

FP026: Sustainable Landscapes in Eastern Madagascar 2020 APR Summary

Sustainable Landscape Eastern Madagascar (SLEM) Project ('Project'): Key points from the project (Jan 01, 2020 – December 31, 2020)

This 3rd APR for the SLEM project covers months 19-30 of implementation.

Project Management amidst the COVID-19 pandemic

In 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic had profound impacts on the implementation of the Project. All project field activities were suspended on March 20, 2020 and this restriction continued (with few exceptions) through the end of December. CI Madagascar (the Project Executing Entity), in consultation with CI Foundation, project partners, beneficiaries, and the government of Madagascar, determined that project staff and partners traveling from major urban centers to the project's targeted vulnerable communities in remote areas of Madagascar, with little to no health facilities, posed too high a risk to the health and safety of beneficiary communities to be justified.

The project was only able to safely resume implementation of a small sub-set of activities as of December 31, 2020; and these were conducted with the adoption of significant safety protocols to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. The prioritized field activities during the pandemic included a limited number of forest control and local forest patrolling missions that were authorized by CI's Director of Safety and Security. These activities were conducted with extensive safety precautions in place. Approved field work also included assessment missions in late 2020 to communicate with beneficiary communities, in particular those without cell phone service. During these field missions, the project shared COVID-19 toolkits and guides in Malagasy with beneficiaries and key partners to ensure that all safety protocols were followed.

Throughout 2020, the Project continued activities that did not require travel by CI staff, stakeholders, or community members. These activities included revision of community in-kind agreement proposals, procurement planning, remote data analyses, reporting, community patrols of adjacent forest areas, support payments to farmer trainers, community development of tree and food-crop nurseries, and work with the government to begin development of the Climate Change Trust Fund (CCTF). The project also scaled up communications activities in the absence of in-person meetings, and produced four films on the project interventions and its beneficiaries.

Other key activities and impacts of the Project in 2020 include:

- 121,300ha of forest patrolled by communities; these 1104 patrols identified fires, deforestation, and illegal activity - triggering 21 forest control missions by law enforcement agencies, resulting in 130+ arrests.
- 317ha of forest restored across 17 municipalities, through community planting of ~183,000 native trees with an average survival rate of 77%
- 190,400 seedlings produced by project-supported nurseries.
- Beneficiary agricultural production included 12.4 T of beans, 32.5 T of rice, 73.4 T of ginger & 1.9 T of Bambara peas. A subset survey of 559 households indicated that sales from project supported

crops were approximately 45M Ariary from one harvest (2 / 3 harvests per year are expected, depending on the specific crop).

- 24 fire warnings from the Firecast system were provided to communities and law enforcement agencies. Fire frequency was observed to be 17% higher in 2020 than in 2019.

- A detailed, practical guide in Malagasy on gender issues was produced for distribution to lead farmers, producer groups, and beneficiary households.

- The percentage of female farmer trainers increased from 24% in 2019 to 35% in 2020.

- 10 articles on climate change were published in national newspapers and 96 radio spots were broadcast.

- In total 141 agricultural showcases were operational in 2020, this includes the number of new agricultural showcases developed in 2020, and those established in 2019.

- Prior to the onset of COVID-19 travel restrictions, the project worked with 79 new community associations, representing 5534 households (approximately 33,000 individuals) to develop proposals for training and in-kind grants. These communities will finalize their proposals, sign conservation agreements, and receive grants in 2021 when field work fully resumes.

The most significant impact of the pandemic on the Project's planned activities was the postponement of the procurement and delivery of in-kind grants and training to beneficiary communities. Due to travel restrictions, in-kind grants were delivered to only 1,313 households in 2020. These 1,313 households had received an earlier delivery of goods in 2019, with the 2020 delivery being a completion of the same tranche.

Due to COVID-19 and poor telecommunications infrastructure in Madagascar, meetings with Government of Madagascar officials, stakeholders, partners, and beneficiaries were not possible and prevented the implementation of a variety of additional planned Project activities, including household surveys of beneficiaries and updates to the management plans of the CAZ and COFAV protected areas.

The economic impacts of the pandemic on the Project's beneficiary population were severe. Trade between towns and the larger cities of Madagascar was halted, public transportation was banned, access to markets was greatly reduced, and much higher prices for all goods were observed. Largely due to this economic insecurity, more deforestation took place in the protected areas of CAZ and COFAV in 2020 than in 2019. A compounding factor was the reduction in project-supported patrolling of forests and reduced enforcement activities by government officials. To secure food and income, communities illegally cleared land, sought out NTFPs, timber, and pursued mining opportunities in the project's target geographies. These activities resulted in a 30% decrease in emissions reductions in 2020, 774,175 tCO₂e compared to 1,061,455 tCO₂e in 2019.

The other significant change for FP026 this year was that the European Investment Bank (EIB) formally withdrew from its participation as co-Accredited Entity of SLEM / FP026 in June 2020. Neither EIB, nor its EE (Mirova Natural Capital, formerly Althelia) had started implementation of EIB components of the project at the time of withdrawal.

Financial overview:

Budget and Expenditure¹

	Budget Y3	Expenditure Y3	Expenditure Rate Y3	Budget Project Total	Expenditure Project Total	Expenditure Rate Project Total
GCF financing	\$ 3,245,648	\$ 1,474,800	45%	\$ 18,500,000	\$ 4,539,774	25%
Co- financing	\$ 163,132	\$ 242,159	148%	\$ 771,318	\$ 735,743	95%
Project total	\$ 3,408,780	\$ 1,716,959	50%	\$ 19,271,318	\$ 5,275,517	27%

Disbursements

Number of Disbursements Y3	Disbursement Amount Y3	Number of Disbursements Project Total	Disbursement Amount Project Total
1	\$1,900,000	4	\$6,000,000

¹ Expenditure figures exclude reported commitments