

EVALUATION RESPONSE AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOLLOW-UP PLAN

Evaluation Title: **ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNT PROJECT 1819AJ**

Coordination, Coherence and Effectiveness for Implementing the Environmental Dimension of the 2030 Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean

Implementing Division/Office: **Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Division of ECLAC**

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	Recommendations and proposed actions	ECLAC response and anticipated actions	Responsible Entity (Division/	Estimated target date for completion
Rec. 1	Improve the project drafting mechanism focusing on mainstreaming the environmental dimension into the 2030 Agenda through area or stakeholder mapping during the design stage and more comprehensive results.			
	<p>This requires a careful project preparation phase under which sectoral and thematic area priorities are established in advance according to stakeholders' needs and existing and future interventions from other institutions. These mapping efforts should constitute the basis for project design defining why ECLAC is intervening in a particular area, and which other institutions are complementary.</p> <p>New interventions need to better explain the desired final situation (e.g., create an enabling environment – legal, institutional; draft policy X or draft legislation Y ready for Minister Council/Parliament review, stakeholders aware of technical, legal aspects) as per initial state with baseline studies. The design phase should include an important step on alignment with relevant beneficiary priorities. That means Results should tend towards creating an enabling environment for stakeholders to be able to mainstream the environmental dimension through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Greater stakeholder awareness of the issues at stake, including advocacy and advice targeting both the executive and legislative powers; (ii) The development of tools or assessments and the production of information and advice; (iii) The strengthening of stakeholders' technical capacities; (iv) Dissemination combined with ad hoc support to facilitate ownership and empowerment regarding the above products or results; this could also include support for better local level piloting (for example lobbying for funding, involving the private sector). 	<p>One of the lessons learnt during the project was that the implementation of pre-defined activities, without a comprehensive assessment of every specific reality, and without the participation of the target countries, would not be a good/effective approach for the project. To reach its goals, the project focused on the needs and demands of the targeted countries. Project design activities inside the SDHSD are now taking into account creating an enabling environment for stakeholders to be able to mainstream the environmental dimension through greater stakeholder awareness of the issues at stake, including advocacy and advice targeting both the executive and legislative powers; strengthening of stakeholders' technical capacities and ownership and empowerment regarding the products or results of each designed project.</p>	SDHSD	Implemented
Rec. 2	Redesign and update the environmental big push strategy taking into account the findings of its report "Building a New Future: Transformative Recovery with Equality and Sustainability".			
	<p>Environmental mainstreaming in the 2030 Agenda needs a robust strategic approach that goes beyond the project cycle. There are now quite a few indications on how to achieve this, through the annual reports of the Forum of Countries on Sustainable Development, in particular with regard to what priority sectors should be considered for the environmental big push. The policy document Building a New Future: Transformative Recovery with Equality and Sustainability sheds light on how to address the mainstreaming of the environmental dimension into the 2030 Agenda. It can be used to steer future actions, but it should be reviewed, updated and fed into an environmental big push strategy with predefined milestones, meaning that strategic choices would need to be made, in close collaboration with member countries.</p> <p>Such a strategy would define the interventions to come for Development Account project cycles to come and would reduce the risk for stop-gap responses as Governments change over time (or change their priorities).</p>	<p>The ECLAC's 2020 Document of the Period of Sessions - "Building a New Future: Transformative Recovery with Equality and Sustainability"-widely benefited from what was accumulated in this Development Account Project and provided an important guideline for the definition of which studies and technical assistance should be carried out at regional and national level. As the sanitary conditions throughout 2020 did not allow travels and presential meetings, the project focused on providing a roadmap and strategies for a green recovery in the region and focused on mainstreaming these roadmaps/strategies into the national planning process in the target countries during 2021.</p> <p>This strategy proved efficient, and a set of intertwined studies were discussed with the beneficiary countries and commissioned to produce contributions to favor a green recover from the pandemic with equality and sustainability. New projects under implementation, and some under the designing phase, are all taking into account the roadmap produced during that period and at the same time deepening and updating such approaches.</p>	SDHSD	Implemented

Rec. 3	Target priority sectors in future Development Account projects focusing on an environmental big push strategy or road map.			
	The next generation of projects based on the environmental big push strategy or a specific road map should better target priority sectors and thematic areas as per mapping exercise to avoid any dispersion effect of resources. This would enhance effectiveness by concentrating resources.	The new generation of projects are based on the environmental big push strategy and a road map that define target priority sectors and thematic areas as per mapping exercise, avoiding dispersion effect of resources (see response above). This is enhancing effectiveness by concentrating resources. Examples are projects on a transition towards electromobility and for a better landscape management for LAC.	SDHSD	Implemented
Rec. 4	Increase the focus on (sub)regions and populations that are more vulnerable or exposed to environmental degradation.			
	While mainstreaming the environmental dimension into the 2030 Agenda is a global effort, regions and populations are not equal in terms of how to achieve it. ECLAC needs to focus more on the widest environmental mainstreaming gaps and on the most exposed populations. A balance should, however, be found with the financial and economic capacities of beneficiary member States as to how to contribute to achieving this objective.	The project focused on implementing a green recovery strategy to support Member States in Latin America and the Caribbean in their efforts to achieve economic dynamism through the pursuit of ambitious sustainable development goals, especially in areas that are more vulnerable or exposed to environmental degradation. The division will continue to consider a more vulnerable population when defining the countries and specific territories that should be under sustainable land management in the newly negotiated and approved projects.	SDHSD	Ongoing
Rec. 5	Mainstream gender and the “leave no one behind” principle in environmental big push specific projects.			
	The 2017 Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030 sets the pace for effectively mainstreaming gender into the 2030 Agenda. It included recommendations on how to establish mechanisms to ensure gender equity within Governments and how to set up intersectoral protocols, but did not explain how gender should be mainstreamed into the environmental big push. ECLAC should make provisions to allocate resources within project-specific gender strategies or guidance or preferably design a more comprehensive strategy for integrating gender into environmental big push interventions.	Recently, the SDHSD prepared and approved at the International Climate Initiative (“IKI”) of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) a project entitled "Implementation and Financing of Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) in the Food and Agriculture Sector to reduce climate risk and environmental impacts in Latin America". In this project a series of "gender trainings" was included in order to include a gender agenda in the planned activities as detailed below. This is a result of this recommendation. These activities will focus on the target countries of the initiative: Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Paraguay - supporting the design of ecosystem-based adaptation for a more resilient sector, green growth public policies with a circular economy approach. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •assessments of economic impacts of climate change in the sector in selected countries and their adaptation policy implications; •preparing a roadmap for investment in an adaptation for a more resilient, low carbon green growth economy; •convening governments, policymakers and researchers to address and exchange view on public policies, regulations, barriers on environmental challenges and sustainable landscape management; •advising governments in LAC on regional policy issues; •reviewing, proposing and discussing metrics or indicators of adaptation based on Ecosystem Based Adaptations; •analyzing, in collaboration with TNC the opportunities and barriers in the present institutional arrangements, policies and incentives for the sector. 	SDHSD	Implemented
Rec. 6	Review project budget allocation to better match provisions with realistic implementation.			
	The four-year project had planned for a decreasing delivery intensity over time with a planned 50% delivery during the first year. Such a resource allocation and the resulting work plan are not grounded in reality. It results in extreme delivery variations and steering committee justifications requires extensive budget revisions and generates project team stress. In fact, all projects undergo an inception phase with little if any spending; this is most often due to the project setting up.	This recommendation is considered not relevant to future projects given the specific circumstances that affected the implementation of this project. The financial implementation of the project was delayed and postponed because this Development Account project leveraged financial resources from the cooperation between ECLAC and GIZ--Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the challenges it posed to Member States in 2020 and 2021, all activities needed to be adjusted, especially planned missions and workshops.	SDHSD	Not applicable

Rec. 7	Ensure results ownership and empowerment by beneficiary institutions.			
<p>The ECLAC dissemination procedure for reports broadly consists of a short presentation and debriefing to ECLAC, report review by ECLAC and formal publication. ECLAC then organizes either an event, workshop and/or a formal presentation of findings to the relevant stakeholders. The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted this cycle, starting with the contracting of most consultants in the second half of the project. This has delayed the publication review and subsequent dissemination phase by months, after project closure.</p> <p>ECLAC needs to accompany this phase ensuring that stakeholders can use the information for decision-making. Streamlining thematic areas is thus required, focusing on those with highest replication/appropriation potential in other countries: regional (with dissemination potential), national (as a key development priority), local (with interest in practical application).</p>	<p>In the case of this project, dissemination of relevant information and capacity building were achieved through at least 15 national, regional and global events that have been convened to disseminate the outcomes of the project and 11 publications that were produced to promote capacity building, to consolidate and to replicate experiences. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the region was strengthened through the organization of 7 partnerships which were developed to expand and strengthen the reach of green recovery strategies.</p> <p>Ongoing monitoring activities 1) the initiatives that were undertaken in the OECS countries and in Brazil will have enduring outcomes, once the appropriation by the countries is already done; 2) initiatives in Argentina, Chile and Colombia, found their way inside governments and are being processed forward; 3) in Costa Rica, the proposal for retrofitting diesel buses to electric ones is part of the National Decarbonization Plan with a defined public budget and a set of coordinated actions.</p>	SDHSD	Ongoing	
Rec. 8	Generalize legislative power policy advice and advisory services.			
<p>ECLAC provided support in Brazil on sustainable development legislative matters through the CMA with the establishment of a forum of discussion that is leading to new law proposals. This is one example of how ECLAC can ensure that the environmental dimension of sustainable development can be taken into account. Another successful example that is starting to be used in many parts of the world is direct awareness-raising of parliamentarians through on-site formal and informal information sessions, events prior to budget establishment/allocation.</p> <p>At Government level, successful policy advice is realistically feasible when project results match a new legislature or when there is continuity between Governments over time (e.g., Costa Rica); in that context, it is best to concentrate efforts on supporting strategic and long-term development options instead of Government-specific initiatives that can be dropped once a Government falls. This is why ECLAC should make every effort to target the mostly senior technical levels within Ministries that are more stable over time than cabinets.</p>	<p>Innovative approaches could be seen in this project in organizing a stakeholder forum in the case of the partnership with the Brazilian Federal Senate. The “Fórum da Geração Ecológica” was transformed into a receiver of the contributions, proposals and studies related to the objective of this project, like sustainable mobility, sustainable agriculture and cattle ranching and energy transition. Divided into 5 working groups, the contributions are being transformed into proposals for a legal framework for a green and resilient economic recovery in Brazil. Besides that, during the discussions a proposal to create a Parliamentary Observatory on Fair Transition, with the participation of others Latin American parliaments, came out, and was successfully implemented, being one of the most interesting results of this project. This is an experience with high potential of replicability.</p>	SDHSD	Implemented	
Rec. 9	Favour thematic areas and issues for which there is a broad consensus to bring in ECLAC expertise whether at the regional or national levels.			
<p>Overly-tailored regional/national studies can respond best to stakeholders’ demands but are also less adaptable to other contexts. This is an issue in terms of efficiency. It is paramount to think in advance as to how studies can benefit other countries or contexts and serve as lessons learned, and then imprint that into TORs early on so as to maximize value for money.</p> <p>This also means that the priority should be lowered for particular situations and contexts if there is little expectation of creating value in other circumstances (multiplication effect, upscaling or downscaling).</p>	<p>The implementation process was designed in such a way as to ensure that there was repeated interaction with stakeholders so as to maximize knowledge transfer and build momentum around the project objectives. Considering that, key actors were identified in the countries and in the region, and by accompanying the process all the way from identification of areas to address, to development of national action plans to supporting and implementation, the project pursued stakeholder ownership and aimed to provide the necessary support to make plans become effective. The recommendation was internalized and implemented.</p>	SDHSD	Implemented	

Rec. 10	Accelerate ECLAC transformational change so that implementation through interdisciplinary collaboration becomes the norm for environmental big push interventions and considering interdivisional Development Account project types for future interventions that will accelerate the environmental big push.			
<p>The project was managed by the SDHS in close collaboration with other sectoral divisions and ECLAC national offices in Latin America (Argentina, Brazil, Colombia). Interviews showed this approach still resulted in siloed operationalization of activities by relevant divisions and units with a top-down approach with local offices. This makes it difficult for ECLAC to develop a holistic view of the project and how activities and results can contribute to the overall objective.</p> <p>There are recent attempts to suggest changing the ECLAC intervention approach from sectoral implementation to more collaboration between key sectors (interdivisional working groups). This has great advantages in terms of efficiency, but ECLAC should pursue this logic at the programme level —in particular for the environmental big push— through a more integrated implementation approach based on interdisciplinarity. This aspect is key to the successful mainstreaming of the environmental aspect of the 2030 Agenda into relevant institutions.</p> <p>One should consider interdivisional Development Account projects in the future to ensure a more holistic approach to mainstreaming the environmental dimension into the 2030 Agenda – an issue addressed globally from different perspectives.</p>	<p>An important lesson learnt related to this topic was the production of regional studies. Regional studies to systematize and compile information, policies and gaps and to provide recommendations of national and sub-national policies to promote the environmental dimension of the 2030 agenda and the sustainable use of the natural capital were developed, agreed with countries and published.</p> <p>The lesson learnt was that is far more effective to produce information, guidelines, policies and recommendations through official processes, with a high level of actors engagement, benefiting all sides with a wide dialogue and producing far better policies and proposals. If produced in an isolated way, the regional studies wouldn't be so effective and appropriated by countries and wouldn't be so disseminated within the region. ECLAC will continue to apply this lesson learned under future projects and interventions.</p>	SDHSD	Ongoing	