

**ESS4 - Community Health and Safety**



CANARI serves as CEPF's regional implementation team for the Caribbean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot.

## **Community Health and Safety Plan**

**10 May 2023**

**CEPF- 113662**

**Fundación de Apoyo al Suroeste, Inc. - FUNDASUR**

**Promotion of Participatory Management of the Padre Miguel Forte Natural Monument in the Dominican Republic**

## Grant Summary

1. **Beneficiary organization: Fundación de Apoyo al Suroeste, Inc. – FUNDASUR**
2. **Project title: Promotion of Participatory Management of the Padre Miguel Fuerte Natural Monument - Dominican Republic**
3. **Grant number: CEPF-113662**
4. **Grant amount (US dollars) \$49,964.20**
5. **Proposed grant dates: 1 September 2023 – 30 August 2024**
6. **Countries where the activities will take place: Dominican Republic**
7. **Date of preparation of this document: May 9, 2023**

## 8. Caribbean Hotspot Project Overview

The Caribbean Islands Biodiversity Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) Small Grants Facility is being implemented in the Caribbean Islands by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI), acting as the Regional Implementation Team (RIT). for its acronym in English). After a successful first investment in the Caribbean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot between 2011 and 2016, the CEPF has returned to the region for a second phase of investment from August 2021 to July 2026, amounting to US\$11.8 million.

The objective of the CEPF is to conserve biodiversity. Its approach is to build local conservation leadership and promote sustainable development by developing locally-driven conservation strategies and providing grants to civil society to implement those strategies. In the Caribbean, the CEPF aims to strengthen the protection and management of globally important biodiversity within 32 priority Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) and seven conservation corridors in Antigua and Barbuda; The Bahamas; Dominican Republic; Haiti; Jamaica; Saint Lucia; Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

## 9. Project Summary

The Padre Domingo Miguel Fuerte Natural Monument, also commonly called *Bahoruco Oriental (BO)*, is considered one of the most biodiverse protected areas in the Dominican Republic, standing out for its exceptional flora and fauna. In addition, it is considered the Mother of the Waters of the Province of Barahona since it produces all the waters consumed by more than 150,000 thousand inhabitants of Barahona, Ciénaga, Paraíso, Enriquillo and Oviedo. In this ACB are born all the rivers and aquifer sources that supply drinking water, the aqueducts of the entire southwest region.

The Padre Miguel D. Fuerte Natural Monument was declared a national protected area (Padre Miguel Domingo Fuertes Biological Reserve -IUCN IB category-) by Decree 233, Article 11, in July 1999 (B.I. Crother 1996). Through the sectoral law of Protected Areas No. 202 of 2004, its management category is modified and confers the one it holds at present.

Geographically the protected area has a surface area of 31.5 square kilometers. Climatically it is very varied, ranging from dry to very humid, depending on the height. Rainfall ranges from 400 to 4000 millimeters, with an average annual temperature between 15 ° and 20 °. The area of the National Monument is in recovery zones, mainly in areas of primary and secondary humid forest and small areas that today are used for grazing and illegal conuquismo.

The current condition of the area reveals that it is a multi-use zone, pastures and diverse plantations, new and old. Among the **threats and critical impacts** we can highlight:

- Hunting and trafficking of fauna (parrots and parakeets)
- Deforested areas and forest fragmentation
- Monocultures (coffee plantations in buffer zones)
- Livestock area
- Subsistence agriculture (Conuquismo)
- Presence of exotic animals
- Quarry mining
- Extraction of timber products
- Proliferation of human settlements and almost no monitoring of the area

Despite the myriad challenges, there are **opportunities** worth highlighting, such as:

- Existence of high biodiversity and endemic species (Annex III)
- Draft Agreement with Environment for co-management of the Park through FUNDASUR-SOEPA AND UCATEBA
- Political will of the M. Environment to support with Administration (1), Ranger (2) and logistics for protection of the park
- Existence of community members with strong motivation to protect biodiversity
- Group of Guides in SOEBA motivated for the protection of the environment
- UCATEBA students motivated to volunteer for environmental volunteering
- Initiatives of the Ministry of Environment to support environmental conservation strategies
- Existence of basic infrastructure (interpretation center and attention to visitors in the area of Cachote) for the purpose of protection and dissemination of the biodiversity of Natural Monument P.D.M.F.
- The Southwest region of R.D advances in the development of the tourist offer which represents a potential increase in demand in the short and medium term.

However, due to the continuous predatory practices and serious threats that plague the protected area, (unprotected so far) it is imperative, through this project, to take corrective actions, take advantage of the opportunities indicated above and update the management plan to safeguard and avoid irreparable damage to this exceptional biodiversity of the Miguel Fuertes Monument.

This proposal will focus in the first instance on updating the management plan and promoting the co-management of the protected area, the training of partners and key actors to ensure effective capacities in the co-management of the area and to supervise the implementation of the management plan, as well as to sensitize the neighboring communities about the importance of biodiversity conservation of this KBA and promote their participation and socialization in the Management plan. It should be noted that, for the updating of the management plan, the procedures specified by the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources will be adapted to ensure its approval.

The risks associated with this project include extreme rainfall or drought, hurricanes, road accidents and/or transmission of Covid-19 or another virus. The objective of this stakeholder engagement plan is to ensure constructive relations between project participants, to ensure that opinions, interests are taken into account and that there is a mechanism to pose challenges and challenges, especially that there is inclusive participation that allows effective co-management.

## 10. Community health and safety risks and mitigation measures

Some community health and safety risks are anticipated in connection with this project, which are listed below in Table 10.1.

**Table 10.1: Potential risks to community health and safety and mitigation measures**

Main risks to community health and safety	Probability of risk (low/medium/high)	Risk level (low/medium/high)	Description	Mitigation Measures
Transmission of communicable diseases, such as COVID-19, to local stakeholders.	Medium	High	COVID-19 occurs worldwide and is more likely to be transmitted through any work involving large gatherings	<p>Project workers interacting with the community/public will follow distancing and hygiene protocols as needed. They will also be vaccinated. Workers will be provided with safety equipment (masks, disinfectant). All national declarations or guidelines of the Government of the Dominican Republic shall be respected.</p> <p>The Ministry of Public Health of the Dominican Republic will continue to be vigilant against COVID-19. It has remained an endemic disease<sup>1</sup>.</p> <p>At all community meetings, sanitizers and masks will be available to others if they need them.</p>
Risks related to hurricanes, earthquakes and other natural disasters.	Middle	High	Throughout the life of the project, the country may be severely affected by a hydrometeorological phenomenon or other natural disasters. The Caribbean region is up to seven times more likely to suffer a natural disaster than the largest States, and when one occurs, the damage is up to six times greater.	<p>Recognizing the risk of natural disaster, workers will remain attentive to all weather warnings and carry out community activities in accordance with the guidelines on natural disasters and emergencies of the government of the Dominican Republic.</p> <p>To the extent possible, community activities should be planned outside the hurricane season.</p>

<sup>1</sup> See COVID-19 measures in <https://presidencia.gob.do/taxonomy/term/161>

Sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment.	Low	Middle	Project workers will physically engage with communities at different levels (from purchasing supplies to participating in workshops), providing an opportunity for exploitation, abuse and sexual harassment.	FUNDASUR will implement a code of conduct, as well as training on the Grievance Mechanism of the Stakeholder Participation Plan and the Labor Management Plan, and other related areas  The documents will also be published on the FUNDASUR website. Some of these activities will be carried out in collaboration with government agencies to raise awareness of these issues and move towards reducing their impact.
Accidents involving people and vehicles	Low	Middle	Risks arising from travel during project activities (e.g. vehicle collisions while moving from one location to another)	To minimize risks to communities or visit the work area, the vehicle to be used within the framework of the project will be properly secured and maintained. If it is rented, it will be done in an accredited rental agency. Authorized drivers of the vehicle will have the necessary licenses to drive the vehicle in question. All authorized drivers will be reminded of safe driving practices. Workers will be licensed to operate vehicles and any other motorized equipment. At the same time, it will be determined that they are in good health before making any trip within the framework of the project.

## 11. Relevant laws in the project countries

Table 11.1 below describes the key law(s) in the project countries and their relevance to this Community Health and Safety Plan. FUNDASUR will ensure that staff comply with these laws and guidelines.

**Table 11.1 Laws relevant to community health and safety in the Dominican Republic**

Laws - Articles	Description
<b>Dominican Republic</b>	
General Health Law, No. 42-01 - Art 1 and Art 3	The purpose of this law is to regulate all actions that allow the State to make effective the right to health of the population, recognized in the Constitution of the Dominican Republic. All Dominicans and persons of foreign citizenship who have established their residence in the national territory are entitled to

Laws - Articles	Description
	the promotion of health, prevention of diseases and protection, recovery and rehabilitation of their health, without any discrimination <sup>2</sup> .
Law No. 87-01 Dominican Social Security System.	"the State shall encourage the progressive development of social security, so that everyone may enjoy adequate protection against unemployment, sickness, incapacity and old age"
Law on Risk Management (No. 147-02)	This law establishes the National Disaster Prevention, Mitigation and Response System, the National Risk Management Plan, the National Emergency Plan and the National Integrated Information System in the Dominican Republic. It is based on the principle of citizen participation.

## 12. Measures to avoid the risk of COVID-19

Project workers interacting with the community/public will follow distancing and hygiene protocols as needed. Workers will be provided with safety equipment (masks, disinfectant). All national declarations or guidelines of the Government of the Dominican Republic will be respected. FUNDASUR has internal guidelines for COVID-19 that cover the basics of creating a healthy and hygienic work environment for COVID-19. Workers are required to follow these standards diligently, to maintain a healthy and safe workplace while sharing common workspaces.

Any other relevant guidance from the World Bank as indicated in the technical note, "Public Consultations and Stakeholder Engagement in WB-Supported Operations When There Are Constraints to Conducting Public Meetings" (March 20, 2020) will be followed, as relevant and appropriate.

## 13. Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan

Project team members have means of communication with the head office at all times, and means to receive announcements and notices of public safety. The project coordinator ensures that climate-related risks (e.g. hurricanes) are closely monitored before and during community visits. Workers are instructed to put the safety and health of personnel before other objectives and to evacuate field sites as appropriate. Activities will adhere to any statement or guidance provided by the authorities of the Dominican Republic

## 14. Measures to mitigate risks related to security personnel

Not applicable.

## 15. Schedule and remedies

The implementation of mitigation measures will take place throughout the project time frame. The cost of implementing the plan is mostly included in the CEPF project.

### ***Table 15.1: Implementation timeline and estimated resources***

<sup>2</sup> For more detailed information see

<https://repositorio.msp.gob.do/bitstream/handle/123456789/793/LeyNo.%2042-01.PDF?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

Actions	Estimated cost (USD)	Implementation timeline				
		2023		2024		
		Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
Salary of direct workers to apply the CHSP	\$3000	x	x	x	x	x
Purchase of COVID-19 safety supplies (masks, hand sanitizer, rapid test results)	\$200	x	x	x	x	x
Maintenance of vehicle	\$1200	x	x	x	x	x

### 16. Monitoring arrangements

The general manager and/or project coordinator will hold weekly meetings with other project workers. Issues can be raised in an open forum of the organization and resolved quickly. A record shall be kept of issues that may adversely affect the project. It will also include how the issues were addressed. Reports on the implementation of the ESS will be produced during the biannual progress reports.

### 17. Disclosure

The agenda of the project's internal kick-off meeting will include a review of planned and potential interactions with the community, and review the code of conduct and necessary safety measures. Community members will be explained the project and any concerns will be directed to the Project Coordinator. In case any of the stakeholders (project workers, community members, etc.) raise any concerns or make any comments, they will be taken into account and responded to formally.