

**GEF-7 PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF)**  
**PROJECT TYPE: FULL SIZE PROJECT**  
**TYPE OF TRUST FUND: GEF TRUST FUND**



**PART I: PROJECT INFORMATION**

Project Title:	Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation in the tourism sector of the protected areas and strategic ecosystems of San Andres, Old Providence and Santa Catalina islands		
Country(ies):	Colombia	GEF Project ID:	
GEF Agency(ies):	WWF GEF	GEF Agency Project ID:	
Project Executing Entity(s):	Corporation for the Sustainable Development of the Archipelago of San Andrés, Old Providence and Santa Catalina (CORALINA); and Conservation International Foundation (CI).	Submission Date:	
GEF Focal Area(s):	Biodiversity	Project Duration (Months)	42

**A. INDICATIVE FOCAL/NON-FOCAL AREA ELEMENTS**

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	(in \$)	
		GEF Project Financing	Co-financing
BD 1.1	GEFTF	1,522,500	17,083,463
BD 2.7	GEFTF	1,129,794	2,116,079
<b>Total Project Cost</b>		<b>2,652,294</b>	<b>19,199,542</b>

## B. INDICATIVE PROJECT DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

<p><b>Project Objective:</b> To promote biodiversity conservation mainstreaming in the tourism sector of the Protected Areas and strategic ecosystems of San Andres, Old Providence and Santa Catalina islands through the design and implementation of participatory governance models, effective policies and biodiversity friendly tourism products.</p>					
Project Components	Component	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	(in USD\$)	
	Type			GEF Project Financing	Co-financing
<p><b>Component 1:</b> Planning and Institutional Framework for a biodiversity focused tourism sector in the MPA, PAs and three islands of the Archipelago, in the context of the POMIUAC.</p>	TA	<p>Outcome 1.1: Biodiversity is mainstreamed into tourism for MPA, PAs and three islands of the Archipelago, for improved protection of corals, sandy beaches, mangroves and key species</p>	<p>Output 1.1.1: Interinstitutional coordination group created to advise and accompany the design and implementation of a new sustainable tourism plan for MPA, PAs and the three islands, in the context of POMIUAC, including active participation of the tourism private sector.</p>	810,000	15,850,000
			<p>Output 1.1.2 Carrying capacity assessments and spatial use analysis of threatened ecosystems of MPA, PA and three islands for the design of environmental management measures to implement into the tourism sector.</p>		

			<p>Output 1.1.3: Sustainable tourism plan developed and under early implementation stages by responsible authorities (CORALINA and the Tourism Secretariat), as part of the POMIUC.</p>		
			<p>Output 1.1.4: Technical assistance to local authorities to mainstream biodiversity conservation in the design and development of green and grey infrastructure projects (in the context of the POMIUC and updated tourism plan).</p>		
<p><b>Component 2:</b> Management of tourism impacts on the key biodiversity of the MPA, PAs and the three islands.</p>	<p>TA</p>	<p>Outcome 2.1. Reliable information about tourism impacts on coral reef, sandy beaches, mangroves and key species in MPA, PAs and three islands is used by decision makers to respond to environmental threats.</p>	<p>Output 2.1.1: Training, technical assistance and operational support for development and implementation of a tourism impact monitoring program on 3 threatened ecosystems (mangroves, corals and sandy beaches).</p>	<p>1,075,994</p>	<p>2,050,000</p>
			<p>Output 2.1.2: Training,</p>		

			technical assistance and operational support for development and implementation of a tourism impact monitoring program for three (3) species most sensitive to tourism.		
		Outcome 2.2: Improved capacity of CORALINA and local authorities to effectively mitigate tourism impacts and manage corals, sandy beaches, mangroves and associated species in the MPA and PAs.	Output 2.2.1: Training and technical assistance to CORALINA to develop and implement emergency management measures for key species and ecosystems impacted by tourism in the MPA, PAs and three islands.		
			Output 2.2.2: Training and operational support to CORALINA, SAI and DIMAR authorities (including basic equipment, maintenance, and field supplies) for improved management (including control and surveillance) of key threatened ecosystems and species.		

<p><b>Component 3:</b> Biodiversity mainstreaming in innovative coastal and marine local tourism development in the MPA, PAs and three islands.</p>	<p>INV</p>	<p>Outcome 3.1: Sustainable use of corals, sandy beaches, mangroves and key species is mainstreamed into existing local tourism initiatives.</p>	<p>Output 3.1.1 Participatory selection of at least 5 local tourism initiatives from an existing portfolio with potential to mainstream biodiversity and development of their action plans.</p>	<p>470,000</p>	<p>600,000</p>
			<p>Output 3.1.2 Technical assistance and key investments (equipment and materials) for supporting implementation of action plans (prepared under 3.1.1.)</p>		
			<p>Output 3.1.3 Marketing plans for the selected tourism initiatives.</p>		
			<p>Output 3.1.4: Business models for the selected local tourism initiatives developed and implemented.</p>		
			<p>Output 3.1.5: Awareness campaign implemented to improve tourist behavior in regard to the importance of biodiversity and the need for</p>		

			responsible tourism.		
Component 4: Monitoring and Evaluation, awareness raising and knowledge management.		Outcome 4.1 Monitoring and evaluation plan finalized with on-time data collection, reflection and reporting to aid in results-based decision making and adaptive management .	Output 4.1.1 Training of PMU and field staff on data collection and reporting to track and analyze indicators of the results framework and workplan.	170,000	100,000
			Output 4.1.2 Annual reflection meeting to track progress against work plan and results framework indicator targets for effective adaptive management.		
			Output 4.1.3 Project M&E plan implemented and reports — including project progress reports, results framework, midterm and terminal evaluation.		
Sub Total				2,525,994	18,600,000
<b>PMC</b>				126,300	599,542
<b>Gran Total Project Cost</b>				<b>2,652,294</b>	<b>19,199,542</b>

**C. INDICATIVE SOURCES OF CO-FINANCING FOR THE PROJECT BY NAME AND BY TYPE, IF AVAILABLE**

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount (\$)
GEF Agency	WWF GEF	In-kind	Recurrent	330,000
National government	CORALINA - Archipelago Departmental Authority	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	18,600,000
NGO	CI Colombia	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	269,542
<b>Total Co-financing</b>				19,199,542

**D. INDICATIVE TRUST FUND RESOURCES REQUESTED BY AGENCY(IES), COUNTRY(IES), FOCAL AREA AND THE PROGRAMMING OF FUNDS**

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/Regional/Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	(in \$)		
					GEF Project Financing (a)	Agency Fee (b)	Total (c)=a+b
WWF	GEFTF	Colombia	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	2,652,294	238,706	2,891,000
<b>Total GEF Resources</b>							

**E. PROJECT PREPARATION GRANT (PPG)**

Is Project Preparation Grant requested? Yes  No  If no, skip item E.

**PPG AMOUNT REQUESTED BY AGENCY(IES), TRUST FUND, COUNTRY(IES) AND THE PROGRAMMING OF FUNDS**

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/Glob al	Focal Area	Programmi ng of Funds	(in \$)		
					PPG (a)	Agency Fee (b)	Total c = a + b
WWF	GEFT F	Colombia	Biodiversity		\$100,000	\$9,000	\$109,000
<b>Total PPG Amount</b>							

**F. PROJECT'S TARGET CONTRIBUTIONS TO GEF 7 CORE INDICATORS**

Provide the relevant sub-indicator values for this project using the methodologies indicated in the Core Indicator Worksheet provided in Annex B and aggregating them in the table below. Progress in programming against these targets is updated at the time of CEO endorsement, at midterm evaluation, and at terminal evaluation. Achieved targets will be aggregated and reported at any time during the replenishment period. There is no need to complete this table for climate adaptation projects financed solely through LDCF and SCCF.

Project Core Indicators		Expected at PIF
1	<b>Terrestrial protected areas</b> created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use (Hectares)	108
2	<b>Marine protected areas</b> created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use (Hectares)	11,817
3	Area of <b>land restored</b> (Hectares)	
4	Area of <b>landscapes under improved practices</b> (excluding protected areas) (Hectares)	4,363
5	Area of <b>marine habitat under improved practices</b> (excluding protected areas) (Hectares)	
	Total area under improved management (Hectares)	

6	<b>Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated</b> (million metric tons of CO2e)	
7	<b>Number of shared water ecosystems</b> (fresh or marine) under new or improved cooperative management	
8	Globally over-exploited <b>marine fisheries</b> moved to more sustainable levels (thousand metric tons) (Percent of fisheries, by volume)	
9	<b>Reduction</b> , disposal/destruction, phase out, <b>elimination</b> and avoidance of <b>chemicals of global concern</b> and their waste in the environment and in processes, materials and products (thousand metric tons of toxic chemicals reduced)	
10	Reduction, avoidance of emissions of <b>POPs to air</b> from point and non-point sources (grams of toxic equivalent gTEQ)	
11	Number of <b>direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender</b> as co-benefit of GEF investment	TBD

### G. PROJECT TAXONOMY

Please fill in the table below for the taxonomic information required of this project. Use the GEF Taxonomy Worksheet provided in Annex C to help you select the most relevant keywords/topics/themes that best describe this project

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Influencing Models	Transform policy and regulatory environments Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making Convene multi-stakeholder alliance		

Stakeholders	Indigenous people		
	Private sector	Capital providers	
		Financial intermediaries and market facilitators	
	Beneficiaries	Individuals / entrepreneurs	
	Local communities		
	Civil society		
		Community based organization	
	Type of engagement	Non-government organization	
		Academia	
	Communications	Consultation	
	Participation		
	Education		
	Public campaigns		
	Behavior change		

<p>Capacity, Knowledge and Research</p>	<p>Capacity development</p> <p>Knowledge generation and exchange</p> <p>Targeted research</p> <p>Learning</p> <p>Innovation</p> <p>Knowledge and learning</p>	<p>Indicators to measure change</p> <p>Knowledge management</p> <p>Capacity development</p> <p>Learning</p>	
<p>Gender Equality</p>	<p>Gender mainstreaming</p> <p>Gender results areas</p>	<p>Beneficiaries</p> <p>Women groups</p> <p>Participation and leaderships</p> <p>Access to benefits and services</p> <p>Capacity development</p> <p>Knowledge generation</p>	

Focal Area/Theme	Biodiversity	Protected areas and landscapes	Coastal and marines protected areas Productive seascapes Community based natural resource management Tourism Infrastructure Certification (national standards) Certification (international standards) Threatened species Wildlife for sustainable development Mangroves Coral reefs Payment for ecosystem services Natural capital assessment and accounting Conservation finance
		Mainstreaming	
		Species	
		Biomes	
		Financial and accounting	

## **PART II: PROJECT JUSTIFICATION**

### **1a. Project Description. Briefly describe:**

1) The global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed (systems description); 2) the baseline scenario and any associated baseline projects, 3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project; 4) alignment with GEF focal area and/or Impact Program strategies; 5) incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEFTF, LDCF, SCCF, and co-financing; 6) global environmental benefits (GEFTF) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF); and 7) innovation, sustainability and potential for scaling up.

### **1. Global environmental problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed**

#### ***Project Scope and Environmental Significance***

The Seaflower Biosphere Reserve was declared in 2000 by UNESCO, due to its cultural and environmental values. Within this area, the project will be implemented in the Seaflower Marine Protected Area associated with the islands of San Andrés, Old Providence and Santa Catalina (11,623 ha including key coral reef and seagrass ecosystems of the total 6,501,700 ha of the Seaflower MPA) and in the three regional protected areas of Jhonny Cay (44.2 ha), Old Point (247.56 ha) and The Peak (10.52 ha). Interventions will also focus on the non-protected but key terrestrial ecosystems of the islands of San Andrés, Providencia and Santa Catalina, especially in the mangroves (133.93 ha) and sandy beaches (hectares to be determined during project development). The islands comprise a land area of 4,363.08 ha (Taylor et al., 2012) excluding the terrestrial part of regional protected areas, that include strategic marine and coastal ecosystems (GIS CORALINA, 2016). Table 1 presents a characterization of the PAs included in the project.

**Table 1. Protected Areas included in the project**

	Protected Area Name	National Level	Area Type	Hectares	WDPA ID	IUCN category	Area (hectares)	METT Score (year)	
								I	II
1	District of integrated management of the marine protected area (MPA) of the Seaflower Biosphere Reserve	MPA Area associated with the islands (San Andrés, Providencia and Santa Catalina)	Marine	11,623 (of the total 6,501,700 ha from the Seaflower MPA)	VI	Protected Area (PA) with sustainable use of natural resources	11,623	37% (2009)	55,6% (2013)
2	Jhonny Cay Regional Natural Park	Regional Protected Area	Terrestrial	5.30	II	National Park	44.20	-	
			Marine	38.90					
3	Old Point Regional Mangrove Park	Regional Protected Area	Terrestrial	92.47	II	National Park	247.56	-	
			Marine	155.09					
4	The Peak Regional Park	Regional Protected Area	Terrestrial	10.52	II	National Park	10.52	-	

In 2005, the Seaflower Marine Protected Area was declared within the Seaflower Biosphere Reserve in Colombia<sup>1</sup>, a category that was reaffirmed in 2014 when CORALINA (regional environmental authority in charge of the management, control and administration of the natural resources of the Archipelago) reasserted it as an Integrated Management District (DMI). This designation, recognized in the National System of Protected Areas, allows the development of sustainable activities from the cultural, ecological and economic point of view, such that *"the Seaflower protected area must guarantee the conservation of representative samples of marine and coastal biodiversity, of the basic ecological processes that support the environmental offer of the Archipelago and of the social and cultural values of the population"*. This area covers 34% of

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.protectedplanet.net/555624229>

the Colombian Caribbean territorial sea. It is one of the largest MPAs in the world and the largest in the Caribbean; covering 10% of the Caribbean Sea. The Seaflower MPA is found within the Western Caribbean Coral Reef Hotspot, identified by Conservation International, and contains about 78% of all the coral areas of Colombia (142,000ha). It is a Secondary Endemic Bird Area on the edge of the Western Flyway. Overall, the MPA contains more than 200,000 hectares of significant corals, mangroves and seagrass beds that provide feeding and breeding grounds for birds, reptiles, fish and invertebrates, including many endemic, vulnerable, threatened and endangered species (Prato & Newball, 2015).

The great diversity presented by the island areas of Colombia's Caribbean is largely attributable to the fact that it is the third largest barrier reef in the world and, together with other ecosystems such as corals, mangroves, seagrasses, beaches, dry forests and deep marine environments, provides a propitious environment for iconic species of great relevance to the marine food webs and health of natural systems (CCO, 2014). The adjacent and surrounding areas of this reserve include globally important biodiversity, encompassing the largest and most productive open-ocean coral reefs in the Caribbean and providing a continuum of habitats that support significant levels of marine biodiversity.

With the presence of 192 Red-Listed species, the Seaflower Reserve is an important site for the conservation of endangered and threatened species of global concern. While the main islands are threatened with over-visitation, much of the Reserve remains under-explored, featuring barrier reefs, reef lagoons, reef slopes, deep coral plateaus, seamounts, deep coral reefs, mangroves, seagrass and algal beds, soft and hard bottoms, beaches, and open ocean. The Seaflower MPA provides an exceptional example of marine habitat diversity, complexity, and inter-connectivity on a regional basis, with a few overpopulated islands that threaten the surrounding natural capital.

Important characteristics of the Seaflower Biosphere Reserve include:

- Coral reef ecosystems: Of an estimated 60-70 scleractinian coral species (often referred to as hard or stony corals) found in the Caribbean Sea, at least 48 species are known to occur in the Seaflower MPA. The coral cover in the Reserve represents more than 76% of Colombia's coral reefs.
- Sandy beaches: The beaches of the islands and atolls of the Seaflower MPA are crucial habitats for nesting populations of 4 IUCN Red-listed sea turtle species: the loggerhead turtle (*Caretta caretta*, EN), the hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*, CR), the green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*, EN) and the leatherback turtle, (*Dermochelys coriacea*, CR). The surrounding ocean is home to another 188 RED-listed species of marine mammals, fish and invertebrates. The sandy beaches are also a tourism attraction.
- Mangroves: The three main islands are surrounded by coastal mangroves swamps and highly intact and productive associated coral reef ecosystems. Mangrove tree species include *Rhizophora mangle*, *Avicennia germinans*, *Laguncularia racemosa* and *Conocarpus erectus*, and host endemic fish and an endemic toad.
- Fish species: The Seaflower MPA also supports important commercial fish populations such as the queen conch, the spiny and spotted-spiny lobsters and various snapper and grouper species. Of an estimated 500-600 fish found in the Greater Caribbean region, 407 species have been recorded within the Seaflower MPA, of which 52 species (13%) are IUCN Red-listed.

- Bird species: The San Andres Archipelago is located at the edge of the western flyway and to date 126 migrant bird species have been documented in the MPA. Of these, it has been estimated that at least 85 migrant species belonging to 25 different families specifically use the island's mangroves, wetlands and cays as stopover sites. The St. Andrew vireo, *Vireo caribaeus* (VU) is endemic to this area and includes 12 endemic subspecies.
- Other key species: The islands of Old Providence and Santa Catalina are home to a globally significant population of range-restricted Black Crab. The species inhabits the islands' tropical dry forest and migrates to the sea to reproduce. The species suffered a 40 percent population decline between 2004-2014 (Caldas 2016) and is under consideration by IUCN to be listed as Endangered (EN).

The sandy beaches are an ecosystem of economic importance for the Archipelago, and a major driver of the “*sun and beach*” economy of the Caribbean island territories (Salas-Betin, 2009). From an ecological point of view, beaches are important areas (McLachlan, 1983) where emblematic species such as sea turtles nest and therefore are vital to fulfill their reproduction cycles.

Traditionally, the fishing sector has been one of the Archipelago's main economic drivers. However, eight years after the International Court of Justice's decision in which Nicaragua was granted title to territory and maritime delimitation to the area, and following Colombia's 2016 peace agreement, the economy of the Archipelago has shifted. Tourism has boomed, and tourism related activities have become the main threat to biodiversity in the Archipelago. Traditional fishing activities have decreased dramatically and the exponential demand for natural resources due to the increase of visitors to the Islands, has exposed the Archipelago, its ecosystems and biodiversity to a new set of threats that must be urgently addressed.

### **Tourism trends and economic significance in the San Andres Archipelago Reserve and the Caribbean.**

Marine, coastal and island areas bring together an important set of productive activities that significantly affect the economies of local and national governments at different scales; as well as concentrating an abundance of natural resources that are directly related to regional economic productivity (UNEP, 2013). Considering that natural resources associated with economic activities are constantly and increasingly under pressure from urban planning, food and recreation, the governments are now called upon to create and apply marine and coastal management tools to guide actions toward the sustainable use of the seas and especially the coastal and insular areas (Ehler et al., 2013; Foley et al., 2010; Gilbert et al., 2015).

Currently, the tourism sector that is developing in the coastal and insular areas is considered one of the fastest growing private sectors worldwide. It has been noted that, due to the dynamic nature of the marine and coastal environment, any activity that interferes with the processes of these natural ecosystems may have consequences on their stability. Taking this into consideration with the magnitude of tourism demand, the development of the tourism sector must be fully integrated into government plans, policies and programs in order to guarantee the sustainable use of natural environments (Hal, 2001). Among the main environmental impacts that have been identified in association with tourism activities are noise pollution, the production of garbage and other waste, and physical damage to natural environments, all of which involve different general regulations at

the international level and specific regulations in the countries according to the particularities of the activity (Moreau, 2009).

According to the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism (MINCIT), the tourism sector in Colombia has followed global trends, reaching an increase of 28% in 2017. Given the extraordinary biodiversity and its insular condition, the Archipelago of San Andrés, Old Providence and Santa Catalina is not exempt from this trend of expansion of the tourism industry. In fact, the Archipelago is an example of the natural resources exploitation that can result from the development of a “sun and beach” tourism model, which plays a very important role in the economy of the islands but constitutes also the main threat to the biodiversity of the Archipelago.

San Andres island is largely a conventional “sun and beach” destination, characterized by the construction of a large number of all-inclusive hotels, focused on the demand for mass tourism (Zuluaga, 2006). The Island of San Andres has experienced an exponential increase in tourism, with the number of visitors growing from 263,577 in 1991 to 1,050,763 in 2017 (Fig. 1) where 90% of the visitors who arrive have as their motive to undertake tourist activities. As a result of this important flow of visitors, a tourism development model has been implemented in the territory based on the standardization and sale of land, to provide tourism services to a floating population that exceeds the carrying capacity limits of the Archipelago. The tourism potential of the Archipelago has positioned this region as an attractive destination in the Caribbean, where many cultural and environmental assets have been increasingly put at risk due to the overwhelming pressure from the exponential growth of visitors (Coralina-Invemar, 2012).

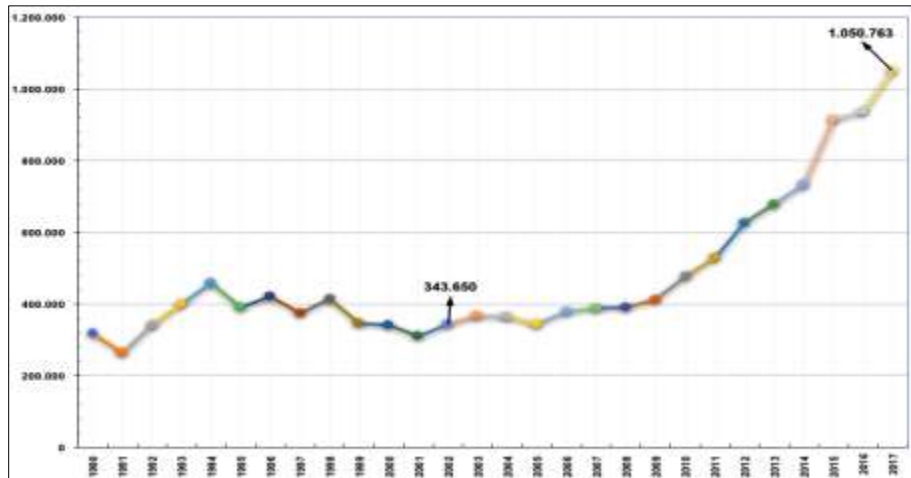


Fig 1. Tourist arrivals to San Andres 1990-2017. Figure provided by the Secretariat of departmental tourism.

The exponential increase of the tourism sector has also been reflected in the amount of small-scale tourism services that are offered locally. Table 2 shows an overview of current tourism service providers in the Department and highlights a high percentage of locally-run lodgings, such as tourist housing accommodations (57%), Apart-hotels (20%), and Native places (7%) amongst others. The local population also provides other tourism-related services such as terrestrial transport, tourism agencies, nature tourism and ecotourism, gastronomic activities, and tour guide services.

**Table 2. Total number of establishments and type of operators currently providing tourism services.** Source: Secretariat of Tourism of the Department, 2019

Tourism Service Providers	Total of establishments
Travel and Tourism Agencies	59
Operating Agencies	102
Wholesale Travel Agencies	3
Tourist Representation Offices	7
Tourist Guides	5
Terrestrial Transport Companies	2
Car Rental Companies	43
A&B Gastronomy Establishments	74
TimeShares Accommodations	4
Apart-hotel Accommodations	194
Hostels Accommodations	41
Hotel Accommodations	88
Tourist Housing Accommodations	542
Native Places Accommodations	65
Accommodations Albergues	7
Accommodations Camping	2
Other Types of Accommodations	3
Vacation Center Accommodations	1
Rural Farmhouses Accommodations	5
Accommodations Subtotal	947
Total	1246

Although the above explained tourism trend has benefited the economy of the islands - for instance hotel occupancy has remained at an average of 74% over the last 5 years (MINCIT) -, the disorderly expansion of this model has brought negative consequences and is at the center of many conflicts and pervasive impacts on the territory and its local populations. The development of the Tourism Master Plan (PMT) for San Andrés island and its diagnosis (Consultur, 2002), revealed that the tourism sector -including local tourism- posed a high risk of

environmental degradation in the Archipelago, derived from a disorderly growth that has not taken into account the carrying capacity of the territory or the necessary infrastructure and equipment, a situation that remains unsolved at present. Additionally, this tourist model has caused a competitive crisis in the tourism sector, with an increase on the offer of local services to the tourism sector, mainly related to lodging with only a few examples of successful sustainable local tourism initiatives.

In relation to local tourism development it is important to understand how since the 1950's a set of transformations were initiated and were of fundamental importance for life in the archipelago, where tourism would be added to agriculture, livestock and fishing as the basis of the economy of the islands. This was added to a migratory flow produced by the free port, generating a segmentation of the island population within its own territory, competing at the level of job offers where employers preferred to hire immigrant labor for activities related to tourism and trade (Salas, 2015). As a result, a local tourism sector was created, based on the Raizal community, which was considerably expanded once the number of visitors to the islands increased significantly.

Few documented and detailed information on local tourism is available, but it is known that about 50% of the total number of rooms available on the island of San Andres is provided by large national and international hotel chains (James, 2013) which receive most of the mass tourism, and the remaining percentage is supplied by the local population, where native lodges may represent more than 20% (Vega and Lopez, 2013). This type of accommodation (houses of patrimonial value owned by the island population) has grown and generated interest from tourists, principally as a cheaper alternative. Today the islands present a situation where local accommodation has taken a strong hold and is competing with the traditional hotel industry. Clearly, tourism can be a source of economic income for the local population and it demands spaces that are preserved but not usually used to receive visitors, which ultimately challenges in maintaining a balanced relationship with the environment.

The Caribbean region is more dependent on tourism than any other region in the world. The sector accounts for over 15% of the GDP and 13% of jobs in the region. Tourism is the Colombian islands' economic driver, representing nearly 40% of the Archipelago's GDP (Govt. of San Andres, Providencia and Santa Catalina, 2012), equivalent to \$184 million annually (Banco de la República de Colombia, 2012). The Caribbean's tourism industry and the whole regional economy is dependent on the health of its coral reefs and other important coastal and marine ecosystems (including mangroves and seagrass), as well as fragile terrestrial habitats and species. A recent study by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) found that reef-adjacent activities generate an estimated \$5.7 billion per year in the Caribbean from roughly 7.4 million visitors. When combined with reef-dependent tourism activities, they generate \$7.9 billion total from roughly 11 million visitors (The Nature Conservancy, 2019).

### ***Environmental problem***

Coastal marine ecosystems in the Archipelago -- rocky shores, sandy beaches, mangrove forests, sea grass, wetlands and coral reefs -- are seeing their functionality impacted by tourism-related degradation. The loss of mangroves due to tourism infrastructure development diminishes the productivity of fish populations, thus affecting food security for local communities and increasing the risk of, and vulnerability to, natural disasters. It also accelerates the coastal erosion process. Similarly, the loss of vegetative cover has contributed to soil erosion and generated heavy sediment loads, which in turn have degraded the coral reefs, ultimately reducing the capacity of

ecosystems to respond effectively to the impacts of climate change. Furthermore, mass tourism and high concentrations of human settlements in beach and coastal environments have caused significant impacts on natural and cultural areas. This has generated environmental problems such as inadequate solid waste management, insufficient wastewater management, degradation of critical ecosystems, coastal erosion, excessive noise pollution, and increased occupation of public space, among others.

The local resident population in the islands of the Archipelago (Raizales) belong to an ethnic community, recognized by Colombian government as peoples with specific rights, with an invaluable culture and traditional knowledge of its territory. This community is already suffering the first effects of climate change because their territories are more vulnerable, and their livelihoods depend on local production.

The three inhabited islands of the Archipelago (San Andrés, Old Providence and Santa Catalina) are small terrestrial areas with particular ecological, social and economic attributes that highlight their vulnerability. These attributes are mainly related to the maintenance of ecosystem interrelationships of the marine, coastal and land environments and a limited economic base that is highly exposed and vulnerable to external influences, with immediate, and in many cases irreversible, impacts (Taylor *et al.*, 2012). This has led to the current challenges in the management and conservation of the natural resources of the Archipelago which require strategic and sustainable interventions with the involvement of the local community. The extent to which these ecosystems are impacted and how much the wildlife is disturbed is currently unknown. The proposed project seeks to improve biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of ecosystem services in San Andres, Old Providence and Santa Catalina islands through the design and implementation of participatory governance models, effective policies and innovative culturally-based and biodiversity friendly tourism products.

### **Tourism and Threats to Biodiversity**

In order to identify and rank the threats to the priority ecosystems (project conservation objects), a threat analysis was carried out, based on a review of the existing literature on tourism and its impacts on the islands, as well as the results of the stakeholder consultation process and expert opinions. First, the conservation targets were identified as: Mangroves, Sandy Beaches, Coral Reefs, and Seagrass. Then, the overall threats (including those from tourism and other sectors) to those conservation targets were identified. The threats were rated, based on the criteria of scope (SC), severity (SE), and irreversibility (IR), according to their impacts on each of the conservation targets identified by the project. This exercise was socialized and validated by the technical teams of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, CORALINA, Conservation International and WWF Colombia. The results of the analysis are included as an Annex to the PIF and Table 3 shows a synthesis of the final threat prioritization.

**Table 3. Analysis of threat impacts to target ecosystems.**

<b>DIRECT THREATS</b>	<b>Mangroves</b>	<b>Coral Reefs</b>	<b>Sandy Beeches</b>	<b>Seagrass</b>	<b>Average across all targets</b>
Unplanned development of small-scale local tourism lodging.	High	Medium	High	Medium	High
Unplanned mass tourism infrastructure development in coastal areas (hotels, roads, piers, etc.).	High	Medium	High	Medium	High
Excessive physical presence of tourists in the prioritized ecosystems without carrying capacity consideration.	High	Medium	High	Medium	High
Uncontrolled solid waste disposal (from tourism and general population).	High	High	High	Medium	Moderate-High
Unsustainable recreational water sport and motorized transportation activities.	Moderate-High	Moderate-High	Moderate-High	Moderate-High	Moderate-High
Sewage disposal (from tourism and general population) into waterways, mangroves and reefs.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Unsustainable fishing (local artisanal) to feed tourism demand.	Medium	Medium	Low	Medium	Medium
Overconsumption (by tourism sector) of freshwater from aquifers.	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
Overconsumption of endemic species (by tourism sector), such as the Black Crab.	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
Sand mining and dredging to satisfy demand for building materials (to feed a growing number of tourism infrastructure projects).	Medium	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium
Unplanned urban development (expansion over natural ecosystems) to satisfy immigration of tourism employees.	Medium	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium

<b>KEY TO THREAT PRIORITIZATION</b>	<b>HIGH</b>	<b>MODERATE - HIGH</b>	<b>MEDIUM</b>	<b>LOW</b>
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Considering the results of the exercise presented in the table above and according to the score agreed upon for each threat, the project will focus on addressing those threats categorized as high (in red) and moderate-high (orange) in the threat analysis, which are summarized in Table 4 below:

**Table 4. Description of prioritized threats**

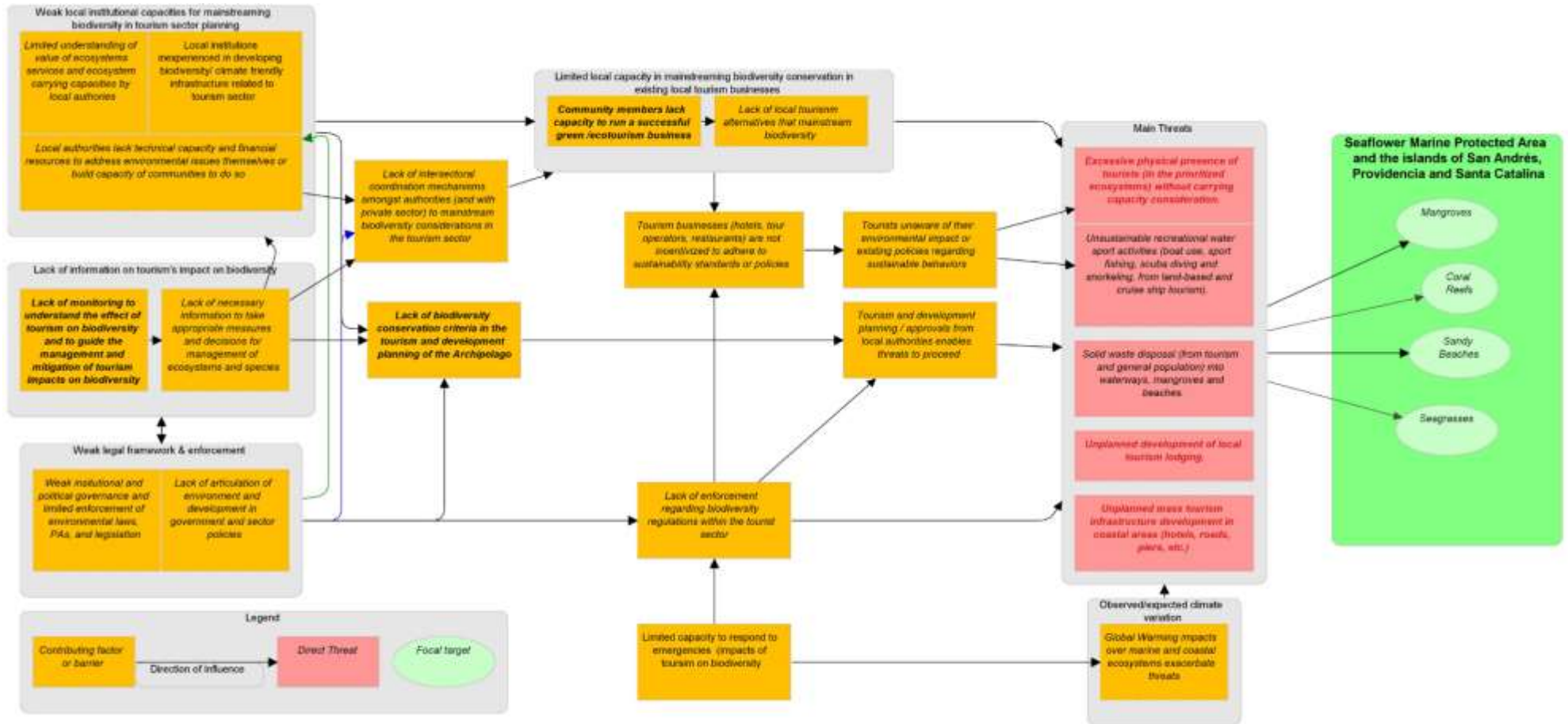
Threats	Impacts on BD
<p>Unplanned development of small-scale local tourism lodging.</p>	<p>The unplanned development of the local tourism represents a high threat to biodiversity since there are no environmental norms regulating the expansion of this sector. This means, for example, that traditional Raizal constructions or infrastructure related to transport or mobility (roads, highways, or piers) can be built on key ecosystems, such as mangroves, and that these habitats are under serious threat of being destroyed. In recent years the number of local tourism initiatives has significantly increased in the islands, facilitating an increased number of tourists and an increased pressure on the island's ecosystems. Most local tourism initiatives do not adopt good environmental practices in recreational activities, and they offer products and services that directly affect the health of ecosystems. This situation will be further described below.</p>
<p>Unplanned mass tourism infrastructure development in coastal areas (hotels, roads, piers, etc.).</p>	<p>Mangrove and other coastal forest lands of San Andres have been cleared for developing mass tourism infrastructure which has, in turn, led to increased vulnerability to climate change impacts, coastal erosion and sedimentation on coral reefs. This has caused mortality and reef degradation across San Andres. Also, sandy beaches have decreased in the Archipelago, due to erosion caused by different factors, including climate change impacts.</p> <p>Fragmentation of the mangrove forest compromises the ecological integrity and functionality of the ecosystem and degrades hydrological systems. This loss and fragmentation of habitat are threatening seabirds, shorebirds, migratory and resident species, as well as shellfish, crustaceans, and reef fish species. The loss of beach habitat in the Archipelago due to erosion and massive infrastructure development are, in the Archipelago, threatening endangered turtle species and affecting black crab natural migration processes.</p> <p>Lastly, the criteria for the use and type of materials for the construction of tourism-related infrastructure is based on conventional engineering approaches that do not integrate biodiversity conservation or climate change adaptation and resilience considerations. The disposal of surplus and residues from infrastructure development impacts coastal ecosystems -at different levels- in particular, the mangrove.</p>

<p>Excessive physical presence of tourists in the prioritized ecosystems without carrying capacity consideration.</p>	<p>The lack of a carrying capacity analysis for the islands means that there is great pressure on ecosystems and hence there is a demand for environmental services that far exceeds what the ecosystems can support. The vast number of tourists on the islands leads to a high frequency of visits to conservation objects, generating physical interaction with the ecosystems which disrupts biological processes.</p> <p>More tourists imply an increase of the fishing efforts including illegal fishing and use of non-selective fishing gear and techniques that have wide-ranging ecological consequences (such as fish traps that catch small species and are often left behind which results in ghost-fishing) affecting the sustainability of commercially-important fishing resources, and creating a demand for consuming new fish species that were not considered in the past (i.e., parrot fish).</p> <p>Selective removal of species from reef communities and beaches (such as queen conch, lobster, grouper, snapper, and parrot fish, among others) has adverse ripple effects on the integrity of the reef ecosystem.</p> <p>An exorbitant presence of tourists implies an increase in light and noise pollution on the islands, which affects certain species of birds; it also results in an increase in the emissions that occur on the islands (due to the increase in transport) and in the discharge of wastewater into the ecosystems of the coastal marine territory.</p> <p>Lastly, a great number of tourists results in overconsumption of freshwater from aquifers in tourism resort areas leading to degradation of water supply.</p>
<p>Uncontrolled solid waste disposal (from tourism and general population).</p>	<p>Uncontrolled solid waste disposal (especially plastic) into wetlands, water retention zones, and coastal areas leads to mortality of fish, birds, and turtles (among other species) when entangled or ingested by individuals.</p> <p>Likewise, solid waste agglomerates on the beaches and mangroves affecting the health of species and generating considerable impacts on vegetation cover ecosystems such as forests and mangroves.</p> <p>The organic matter associated with solid waste implies bacteria and microorganisms that generate compounds that acidify the water and eliminate oxygen which is vital for the life of aquatic species and cause contamination of water for human consumption and health problems.</p>

<p>Unsustainable recreational water sport and motorized transportation activities.</p>	<p>Degradation of marine habitats from increased contact and disturbance, e.g. mooring and anchoring of dive boats, yachts, and, less frequently, cruise ships on or near coral reefs. Other recreational activities, such as the unregulated use of speed boats, and spear fishing are also destructive to wildlife.</p> <p>Water transport can also result in collision damage on reefs, and mortality of mammals and sea turtles. Noise emissions from motorboats affect the wildlife associated with the water bodies.</p>
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The relationships between threats and their contributing factors are illustrated in the conceptual model in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2. Project Conceptual Model



## **Barriers that Need to be Addressed**

### **a. Weak local institutional capacities for mainstreaming biodiversity in the tourism sector planning.**

These weaknesses are reflected in the absence of an effective inter-institutional governance model between the entities charged with regulating tourism and those in charge of protecting and conserving biodiversity and ecosystem services in the Seaflower Biosphere Reserve, creating a barrier to the adequate mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation in the tourism sector. Also, the limited capacities of the competent authorities in terms of training, skills, equipment and knowledge of the area, is an additional barrier for the adequate management of biodiversity in the context of the tourism in the islands.

More effective inter-institutional coordination which includes all the relevant stakeholders (public and private) at the national and local level is needed to properly mainstream biodiversity conservation in the tourism sector and regulate the tourism industry. For the most part, institutions in charge of environmental and tourism areas work in isolation, and currently don't have a shared vision for how to mainstream biodiversity conservation within the tourism sector or in planning processes. Regional governmental tourism entities have little experience regulating tourism in protected areas, which often reinforces the tendency to focus on the existing model of mass tourism.

In regards to spatial planning, there is no information with respect to the carrying capacity of the islands nor the value of the ecosystem services which are key to determining the potential zoning and the possible sustainable uses of the territory. These information gaps contribute to poor planning capacities and result in tourism that grows without control and negatively affects biodiversity.

The infrastructure developed on the islands is based mainly on conventional construction (grey infrastructure). No specific infrastructure projects with biodiversity conservation considerations have been developed on the islands and currently local authorities have expressed the necessity to acquire capacity in sustainable development, and on how to integrate biodiversity conservation considerations in future tourism infrastructure. The current project will aid in generating capacity amongst stakeholders to mainstream biodiversity conservation in green and gray infrastructure for current and future touristic project development.

**b. Lack of sound data to understand the effect of tourism on biodiversity and to guide the management and mitigation of tourism impacts on biodiversity.**

The absence of monitoring efforts to evaluate the tourism sector's impact on the Reserve's biodiversity and the associated economic impacts on ecosystem services is critical. Currently, no database or data collection methods exist for measuring the tourism activities' impact on protected areas and key biodiversity. Additionally, there is a data gap regarding ecosystem services associated with tourism in the Seaflower Reserve. This barrier results in the lack of necessary information to take the appropriate measures for adequate management of ecosystems and species. The local authority's lack of capacity to respond efficiently leads to an inability to make informed and concrete decisions that support natural resource conservation.

**c. Weak legal framework and enforcement.**

There are gaps in the national regulations for the adequate management of tourism in strategic areas or ecosystems, and a lack of articulation amongst the environmental and economic development sectors. The weaknesses in the legal framework as well as the limitations in the application of policies leads to difficulty in the implementation enforcement of relevant legislation. Also, the competent authorities lack the proper training to effectively implement, control and survey the territory; and lack essential supplies for the fulfillment of their enforcing functions. Therefore, strengthening the authorities in terms of both their capacities and the equipment is fundamental in overcoming this barrier and obtaining more effective control and surveillance within the islands.

**d. Limited local capacity in mainstreaming biodiversity conservation in existing local tourism businesses.**

The weak institutional capacities and engagement, combined with the limited information available and the weak legal framework result in the islands being a conventional "*sun and beach*" destination, with very few examples of successful sustainable community-run tourism projects. Old Providence and Santa Catalina islands are well-positioned to cater to specialty tourism activities and ecotourism; however, existing products and services lack quality and diversity. Also, the local proprietors of such community initiatives often lack the capabilities to run a successful business and the resources to offer a biodiversity friendly portfolio of tourism activities. Given these constraints, it is necessary to strengthen the local tourism industry capacity and scope to promote the transformation of existing local businesses into sustainable businesses that ensure the conservation of biodiversity.

To address these gaps, it is necessary to structure an incentive to tourism businesses to adhere to sustainable standards and policies, engaging the tour operators and visitors of the area in conservation actions and the need of identifying a niche by taking up again their cultural values as "islanders" together with a strong biodiversity conservation approach.

## **2. Baseline Scenario and Associated Baseline Projects**

### **Planning and Institutional Framework for a sustainable tourism sector.**

The Corporation for Sustainable Development of the Archipelago of San Andres, Old Providence and Santa Catalina (CORALINA – local environmental authority), under the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MESD) and the Departmental Authority (Gobernación Archipelago) under the Colombian National Government, are the key government entities that manage the Seaflower Marine Protected Area and oversee the implementation of corresponding national and departmental plans and programs.

The evaluation and data analysis of the biodiversity values associated with the islands of San Andres, Old Providence and Santa Catalina, is a strong baseline that supports and validates the importance of this region and the need to strengthen conservation actions for their environmental resources. CORALINA as a local environmental authority have generated significant inputs which can be incorporated into policy programs in other government sectors.

The departmental authority has different units responsible for the administration of national policy applied to the local level. One of these agencies is the Secretary of Tourism, whose actions are based on a tourism plan adopted in 1995. As the time nears for the departmental authority to update the tourism plan, the opportunity arises to include more environmental considerations that will have an impact on a new sustainable tourism plan.

The local authorities, in accordance with their functions, regularly follow up and monitor aspects relevant to their jurisdiction. CORALINA generates data on the condition of critical ecosystems such as corals, sea grasses, mangroves and beaches, as well as key species. The departmental authority registers and monitors tourist activity on the islands by documenting the number of visitors, lodgings, restaurants, and other information. Although data is collected and monitored by local authorities, there is limited information to identify and define effective actions for the management of tourism and biodiversity conservation in the islands in an integrated manner.

The grey infrastructure built on the islands (mainly on the San Andres island) has not considered environmental criteria in the past. However, existing traditional architecture developed by the local Raizal population, for many generations, may be a valuable baseline to consider for new infrastructure projects on the islands.

Additionally, by Decree No. 415, March 13, 2017 the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MADS) unified different environmental instruments in the Archipelago Department of San Andrés, Old Providence and Santa Catalina, establishing that (for all purposes of environmental management), the Integrated Management and Management Plan of the Caribbean Insular Coastal Environmental Unit (Insular POMIUAC), is the only instrument articulating the regulations and ordinances of the territory of the Archipelago Department of San Andrés, Providencia and Santa Catalina responding adequately to the specialties and environmental needs of this jurisdiction. Accordingly, the Insular POMIUAC constitutes the norm of superior hierarchy and environmental determinant for the elaboration and adoption of the plans or schemes of territorial ordering or departmental ordering, in the Archipelago of San Andrés, Old Providence and Santa Catalina.

CORALINA is currently in the process of formulating the POMIUAC, and simultaneously is formally advancing a process of previous consultation of the same with the Raizal ethnic community. Tourism, as the main engine of the economy in the Archipelago of San Andrés,

Providencia and Santa Catalina is prioritized in order to address its impacts on biodiversity and protected areas, and to prospectively adopt policy, regulatory and governance guidelines that promote the development of sustainable tourism in accordance with the guidelines of the Seaflower Biosphere Reserve.

Lastly, the local authorities from the Archipelago, according to their functions, maintain a relationship with the private sector associated to tourism at different levels, focusing on the actions implemented by the government programs, as well as on specific projects that are formulated and executed. An important baseline to emphasize in the framework of the last METT evaluation (2013), was the active participation of key actors including the private sector, in which limited awareness (by the population at large) regarding the importance of natural resources and biodiversity was identified, highlighting the association between the difficulty in committing to care for these resources and the unemployment and lack of economic alternatives for the local population.

### **Monitoring, management and mitigation of tourism impacts on biodiversity.**

CORALINA, as the maximum environmental authority in the Archipelago, executes the national policies, plans and programs in environmental matters defined by the law of the National Development Plan and the Ministry of Environment. The entity has a particular condition which allows annual access to the Environmental Compensation Fund (FCE), an economic instrument that distributes resources among national corporations, and is managed by the Ministry of Environment. Therefore, through the submission of projects, CORALINA has acquired financial support from the national government for about 15 years to carry out the activities under its competence, such as monitoring, surveillance and control at the environmental level, creation of awareness strategies, training and capacity building, development of sustainable production and consumption practices, management of water stress and adaptation to climate change, among others.

Regarding the monitoring of the coastal and marine resources, INVEMAR, the scientific institution in charge of the research of these ecosystems, has developed several protocols (2014) for the monitoring of sandy beaches, coral reefs, seagrasses, mangroves and aquatic birds (which was updated on 2018 through the resolution 1263). These methodologies have been reviewed, expanded and implemented by CORALINA, under the project “*Protección de la Biodiversidad en la Región Suroccidental del Caribe*” GRT/FM-11865-CO, in order to generate management and conservation strategies for key species, and obtain information regarding the state of the ecosystems. Within this project, feasibility studies have also been carried out to guarantee the implementation of conservation agreements and the quality of life of the Archipelago's fisherfolk. It has also been possible to maintain and reinforce four community monitoring programs (Reefcheck, Coral Nursery, Marine Mammals, and Chondrichthyans), as well as training, coaching, generation of guides, building and adaption of a specific zone related to important tourist activities developed within the islands of San Andrés and Old Providence, including: recreational diving, water sports, marine mammal sighting, tourist practices related to rays (*Dayastis americana*), and diving for chondrichthyan observation. Although the mentioned project has ended, these activities continue within the framework of the biological monitoring functions of CORALINA, which applies the protocols designed by INVEMAR annually.

The San Andres, Old Providence and Santa Catalina Archipelago department has the largest protected area in Colombia which was approved, declared and re-categorized, according to the Single National Registry of Protected Areas of Colombia (RUNAP), as a District of integrated management of the marine protected area (MPA) of the Seaflower Biosphere Reserve. Since the

creation of this area and under two GEF projects, the Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) have been carried out in 2009 (with a score of 33%) and in 2013 (with a score of 55.6%) providing an important baseline on the status of the implementation of the management plan in this national protected area. The METT assessment has not been updated since then in the MPA. In addition, CORALINA, as the local environmental authority, manages three (3) regional protected areas since 2001. The management plans for these areas have been generated and implemented, but no evaluation of their management effectiveness has been conducted to date.

Lastly, The Archipelago government, following the guidelines of the National Development Plan (NDP 2018 - 2022), is currently supporting economic strategies and instruments that make the productive sectors more sustainable, innovative and reduce their environmental impact.

### **Local biodiversity friendly tourism initiatives.**

The existing tourism model in the Archipelago has caused a competitive crisis in the tourism sector, with a growing local tourism sector trying to capture some of the economic benefits the mass tourism sector represents in the Department, but through business that do not always integrate sustainability considerations, and lack technical and financial capacities. For this reason, CORALINA has created a Green Business Window by legal act (Resolution 055 of 2019), which has been promoting, encouraging and accompanying Green Businesses on the islands. The corporation decided to promote sustainable and environmentally friendly ventures, seeking to mitigate the evident damage on the Archipelago. The Green Businesses consider the economic activities that offer goods or services, and generate positive environmental impacts and also incorporate good environmental, social and economic practices with a life cycle approach, contributing to the conservation of the environment as natural capital that supports the development of the territory (ONVS 2014).

CORALINA has been accompanying 49 Green Businesses, through a revision process with different criteria gathered in 3 different qualification levels: (1) Economic, social and environmental compliance at a legal level; (2) Economic viability, positive environmental impact, useful life, use of recycled materials, social and environmental responsibility in the value chain, communication of its environmental services; (3) Environmental or social schemes, programs or recognitions implemented or received. This constitutes a very important baseline for directing actions to strengthen innovative local initiatives that incorporate tourism that benefits the conservation of the islands' natural resources.

This is consistent with one of the pillars of the National Development Plan, on the promotion of the economy through circular economy strategies where tourism and value chains play an important role in promoting local businesses. In this way, the National Development Plan consolidates the strategy of the orange economy as that which seeks to consolidate the cultural and creative industries. Likewise, the pillars of sustainable business are strengthened as a tool to diversify the economy and has a goal to consolidate at least 1865 verified green businesses at national level. This generates a national commitment that provides the opportunity to strengthen local initiatives and contribute to the conservation of strategic ecosystems and species and to their livelihoods.

At an institutional level, CORALINA is an active member of the Regional Network of Enterprises of the Department of San Andrés, as a strategic ally to promote and boost green businesses and their products in the region. Among the entities linked to the Regional Enterprise Network are The San Andres Islands Chamber of Commerce, the Departmental Government, SENA Regional San Andres, the Institute of Technical Vocational Training INFOTEP, the San Andres Islands Family

Compensation Fund CAJASAI. This network gives the opportunity to articulate activities that are relevant to validate innovative tourism plans and make the corresponding investments and strengthening.

### **3. Proposed Alternative Scenario**

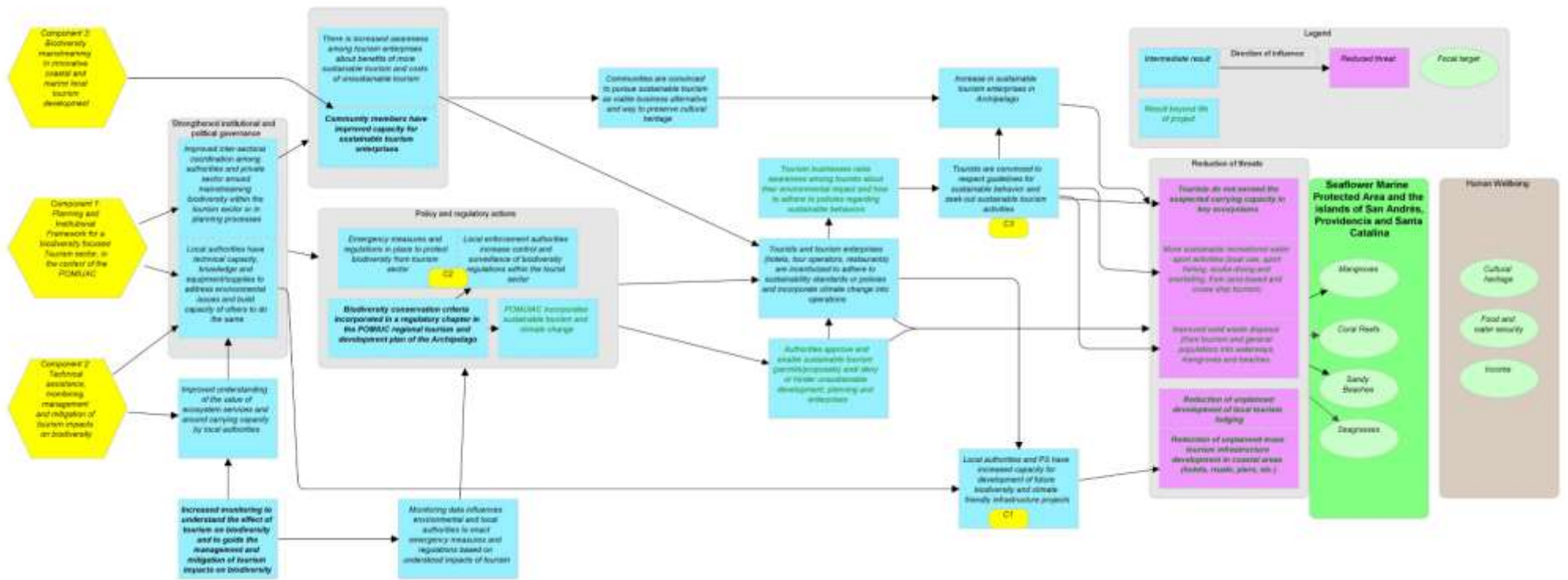
The proposed project “Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation in the tourism sector of the protected areas and strategic ecosystems of San Andres, Old Providence and Santa Catalina islands” seeks to promote biodiversity conservation mainstreaming in the tourism sector in the Archipelago’s areas described above, through the design and implementation of participatory governance models and effective policies, management of tourism impacts on key ecosystems and species, and transforming existing local tourism activities into culturally-rich and biodiversity friendly and sustainable products.

The strengthening of capacities and the inter-institutional articulation with the small-scale private sector, as well as the first-hand knowledge of the impacts produced by tourism on biodiversity, will allow informed decision-making and the participatory implementation of measures for the effective management of ecosystems and their respective conservation. Likewise, the support and strengthening of biodiversity friendly and culturally-rich local tourism initiatives - based on the principles established by the national government regarding green businesses - will promote a change in the local tourism sector towards one that not only has an impact on conservation but also is an agent of change that can be used in favor of biodiversity.

The underlying theory of change of the project is: If the ecological, social and economic attributes of the Archipelago (San Andrés, Old Providence and Santa Catalina) are to be preserved, then an innovative model for sustainable tourism needs to be implemented in which there is (i) a consolidation of the sustainable tourism chapter as a strategic part of the Integrated Management Plan of the Coastal Environment; (ii) strengthening of authorities’ capacities and equipment for taking appropriate environmental measures and enforcing regulations that protect biodiversity; (iii) reliable, scientific information about tourism impacts on key biodiversity and institutional capacities developed to guide management and mitigation actions based on this information to reduce threats; and (iv) local tourism initiatives in the Archipelago transformed into biodiversity friendly and financially sustainable businesses.

In summary, the logic of the project’s Theory of Change is depicted in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3. Project Theory of Change



## Components and Key Outcomes

The proposal has four components:

### **Component 1: Planning and institutional framework for a biodiversity focused tourism sector in the MPA, PAs and the three islands of the Archipelago, in the context of the POMIUAC.**

The POMIUAC is a legal instrument that defines and guides the environmental planning and management of coastal areas of the Colombian territory, and through the development and implementation of a sustainable tourism plan, Component 1 seeks to integrate -into the POMIUAC- different strategies and regulations for mainstreaming biodiversity in the tourism sector of the Archipelago. This will be achieved with the participation of the key related institutions (public and private) at the local level and through the following outcomes and outputs:

#### ***Outcome 1.1: Biodiversity is mainstreamed into tourism for MPA, PAs and three islands of the Archipelago, with key institutional stakeholders, in the context of POMIUAC.***

**Output 1.1.1:** Interinstitutional coordination group created to advise and accompany the design and implementation of a new sustainable tourism plan for MPA, PAs and the three islands, in the context of POMIUAC, including active participation of the tourism private sector.

An interinstitutional coordination group will be established to support the development of a sustainable tourism plan and to support implementation of the plan through the activities of Component 2 and 3. This inter-institutional coordination group will be made up of the competent authorities in environmental matters (CORALINA), administration of beaches (DIMAR), and tourism (Government). Also, it will include the participation of the various stakeholders in the islands, including private sector. Representatives of the hotel sector (large chains and local hotels) and of other related tourism services will participate in the generation of inputs as well as recommendations to harmonize planning measures with the economy and development of the islands and to better integrate biodiversity conservation objectives in the tourism strategy of the Archipelago.

**Output 1.1.2:** Carrying capacity assessments and spatial use analysis of threatened ecosystems of MPA, PAs and three islands for the design of environmental management measures to implement into the tourism sector.

Spatial analysis and carrying capacity assessments will be developed through consultancies as a practical tool for creating and establishing more rational management principles (to be included in the sustainable tourism plan) on how marine and coastal key ecosystems are used, considering the demand that this sector is generating in the Archipelago. The participation of representatives of the tourism sector in the islands will be of great importance for the development of the spatial analysis and the carrying capacity assessments.

**Output 1.1.3:** Sustainable tourism plan developed and under early implementation stages by responsible authorities (CORALINA and the Tourism Secretariat), as part of the POMIUAC.

Taking into account information generated in previous outputs, a tourism plan will be designed - between CORALINA and the group of experts- including measures with appropriate environmental considerations (ecological principles and an ecosystem approach), differentiating the current particularities of the sector on the islands of San Andrés, Old Providence and Santa

Catalina, and taking advantage of international certifications such as the “Blue Flag” to consolidate a sustainable tourism based on the conservation of priority coastal ecosystems such as beaches. Project components 2 and 3 will initiate the implementation of this sustainable tourism plan.

**Output 1.1.4:** Technical assistance to local authorities to mainstream biodiversity conservation in the design and development of green and grey infrastructure projects (in the context of the POMIUAC and updated tourism plan).

The project will focus on leaving installed capacity in the competent authorities to design and implement biodiversity friendly green and gray infrastructure. To that end the project will finance consultants to carry out a diagnosis of the possible application of biodiversity conservation criteria in green-gray infrastructure solutions, in accordance with the needs of the islands, and provide spaces for trainings, “hands on” workshops and exchanges of experience that will enable officials to have the necessary knowledge to propose this type of biodiversity friendly engineering design approaches for the territory within the framework of their planning functions.

These workshops and spaces will also be attended by representatives of the tourism private sector for them to be able to incorporate biodiversity friendly green-gray strategies into their current or future tourism development projects on the islands.

## **Component 2: Management of tourism impacts on key biodiversity of the MPA, PAs and the three islands.**

Component two of the proposed project focuses on the generation of comprehensive and reliable information on the impact of the tourism sector on the biodiversity of the Archipelago for supporting management decisions and to ensure its proper diffusion and dissemination with policy makers, authorities and the general public; and using this information to undertake management actions to reduce the threats caused by tourism on key ecosystems and species. This is the backbone for maintaining biodiversity sensitive to tourism and for sustaining the Archipelago’s tourism industry, which relies on the beaches, coral reefs, seagrass beds and tropical dry forest. Under this component, a process will be carried out to identify three key species that are highly impacted by tourism-related activities, for which appropriate monitoring strategies should be generated in order to concretely evaluate the level of impact, and to inform development and implementation of appropriate measures for their conservation. The project will place special emphasis on the long-term generation of information on the status of key ecosystems (mangroves, coral and sandy beaches) and population trends of flagship marine species that are negatively impacted by tourism in project areas.

### ***Outcome 2.1. Reliable information about tourism impacts on key biodiversity in MPA, PAs and three islands is used by decision makers to respond to environmental threats.***

**Output 2.1.1:** Training, technical assistance and operational support for development and implementation of a tourism impact monitoring program on 3 threatened ecosystems (mangroves, corals and sandy beaches).

Component 2 will strengthen conservation and management information gathering across 3 strategic ecosystems threatened by tourism: a) seagrasses and; b) coral reefs, mainly related to activities such as diving and snorkeling and c) mangroves, which are included within the Old Point Regional Park, which corresponds to the most extensive system of bordering mangroves in the San Andrés Archipelago, located in Hooker and Haynes Bays, on the eastern side of the island,

where four species of mangroves, mussels, crabs, iguanas, lizards and endemic and migratory birds predominate.

**Output 2.1.2:** Training, technical assistance and operational support for development and implementation of a tourism impact monitoring program for three (3) species most sensitive to tourism.

This output will strengthen conservation, management and data collection for 3 strategic species threatened by tourism. It is foreseen that this activity will be carried out for rays, sea urchins and parrot fish. However, this decision may vary according to the consultation conducted during the design phase of the project.

***Outcome 2.2. Improved capacity of CORALINA and local authorities to effectively manage MPA and PAs and mitigate tourism impacts on key species and ecosystems (corals, seagrasses, sandy beaches and mangroves).***

With this component, work will be done to strengthen the institutional layers of CORALINA and other component entities with a view to improving their capacity to respond to, manage and control the natural resources associated with tourism.

**Output 2.2.1:** Training and technical assistance to CORALINA to develop and implement emergency management measures for key species and ecosystems impacted by tourism in the MPA, PAs and three islands.

CORALINA's response capacity will be improved in order to take measures and resolutions to guarantee the sustainability of key ecosystems and species. These measures will be based on the results of the monitoring program (developed under 2.1.1 and 2.1.2) . This will be achieved through the expedition of legal acts and resolutions (such as bans and restrictions for the boats, amongst others) that take into account the information of the monitoring program. The implementation of the response measures (obtained as a result of the monitoring of the impact of tourism) will be jointly done with the tour operators, who will have to guarantee that the activities they offer - and their guests behaviors - respect the restrictions and are in accordance with the best environmental practices.

**Output 2.2.2:** Training and operational support to CORALINA, SAI and DIMAR authorities (including basic equipment, maintenance, and field supplies) for improved management (including control and surveillance) of key threatened ecosystems and species.

Lastly, in order to guarantee the effective implementation of the POMIUAC and its sustainable tourism component, a strengthening of control and surveillance is proposed to lower the negative impacts on biodiversity. In addition, together with the competent authorities, during the PPG phase, the acquisition of equipment needed to carry out effective control and surveillance of tourism activities will be prioritized.

**Component 3: Biodiversity mainstreaming in innovative coastal and marine local tourism development in the MPA, PAs and three islands.**

Component 3 of the project aims at engaging with the small-scale private sector of the Islands - operators of tourist activities- to strengthen and mainstream biodiversity conservation approaches into existing local tourism initiatives. It will include the development of a strategy to integrate and preserve biodiversity friendly culturally-rich community-based tourism, as well as improving local

utilities, services and infrastructures related to tourism. Moreover, it will include final selection of pre identified initiatives by CORALINA, and the development of marketing plans and business models, aiming at giving the initiatives the basis for their sustainability. The component will be aligned with the Ministry of Culture's "Orange Economy<sup>[1]</sup>" strategy and with the Ministry of the Environment's "Green Ventures" initiative.

Additionally, the component 3 will promote the alignment of the business models with the conservation actions of the ecosystems and species management plans, in order to complement the resources and actions directed by the competent authorities and thus promote a greater conservation effort in the project's targeted areas.

Finally, this component will focus on the generation and implementation of a communication strategy aimed at raising the awareness of the tourism sector actors - both public and private - in order to generate awareness of the value of the biodiversity and ecosystem services present in the area, and of the actions that each of the stakeholders can take to contribute to the protection of those natural assets.

Private sector engagement in this component will be essential, since the actions set out in each of the outputs will be carried out in a participatory manner. Likewise, the initiatives selected must contribute in kind to achieve the project results. This contribution will be determined during the PPG phase.

***Outcome 3.1: Biodiversity conservation sustainably mainstreamed into existing local tourism initiatives.***

This component is aligned with the national government's priorities in terms of consolidating green businesses that promote both conservation and the generation of economic alternatives for communities. During the PPG at least five of the 49 green businesses previously identified by CORALINA will be selected to be strengthened and supported. This process will be conducted in a participatory manner.

**Output 3.1.1** Participatory selection of at least 5 local tourism initiatives from an existing portfolio with potential to mainstream biodiversity and development of their action plans.

Under this output, a validated portfolio of green businesses in the three islands that have the potential both to ensure the conservation of natural resources and to propose differential tourism will be consolidated. Based on this, at least five (5) local initiatives will be selected according to their financial management capacity, social capital, leadership, risk assessment, record of information about their activity, innovation of products offered based on environmental and cultural components, and their willingness to be transformed towards a biodiversity friendly business model. Each initiative will be supported financially and technically, according to an action plan developed together with the environmental authority and local stakeholders.

**Output 3.1.2** Technical assistance and key investments (equipment and materials) for supporting implementation of action plans (prepared under 3.1.1.).

Based on the action plans there will be an intervention in the selected initiatives regarding their tourist offer conditions in order to strengthen and transform them towards a more biodiversity friendly business model. The capacity of the operators to provide ecotourism services will also be strengthened in order to provide the best possible attention to tourists.

### **Output 3.1.3** Marketing plans for the selected tourism initiatives.

Marketing plans will be prepared for each initiative to offer biodiversity friendly tourism services to the public or tourists interested in investing in recreational activities that contribute to the sustainability of natural resources while enhancing cultural approaches.

**Output 3.1.4** Business models for the selected local tourism initiatives developed and implemented.

For each of the selected biodiversity friendly and culturally-rich local tourism initiatives, a business model will be developed, with the purpose of creating a high-level plan for a profitable operation of their eco-friendly activities in the Archipelago's tourism market. For each initiative, the aim is to identify the products or services the business will sell, select the target market and anticipate their expenses to accomplish their business goals.

The project will not create new initiatives nor compete with large-scale massive tourist operators. On the contrary, the project will strengthen and transform an innovative niche, existing local tourism activities that want to pursue a differential market and be transformed into biodiversity friendly businesses.

**Output. 3.1.5** Awareness campaign implemented to improve tourist behavior in regard to the importance of biodiversity and the need for responsible tourism.

Finally, the actions will be complemented with the design and implementation of a communications strategy aimed at the authorities and local stakeholders (inhabitants, operators, tourists, among others) that socializes the importance of the environmental goods and services of the island and the protected areas, as well as the actions that each of the different actors can contribute to the sustainability of the resources.

## **Component 4:** Monitoring and Evaluation, awareness raising and knowledge management

### ***Outcome 4.1 Monitoring and evaluation plan finalized with on-time data collection, reflection and reporting to aid in results-based decision making and adaptive management***

Project monitoring and evaluation will be conducted in accordance with procedures established by the WWF GEF Agency. This is guided by the WWF Program and Project Management Standards, which follows the Open Standards for Conservation, endorsed by major international NGOs, including Conservation International and WWF, and which lends consistency to planning, implementing, monitoring and reporting effective conservation projects and programs worldwide. The monitoring plan is designed to help the project team plan, execute, monitor and report progress towards achieving objectives and outcomes in a consistent and routine manner.

Results indicators will be selected and clearly defined in project development to enable uniform data collection and analysis. The frequency and schedule of data collection will be defined for the project, as well as the roles and responsibilities of project team members. The project's M&E plan will be presented at the project inception workshop, including a review of indicators, means of verification, and the full definition of project staff M&E responsibilities.

Networking tools and communications products will be applied to facilitate the general public's awareness regarding the importance of the Seaflower Biosphere Reserve and the actions needed to protect it.

**Output 4.1.1** Training of PMU and field staff on data collection and reporting to track and analyze indicators of results framework and workplan

**Output 4.1.2** Annual reflection meeting to track progress against work plan and results framework indicator targets for effective adaptive management

**Output 4.1.3** Project M&E plan implemented and reports — including project progress reports, results framework, midterm evaluation and terminal evaluations

#### **4. Alignment with GEF focal areas**

*BD 1-1 Mainstream biodiversity across sectors as well as landscapes and seascapes through biodiversity mainstreaming in key sectors.*

*BD 2.7 Address direct drivers to protect habitats and species and Improve financial sustainability, effective management, and ecosystem coverage of the global protected area estate*

#### **Component 1:**

BD 1-1: Institutional capacities will be strengthened to mainstream biodiversity as a determinant in tourism management, in the context of the POMIUAC as the legal framework for the spatial planning in the coastal and marine territory. Similarly, through the strengthening of coordination bodies by the competent management authorities, it will be ensured that biodiversity is present as a determining factor in the planning of activities and use of resources.

BD 2-7: Capacity of competent authorities will be strengthened to ensure that appropriate environmental management measures (such as bans, restricted areas, limitations on number of tourists) are designed based on accurate scientific information and implemented to respond to tourism impacts that directly affect the health of species and ecosystems to improve those conditions in the project areas. The project will also address direct drivers by ensuring that biodiversity conservation is mainstreamed into the design and development of green-gray infrastructure, to also deliver climate change resilience and adaptation benefits.

#### **Component 2:**

BD 1-1: This component focuses on strategic ecosystem and species monitoring actions as tools for measuring the impact of tourism on biodiversity as well as for decision making. This project will generate - for the first time in the Archipelago - indicators to measure the impact that tourism has on key species and priority ecosystems to mainstream biodiversity.

BD 2-7: The project will ensure that small-scale local tourism management measures taken adequately respond to environmental criteria and determinants that will result from the monitoring program, and according to the specific conditions of the species and ecosystems. In this way, biodiversity of the protected areas, which underpin the region's tourism, will have enhanced protection. This example can be amplified beyond the project life to large-scale tourism operators.

### **Component 3:**

BD 1-1: This component aims to ensure biodiversity is mainstreamed into innovative culturally-rich local community-based tourism initiatives to protect natural resources and traditions. These initiatives will be strengthened and consolidated to generate a tourism portfolio that includes sustainability criteria as well as investments that allow operators to offer a differential quality service.

BD 2-7: The inclusion of green and traditional local cultural approaches in the tourism portfolio, in addition to the promotion of the initiatives' business models' alignment with conservation actions of the ecosystems and species' management plans will allow for more adequate management of ecosystem services related to this sector.

**5. Incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEFTF and co-financing?**

Considering the different stakeholders related to the tourism sector in the Archipelago, the project will incorporate an inter-sectoral approach, based on the involvement of local community, government authorities and the private sector, in order to generate an updated institutional framework with clearly defined environmental criteria, with the objective of generating benefits in the management and conservation of the islands' biodiversity. Under this context, the project will support the creation of an optimal scenario for inter-institutional coordination, articulating key assessments for biodiversity management associated to the tourism sector using environmental sustainability inputs, and also the generation of reliable information by monitoring the impact of this activity on key ecosystems and priority species. Additionally, because the local community of the Archipelago is an ethnic group recognized by the national legislation of Colombia, actions will be focused on the strengthening of local tourism through the recognition and support of culturally-rich innovative and environmentally friendly local initiatives.

**Table 5. Proposed Alternative and Global Environmental Benefits**

Baseline	Proposed Alternative	Global Environmental Benefits
<b>Planning and Institutional Framework</b>		
<p>POMIUAC, as a territorial environmental planning instrument, is currently being formulated by the environmental authority, CORALINA, in accordance with legislation.</p> <p>There is an absence of an effective inter-institutional governance model between the entities charged with regulating tourism and those in charge of protecting and conserving biodiversity and ecosystem services in the Seaflower Biosphere Reserve, creating a barrier to the adequate mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation in the tourism sector.</p> <p>The tourism sector in the archipelago has an outdated plan for the implementation of actions from the local</p>	<p>By strengthening inter-institutional coordination and capacities, an intersectoral and advisory group will be created to review and propose measures that benefit biodiversity and sustainable tourism with environmental criteria, to be formalized through administrative acts (resolutions).</p> <p>In order to appropriately incorporate environmental criteria in the tourism activity related to the management instruments, a tourism plan will be updated in the context of POMIUAC to add intersectoral measures to environmental planning.</p>	<p>An effective inter-institutional coordination will allow an appropriate management and conservation of the biodiversity and conservation objects of the protected areas of the Archipelago, contributing to national and international goals.</p> <p>The sustainable tourism plan to be included in POMIUAC will provide measures and guidelines to protect globally significant biodiversity from the impacts of tourism activities.</p> <p>Increased efficacy in the management and spatial</p>

<p>government (Tourism Secretariat), lacking clear environmental considerations, for the management of tourism for the benefit of biodiversity.</p> <p>Previous assessments of the biodiversity associated with the islands of San Andres, Old Providence and Santa Catalina and protected areas, provides insights and inputs to support the importance of managing tourism activities in key ecosystems.</p> <p>The grey infrastructure built on the islands (mainly on the San Andres) did not consider environmental criteria and there are technical limitations in developing and implementing biodiversity friendly infrastructure projects.</p>	<p>With the project's support, an assessment of the carrying capacity and spatial analysis associated with the use of natural areas by the tourism sector and the appropriate limits of number of visitors, shall indicate how to decrease the impact on strategic ecosystems.</p> <p>The project will help generate capacity for local authorities in green-gray biodiversity friendly infrastructure solutions and to incorporate in the legal and planning framework formal considerations for the implementation and sustainability of this kind of infrastructure.</p>	<p>planning of tourism activities, wil improve the provision and sustainability of ecosystem services in islands and their protected areas.</p> <p>Maximize ecosystem benefits, coastal protection, climate change adaptation through disaster risk reduction, water security or improving water quality by filtering pollutants.</p>
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**Technical assistance and monitoring**

<p>National monitoring programs, as well as special programs on coastal marine ecosystems (corals, seagrasses and mangroves), are being implemented by CORALINA for the most part in sampling areas or stations outside of tourism areas.</p> <p>In terms of species, there is a baseline for monitoring at the level of fish and marine invertebrate communities. However, there is no monitoring of the impacts on species which interact directly with tourists.</p>	<p>The project will implement monitoring of strategic ecosystems and species in tourist areas to determine the impact of this activity; and implement emergency measures to respond to threats and reduce impacts on key ecosystems and species.</p> <p>The monitoring of strategic ecosystems will continue to focus on mangroves, sea grasses and corals. In addition, the monitoring of beaches -which are outside of the protected areas- will be included in order to reduce the impact of tourism on these areas.</p>	<p>Improved information on the impact of the tourism sector on key ecosystems and species will guide the design and implementation of more efficient management and mitigation measures, strengthening biodiversity conservation efforts in key ecosystems.</p> <p>Increased management effectiveness of protected areas from Archipelago, enhancing the recovery and conservation of key ecosystems and maintaining populations of priority species.</p>
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<p>As part of the implementation of management plans for the protected areas from the archipelago, only assessments of management effectiveness (METT) have been carried out for the Seaflower MPA, and these are now outdated. Also, regional protected areas have not had any such assessments and there is a lack of a reference value for their effectiveness.</p>	<p>For the first time in the islands, there will be certainty about the impact of tourism on the determined species, and ecosystems and emergency measures can be taken according to the information collected.</p> <p>Likewise, emergency measures to protect certain species will be formally adopted by the competent authorities.</p> <p>Led by CORALINA, an updated baseline will be generated on management effectiveness assessment for all the protected areas from the archipelago managed by this authority, allowing to measure the effective implementation by the project actions in benefit of the protected areas and their conservation objects.</p>	
<p><b>Local tourism development</b></p>		
<p>Local tourism facilities and operators in the islands of San Andres, Old Providence and Santa Catalina are varied. There is a high number of local lodgings and informality in the provision of services to visitors. This tourist model has caused a competitive crisis in the tourism sector where only few examples of successful sustainable community tourism projects are seen.</p>	<p>The project will support the transformation and consolidation of community-based tourism alternatives that meet biodiversity conservation criteria and are willing to enhance cultural and traditional values.</p>	<p>Innovative tourism products contribute to biodiversity conservation, maintenance of ecosystem services and improvement of communities' livelihoods.</p>
<p>CORALINA, through the Green Business Window created by legal act (resolution 055 of 2019), has</p>	<p>The project will strengthen the initiatives with more potential according to the criteria described previously, creating</p>	

<p>been promoting, encouraging and accompanying Green Business in the islands. 49 green businesses have been accompanied and only two have received advanced ratings, so it is necessary to strengthen the capacities for their sustainability.</p> <p>Most visitors who access the tourist services available in the Archipelago are not aware about the natural richness and importance of the ecosystem services provided by the biodiversity of this region of the country. This implies a low commitment and understanding of the significance of taking actions that contribute to the conservation of key ecosystems and species.</p>	<p>plans and business models for their sustainability and marketability.</p> <p>A communication strategy will be developed and implemented under the leadership of local authorities, in order to increase the level of awareness and commitment of the visitors, contributing through conservation actions hand in hand with the local communities.</p>	
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**6. Global Environmental Benefits**

A baseline assessment of the conservation status of each priority ecosystem listed below will be developed during PPG phase, and will inform the specific management measures, the indicators to be used in monitoring these ecosystems and the priority species selected during project implementation. Based on the baseline assessment, the conservation outcomes to be achieved during project implementation will be designed.

Considering the above, the condition from each ecosystem will be improved according to its particularities:

- a. **Corals:** For the last few decades there has been a degradation of the coral reefs in the archipelago, mainly in terms of loss of structure and cover. The project will recover degraded areas to increase coral cover (percentage increase), improving a favorable substrate for coral reef ecosystem community development, enhancing overall coral reef ecosystem health.
- b. **Seagrasses:** In terms of ecological integrity, the seagrass’s ecosystem in San Andres and Providencia is still in good condition. However, mechanical damage and signs of pollution have been evidenced in some locations. The project will identify areas with homogeneous extensions which represent the largest area of at least one dominant species to reduce

pressures from tourism in these areas and ensure optimal levels of density and extension of seagrasses.

- c. **Sandy beaches:** Urban and tourism development has considerably increased the demand on the coastal area, and the pressures over this ecosystem. The project will increase protection of sandy beaches through environmental management measures, especially through the promotion of appropriate waste management following legal standards and recycling processes, as well as implementing educational campaigns aimed at informing the general public on natural capital values, conservation activities, and good behavioral code.
- d. **Mangroves:** Even if this ecosystem still presents a good structural condition in the Archipelago, mangroves have been cleared out and are under serious threat. The project will increase protection status of mangroves threatened by expansion of unplanned tourism-related infrastructure development by supporting spatial planning regulations which mainstream biodiversity conservation and specific management and conservation measures.

The Archipelago's biodiversity is mainly found in ecosystems prioritized by the project (coral reefs, sandy beaches, mangroves, and seagrasses), which host species that are (to a greater or lesser extent) exposed to tourism activities. although CORALINA has identified direct pressures (from tours that offer direct interactions) to some species such as rays, sea urchins, starfish and sea cucumbers, no scientific study has been carried out to provide evidence of these impacts on species related to tourism. Through the project, studies will be carried out to identify the species most affected by tourism, increase their population densities and their protection. Achieving a better condition of the ecosystems will guarantee a natural environment to support key species (mainly fish) that are a vital source of food security for the local population.

The proposed project will contribute to four GEF Core Indicators: i) Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use, ii) Marine protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use, iii) Area of landscapes under improved practices (excluding protected areas), and iv) Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment.

*Core indicator 1: **Terrestrial protected areas** created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use (Hectares) - 108 has.*

*Core indicator 2: **Marine protected areas** created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use (Hectares) - 11,817 has.*

The proposed project will improve management of approximately 11,925 hectares of protected areas, including both terrestrial areas of the regional Protected Areas of Jhonny Cay, Old Point and The Peak, and marine protected areas including the Seaflower MPA and the marine areas of Jhonny Cay and Old Point. Management effectiveness for PA and MPA will be improved through the promotion of inter-institutional coordination and strengthening of capacities of the responsible authorities to improve planning processes - through the chapter on sustainable tourism as part of POMIUAC - to generate tools to increase the control and monitoring of measures and, in turn, increase the response capacity from the authorities in taking decisions and regulations to conserve key ecosystems and species which are priorities in the face of tourism impact.

Since the creation of the MPA, and under two GEF projects, the Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) have been carried out in 2009 (with a score of 33%) and in 2013 (with a score of 55.6%) providing an important baseline on the status of the implementation of the management plan in this national protected area. The METT assessment has not been updated since then in the MPA. As for the other three terrestrial (3) regional protected areas, the management plans for these areas have been generated and implemented, but no evaluation of their management effectiveness has been conducted to date. During the PPG phase, the METT assessment will be carried out in the MPA and 3 terrestrial PAs in order to provide a baseline score and a target increase in each PA due to project interventions.

*Core Indicator 4: Area of landscapes under improved practices (excluding protected areas) (Hectares) - 4,363 has.*

The project will also carry out interventions in key ecosystems, especially mangroves and sandy beaches (hectares to be determined during project development), of the archipelago of San Andres, Providencia and Santa Catalina Islands.

These actions will be implemented in the key and prioritized ecosystems and species within protected areas and also the non-protected area of the three islands. As such, the same activities will be applied in both PA and non-PA areas, thus contributing to Core Indicator 1 and 2, as well as the Core Indicator 4.

Under component two, actions to monitor the impact of tourism will also be carried out in protected areas and three islands. In this way, it will be possible to have real certainty of the **impact of the tourism** sector on biodiversity in accordance with the zoning of the area established by the environmental authority.

Monitoring is a central activity for the effectiveness of the areas since it will allow the observation of changes in the trend of the state of the key ecosystems and priority species impacted by tourism. This in turn will allow for the generation of a solid and continuous base of information over time that will allow for the measurement of the effectiveness of actions aimed at the impact of tourism on biodiversity.

*Core indicator 11: Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of the GEF investment*

Number of beneficiaries to be determined during the project design phase, and will include persons in the coordination groups, those developing the sustainable tourism plan, government staff trained, carrying out law enforcement, private sector tour operators, *inter alia*.

Through component number 3 of the project, the project will work directly with at least 5 local initiatives to strengthen their capacities in terms of tourism supply integrating biodiversity conservation and enhancing cultural and traditional values. Likewise, this component will promote the increase of income from these initiatives and ensure the project produces direct beneficiaries and will develop action plans and business models to support the implementation of the management measures.

This component is vital for the management of protected and unprotected areas, working directly with the users of ecosystem services and modifying their behavior, which in turn reduces their impact and to generate economic alternatives for communities that currently depend on resources for their livelihoods.

As mentioned above, the actions of all components will be carried out for prioritized ecosystems and species in terrestrial and marine protected areas and in unprotected areas.

## **7. Innovation, Sustainability and Potential for Scaling Up**

### Innovation

In 2012 the International Court of Justice sanctioned against Colombia concerning title to territory and maritime delimitation with Nicaragua. After eight years of that decision and following Colombia's 2016 peace agreement, the economy of the Archipelago is in crisis. Tourism has boomed and a new set of threats to nature must be addressed. Fishing activity decreased dramatically and the exponential demand for resources due to the increase of visitors to the Islands, had led to extracting new wildlife species.

There is an increased need to control the tourism activity, to reduce negative impacts on biodiversity, and maintain the ecosystem services, while at the same time promoting economic incomes for local inhabitants that are directly affected by the above situation.

The project injects the best available science, strategies and tools firmly into the center of the tourism planning process in one of the region's most biologically diverse sites and popular tourist destinations. For example, by combining conservation of ecosystems with selective use of conventional engineering approaches, the project will promote biodiversity friendly green-gray innovative solutions for small-scale tourist lodges that are a threat to water quality of key ecosystems. Solutions will be derived from the indicators defined by biological monitoring protocols to assess negative impacts on biodiversity by the actual tourism activity in the Archipelago.

Additionally, the project will draw on the experiences of other innovative and noteworthy projects as well as include market analysis to improve existing tourism products designed to have a smaller ecological footprint, and greater economic impact while creating and supporting finance mechanisms for protecting biodiversity.

### Sustainability

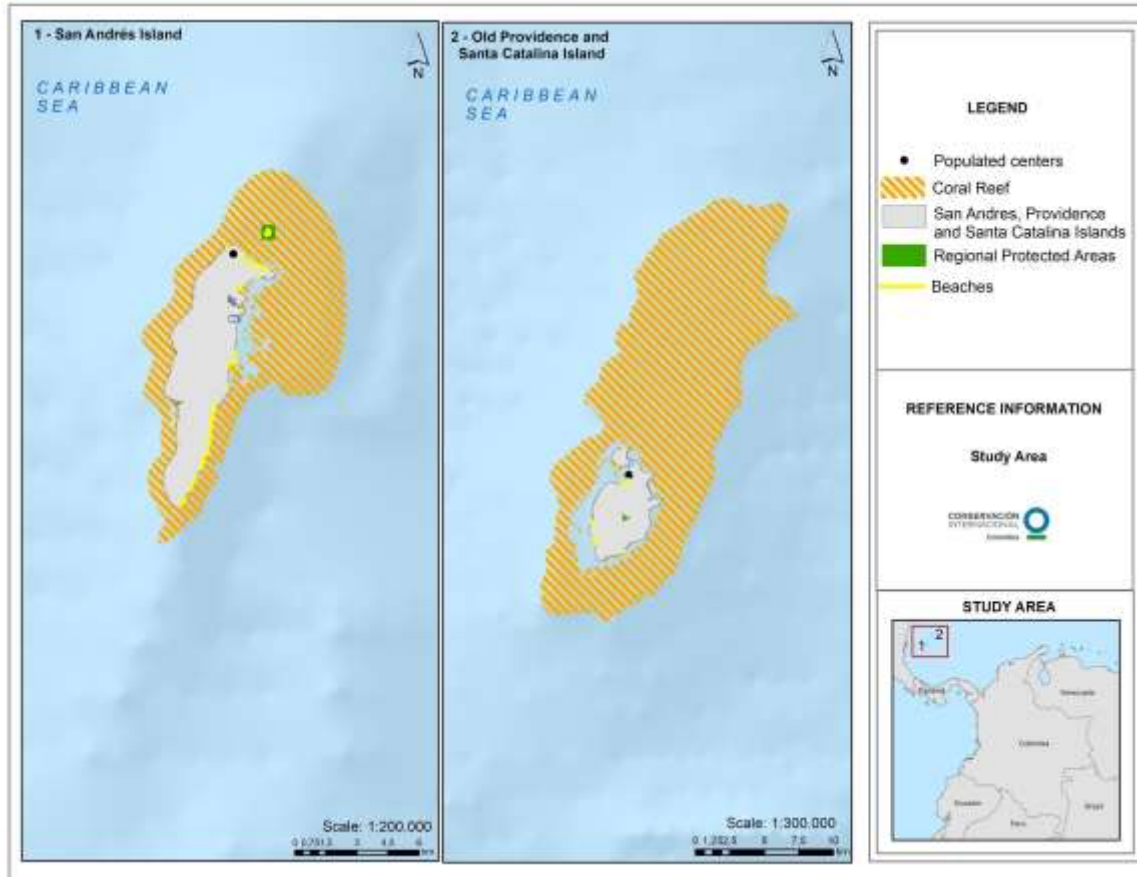
Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation into the Archipelago's tourism industry and planning process is a game changer when compared to the business as usual scenario. The project will create important economic and educational linkages between tourists, operators, hotels and decision makers with respect to biodiversity and priority ecosystems. Additionally, by strengthening governance and policy related to management plans for biodiversity affected by tourism activities, and working directly with local government, the project seeks to ensure the long-term support of local enforcement and government agencies that guarantee the continuity of proper tourism practices. The project will also focus on the small-scale private sector tourism operators to formalize their business practices, become compliant with environmental regulations and reduce pressure and negative impacts on key natural ecosystems.

### Potential for Scaling up

With the collaboration of influential stakeholders in local and national politics, the project will work on the construction of innovative strategies that seek to mainstream biodiversity through the

strengthening of local small-scale tourism in a region that is quite popular among tourists in Colombia. As such, it is expected to become a model to be expanded within the Islands and similar coastal areas in Colombia, to reduce pressures on key species and ecosystems exerted by the mass Sun and Beach tourism model.

**1b. Project Map and Coordinates. Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.**



**2. STAKEHOLDERS. SELECT THE STAKEHOLDERS THAT HAVE PARTICIPATED IN CONSULTATIONS DURING THE PROJECT IDENTIFICATION PHASE:**

[OBJ]

A group of stakeholders was consulted during the project identification phase through virtual and in person meetings/workshops carried out in the San Andres island and in Bogotá. CI Colombia, CORALINA, the Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development (MADS), the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism (MINCIT), the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MADR), were all part of the consultation process. The consultations have been mainly through two in-person meetings (March 2018 and February 2019) with the participation of officials from the entities mentioned. In these meetings, the priority thematic areas to be addressed were identified and validated in terms of the problems presented by the islands with tourism and biodiversity. Representatives of local NGOs, fishermen, tourism operators, tourists, academics, scientists, former government officials, ecotourism experts and members of the native Raizal community were also part of the identification phase.

As a result of the consultations and validation with the key actors, it has been possible to identify the consensus among all stakeholders on the problems surrounding tourism on the islands, with

the largest dimension on the island of San Andres. The authorities confirmed that biodiversity is the fundamental basis for maintaining the economic activity of tourism, considering the attractions of this region of the country. On the other hand, it was identified that there is no updated institutional framework for the articulation of these two issues (tourism and biodiversity), which would allow an effective and coordinated management among the local entities.

During the Project Preparation and Project Implementation phases, the different stakeholders will be continuously consulted for feedback and recommendations. The stakeholders and their respective roles and functions in the project will be confirmed and established during the project development phase.

The list of actors with an important role in the preparation of the project, including a brief explanation of their functions as an institution or organization and the main role they would assume in the project, is presented in Table 6.

**Table 6.** List of the main stakeholders with an important role in the project preparation.

Key Stakeholders	Role	Role in project preparation
<p><b>Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MADS)</b></p> <p><b>Directorate of Marine Affairs, Coastal and Aquatic Resources (DAMCRA)</b></p> <p><b>Office of Green and Sustainable Businesses</b></p> <p><b>International Affairs Office (OAI)</b></p>	<p>Government authority that coordinates national and international development projects for Colombia</p> <p>DAMCRA is the ministry section in charge of public policy development and marine-coastal management</p> <p>DCCGR leads climate change adaptation policy in Colombia</p> <p>OAI coordinates bilateral and multilateral meetings, to guarantee the inclusion of the sector's priority issues in international agendas and ensure the support of the international community.</p>	<p>Endorsement of the project; Coordination of the planning, execution and monitoring of the GEF projects in Colombia.</p> <p>Provides guidelines at the policy level for the adequate management of the ecosystem services offered by Colombia's marine-coastal zones and the respective protection of the associated marine biodiversity.</p> <p>Develops studies and economic and financial instruments that promote behavior changes of the actors involved in the use of natural resources and that contribute to the financing of environmental management. It also supports the consolidation of green businesses in nature tourism, through technical support and transfer of policies and methodologies.</p> <p>This ministry will also provide technical input in project preparation for its alignment with the national policies.</p>

<p><b>Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism (MINCIT)</b></p> <p><b>Vice-ministry of Tourism</b></p>	<p>MINCIT supports business activity, goods, services and technology, as well as tourism management in the different regions of Colombia.</p> <p>The Vice-ministry of Tourism assists the formulation and evaluation of national tourism policy and the plans and programs derived from it.</p>	<p>MINCIT will support the formulation, management and coordination of policies related to the development of sustainable tourism practices and other activities associated with the economic and social progress of the region.</p> <p>The MINCIT will ensure that the project will be executed in accordance with the national policies through the articulated work with the Tourism Secretary.</p>
<p><b>Ministry of Transport</b></p> <p><b>Special Administrative Unit of Civil Aeronautics (AEROCIVIL)</b></p>	<p>MinTransport is the authority of the National Government in charge of formulating and adopting the policies, plans, projects and economic regulation of transport, transit and infrastructure.</p> <p>AEROCIVIL is in charge of control and surveillance of the aeronautical activities in Colombia</p>	<p>MINTransport and AEROCIVIL will be strategic allies if the project identifies the need to regulate the entrances of tourists into the Islands.</p>
<p><b>Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MADR)</b></p> <p><b>AUNAP (National Authority for Aquaculture and Fisheries)</b></p>	<p>MADR guides and manages the formulation of the plans, programs and projects required for the development of the agricultural, fishing and rural areas.</p> <p>AUNAP is responsible for implementing national fisheries and aquaculture policy and promotes research on fisheries resources and aquaculture production systems. In this case, considering the role of the Secretariat of Agriculture and Fisheries of the Archipelago's Government, the AUNAP has limited functions in the project's area.</p>	<p>MADR will support the formulation and adoption of the policies, plans or programs to ensure that the project is developed under policies that promote competitive, equitable and sustainable development of agricultural, forestry, fisheries and rural development processes.</p> <p>The participation of the AUNAP will be limited in accordance with the legal competencies of the Secretariat of Agriculture and Fisheries of the Archipelago.</p>

<p><b>Enforcement Agencies</b></p> <p><b>Ministry of Defense</b></p> <p><b>Army, National Navy - DIMAR (General Maritime Directorate)</b></p> <p><b>Special units of the National Police of Tourism and Environment:</b></p>	<p>The Ministry of defense is the National authority in charge of formulating, managing and directing public security and defense policies, as well as leading the strategic direction of the Public Force and providing the necessary means for their fulfillment.</p> <p>DIMAR is the Colombian Maritime Authority responsible for implementing the marine policy and control of marine activities in the country.</p> <p>The Navy, Air Force and national police are the competent entities for the control and surveillance of national sovereignty</p> <p>The Environmental police unit in charge of control and surveillance of the fulfillment of regulation regarding these two subjects.</p>	<p>These enforcement agencies are key in the appropriate development of the management plan. For this reason, the inputs generated by these agencies will be widely taken into account.</p> <p>Additionally, DIMAR will have a strategic role during the project, because of its functions regarding marine spatial planning and the regulation of the use of public goods in the coastal region as well as in aspects regarding marine transportation.</p> <p>The special units of the Police are key in order to ensure that the management measures implemented by project are subject to compliance.</p>
<p><b>National Natural Parks of Colombia (PNN)</b></p> <p><b>SINAP (National System of Protected Areas)</b></p>	<p>PNN is a governmental body that administers all the 58 national protected areas, and it is the official coordinator of SINAP</p> <p>SINAP coordinates actions between all protected natural national reserves.</p>	<p>National authority to manage national parks of Colombia. They are key in the implementation of field conservation action, national and local coastal ecosystems strategy and policy strengthening. PNN will especially lead the development of the management plan or activities carried out in the Old Providence McBean Lagoon National Natural Park, the only national protected in the Colombian oceanic Caribbean, located in the Island of Providence and Santa Catalina.</p>

<p><b>Government of the Archipelago of San Andres, Old Providence and Santa Catalina</b></p> <p><b>Secretariat of Agriculture and Fisheries</b></p> <p><b>Secretariat of Tourism</b></p> <p><b>Secretariat of Planning and Physical Infrastructure</b></p> <p><b>Secretariat of Public Services and Environment</b></p> <p><b>Secretariat of Social Development - Departmental office for women's and gender affairs</b></p>	<p>It is the authority of the local government. Through Law 47 of 1993, the Colombian Congress provided to the Archipelago's Government, the autonomy to manage its own affairs with the right to govern itself according to its geographical, cultural, social and economic conditions</p> <p>The secretariats perform an important function in the administration, coordination, control and regulation of local plans and tourism, agricultural and environmental activities that contribute to the integral sustainable economic, social, territorial and cultural development of the Archipelago.</p> <p>The departmental office for women's and gender affairs coordinates the design, implementation and monitoring of the departmental public policy on women.</p>	<p>As a co-financing entity of the project and principal authority of the area, it will be present in all stakeholders' workshops during the project preparation and will support local strategy development and implementation.</p> <p>The project's activities will be accompanied by members of the Secretariat of Agriculture and Fisheries, Secretariat of Planning and Physical Infrastructure, Secretariat of Planning and Physical Infrastructure and Secretariat of Public Services and Environment.</p> <p>Additionally, the departmental office for women's and gender affairs will support the coordination of legal, technical, financial and administrative issues that guarantee the real and effective application of women's rights in the project design.</p>
<p><b>Mayor's Office of Providencia and Santa Catalina</b></p>	<p>It carries out the administrative management, and executes the activities of planning, organization and control of economic and social programs for the municipality of Providencia and Santa Catalina.</p>	<p>As a principal authority of the municipality, it will be present during the project preparation and will support in the Providencia and Santa Catalina strategy development and the implementation plan.</p>
<p><b>CORALINA (Corporation for the Sustainable Development of the Archipelago of San Andrés, Providencia and Santa Catalina)</b></p>	<p>CORALINA is the Corporation for the Sustainable Development of the Archipelago of San Andrés, Providencia and Santa Catalina. Main administrative authority of the Seaflower Biosphere Reserve MPA</p>	<p>As a co-financing and Co-executing entity, CORALINA will be in charge of the implementation of some activities of the project, and as the environmental authority will guarantee the project will fulfill the environmental regulation and standards.</p>

<p><b>Universities and private/public Research Centers</b></p> <p><b>National University of Colombia (UNAL) – Caribe campus</b></p> <p><b>INVEMAR (Institute of Marine and Coastal Research)</b></p> <p><b>IDEAM (Institute of Hydrology, Meteorology and Environmental Studies)</b></p>	<p>Support research and community relations.</p> <p>UNAL – Caribe, is a public and national research university located in the Archipelago, and it has great influence on the development of environmental research within the region.</p> <p>INVEMAR – Scientific institution attached to MADS, that carries out researches in coastal, marine and oceanic ecosystems of national interest</p> <p>IDEAM - public institution of technical and scientific support, in charge of producing hydrological, meteorological and environmental information</p>	<p>Its main role in the project preparation is to apply basic and tested environmental research of renewable natural resources and the environment and coastal ecosystems as the coral reefs, mangroves and sandy beaches.</p>
<p><b>Local Communities</b></p> <p><b>Native Raizal Community</b></p>	<p>The Raizales are an ethnic community that has a strong cultural identity that differs from the rest of the Colombian population. They represent the 35 - 40% of the total Archipelago population.</p> <p>The Raizales community is recognized as one unit by the national government, however the main structure of this community is given by the populations living in their islands and sectors. There is a marked difference between the population from Providencia and Santa Catalina with respect to San Andres Island.</p> <p>Another element that affects the structure of the Raizal community is religion, with the majority of the population being Baptists, followed by Catholics and Adventists.</p>	<p>For the development of the PRODOC, workshops will be held with the participation of community leaders and representatives (including from the Native Raizal community), determining how the project might affect the community and incorporating their feedback into project design.</p> <p>Afterwards, all the activities that will be developed will have the active participation of the Native Raizal community and other local communities, considering their vital role in the conservation and tourism strategies.</p>
<p><b>Private Sector of Tourism</b></p>	<p>It is constituted as one of the main actors that intervene in the</p>	<p>The private sector will play a central role in the project</p>

<p><b>(e.g. Travel agencies guild, tourist transportation agencies, scuba diving centers)</b></p>	<p>management of the tourist resources, and therefore, it possesses an important economic and social role in the Archipelago.</p>	<p>preparation. Tourism operators and other businesses in the value chain are among the project's central stakeholders and they will actively participate in the stakeholder consultations and events for project design, during the PPG, to ensure the Project integrates their views and opinions. During project implementation, the private sector will participate in the Interinstitutional coordination group that will be created to advise and accompany the design and implementation of a new sustainable tourism plan.</p>
<p><b>Local and national NGOs</b> <b>Corales de Paz Foundation</b></p>	<p>Local non-government organizations dedicated to biodiversity conservation.</p> <p>Corales de Paz - NGO that promotes and encourages participatory conservation of goods and services provided by coral reefs</p>	<p>The main Local NGOs will be invited to stakeholder workshops during project preparation.</p> <p>Its participation as technical support in coral management and conservation will be of essence for this project.</p>

**3. Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment.**

In regard to gender, Colombia has experienced significant growth since 1981, when Law No. 51 was enacted, which approved the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against women<sup>2</sup>. The development of the country’s Constitution in 1991, also emphasized the principles of equality as a social, economic and cultural right.<sup>3</sup> Despite these positive changes, there are still challenges in reducing the gender wage gap for girls and women, which has changed little over the last 20 years. In order to reduce gender inequality, Colombia has developed a series of indicators to monitor the targets associated with Sustainable Development Goal 5, from the consolidation of targets to be met by 2030. These goals imply a great challenge for the Colombian State, as there is a considerable low score in each of the objective’s criteria<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Observatorio de asuntos de género. 2012. Evolución del marco jurídico internacional en violencia sexual contra la mujer. Alta Consejería Presidencial para la Equidad de la Mujer Available online at [http://www.equidadmujer.gov.co/oag/Documents/Evolucion\\_del\\_marco\\_juridico.pdf](http://www.equidadmujer.gov.co/oag/Documents/Evolucion_del_marco_juridico.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Garzón Fernández M. 2018. Equidad de género para las mujeres en Colombia. Universidad Católica de Colombia.

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In the case of the Raizal-island population (an ethnic group recognized by the Colombian legislation and especially by the political constitution of Colombia) of the Archipelago of San Andrés, Providencia and Santa Catalina, a similar situation is observed. A gender analysis done by the Colombian multidimensional poverty index (MPI)<sup>3</sup>, measured factors such as: i) household educational conditions (average illiteracy and schooling), (ii) conditions of children and young people (non-attendance and issues at school), (iii) work (unemployment and undocumented), (iv) health (health status and barriers to access services)<sup>5[OBJ]</sup>.

In order to reduce the gender equality gap on the San Andrés, Providencia and Santa Catalina islands, the Archipelago's development plans consider<sup>6,7</sup>: i) the formulation, implementation and evaluation of the Plan for Equal Opportunities for Gender Equity on the island territory, with emphasis on the prevention of violence against women; ii) actions aimed at promoting the protection of rights, participation, recognition and reduction of all forms of discrimination against women, iii) the promotion and training of young women in leadership, in the prevention of teenage pregnancy, and in social and political participation, among others. However, one of the most significant advances has been achieved through the creation of the Gender and Women's Observatory and the Women's Office on the island. These initiatives have made monitoring compliance with national and international laws related to women's equity possible, especially aid in understanding the gender gap between men and women<sup>8</sup>. Additionally, in accordance with the ordinance 013 of 2017<sup>9</sup>, this office is responsible for the inter institutional coordination of all plans and projects related to women and therefore will play a vital role in the development of the gender-based components of this project.

Actions undertaken by the Women's Office are complemented by the national public policy "Equity Pact for Women", implemented in the National Development Plan 2018-2022, which aims to reduce the monthly income gap between men and women, decrease the percentage of teenage pregnancies, increase the number of municipalities with inter-sectoral mechanisms to prevent and address violence against women, and increase the percentage of women in leadership positions in the Colombian state<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> Observatorio de asuntos de género. 2011. La participación política de las mujeres en Colombia: Avances, retos y análisis sobre la presencia y acceso de las mujeres a los espacios de decisión en el país. Alta Consejería Presidencial para la Equidad de la Mujer. Boletín 13. Available at: [http://www.equidadmujer.gov.co/oag/Documents/oag\\_boletin-13.pdf](http://www.equidadmujer.gov.co/oag/Documents/oag_boletin-13.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Sistema de Consulta de los Programas de los Planes de Desarrollo Departamentales de la Región Caribe. 2016. Política pública, participación y derechos para equidad de género. [online] Available at: <http://www.ocaribe.org/-/pdcaribe/equidad-de-genero>

<sup>7</sup> Secretaría de Planeación Municipal. 2016. Plan de desarrollo "+ POR LAS ISLAS" 2016-2019. Providencia y Santa Catalina Municipality.

<sup>8</sup> San Andrés Government. Decree 585 de 2018 – public policy action plan and the department's women's observatory.

<sup>9</sup> Article 2: The Departmental Office of Women and Gender Affairs will have the following functions: A. Give support in the design, elaboration and definition of the Departmental Development Plan, just as the policies, plans programs and departmental projects so women participation and gender perspective is included in them. B. Promote within the Department Archipelago the participation of women in politics, culture, family, work and social life according to the framework of international commitments acquired by Colombia. C. Establish controlling mechanisms over the effective application of the Law. D. Direct efforts to guarantee the free, equal and solidary access of women, according to their qualities, in the work and educational areas, social, political and economic safety. E. Support all different forms of association of women in the Department. F. Design strategies Department wise, oriented to the personal development of women. G. Promote all actions tending to eliminate violent and discrimination forms against women. H. Act as a coordination area of political policies for women in all the Department, including regional and national policies. I. Promote and implement policies, plans, programs and projects that tend to develop women creativity and qualities in scientific, technological, artistic and cultural areas. J. Promote and make studies and research in coordination with other national entities that allow the formulation of strategies for women integral care in the Department. K. Manage resources with national and international entities to be invested in plans, programs, and projects that seek to benefit women in the Department. L. Promote and make campaigns related to the promotion of women's rights consecrated in the Political Constitution.

Women play an important role in global tourism from both the market (or demand) side of the equation as well as the supply side or destination. According to studies such as *Peace is about much more than doves* (World Development), women represent a larger proportion of the overall global travel market (52 percent) and tend to play an important decision-making role in regard to where their families will travel for vacation. Additionally, according to the World Tourism Organization, the majority of international travelers are interested in seeing their tourism dollars spent in ways that contribute to greater social and gender equality. On the supply side, across global destinations, women are fundamental to the tourism value chain at all levels, however, they are over-represented across low-paying service sector jobs, such as hotel housekeepers, kitchen staff and lower-level clerical or tourism administration jobs. Better paying jobs, such as tour guides, drivers and higher-level administration and leadership jobs are largely male-dominated. During the project, the team will actively work to ensure women's participation in capacity development initiatives with the intention of increasing tourism-based opportunities for women as well as increase the amount of female owned tourism businesses.

Another negative impact of the international tourism industry is creating demand for and sustaining prostitution and child prostitution at the local level. This is less severe with high end eco-tourism than with conventional sun and sand beach tourism. Acknowledging this issue, the project will work to support the Government of Colombia's campaign to end child prostitution in the country.

Through the participation of the Women's office in the meetings and workshops, gender equality and women's empowerment will be integrated into the three project components. Specific emphasis will be placed on engaging women officials and decision makers regarding core governance issues. Additionally, participation of women and stakeholder involvement will be central in the development of a new model for sustainable tourism. The project will identify gaps in the information on gender and ways to reduce gender inequalities in public policies or programs that the project intends to improve or establish. The objective is to ensure equal gender representation during the decision-making processes as well as equal access to, use of, and control over natural resources. The project will also encourage men and women to participate in the project design, implementation and monitoring. A Gender Action Plan will be developed during project preparation which will identify gender inequalities and opportunities to mainstream gender in the project strategy. The GEF and WWF policies on gender equality will be applied throughout the development and implementation of the proposed project.

**4. Private sector engagement. Will there be private sector engagement in the project? (yes /no ). Please briefly explain the rationale behind your answer.**

YES. The private sector will play a central role in the project, specifically the tourism sector. Tourism operators and other businesses included in the tourism value chain are among the project's central stakeholders and participation is critical for the project's initial uptake as well as long-term sustainability.

**5. Risks. Indicate risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved or may be resulting**

**from project implementation, and, if possible, propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the project design (table format acceptable).**

Risks and critical assumptions include: lack of political will to forego short-term gains associated with the current tourism boom and rejecting, undermining or failing to incorporate project elements such as the carrying capacity assessment; resistance from key stakeholders, specifically tour operators, to depart from business as usual models and practices; extreme weather events; shocks to the global economy that negatively impact tourism and others. In the face of these risks, the project will take a proactive approach to align with national-level priorities, including President Duque’s Orange Economy Initiative and the Ministry of Environments Green Ventures Initiative, local officials and other opinion leaders that could be opposing this project. The project will aim to integrate its core components at the top of the political and business agenda, while also taking advantage of the project resources to make the case to tourists and the general public to adopt and embrace measures in favor of the Seaflower Biosphere Reserve.

The COVID-19 outbreak has severely disrupted economies globally, with negative impacts on public revenue, private sector income and local livelihoods. The tourism sector has been particularly affected and will continue to decline in the coming months, with consequences for direct and indirect tourism-related jobs. Although the decline in international travel and decreased numbers of tourists on the islands could positively impact the health of the ecosystems currently under threat from massive tourism, the Seaflower Archipelago has been marketed as a low-cost “sun and beach” tourism model, and could recover relatively quickly (especially at national level) and could continue to exert the same pressure to the environment. Also - in accordance with the national government - Colombia will apply “intelligent isolation” through which the country’s economy, including tourism activities, will be reopened gradually to protect the country’s health as well as its development in an articulated manner. In this context, the project strategy of mainstreaming biodiversity conservation in the tourism sector would continue to be relevant.

The project will closely monitor the situation of the COVID-19 and its consequences on the Archipelago socioeconomic and political system, in order to implement any adaptive management to the design process, to ensure an effective project strategy to deliver the Global Environmental Benefits.

Regarding social and environmental safeguards, the safeguards categorization and screening will be undertaken during project development once activities have been explicitly defined and a categorization in person mission has taken place. If mitigation plans or measures to address identified risks are needed, they will be developed during the project development phase.

Risk	Level	Mitigation Strategies
Project components rejected by key stakeholders, i.e. tourism industry, based on perception it is “bad for business.”	Low	Engage opinion leaders and relevant figures early to articulate the benefits of the project and the long-term costs of business as usual and engage them in design to ensure uptake.

Key political figures, including the new governor or CORALINA director, don't support or champion the project based on the perception that it's bad for business or generates strife within the private sector.	Low	Project always presented in a politically neutral way. Project communications strategy articulates the economic benefits of sustainable tourism over short, medium and long term.
Key stakeholders, i.e. tourists, reject efforts to change behavior and don't want to give up traditional practices such as handling wildlife while snorkeling, etc.	Med	Information packages developed to engage and change behavior of tourists, especially groups accustomed to negative practices such as handling fauna during excursions. Project interventions include monitoring and enforcement.
Political corruption, scandals, turnover delay or disrupt project implementation.	Med	Account for corruption within institutional arrangements and controls.
Climate change risks to the tourism sector.	Med	Tourism sector, especially the coastal zone, is vulnerable to climate change. The proposed project will help mitigate climate risks by making sure that the revised planning and regulatory framework for the sector includes provisions for climate change adaptation.
A global/national recession as a result of COVID 19 negatively impacts tourism revenue and generates resistance toward adding perceived barriers.	Low	Diversify tourism product offering via project, lowering dependence on status quo model. Conduct close monitoring of the situation of the COVID-19, and its consequences on the Archipelago socioeconomic and political system, in order to implement adaptive management decisions in the project design process and in implementation.

**6. Coordination. Outline the institutional structure of the project including monitoring and evaluation coordination at the project level. Describe possible coordination with other relevant GEF-financed projects and other initiatives.**

Conservation International Foundation (CI) will be the Lead Executing Agency for this project in coordination with the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of Colombia. The project will be co-executed by the Corporation for the Sustainable Development of the Archipelago of San Andrés, Old Providence and Santa Catalina – CORALINA, who is the regional environmental authority in the region, and is in charge of implementing national environmental policies, plans and programmes within the scope of their jurisdiction.

The Department authority with its dependencies (tourism, environment, and planning secretaries) and the Mayor's office of Old Providence and Santa Catalina islands will be key partners to

engage the local stakeholders and communities, and will be the main project co-financiers in the framework of the performance of the local programs related to the project.

The coordination and strategic guidance of the project will be the responsibility of a Project Steering Committee (PSC) formed for this purpose, involving the main national and local government entities, as well as community actors. The committee will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the project and linking other key partners as appropriate.

Day-to-day management of the project will be ensured through the involvement of a coordinator for the effective implementation of the program activities agreed with the PSC. The main function of the coordinator will be to ensure the alignment of actions between the key stakeholders at technical, political and community levels. The coordinator, based partly in Bogotá and partly on the islands, will also be responsible for guiding the recruitment of consultants to perform specific technical functions in the project, as well as the general functions of reporting, monitoring and evaluation.

CI will designate a Project Director who will be responsible for the administrative aspects of project implementation and will supervise the coordinator. The director will also communicate directly with the PSC.

WWF GEF acting as the GEF Agency will conduct annual visits to the project and project field sites based on the agreed schedule in the project's Inception Report/Annual Work Plan to assess first-hand project progress and monitoring of WWF Safeguards Policies compliance.

Regarding the coordination with other relevant initiatives, CI and CORALINA will guarantee that there are no repeated actions and that there is an effective articulation amongst stakeholders and different initiatives to obtain an effective use of the financial resources.

This project will continue with the efforts made in the previous two large projects in the islands (Caribbean Archipelago Biosphere Reserve: Regional Marine Protected Area System and Protecting Biodiversity in the Southwestern Caribbean Sea) building upon the principal lessons learned related to community participation, financial sustainability, institutional arrangements, effective coordination among institutions and clear enforcement systems. Lessons learned through these projects have been reflected into the project design as follows:

The vital role of the communities and other actors of the private sector will be incorporated through ensuring their active participation in the implementation of all the components, especially in the advisory group for the sustainable tourism plan; the implementation of the environmental management measures; and the strengthening of selected private initiatives. The need for including biological assessments for the zoning agreements is reflected through component 1 and 2 considering the results of the tourism impact monitoring. The need for strengthening the enforcement system has also been taken into account in the project design, including actions for increasing capacities of the competent authorities, and equipment for the enforcement functions.

Furthermore, the proposed project will build upon the main results and strategies of previous projects through the following: (i) Strengthening of effective management of the protected areas and terrestrial ecosystems, (ii) Monitoring of key ecosystems and species; and (iii) Capacity building of local competent authorities.

## 7. Consistency with National Priorities.

In general terms, the activities developed under the proposed project contribute to the priorities of the National Plan of Adaptation to Climate Change (PNACC) within the framework of the Colombian Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (iNDC). The project expects to contribute to the following strategic lines of the PNACC: (i) Adaptation of basic infrastructure and sectors of the economy, (ii) Incorporation of adaptation and resilience considerations in sectoral, territorial and development planning, and (iii) Strengthening of institutional capacities. It is also aligned with the iNDC's objectives of overcoming poverty and building resilience in the archipelago region.

Regarding the project strategy: The first component is aligned with the National Environmental Policy for the Sustainable Development of Oceanic Spaces and Coastal and Island Areas of Colombia (2000), whose purpose is to promote the sustainable development of oceanic spaces and coastal areas that will make it possible, through integrated management, to contribute to improving the quality of life of the Colombian population, the harmonious development of productive activities and the conservation and preservation of marine and coastal ecosystems and resources. This policy set the precedent for POMIUAC which - as stated in the baseline - is the tool for the management of the country's coastal marine spaces and which - in the case of the islands and because of the project objective - will have a component dedicated to sustainable tourism.

In terms of the project's second component, Colombia is part of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), which establishes the obligation of the State Party to take measures for the monitoring of biological diversity. Under this obligation, Colombia formulated the Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Biodiversity Policy, which incorporates research and knowledge actions with the objective of establishing a national biodiversity monitoring system in two of its main axes. This is how the Biodiversity Information System was consolidated, which is currently part of the Colombian environmental information system. Finally, the National Policy for Integral Management of Biodiversity and its Ecosystem Services (PNGIBSE 2012) includes a strategic line focused on strengthening inventory processes and monitoring of biodiversity and its ecosystem services, through scale mapping, collection and evaluation of components, structures and functions of biodiversity.

Also, this component is consistent with National Strategies related to biodiversity like the Colombian Biodiversity Action Plan – BAP (2016 – 2030). The BAP promotes the incorporation of biodiversity and its ecosystem services in the sectoral planning of short, medium and long-term actions, and is aligned with the project as an instrument designed to contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, and providing space for ecotourism development, that benefits local populations, the region and the business sector.

Lastly, the third component is aligned with the sustainability section of the National Development Plan (NDP) 2018 – 2022: *“producing while conserving and conserving while producing”*, that seeks a balance between the productive development and conservation of the environment to ensure the natural resources for future generations. The project aims at the specific NDP sustainability objective that addresses the implementation of economic strategies and instruments to make the productive sectors more sustainable, innovative and reduce its impacts on the environment. The project also corresponds to the national goal of sustainable and responsible tourism development, which particularly supports the promotion of differentiated tourism products, as nature or cultural tourism. Moreover, it is clearly related to the chapter *“Seaflower region: for a prosperous region, safe and sustainable”*, regarding the archipelago's sustainable development

mainly through the enhancement of green business ventures and the sustainable use of marine ecosystems.

Colombia has met and surpassed CBD goals as well as existing AICHI targets. In 2016, the IV World Congress of Biosphere Reserves was held in Lima (Peru). The Congress addressed issues related to the implementation of the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Program, in particular in support of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, the Paris Climate Change Agreement, as well as education for sustainable development, green economies and ecological societies, biodiversity, global change and the protection and sustainable use of natural resources, among others.

From this emerged the Lima Action Plan for UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Program and its World Network of Biosphere Reserves (2016-2025) which contains a comprehensive but concise set of actions aimed at ensuring the effective implementation of the 2015-2025 MAB Strategy adopted by CIC-MAB at its 27th session (UNESCO, Paris, 8-12 June 2015) and endorsed by UNESCO's General Conference at its 38th session (UNESCO, Paris, 3-18 November 2015). The Seaflower Biosphere Reserve is part of the World Network, and through this project aims to contribute to the achievement of various objectives and actions contemplated in the Lima Action Plan.

Lastly, as stated in the *Baseline scenario and Associated Baseline Projects* section, the project is aligned with several tourism policies (ecotourism, cultural tourism, social tourism, crafts, beach tourism, nature tourism, community tourism) as well as the legal framework, and especially the one regarding the planning of the marine and coastal territory.

Finally, in terms of biodiversity mainstreaming in tourism development, Colombia has a well-established legislation and policies for tourism, including:

- Ecotourism Development Policy (2003): The policy aims to strengthen and diversify ecotourism activities, having as an essential reference the need for sustainable development, to improve the quality of life of the residents living in the regions and to provide a competitive offer of services, in harmony with the ecological and cultural diversity.
- Cultural Tourism Policy (2007): The policy seeks to position Colombia as a national and international cultural tourism destination that, through taking advantage of its diversity and cultural wealth, generates dynamics of local development and sustainable production that promote the competitiveness of the heritage and identity of the regions.
- Social Tourism Policy (2009): The policy promotes the access of all Colombians to tourism, as a real possibility for the exercise of the fundamental right to recreation and use of free time.
- Tourism and Crafts Policy (2009): The policy integrates the value chains of the tourism and handicraft sectors as a proposal for sustainable and responsible development, seeking the dissemination of artisanal traditions and of the economic, social and cultural traditions of the communities and destinations.
- Touristic Beach Policy-Sector Guidelines (2011): The policy and guidelines seek to strengthen the competitiveness of the beach tourism product in Colombia, through

institutional coordination, planning, recovery and ordering schemes for the tourist beaches, that incorporate quality, the preservation of the coastal ecosystems, and respect for local cultures.

- Preliminary document of the National Policy of Nature Tourism (2012): The policy aims to position Colombia as a nature tourism destination, recognized for the development of highly competitive and sustainable products and services that allow the preservation of natural resources and improve the quality of life of the receiving communities
- Preliminary guidelines for a Policy for the development of community tourism (2012): The guidelines promote the development of community tourism, focused on participatory entrepreneurship processes, that contribute to the generation of employment and income and to the consolidation of destinations, through differentiated, competitive and sustainable tourism products.

These are just some of the current policies on tourism in Colombia but -as evidenced- the vast majority were developed years ago and require updating. Also, currently the departmental Assembly of the Archipelago is in the process of approving “The Sustainable Tourism Policy” for the region. The development of this instrument will be supported by this project and its strategic lines will be included in the planning process explained under the component one.

## **8. Knowledge Management.**

The project knowledge management component will be elaborated during the project preparation phase and aligned closely with the stakeholders and experts in San Andres, Old Providence and Santa Catalina Islands. Additionally, the monitoring data collected, and lessons learned will be shared with relevant stakeholders, contributing to knowledge management that facilitates upscaling across Colombia and Caribbean region.

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### **PART III: APPROVAL/ENDORSEMENT BY GEF OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT(S)**

#### **A. RECORD OF ENDORSEMENT OF GEF OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT (S) ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT(S):**

(Please attach the Operational Focal Point endorsement letter(s) with this template. For SGP, use this SGP OFP endorsement letter).