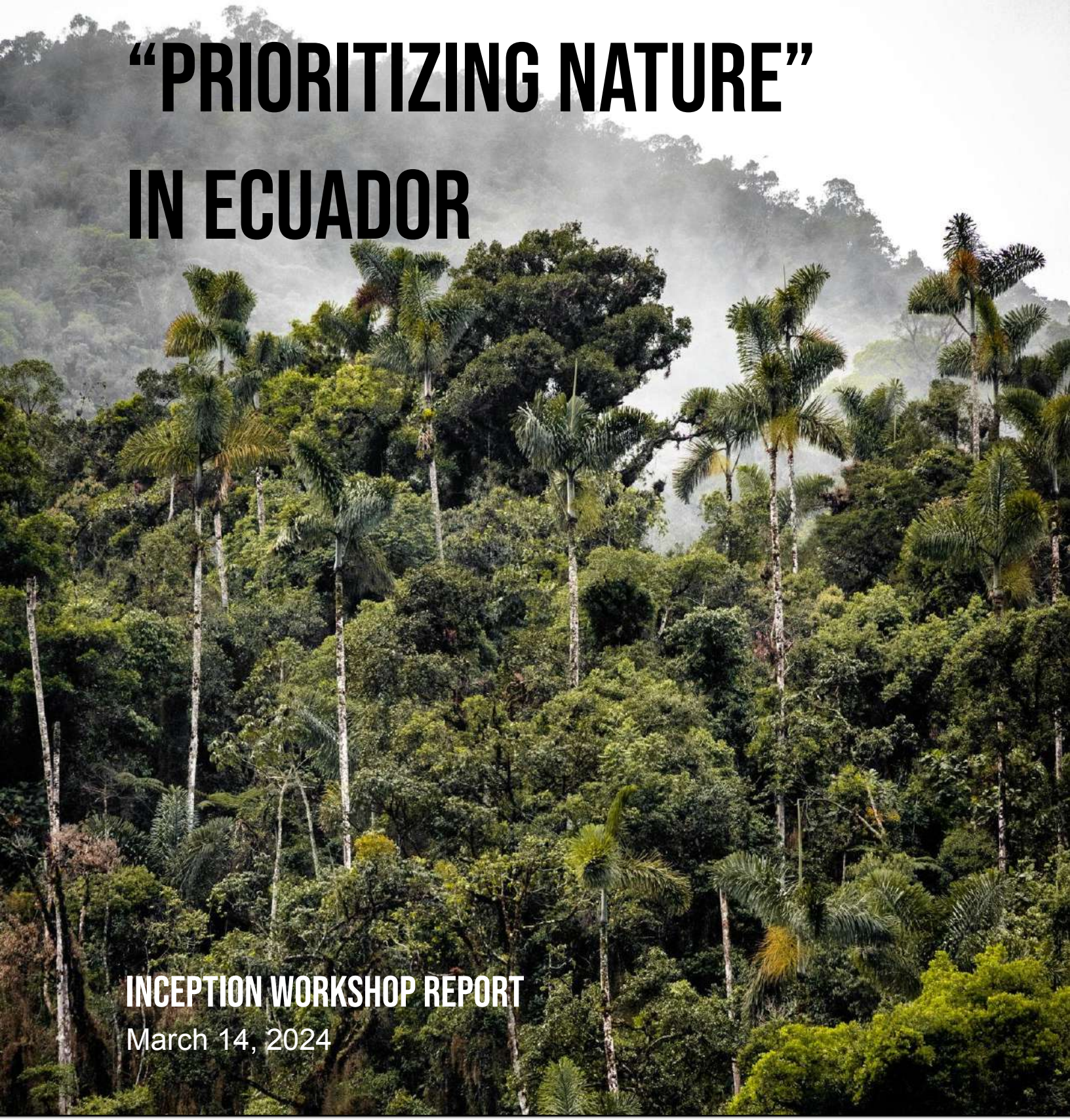
“PRIORITIZING NATURE” IN ECUADOR



INCEPTION WORKSHOP REPORT

March 14, 2024

UN environment programme WCMC

UNDP

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Box 1: Key resources

Link to the folder with the presentations

Workshop agenda

Data matrix

Feedback session (Jamboard)

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ACRONYMS

AME	Association of Municipalities of Ecuador
AUSCEM/CM	Sustainable Use and Stewardship Agreement of the Mangrove Ecosystem
ACUS	Conservation and Sustainable Use Areas
BVP	Protective forests and vegetation
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CC	Connectivity Corridors
CO	Country Office
CONGOPE	Consortium of Autonomous Provincial Governments of Ecuador
COP	Conference of the Parties
DBI	Directorate of Biodiversity
EAS	Early Action Support
ELSA	Essential Life Support Areas
FENACOPEC	National Federation of Artisanal Fishing Cooperatives of Ecuador
GADs	Decentralized Autonomous Governments
GBF	Global Biodiversity Framework
GIZ	German Agency for International Cooperation
Ha	Hectares
HPAs	Water Protection Areas
HR	RAMSAR Wetlands
INABIO	National Biodiversity Institute

IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
IZ	Intangible Zones
KBA	Key Biodiversity Areas
K-M	Kunming-Montreal
MAATE	Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition Ecuador
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans
NCI	Nature and Culture International
NGO	Non governmental organization
OECMs	Other effective area-based conservation measures
PA	Protected Area
PFE	State forest patrimony
PSB	Socio Bosque Project
RB	Biosphere reserves
SCP	Systematic Conservation Planning
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SNAP	National System of Protected Areas
SPN	Undersecretariat of Natural Heritage
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP-WCMC	United Nations Environment Programme - World Conservation Monitoring Centre
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On March 14, 2024, the Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition (MAATE), the UNDP Country Office (CO) in Ecuador, and the UNDP Global Programme on Nature for Development, with the support of the Bezos Earth Funds, convened more than 40 experts for the inception workshop of the project "Prioritizing Nature in Ecuador". The project was introduced during this workshop, and its vision was explained. The workshop also offered an opportunity to understand the science used in the project. The core of the workshop focused on interactive discussions with the participants to obtain feedback on the data and scientific context of the project, its structure, and the work plan for 2024-2025.

PURPOSE OF THE INCEPTION WORKSHOP

- Introduction of the project “Prioritizing Nature” in Ecuador.
- Understand how this project will support Ecuador’s efforts in achieving Target 3 of the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).
- Understand the project's science, focusing on Systematic Conservation Planning (SCP).
- Provide initial feedback on the context around GBF Target 3 in Ecuador, including protected areas, other effective area-based conservation measures (OECM), and other areas and qualitative elements of conservation in Ecuador.
- Identify key stakeholders that should be involved throughout the project.
- Confirm the structure of the project’s implementation and work plan for 2024 & 2025.

PARTICIPATION OF EXPERTS IN THE WORKSHOP

The inception workshop brought together more than 40 experts, from the Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition of Ecuador (MAATE), from different departments; Directorate of International Cooperation, Directorate of Protected Areas and Other Forms of Conservation, Directorate of Biodiversity, Directorate of Environmental and Water Information and Environmental Education for Ecological Transition, and from the Directorate of Forestry. These participants brought diverse knowledge and perspectives to the workshop discussions, contributing significantly to the feedback received.

In addition, other key stakeholders who are actively involved in promoting policy development and programme implementation of protected areas in Ecuador were present, including the 30x30 Coalition. The 30x30 Coalition, a citizen platform made up of non-governmental organizations and cooperation agencies working on environmental issues, voluntarily decided to join efforts to support MAATE in the development and implementation of the GBF, with a focus on Target 3.

SESSION 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT “PRIORITIZING NATURE” IN ECUADOR

María Verónica Córdova, Partnership Specialist and National Consultant from the UNDP Global Programme on Nature for Development, facilitated the workshop with her colleague Casandra Llosa. The workshop's first session opened with welcoming remarks for the consultation, delivered by Monica Andrade from UNDP CO Ecuador and Maria Irene Schuldt, Director of International Cooperation at MAATE.

Opening remarks - Monica Andrade. Head of the Environment Department, UNDP CO Ecuador

Monica Andrade started by indicating that the United Nations Development Programme is one of the organizations that work within the country, giving technical support to the government to achieve the country's international commitments in terms of climate change, environment, and others, including preparing to achieve the goals and targets of the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF). She indicated that many other organizations work with the government too, and it’s important to have events such as this inception workshop to meet, exchange experiences and knowledge, and obtain feedback on the proposed project activities. This aims to help the overall activities coordination and avoid duplication of efforts, always under the leadership of MAATE.

She indicated that UNDP is an implementing partner of UNEP-WCMC in a larger project related to achieving Target 3 of the GBF. The component UNDP is implementing within this larger project has been called Prioritizing Nature in Ecuador.

She then described the “ELSA project”, also frequently referenced as the project “Mapping Hope” implemented in Ecuador in 2021, in which essential life support areas (ELSAs) were identified using systematic conservation planning (SCP) methods in a participative process with institutions and key stakeholders. This process allowed the country to identify areas where nature-based solutions could be implemented to restore, protect, and sustainably manage.

The ELSA project paved the way for the use of geospatial data in decision-making. The objective of the Prioritizing Nature project is to help the country identify new protected areas, corridors, and OECMs to achieve Target 3 of the GBF, and assess the effectiveness of existing ones. UNDP's role is to offer technical assistance to the process led by MAATE and ensure coordination with other organizations and groups working towards similar objectives around Target 3 in the country.

To UNDP, it is important to be aligned with the Early Action Support (EAS) project focused on updating the country's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAPs) and including the analysis and conclusions of the Prioritizing Nature into the Early Action Support project (EAS).

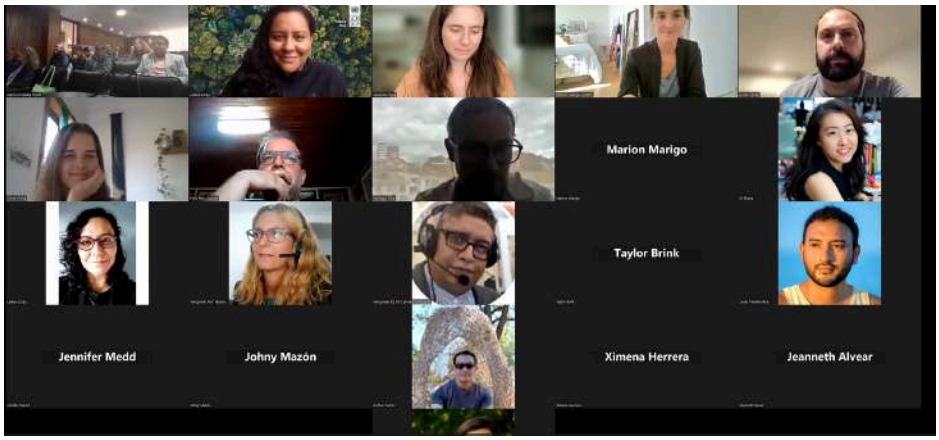
Another opportunity for coordination and knowledge exchange is the 30x30 Coalition.

She finished thanking all the participants for their time and willingness to participate in this inception workshop.

Opening remarks - Maria Irene Schuldt. Director of International Cooperation, MAATE

Maria Irene Schuldt emphasized MAATE's commitment to aligning and coordinating the different initiatives around Target 3 in a participative and integrated manner. She thanked for the support UNDP provides to MAATE in different technical aspects. She echoed Monica’s remarks regarding the opportunity to collaborate with different organizations and conduct this process in a participatory approach, including the different technical areas within MAATE and also other key stakeholders to ensure a positive and bigger impact of the project. María Irene mentioned the commitment to work together to achieve global targets and thanked the participants for attending the call to this inception workshop. Finally, she invited participants to work together and provide feedback on the activities proposed and the workplan.

Figure 1. Grupal photo



SESSION 2: 30X30 IN ECUADOR

Presentation of the project “Prioritizing Nature” -Marion Marigo. Capacity Building and Biodiversity Senior Officer, UNDP

Context

Marion Marigo discussed the significance of nature in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and addressing climate change, highlighting the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework adoption at COP15 in December 2022. Marion highlighted that spatial data is essential for the implementation of Targets 1, 2, and 3 of the GBF, and can additionally support efforts around other targets, such as target 6 on invasive alien species, target 10 on sustainable agriculture/aquaculture/fisheries/forestry, and of target 21 on sharing available data, information, and knowledge for decision making. Target 21, in particular, also deals with how countries must implement actions to be able to implement this framework in their national biodiversity strategies and action plans.

She then emphasized Target 3, indicating it has caught the attention of many actors and is precisely the focus of this project. This target aims to conserve 30% of Land, Waters and Seas by 2030. The target also has qualitative elements, such as the “ecological representative, well-connected and equitably governed” systems, and it mentions Protected Areas as well as

other effective area-based conservation measures, the “OECM” or “OMEC” in Spanish. This target also mentions the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities that must be recognized and respected. Marion indicated that, for this target, using geospatial data is extremely relevant as a key tool, allowing countries to accurately assess the status of their ecosystems and the services they provide. Furthermore, new conservation planning methodologies can enable countries to discover cross-cutting solutions to planning problems, convene stakeholders, and integrate their priorities into a single data-driven framework.

UNDP has worked for almost a decade to support countries using national and global spatial data, with tools such as the UN Biodiversity Lab - or UNBL - a platform that provides access to global datasets and analytic tools that support governments in decision-making, monitoring, and reporting activities.

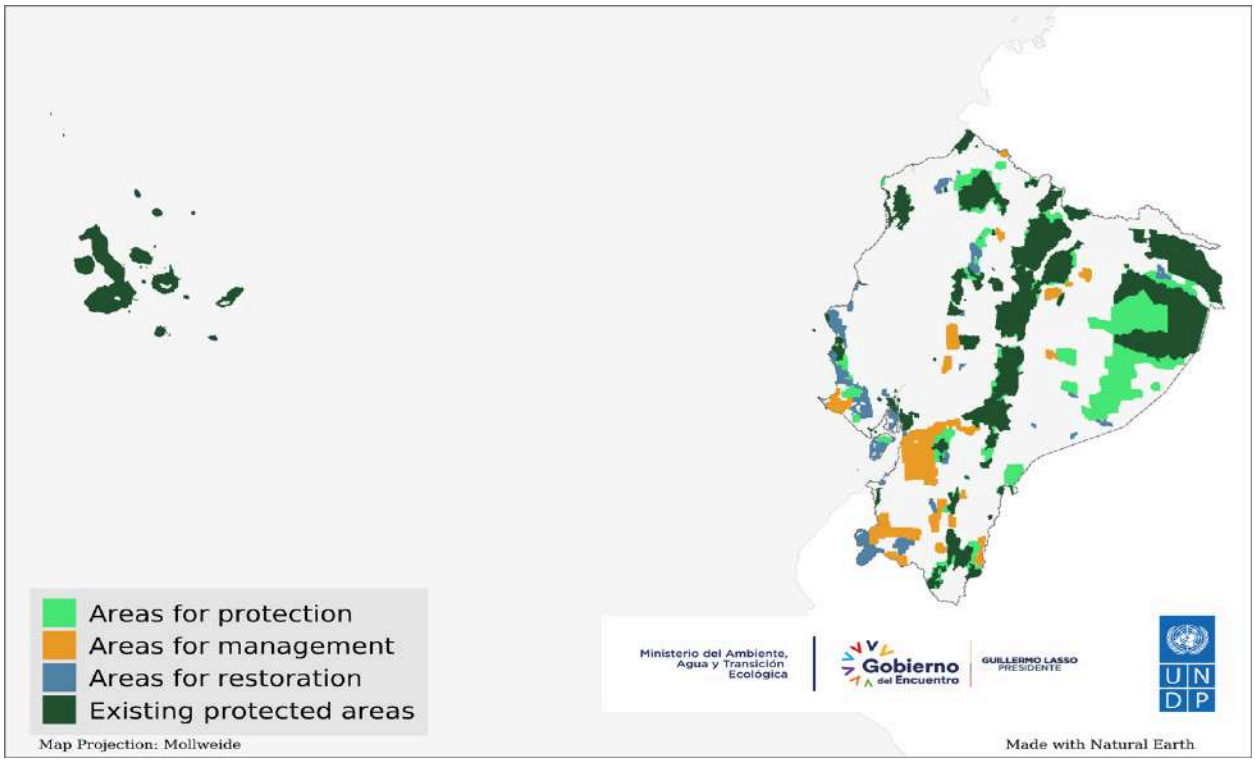
UNDP has refined its support to countries through the project “Mapping Hope”, also known as ELSA (which stands for “Essential Life Support Areas”). Ecuador was one of the five initial pilot countries for this project, with the implementation of the project effectively done between 2020 and early 2022. Marion explained that this project consisted of following national priorities and using “Systematic Conservation Planning (SCP)” to map countries’ ELSAs - areas where actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore nature, can best contribute to achieving diverse national priority policy targets for biodiversity, climate change, and human well-being.

The value of using SCP to run the ELSA analysis is two-fold: it enables capitalization on synergies to determine where actions can most effectively achieve the greatest impact across all policy targets; it also enables diverse stakeholder groups to weigh the relative importance of the various planning features associated with the priority policy targets, view trade-offs that result from conflicting priorities, and foster dialogue around cross-sectoral collaboration and implementation.

Marion explained that UNDP has worked extensively with the Ecuador government to identify the national priorities in terms of biodiversity, climate change, and sustainable development, and has collected key national datasets, and obtained feedback from national experts to create Ecuador’s first ELSA map, finalized in early 2022. This map can support decision-making, or can serve as a tool for further analysis and diverse applications, depending on the needs and choices of the country. The ELSA analysis provided Ecuador with an outcome-orientated map (Figure 2) to implement nature-based solutions that will contribute to the achievement of the 10

priority policy targets and support the country in achieving adaptive, sustainable management of natural ecosystems.

Figure 2. Ecuador ELSA map



Marion then insisted on the potential positive broad impact of GBF Target 3. Under this project, the Bezos Earth Fund has provided grants to key national and international players working on Target 3. The grants aim to support countries' ongoing work around the new framework, with the specific purpose of developing a roadmap to achieve Target 3.

Objectives and expected products

The overall project has five main objectives, one of which is led by UNDP, corresponding to overall objective 2: "Support government-led multi-stakeholders spatial planning processes to identify priorities and national targets for new protected and conserved areas".

She encouraged participants to highlight potential synergies with other ongoing projects focusing on Target 3, considering the large number of actors working on the topic and the need to avoid the duplication of efforts. Marion highlighted the opportunity to contribute in the

Coalition 30x30 as a high priority to align efforts that will support MAATE´s ongoing work. She indicated that the activities led by UNDP with the 3 countries (Peru, Colombia and Ecuador) will also support the activities led by UNEP-WCMC on piloting and enhancing the monitoring of the effectiveness of protected and conserved areas and identifying ecological corridors.

Marion then presented the project's overview: there is a strong emphasis on Protected Areas, as well as ecological corridors and OECM. The MAATE will lead efforts in a robust multistakeholder process with the support of UNDP to understand how planning for protected and conserved areas can have important co-benefits for additional priorities around climate change and sustainable development. This project is directly building on the ELSA analysis, and that's why it is also referred to as the "ELSA +" project. The project will help identify and propose new protected areas and/or OECM, which are areas of high importance for both protection and conservation; it will help assess the effectiveness of the current OECM and PAs in the country; it will also leverage existing global and national datasets; identify actions to enhance Protected Areas connectivity; identify key national stakeholders and engage with them; develop effective recommendations to achieve the GBF Target 3; and lastly, support the development and implementation of relevant national policies – with a particular focus on NBSAP. Once the analysis is done, capacity-building activities will be offered to the MAATE and other key actors, ensuring full ownership of the project data, tools, and results.

At the end of the project, several documents will be available, including an updated scientific analysis to identify new Protected Areas and/or OECM at the national level; an online webtool available in Windows, enabling the MAATE to iterate further analyses in the country; two consultation reports; training materials on the scientific approach, data processing, stakeholder engagement, and monitoring & reporting; and a brief on the methodology, results and policy recommendations customized for Ecuador.

Timeline of the project

The inception workshop objective was to present the project and its vision, understand how this project can support Ecuador's priorities, and understand the science behind the project, as well as to agree on the work plan, and key stakeholders.

Following the inception workshop, the project will be implemented through the work of smaller working groups, one focusing on policy and the other on science, between March and August

2024. These meetings will also be the occasion to focus on data, look at data updates and identify new data, and collect input into the development of the scientific analysis.

A second stakeholder consultation is expected to take place in August 2024. It will focus on reviewing Ecuador's different zones and targets, presenting in detail the national datasets used in the analysis, collecting feedback from national experts, and finalizing the analysis.

Finally, capacity-building activities will focus on the science, data, stakeholder engagement, UN Biodiversity Lab, and will be hosted late in 2024 – early 2025.

Marion concluded her presentation by emphasizing that the NBSAP-related processes, including revision, implementation, and monitoring, will be key in 2024 and 2025; it will be important to ensure that the great work undertaken in this project is reflected in the new version of the NBSAP and that the technical outcomes are used for decision-making.

How does this project contribute to achieving the GBF Target 3 in Ecuador? Angel Onofa. Directorate of Biodiversity, Natural Heritage Sub-Secretary, MAATE.

Cristhian Acurio. Directorate of PAs and Other Forms of Conservation, Natural Heritage Sub-Secretary, MAATE.

The first presentation of the Ministry was divided into two blocks, with representatives of the Undersecretariat of Natural Heritage (SPN), with two of its directorates: the Directorate of Protected Areas and other Forms of Conservation and the Directorate of Biodiversity (DBI). Angel Onofa began by mentioning that the DBI implements the biodiversity policy at the national level, especially the NBSAP 2015-2030. He thanked UNDP for the invitation and highlighted the importance of coordinating among the different institutions.

Under GBF Target 3, the SPN indicates that Ecuador signed the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in 1992 and ratified it in 1993; since that point, the country has complied, to the extent possible, with all the mandates of the Convention, including the NBSAP - the current document has a 2015-2030 vision and reflects international commitments such as the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

Since the adoption of the GBF, , the Ministry, with the support mainly of the UNDP Early Action Support (EAS) Project, began a rapid review and mid-term update of the NBSAP. They are currently working with various other stakeholders and together they are working on the updating process in a participatory approach with workshops at regional and local levels.

The Ministry's objective is to have a revised draft NBSAP to present during COP16 in October-November 2024 in Colombia, in addition to have aligned the current targets to the new framework and to have an action plan with the financial sustainability strategy. Ángel mentions that there will be priority targets and specific plans for these targets.

Cristhian Acurio continued with the presentation of the Directorate of Protected Areas and Other Forms of Conservation who shared the Ministry's progress for goal 3, which he defined as:

1. Declaration of protected areas

2. Recognition of OECMs through a ministerial agreement

In the case of the OECMs, the emphasis is on inter-institutional collaborative work and was divided into the following main steps:

1. Establishment of the Ministerial Agreement in November/December 2023

2. Socialization with organizations and citizenship (workshops, webinars)

3. Stakeholder support (coordination for compliance with requirements)

4. Identification of areas based on a 2012 study for gaps and priorities for conservation. However, several areas are within oil blocks or mining concessions and therefore areas cannot be created within these pre-existing rights.

There are currently 78 protected areas with a total of 26,243,647, which is equivalent to 19.45% of the national territory. The studies within 8 nautical miles of the coastal profile were discussed in order to create protected areas. The cartographic data used for these analyses are: map of ecosystems, land cover and land use, information from the Decentralized Autonomous Governments (GADs), and information from other institutions.

Finally, Cristhian mentioned that Ecuador has 3 connectivity corridors and is working on the recognition of 4 additional connectivity corridors with the support of other organizations.

Ecuador towards GBF Target 3 - Miguel Cañizares. Direction of Education and Information of Environment and Water for Ecological Transition, MAATE.

Miguel Cañizares complemented the presentation of the SPN by presenting in detail the other conservation mechanisms that exist in the country. In the spatial framework, Ecuador has a terrestrial part and a very important marine part that is divided into:

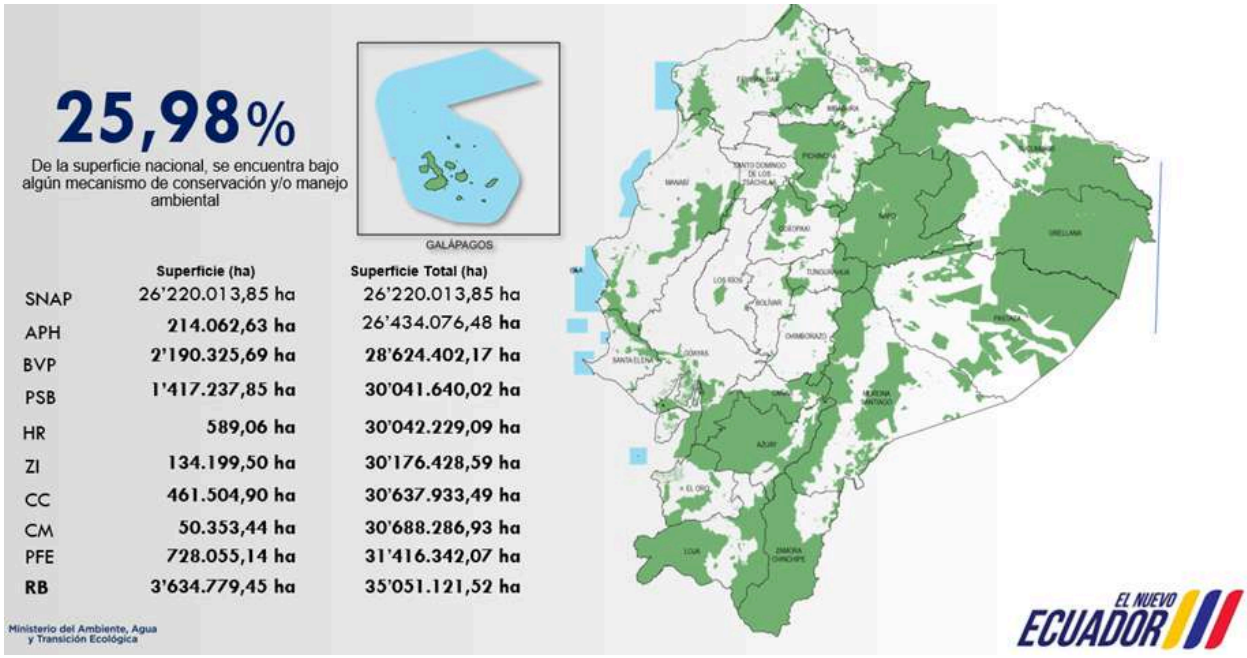
- Marine area (continental and Galapagos): 109,216,000.00 ha (80.94% of the national territory)
- Land area (continental and Galapagos): 25,721,529.55ha (19.06% of national territory)
- Total national surface area (land and marine combined): 134,935,529.55 ha

Miguel presented all the conservation mechanisms that the Ministry has for conservation or environmental management and the work of the Directorate in adding up the mechanisms and avoiding overlapping data:

- National System of Protected Areas (SNAP)
- Water protection areas (HPAs)
- Protective forests and vegetation (BVP)
- Socio Bosque Project (PSB)
- RAMSAR Wetlands (HR)
- Intangible Zones (IZ)
- Connectivity Corridors (CC)
- Sustainable use and mangrove stewardship agreements (CM)
- State forest patrimony (PFE)
- Biosphere reserves (RB)

The total areas under the SNAP and other detailed environmental management mechanisms add up to a total of 25.98%, equivalent to approximately 5,500,000 hectares to be conserved to achieve the 30x30 target considering this analysis.

Figure 3. SNAP and other conservation mechanisms implemented in Ecuador.



The science behind the project Prioritizing Nature in Ecuador -Dr. Oscar Venter. Scientific Leader, UNDP

Dr. Oscar Venter began with an overview of Phase 1 of the ELSA process in Ecuador, which worked to identify Essential Life Support Areas (ELSA), which, if protected, managed, or restored, will support nature-based commitments to biodiversity, climate change, and human well-being. The starting place for Phase 1 of ELSA was a thorough policy review and a policy hackathon in 2020, which identified the ten most important nature-based commitments in the country. The project then identified and gathered relevant national data to map these targets and brought it into a single repository. The science team used Systematic Conservation Planning to produce a custom spatial prioritization analysis to identify the most important areas for Ecuador to protect, manage, and restore to contribute to achieving the 10 priority national targets. Oscar highlighted the 31 data layers revised for the ELSA analysis.

The ELSA approach is unique from the science perspective and, as far as the project team knows, has not been conducted anywhere else in the world. In addition, the project brought together national experts and other key stakeholders to work together and identify national priorities. The final workshop report and science brief from ELSA Phase 1 provide more information on this initial process and can be found on the Learning for Nature website:

https://www.learningfornature.org/es/mapeo-de-la-naturaleza-para-las-personas-y-el-planeta-en-ecuador-primer-taller/

Phase 2 of the project Prioritizing Nature will build on the work undertaken in 2020-2022 to support Ecuador to plan and deliver on the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) and associated national targets in Ecuador. The project can provide scenario analysis for planning for GBF Targets 2 and 3 to demonstrate where restoration and protection should be undertaken to support the achievement of Ecuador's other national GBF targets. Target 3 in particular presents new challenges and new opportunities to understand how Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) can be implemented in a way that contributes to the other GBF targets. This project will work to support Ecuador to do this. In addition, it will support efforts to understand current management effectiveness and land use patterns within existing Protected Areas in Ecuador, including restoration opportunities within protected areas. Ecuador has requested support identifying possible areas to expand existing protected areas or create new connectivity corridors in the country. The project will also provide the opportunity to update the input data used during Phase 1 of the ELSA project. Finally, the project will provide targeted training and capacity building for the MAATE and other key stakeholders around the scientific analyses used in the project.

Dr. Venter explored several key areas where input from national experts will be critical to shape the development of the scientific analysis. First, he outlined the need to identify and recognize Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) within the scientific analysis, building on national definitions for OECMs in Ecuador. To best reflect Ecuador's context, the science team needs input from national stakeholders to understand whether OECMs in Ecuador are places that already exist and need to be recognized and validated, or whether the MAATE would like to identify new potential OECMs. He emphasized that Systematic Conservation Planning can support this process in either case.

Likewise, the science team needs to understand how the MAATE approaches protected areas in Ecuador. The IUCN approach to classifying protected areas includes a range of protection, from people-free protection of wilderness areas to locations that are managed and used by local people for subsistence needs. In Ecuador, it will be necessary to understand what activities are permitted and what type of management actions are possible within protected areas. Once this information is available, the ELSA analysis can help to identify areas within protected areas that could benefit from enhanced management or restoration.

Lastly, Dr. Venter presented the Webtool for ELSA Ecuador developed in 2021 and explained the interface, the methodology for weighting the data layers and the targets to be set at the national level. This analysis will be updated to be framed within the GBF and other targets such as the OMECs.

Input into the science behind the project Prioritizing Nature in Ecuador -Group discussion

To begin to provide information to inform the development of the science for ELSA Phase 2, national experts participating in the workshop provided comments in response to several key questions via a Jamboard. The questions and responses are summarized below.

What should we consider when developing the ELSA methodology in the context of the GBF and the emergent national policy?

- Identified water environmental variables.
- Include threats: oil blocks, mining and active oil fields.
- KBA.
- For the marine part study of NAZCA (2016) and analysis of MIGRAMAR - Rewild 2023.
- Incorporate Conservation and Sustainable Use Areas (ACUS) into the model.
- Modeling can include connectivity variables and management effectiveness.
- WWF is working with Association of Municipalities of Ecuador (AME) and Consortium of Autonomous Provincial Governments of Ecuador (CONGOPE) to improve their geographic and environmental information systems, including downloading and using information layers.
- From various sources. We should coordinate activities because this is related to territorial planning at the subnational level.

Are there protected areas in Ecuador where land conversion and industrial-scale resource extraction are permitted?

- Protective forests: it is possible to develop mining and agroforestry use.
- The only areas that have a constitutional lock to prevent industrial extractives are in the National System of Protected Areas (SNAP).

What kind of management activities are undertaken within protected areas in Ecuador to protect habitat?

- NGO. Creation of protected areas, implementation of three management plans, work with communities, channeling funds for management.
- Academy: Training programs (undergraduate and postgraduate), training plans, biodiversity research and monitoring, biodiversity inventories.

What restoration activities are undertaken within protected areas in Ecuador to enhance habitat?

- No comments.

What are potential OECMs in Ecuador?

- GIZ carried out a study of potential OMEC in 2021.
- The areas of conservation and sustainable use of local governments, which are not found in the national statistics managed by the Ministry.
- Agreements for Sustainable Use and Custody of the Mangrove Ecosystem (AUSCEM), ACUS, municipal and private reserves (NGO).

Are these all places that already exist, or are these places that spatial planning can help identify?

- They do not currently exist in Ecuador.

If they exist but are not recognized, how can territorial planning contribute to demonstrate its biodiversity and other values?

- Through statistical information and geographic dissemination.
- Environmental education and water culture management processes.

- Implement training and dissemination programs on OECM, disseminate the ministerial agreement on the process to enter areas as OECM.

What new or updated data are available for Ecuador?

- Conservation mechanisms: SNAP, BVP, etc. ELSA, Human footprint.
- ACUS National Map (136).
- Private reserves in the south of Ecuador (NCI).
- The academy has new information that has not yet been published, new Spp. that remains to be identified, INABIO has new information.

Who are the key focal points to help us identify and access these data after the workshop?

- Focal point NCI (ACUS).
- Natural Heritage Sub Secretary.
- INABIO, universities
- Birdlife (KBA)
- NAZCA Foundation
- MIGRAMAR
- Directorate of Education, Environmental and Water Information for the Ecological Transition.

SESSION 3: WORK PLAN, STAKEHOLDERS, AND NEXT STEPS IN 2024

Suggested activities and proposed work plan for 2024 - Group discussion

Following the extensive feedback on the science, data, zones, and definition around OECM, PA, and Target 3, Marion Marigo led an interactive discussion on the project's objectives and overall structure. She detailed the proposed structure for the project as follows. She also presented the activities and work plans for 2024 - Q1 2025, which reflect lengthy discussions with the MAATE during 2023. The proposed activities are:

High-level project timeline in Ecuador

Inception Workshop	**March 14, 2024**	• Welcome, vision and objectives • How to best support Ecuador? • Presentation of SCP • Agreement on the work plan, key stakeholders & next steps
Science & policy working group meeting (s)	**March - August 2024**	• *Policy:* Discussion on alignment on the GBF • *Policy:* Policy cohesion mapping between GBF and existing policies • *Science:* Data updates & identification of new data • *Science:* Input into development of the scientific analysis
Stakeholder consultation #2	**August 2024**	• Review of the zones and targets in Ecuador • Presentation of the national datasets used in the analysis • Weighting exercise & first iteration of the analysis • Final national analysis
Capacity building & NBSAP work	**Q4 2024 – Q1 2025**	• Trainings on science, data, stakeholder engagement, and UN Biodiversity Lab • Include results of the project in the NBSAP & other relevant policy docs

ECUADOR - PROPOSED WORK PLAN 2024 – 2025

ACTIVITY	TIMELINE
Stakeholder engagement and participation of key actors	
Stakeholder engagement and outreach across the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, Ministry of Agriculture, Protected Areas Agency, national research institutions, civil society, UNDP country office, and other key organizations.	*November 2023 - February 2024*
Science and data	
Analyze the scope of different partners and organizations working in each country around systematic conservation planning, OECMs, and protected areas to ensure that project activities are complementary and supportive of ongoing activities, including planned work implemented by UNEP-WCMC and national partners.	*January 2024 – April 2024*
Stakeholder consultations to provide input on proposed improvements to the ELSA analysis, guide scientific development and iterate the ELSA map to identify priorities for 30x30 implementation in the country.	*February 2024 & August 2024*
CORE ANALYSIS: Build on the initial scientific analysis and spatial prioritization planning tool created through the ELSA project in each country to include: (1) measures of biodiversity importance other than species richness; (2) social data that are a priority for inclusion to reflect the text of Target 3; (3) new KBA data; (4) management effectiveness and recommended actions within existing protected areas; (5) identification of new protected areas and OECMS, taking into account existing territorial governance and tenure regimes. If UNEP-WCMC has data identifying conditions/pressures within protected areas, we should use it. Focus on the issue of climate and vulnerability to climate change.	*Q2 – Q4 2024*
Support nationally led ELSA analyses to inform national (and sub-national if appropriate) processes on the identification of new protected areas, OECMs and ecological corridors, prioritizing the recognition of existing governance and tenure regimes, and including the identification of potential transboundary protected areas and support to review NBSAPs.	*Q2 - Q4 2024*

ACTIVITY	TIMELINE
Transfer of tools	
Transfer the ELSA tool to a stable location for long-term ownership by the national team (national servers, UNBL workspace, UNICC servers).	*Q4 2024 – Q1 2025*
Refinement and further development of existing UNBL workspaces for each country to support 30x30 work.	*Q3 & Q4 2024*
Capacity strengthening	
Training for the country team and partner agencies to develop and execute stakeholder consultations using the ELSA tool to iterate and produce updated prioritization maps based on changing national priorities.	*Q4 2024 – Q1 2025*
Training for the national team and partners to process data layers for input into the ELSA tool to allow the national team to update all data as new data layers become available. Training for the national team and partners to administer the ELSA tool (either on national servers or at UNBL) and drive updates to technology and data layers.	*Q3 2024 – Q1 2025*
Training for the national team on the UNBL	*Q4 2024 – Q1 2025*
Training on Systematic Conservation Planning	*Q4 2024 – Q1 2025*

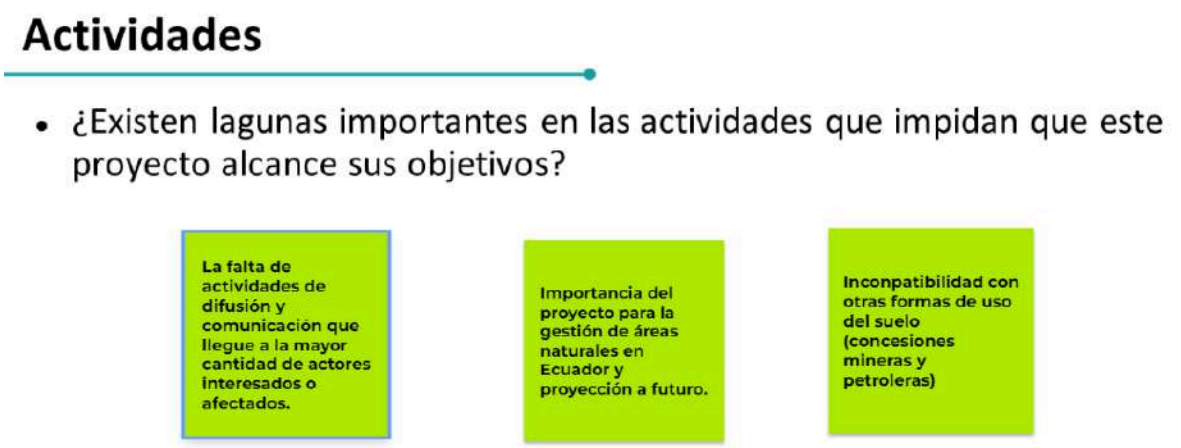
ACTIVITY	TIMELINE
Work on the NBSAP and national policies	
Mobilize stakeholders from all ministries to incorporate the results of the analysis into protected area and OECM planning, including the revision of NBSAPs and the development of national policies and laws. Ensure linkages with the EAS project.	*Q3 2024 – Q1 2025*
Develop a policy brief that analyzes the opportunities for using the ELSA tool and a prioritization analysis to support policy development and implementation for 30x30 (final document with recommendations).	*Q3 2024 – Q1 2025*
Comunicaciones	
Update existing material or develop national and global communications products showcasing use of spatial data and prioritizations to support Target 3 of the GBF.	*Q4 2024 – Q1 2025*

Following her presentation, Marion went back to the Jamboard to capture the feedback from the different stakeholders on several aspects of the project:

About the commitment of the interested parties:

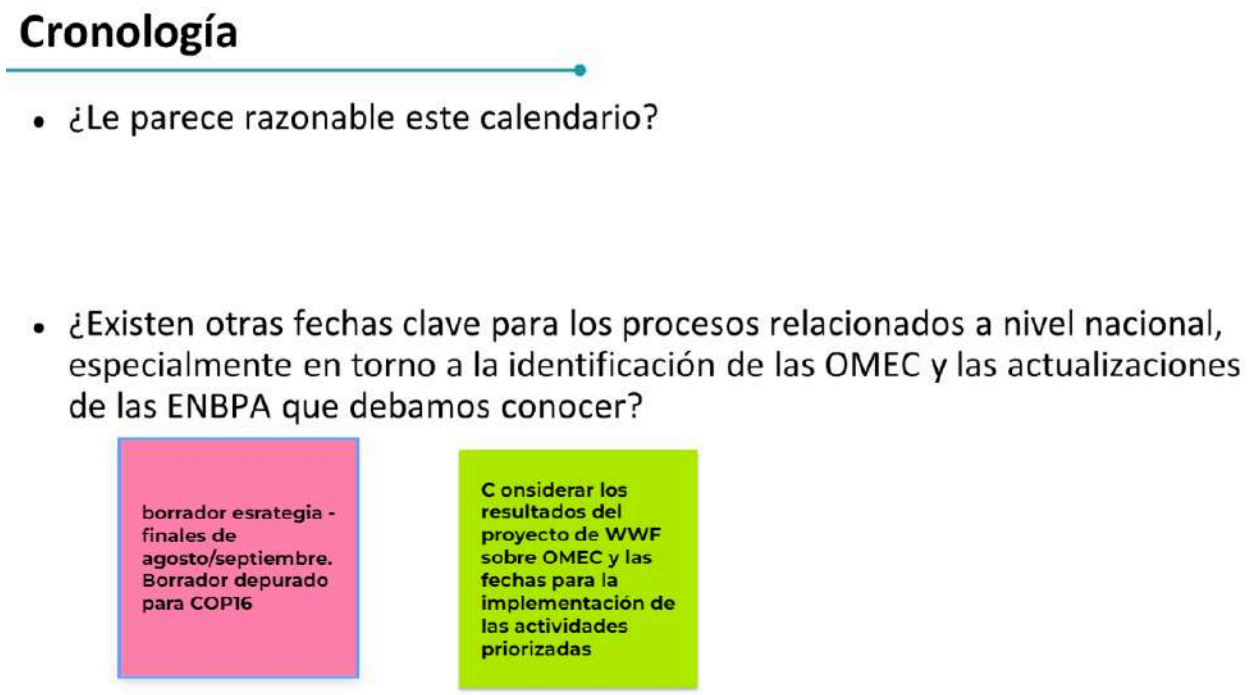
- AME and CONGOPE
- Municipalities Association, prefectures and parochial councils
- Local communities organizations
- Energy and Mines Ministry
- National Federation of Artisanal Fishing Cooperatives of Ecuador (FENACOPEC)
- Private land owners interested in conservation

About the activities:



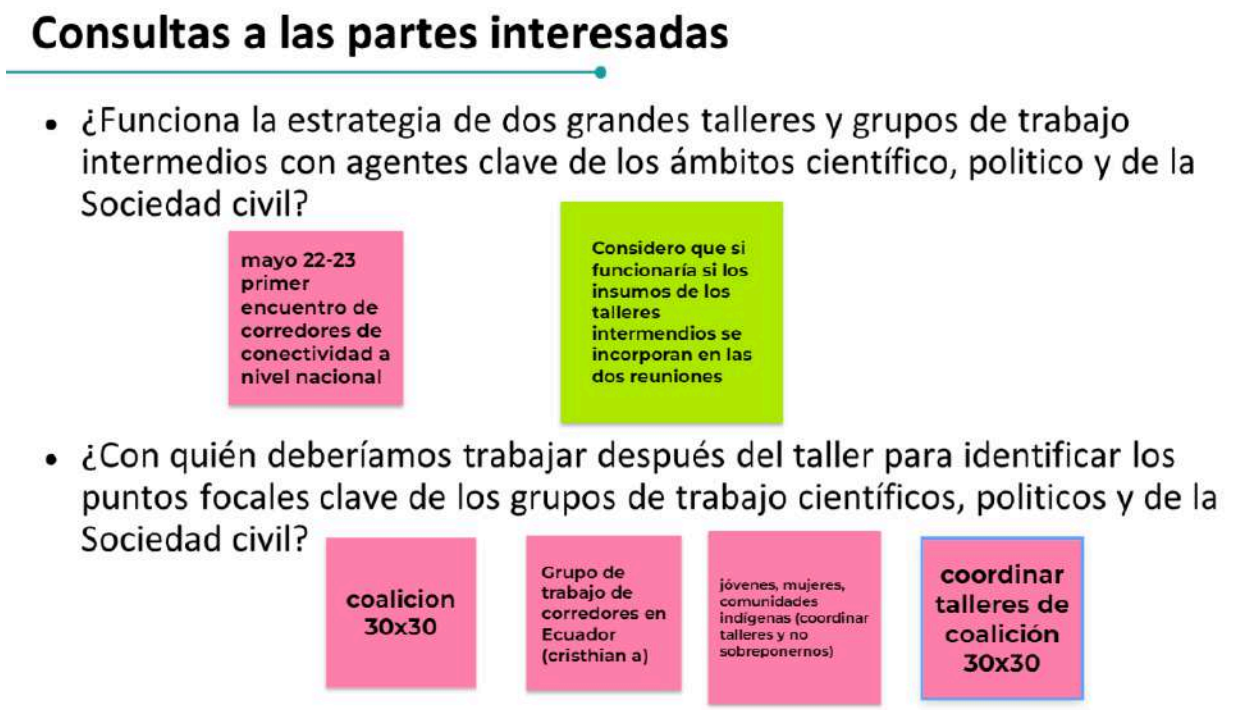
- The lack of dissemination and communication activities that reach the greatest number of interested or affected actors.
- Importance of the project for the management of natural areas in Ecuador and future projection.
- Incompatibility with other forms of land use (mining and oil concessions).

About the timeline:



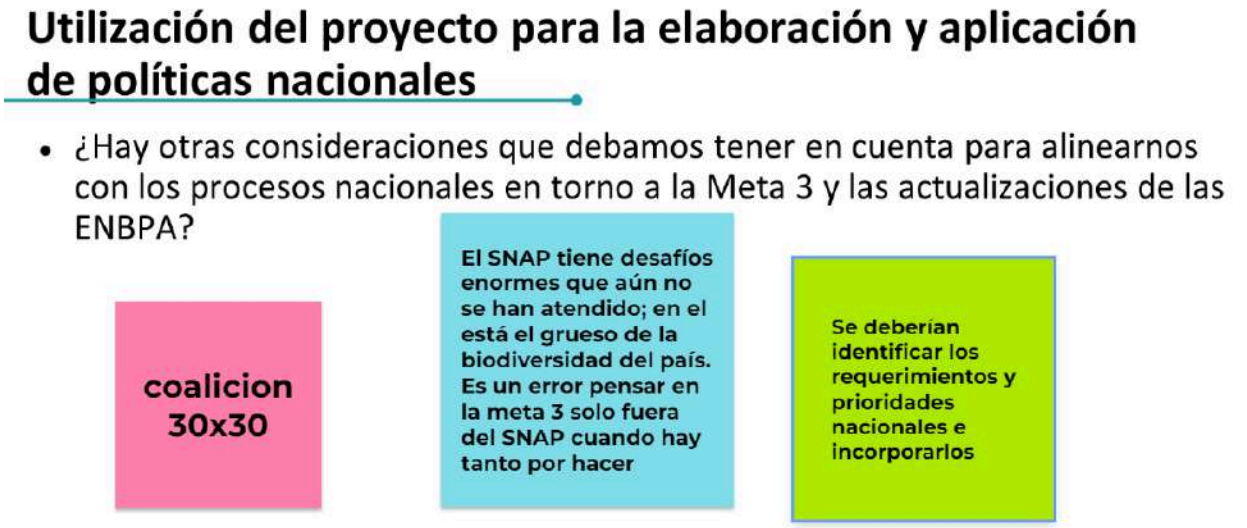
- Draft strategy - end of August/September. Refined draft for COP16.
- Consider the results of the WWF OECM project and the dates for the implementation of prioritized activities.

About consultation with the interested parties:



- Does the strategy of two national consultations and intermediate working groups with key stakeholders work?
    - I consider that it would work if the inputs from the interim workshops are incorporated into the two meetings.
- Who should we work with after the inception workshop to identify the focal points of the working groups on policy and science, including civil society key focal points?
    - 30X30 coalition
    - Corridors group in Ecuador
    - Youth, women, indigenous communities

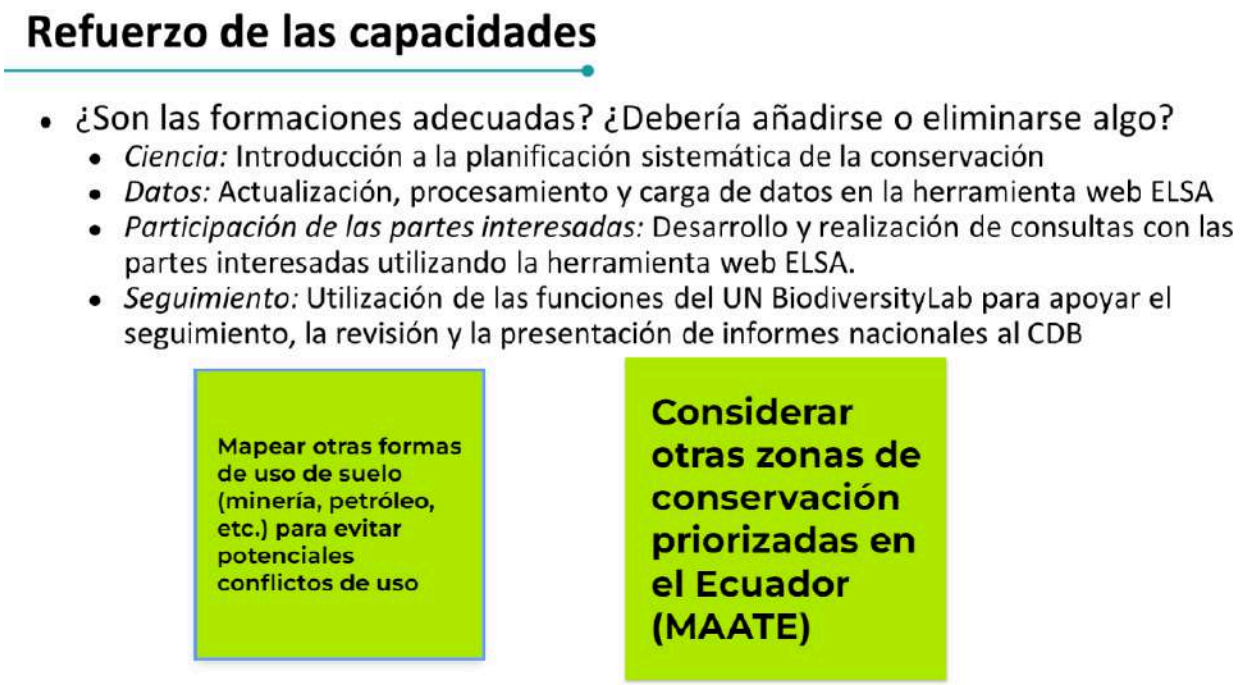
About of how to use the projects outcomes for the elaboration and implementation national policies:



- SNAP has enormous challenges that have not yet been addressed; The bulk of the country's biodiversity is located there. It is a mistake to think about Target 3 only outside of SNAP when there is so much to do.
- 30X30 coalition.
- National requirements and priorities should be identified and incorporated.

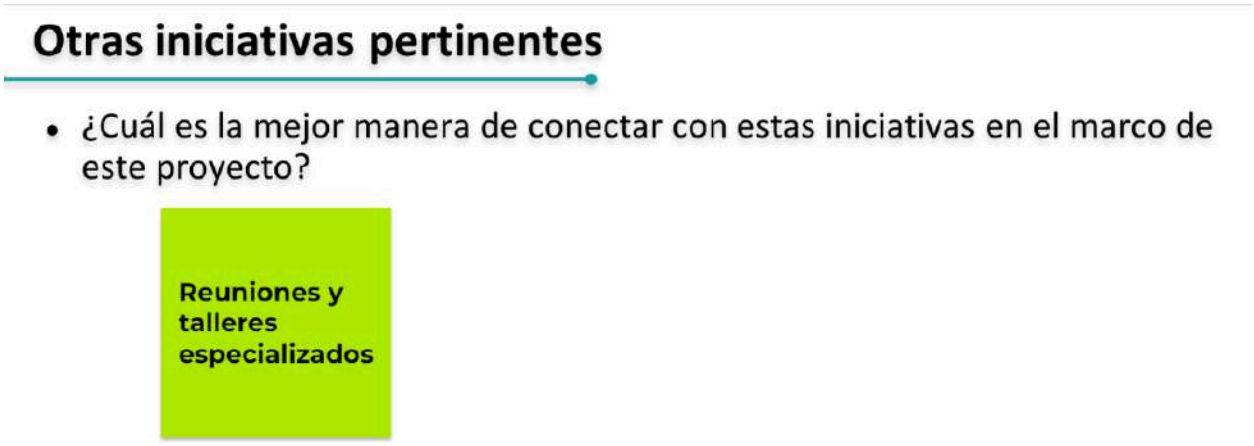
About capacity strengthening:

- Are the workshops adequate? Should we add or eliminate something?
    - Science: introduction to Systematic Conservation Planning.
    - Data: updating, processing and data upload to the ELSA webtool.
    - Interested parties participation: development and implementation of consultations with the interested parties using the ELSA webtool.
    - Monitoring: using the UNBL functionalities to support the monitoring, revision and presentation of national reports to CBD.



- Map other forms of land use (mining, oil, etc.) to avoid potential use conflicts.
- Consider other prioritized conservation areas in Ecuador (MAATE).

About the best option to look for synergies with other initiatives:



- Meetings and specialized workshops.

The team then discussed the importance of including existing indicators in the analysis and linking the web tool and indicators to the update of NBSAP.

Marion concluded the presentation by highlighting the next immediate steps for the project. The annual work plan, reflecting activities for 2024 and 2025, would be finalized and approved by the MAATE after this workshop.

30x30 Coalition - Towards the construction and implementation for Target 3 - Alegría Corral, Re:wild

Alegría presented information gathered together with Esteban Falconí from WWF. The 30x30 Coalition is an initiative that started several years ago as a citizen platform formed by non-governmental organizations, academia and cooperation agencies that voluntarily joined efforts to support MAATE in the implementation of the GBF, especially in Target 3.

The organizations that are part of the 30x30 Coalition are:

- MAATE
- WWF
- WCS
- CI
- TNC
- Re:wild
- NCI
- Fundación Jocotoco / KBA
- RRI
- FFLA
- Grupo Randi Randi (UICN)
- Ecopar
- NCI
- PNUD
- UNEP/WCMC
- CMAP
- Fundación Pachamama
- EcoCiencia
- BirdLife International
- MIGRAMAR
- USFQ
- FIAS
- Andes Amazon Fund
- Nia Tero
- UTPL

The objective is to coordinate all activities working towards Target 3 and align efforts in a cost-effective way. The strategy from the Coalition is based on three key steps to achieve 30% of national territory under conservation:

1. Strengthening of the SNAP
2. Recognition of the OECM
3. Support to the update of the NBSAP

The Coalition 30x30 has identified all projects that are being carried out by stakeholders that contribute to Target 3 such as the identification of new PA, ACUS and APH, financial mechanisms, territorial plans, among others, and as a priority is providing support to the overall update process of the NBSAP led by MAATE.

One aspect that the Coalition considers important is the local process of regularization of indigenous territories and their effective management within the SNAP. In general the main goals that they have achieved are:

- Coordination with MAATE
- Support in the recognition of OMEC in Ecuador as a participatory and multi-actor process
- Technical and legal support

The Coalition aims to invite other initiatives working around Target 3 and continue supporting MAATE.

CONCLUSION OF THE WORKSHOP & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A combination of efforts allowed us to successfully host this inception workshop for the project Prioritizing Nature in Ecuador. The UNDP Nature for Development team extends its deep appreciation to those mentioned below and the many others who joined in this inception workshop.

- To the UNDP Country Office in Ecuador, for its leadership in the project. Thank you, in particular, to Monica Andrade, who has provided valuable guidance and insight into developing and implementing this project in Ecuador; to Arturo Mora, Diego Colina and Marina Ortiz, who followed all the details of the workshop's organization and provided technical feedback; and to the highest level at UNDP CO, for the support provided - thank you to Mathilde Mordt, Resident Representative in Ecuador.

- To MAATE, for providing valuable guidance and insight to develop and implement this project in Ecuador, and a daily support to make this inception workshop happen. Special thanks to Maria Irene Schuldt, Victor Viteri and Cristina Naranjo.
- To other technical specialists of MAATE, specially to Holger Zambrano, Daniel Borja, Ángel Onofa, Ximena Herrera, Danny Guarderas and Cristhian Acurio.
- To representatives of other initiatives that participated in this inception workshop, in particular to Alegría from Re:wild and Esteban Falconí from WWF.
- To our technical partners at UNEP-WCMC for their important support.
- To Jamison Ervin, from UNDP, for creating this vision and inspiring us to explore how it could serve Ecuador, together with Marion Marigo and Annie Virnig.
- To María Veronica Cordova, Partnership Specialist and National Consultant for Ecuador at UNDP, who facilitated the session with Casandra Llosa from UNDP.
- To the lead scientist Oscar Venter, and to the spatial experts Scott Atkinson, Di Zhang, and Leticia Cardozo, who will support this work going forward.
- To Carmelo Vasquez and Flor Tebano, the interpreters.
- To all the participants for sharing their time and knowledge to shape the project to meet Ecuador's needs.