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# Gender Assessment

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## **FP144: Costa Rica REDD-plus Results-Based Payments for 2014 and 2015**

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**GREEN  
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## Gender Assessment and Action Plan

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The Gender Action Plan of Costa Rica's National REDD+ Strategy is part of the efforts that the REDD+ Secretariat has implemented since 2011 to appropriately address gender issues in REDD+ processes. These processes are based on the Gender and REDD+ Roadmap developed by the REDD+ Secretariat in 2016. Through these efforts, the REDD+ Secretariat developed the first analysis of the country's current situation in terms of forests, gender and climate change mitigation, including this publication.

To obtain the information for this publication, several field visits were organized during 2018 and interviews were conducted with government officials, members of local communities and other relevant stakeholders; all interviews and photographs included in this report had the informed consent of their protagonists which was provided during the field visits.

The team gratefully acknowledges the contributions of women and men from local communities who shared their experiences as part of this publication.

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### Acronyms

ACOMUITA	Association of Indigenous Women of Talamanca
ADITICA	Asociación de Desarrollo Integral del Territorio Indígena Cabécar (Association for the Comprehensive Development of the Cabécar Indigenous Territory)
ASADAS	Administrative Associations of the Community Aqueduct and Sewer Systems in Costa Rica
ASP	Protected Wilderness Areas
CATIE	Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Centre
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CENIGA	National Geoenvironmental Information Center
CDB	Convention on Biological Diversity
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Conference on Climate Change
CNP	National Production Council
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
COLAC	Local Conservation Area Council
CONAC	4-S Clubs National Council
CONAGEBIO	National Commission for Biodiversity Management
COVIRENAS	Natural Resources Surveillance Committees
CORAC	Regional Councils of Conservation Areas
CREF	Forest Emission Reduction Contracts
CTDR	Territorial Councils for Rural Development
DCC	Climate Change Directorate
DIGECA	Directorate of Environmental Quality Management
ECADERT	Central American Strategy for Territorial Rural Development
ENAHO	National Household Survey
ENCC	Costa Rican National Climate Change Strategy
ENGBC	Low Carbon Livestock Strategy
EN-REDD+	National REDD+ Strategy
FCPF	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
FONAFIFO	National Forest Financing Fund
FUNCEJE	Cerros de Jesús Foundation
FUNDECOR	Foundation for the Development of the Central Volcanic Range
FUNPADEM	Foundation for Peace and Democracy
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIZ	German Agency for Technical Cooperation in Costa Rica

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IFAM	Municipal Development and Advisory Institute
IMAS	Joint Institute for Social Assistance
IMN	National Meteorological Institute
Inopesca	Costa Rican Fishing and Aquaculture Institute
INEC	National Statistics and Census Institute
INA	National Learning Institute
INAMU	National Women's Institute
INDER	Institute of Rural Development
INEC	National Institute of Statistics and Census
MAG	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock
MIDEPLAN	Ministry of Planning and Economic Policy
MINAE	Ministry of Environment and Energy
NAMA	Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Measure
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
ONF	National Forestry Office
PAM	Policies, Actions and Measures of the REDD+ Strategy
PAN	National Action Programme to Combat Land Degradation in Costa Rica
PEDRT	State Policy for Costa Rican Territorial Rural Development
PEN	State of the Nation Program
PIEG	National Policy for Gender Equality and Equity
PIR	Relevant Stakeholders
PNACC	National Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change
PNDF	National Forestry Development Program
PND	National Development Plan
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
PES	Payment for Environmental Services
PES Program	Payment for Environmental Services Program
RECOPE	Costa Rican Oil Refinery
REDD+	Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and conserving, sustainably managing and enhancing forest carbon stocks.
Rescamur	San Carlos Rural Women Network
RIFA	International Analog Forestry Network
RIBCA	Bribri and Cabécar Indigenous Network
R-PP	REDD+ Readiness Proposal
SEN	National Statistical System



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SEPLASA	Executive Secretariat for Environmental Planning
SESA	Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment
SFA	Agroforestry Systems
SINAC	National System of Conservation Areas
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
UNAFOR	National Forestry Union
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
WISEA	Widening of Informed Stakeholder Involvement to REDD+

## Gender Assessment and Action Plan

### 1. Executive Summary

#### Key Messages

- This report summarizes the process for developing the Gender Action Plan (GAP) of the Costa Rica National REDD+ Strategy, the results found, and the actions proposed to address gender gaps and enhance opportunities differentiated by gender when implementing it.
- The Gender Action Plan of the National REDD+ Strategy is the country's first gender action plan on climate issues and marks a clear path for continuing work on gender and environment in Costa Rica.
- In Costa Rica there are about 12,598 women producers who own 106,564 hectares of land in different regions of the country, representing 15.6% of all farms and 8.1% of the total agricultural area belonging to natural persons in the country.
- Many of the areas with a high percentage of farms owned by women producers coincide with areas which have a lower social development index, as well as with priority areas for forest conservation and management, for the restoration of forest landscapes and ecosystems, and for the promotion of low-carbon production systems.
- There is therefore great potential to increase the participation of these women in sustainable productive landscape initiatives and other land-use related activities, which can generate resources and improve their livelihoods while contributing to the conservation and sustainable management of forest priority areas in the country.
- However, rural Costa Rican women face a number of gender gaps related to the recognition, procedures and distribution in natural resource management that prevent them from engaging in and benefiting from these initiatives.
- The gender analysis carried out as part of the Gender Action Plan (GAP) allowed for a better understanding of the reality of Costa Rican women and men and for obtaining data that show that there are gender-differentiated roles, gaps and opportunities in Costa Rica in relation to natural resource management.
- Thus, the GAP proposes a range of activities for each of the National REDD+ Strategy Policies, Actions and Measures (PAMs) that can generate important rural development opportunities for a wide range of women, while reducing deforestation and forest degradation and increasing carbon stocks.

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- The design of the GAP was based on a bottom-up participatory approach, which allowed for the proposal of concrete actions that reflect the reality of the country and the validation of women's ideas and contributions, as well as greater ownership of the GAP development process by the women and groups consulted.

**Costa Rica shows great advances in the creation of public policies in the environmental sector that have resulted in a clear trend towards the recovery of the country's forest cover in recent decades.** This is due to the country's efforts to design early forest policies that allowed it to reduce emissions by the sector and maintain the vital functions of critical ecosystems, improving its resilience to climate change and providing access opportunities to key environmental and economic resources, especially in rural areas.

**On the subject of gender, environmental policies show a positive evolution over time.** The country has a specific and robust regulatory framework to promote gender equality; it is a signatory and has ratified the main declarations and conventions to promote women's rights; and it has the National Women's Institute (INAMU). This has had a major impact on environmental, forest and climate change policies which in the last decade have evolved from a gender-neutral approach to a gender-sensitive or responsive one.

Since 2016, the REDD+ Secretariat, made up of FONAFIFO and SINAC, has been preparing a Gender and REDD Road Map that concludes with the development of the Gender Action Plan (GAP) of the Costa Rica REDD+ Strategy (EN-REDD+), in collaboration with gender experts, State institutions, civil society organizations, and diverse groups of indigenous women and small rural producers. This report summarizes the process for developing the GAP, the results found, and the proposed actions to address gender gaps and enhance gender-differentiated opportunities by implementing the National REDD+ Strategy. To this end, the REDD+ Secretariat conducted the country's first gender analysis on forests and climate change, which included a review of the regulatory, institutional, academic and social framework related to gender and relevant to REDD+, complemented by field visits and participatory processes to identify gaps and opportunities, case studies and lessons learned.

**Gender analysis allowed for a better understanding of the reality of Costa Rican women and men in relation to forest management and for obtaining quantitative and qualitative data on gender-differentiated roles, gaps and opportunities.** Costa Rican women face a number of gender gaps related to the recognition, procedures and distribution in natural

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resource management that limit their participation in initiatives to reduce deforestation and forest degradation, summarized below.

Recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women are not visible in the agricultural and environmental sector.</li> <li>• Women have fewer farms and these are smaller in size.</li> <li>• Gender-specific contributions and knowledge related to forest conservation and management are not recognized.</li> </ul>
Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women find it more difficult to participate in forestry activities and projects because they have more care responsibilities.</li> <li>• Gender stereotypes limit women's participation in forestry activities and projects.</li> <li>• Fewer women participate in decision-making processes related to natural resource management.</li> <li>• Women producers have less access to information and their farms receive less technical support and extension services.</li> <li>• There is a lower percentage of professional women doing technical work and extension work.</li> <li>• Officials of environmental institutions have limited capacities to implement gender-sensitive or responsive initiatives.</li> </ul>
Distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women producers show higher poverty rates.</li> <li>• The farms of women producers receive less financial support.</li> <li>• The number of women-owned farms included in the PES has been decreasing in recent years.</li> </ul>

**At the same time, there is great potential to increase the participation of women from different regions of the country in sustainable productive landscape initiatives as they are interested in a wide range of activities aligned with the National REDD+ Strategy.** In Costa Rica there are about 12,598 women producers who own 106,563.6 hectares of agricultural land. This represents 15.6% of the farms and 8.1% of the total agricultural area belonging to natural persons in the country. Prioritized activities include reforestation, ecotourism, cocoa cultivation, plant nurseries, home garden improvement, collection of non-timber forest products (medicinal plants, seeds or species for construction) and the development of agroforestry systems. Most of these activities can be carried out close to women's homes allowing them to be part of the activities proposed in the National REDD+ Strategy.

**The activities included in the GAP can generate significant rural development opportunities that generate resources and improve the livelihoods of a wide range of women while reducing deforestation and forest degradation and increasing carbon stocks.** The gender analysis found that many of the areas with a high percentage of the farms that belong to

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female producers coincide with areas with a lower social development index, as well as with priority areas for forest conservation and management, for forest landscape and ecosystem restoration, and for the promotion of low-carbon production systems. The analysis also found that many of the activities prioritized by women during the development of the GAP coincide with or can be strengthened with activities included in the Territorial Rural Development Plans of the country's rural territories.

**The GAP is structured on the basis of the 6 Policies, Actions and Measures (PAMs) of the National REDD+ Strategy and is composed of 6 gender objectives (one for each PAM) and 20 expected results,** together with the definition of specific actions for the achievement of results, monitoring indicators and responsible institutions. The GAP proposes a range of actions that encompass (a) policy changes at the national level; (b) institutional strengthening; and (c) changes at the local level through gender-responsive forestry projects. Hopefully, through these actions, it will be possible to address priority gender considerations in the forest sector and establish strategic alliances between different government institutions, NGOs and women's groups for their implementation.

**The design of the GAP was based on a bottom-up participatory approach.** This made it possible to propose concrete actions that reflect the reality of the country and to validate the ideas and contributions of women, as well as a greater appropriation of the process of development of the GAP by the women and groups that were publicly consulted, turning it into a proposal for concrete social and environmental transformation based on the needs and priorities of the men and women who day after day contribute to the conservation and sustainable management of Costa Rican forests. In addition, the REDD+ Secretariat has achieved an important achievement in the GAP through joint work, synergies and communication with INAMU during the GAP development process.

**This GAP reasserts Costa Rica's commitment to human rights and gender and marks a clear path for continuing work on gender and the environment in the country.** The National REDD+ Strategy GAP is the country's first gender action plan on climate and an important step that contributes to the commitment made in its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC). Through the development of this GAP, Costa Rica becomes one of the few countries that have developed a Gender Action Plan for its REDD+ Strategy.

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### 2. Introduction

*In recent years, the Government of Costa Rica has recognized the importance of appropriately addressing gender issues in REDD+ processes<sup>1</sup>.* The REDD+ Secretariat, comprising the National Forest Financing Fund (FONAFIFO) and the National System of Conservation Areas (SINAC), as the executing unit, has been integrating gender issues into various processes related to the preparation of the National REDD+ Strategy (EN-REDD+), in collaboration with women gender experts, civil society organizations, various indigenous women groups and small rural forest women producers.

*Through the development of the Gender Action Plan (GAP), Costa Rica becomes one of the few countries to build a GAP for its National REDD+ Strategy.* Costa Rica was one of the first countries to commit to the issue and began to integrate the gender approach in the readiness stage for REDD+ since 2011. As a result, the National REDD+ Strategy reaffirms its commitment to the gender mandates of the United Nations Framework Conference on Climate Change (UNFCCC) that suggest that the national REDD+ strategies or action plans must address gender considerations.

*The REDD+ Secretariat has recognized that working with a gender perspective implies not only mentioning the issue as a priority or as a principle, but also identifying relevant gender considerations and proposing concrete actions to promote gender equality as part of the implementation of the National REDD+ Strategy.* To fulfill the mandate of the UNFCCC and harmonize it with this proactive vision, Costa Rica began to include specific actions to address gender considerations in the National REDD+ Strategy Implementation Plan, where it proposed as an enabling condition, to carry out and operationalize a strategy for the participation of gender and special population groups. The first step of this strategy was the development of a Gender and REDD+ Roadmap for Costa Rica in 2016, through a participatory process that allowed the identification of gender considerations relevant to REDD+, based on the country context, as well as gender inequalities, the situation experienced by women, lessons learned from previous forestry projects and the experiences of Relevant Stakeholders (by its acronym in Spanish, PIR).

*Based on this Roadmap, in 2017 the REDD+ Secretariat proposes to develop the ENREDD+ GAP through a multi-stakeholder process based on the reality and proposals of Costa Rican women.* To this end, the REDD+ Secretariat carries out the first analysis of the country's situation in terms of forests, gender and climate change mitigation, which included field

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<sup>1</sup> REDD+ refers to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation, forest degradation, and the conservation, sustainable management and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.

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visits, case studies, analysis of inequalities, opportunities, challenges and lessons learned, as well as analysis of the regulatory, institutional, academic and social framework related to gender and relevant to REDD+. The actions proposed by the GAP are concrete and detailed since they are based on the National REDD+ Strategy Policies, Actions and Measures (PAM) that were approved by the different PIR of the country. To develop these actions, gender considerations relevant to the GAPs and their Implementation Plan were analysed in order to ensure that the expected results are not only achievable, but that they address the gaps faced by Costa Rican women and recognize gender roles and how they contribute to the conservation and sustainable management of forests.

*Finally, it is important to mention that since 2015, Costa Rica leads the gender negotiations within the UNFCCC and is one of the administrators of the Gender Action Plan for this Convention.* This commitment is translated into national policies, where Costa Rica's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) recognizes that the country is in favour of a transformational gender approach in climate governance and supports women's participation in the definition of policies and the implementation of climate actions. The National REDD+ Strategy GAP is the country's first gender action plan on climate matters and is therefore an important step contributing to the country's commitment to its NDC.

*The objective of this report is to present the Gender Action Plan for the Costa Rican National REDD+ Strategy.* The report includes a summary of relevant information on gender and forests obtained during the analysis of the current country situation, the analysis of the gaps and opportunities in the country on which the GAP is based; the expected results, actions and indicators proposed in the action plan and an analysis of the relationship of the GAP with the main international gender mandates. This action plan also reaffirms Costa Rica's commitment to human rights and gender equality, and shows how a country can implement its gender-sensitive climate policies through a gender-responsive climate strategy. However, the National REDD+ Strategy GAP is not only a compliance instrument, it is a concrete and novel proposal for social and environmental transformation, based on the reality, needs and priorities of the women and men who contribute day after day to the true conservation and sustainable management of Costa Rican forests.

Terminology used in this report
Gender Considerations
It occurs when gender is recognized as a key factor in analyses.

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<p>Gender-Sensitive</p> <p>It occurs when gender is recognized as an essential issue and the norms, gender roles and inequalities are considered as part of its objectives.</p>
<p>Gender-Responsive</p> <p>It occurs when gender is considered as a component of its expected results and outputs and includes gender indicators in its monitoring and evaluation processes.</p>
<p>Gender-Transformative</p> <p>It occurs when unequal gender relations are transformed to promote control over resources, equitable decision-making and empowerment.</p>

### 3. Methodology

*The development of the GAP was carried out by the REDD+ Secretariat with the support of the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) and the World Bank.* The process for developing the GAP was based on five key<sup>2</sup>principles: (a) to be based on an approach led by and adapted to country circumstances; (b) develop greater knowledge of the country's current situation and successful experiences; (c) build on national capacities and structures; (d) define a strategic approach to promote gender equality in national environmental and climate strategies; and (e) promote partnerships to achieve the proposed strategic outcomes.

*The development process of the GAP proposes a conceptual framework with three lines of action that encompass gender considerations relevant to the country.* Most of these gender aspects were evidenced when the Gender and REDD+ Road Map for Costa Rica was drawn up in 2016 and three specific lines of action with ten gender considerations were proposed (see Figure 1)<sup>3</sup>. This approach was chosen because the country had three major gender gaps to consider before proposing specific actions related to the National REDD+ Strategy:

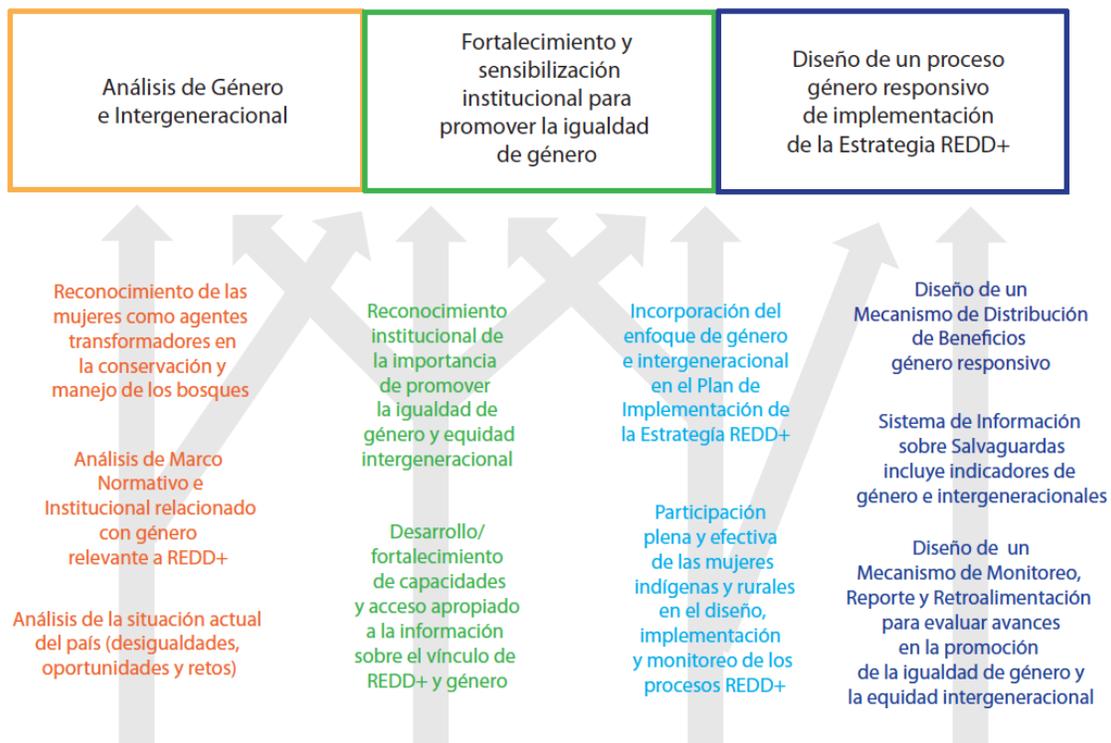
<sup>2</sup> These principles are set out in the five proposed actions to operationalize the World Bank's Gender Strategy.

<sup>3</sup> It is important to mention that the roadmap had 4 lines of action, but in the case of the design of the GAP it was considered that the last two could be included in a broader one that covered all the dimensions included in the EN-REDD+ and GAP proposals.

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(a) lack of recognition of women as forest conservation agents; (b) lack of information on gender and forests; and (c) the need to strengthen institutional capacities and awareness on gender and environmental issues.

Figure 1. Conceptual framework for the development of the National REDD+ Strategy GAP.



*A multi-stakeholder participatory process that considered the identified principles and conceptual framework was proposed in order to define the specific actions and elaborate the GAP.* It is important to emphasize that the three main lines of action are interrelated; therefore, the methodology was based on a theory of change that identified the activities required to obtain the expected results (see Table 1). The methodology combined an analysis of national literature and data, along with interviews, field visits, sensitization workshops, and a national, participatory and *multi-stakeholder* validation process. The combination of these activities made it possible to obtain quantitative and qualitative data, identify undocumented information, including case studies throughout the country, and receive various recommendations on local, national and institutional aspects.

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Table 1. Summary of the proposal for the development of the GAP and the results obtained

Gap that was addressed	Lines of action	Activities performed	Results obtained
<p>Little recognition of women as forest conservation agents.</p> <p>There is a lack of information on gender and forests.</p>	<p>Gender analysis.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Review of 55 laws and plans, national strategies related to social and gender equality (2), environment (9), forestry and REDD+ (9), climate change (13), rural development (4) and Rural Territorial Development Plans (28).</li> <li>* Review of international mandates (UNFCCC, CBD, UNCCD ODS, CEDAW and UNDRIP) and institutional policies (WB).</li> <li>* 16 interviews with various national focal points.</li> <li>* Mapping of gender expert staff, representatives of women's mechanisms and interested associations and women.</li> <li>* Review of 67 forestry and gender publications relevant to the REDD+ process in Costa Rica.</li> <li>* Gender analysis of forest, agricultural, forest management and conservation data, land tenure and socioeconomic gaps.</li> <li>* Documentation of 22 gender and forest case studies.</li> <li>* Field visits to 5 communities. 2 indigenous (Bribri, and Cabécar), 3 rural communities (Hojancha, Sarapiquí and Osa Peninsula).</li> </ul>	<p>Costa Rica has a gender-related analysis of the normative, institutional, academic and social framework relevant to REDD+.</p> <p>Costa Rica has gender-differentiated environmental, social and economic data for regions with high potential for forest conservation and management.</p> <p>Costa Rica has a summary of the current situation of gaps, needs, opportunities, and gender-differentiated contributions to the forestry sector.</p>
<p>The need to strengthen institutional capacities and awareness-raising on gender and</p>	<p>Institutional strengthening and awareness-raising to promote</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* 2 national workshops with 53 people representing government, international cooperation, indigenous women's organizations, women's associations, brigades, indigenous women and women producers.</li> </ul>	<p>Costa Rica strengthens its capacities to implement EN-REDD+ in a gender-responsive manner.</p>

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environmental issues.	gender equality.	* Training module on "Gender, Forests and REDD+" for environmental project implementers.	Implementers of environmental initiatives have gender knowledge and tools.
Few opportunities to involve and promote women as forest conservation agents.	Development of the Gender Action Plan for the National REDD+ Strategy.	<p>* GAP has a matrix with expected outcomes, activities, indicators and allies based on the PAM included in the National REDD+ Strategy.</p> <p>* GAP incorporates information obtained during the gender analysis and the process of strengthening and sensitization.</p> <p>* National Validation Workshop with 101 participants representing government, international cooperation, academia, civil society, indigenous peoples, women's associations, first responders, indigenous women and women producers.</p>	<p>Costa Rica has a Gender Action Plan for the National REDD+ Strategy with concrete actions to promote gender equality in various processes related to GAPs.</p> <p>The GAP includes a summary of gaps and opportunities that projects should consider so that women can participate in and benefit from forest conservation and management projects.</p>

*The gradual implementation of this process made it possible to obtain and articulate the information needed to construct the GAP.* The actions and suggestions identified and proposed during the activities of the first two lines of action, gender analysis and institutional awareness, determined the actions, indicators and partnerships proposed in the GAP for each of the National REDD+ Strategy PAMs (see Figure 2). It should be noted that the second axis for the development of the GAP was very important since one of the greatest challenges faced by personnel working on environmental issues, according to the interviews conducted, is to have the appropriate capacities and tools to incorporate the gender perspective in their initiatives, programs, and projects. Another fundamental point for the development of the GAP was the field visits that allowed to understand the reality of rural women and men. Finally, once the draft GAP was developed, its validation process with representatives from government, civil society, rural communities, indigenous peoples, academia and gender experts was key. This space allowed for greater ownership of the GAP and helped strengthen strategic alliances between government institutions, civil society and women's groups for subsequent implementation. The GAP development process also generated several lessons learned that could be considered in similar initiatives, which are summarized below.

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Table 2. Lessons Learned: Characteristics of the Process for Developing the Costa Rica GAP

**The REDD+ Secretariat led the GAP development process.**

The active involvement of the REDD+ Secretariat made it possible to strengthen the capacities of public officials throughout the process, establish alliances with other government institutions, promote greater ownership of the GAP at the institutional level, and the objectives and actions proposed in the GAP were more specific and harmonized with the National REDD Strategy PAM and the institutional operational plans (IOP) of the institutions in charge of implementing the National REDD+ Strategy.

**The development of the GAP was based on strategic alliances with other institutions.**

For the development and implementation of the GAP, a strategic alliance was established with the National Women's Institute (INAMU), a national entity that leads the promotion and protection of women's human rights in conjunction with the Costa Rican State and civil society. Through this partnership, gender issues were reinserted as part of MINAE's actions and INAMU integrated environmental issues as part of the women's agenda and the National Policy for Effective Equality between Men and Women 2018-2030.

**The development of the GAP was based on a proposed theory of change.**

Identifying the gaps and proposing three interrelated lines of action allowed the entire GAP design process to be articulated. As a result, the actions proposed for the first two lines of action, gender analysis and capacity building, were progressively implemented, which was necessary before designing the action plan to address national gaps in gender and forests. This means that the expected results and concrete actions of the first two lines of action were the necessary enabling conditions to design the GAP and implement its actions.

**The GAP was developed using a methodology that included a combination of analytical and participatory approaches.**

Thanks to this methodology, very diverse data were collected that allowed for proposing actions in the GAP and that have an impact on a national and local scale and contribute to addressing gaps and enhancing opportunities in diverse environmental sectors. Complementing the desk research with focus groups and workshops highlighted the importance of visiting and listening to various PIR in the country, especially those in local communities.

**The development of the GAP was based on a "bottom-up" approach.**

This approach made it possible to propose concrete actions in the GAP that reflect the reality of the country and to validate the ideas and contributions of women, which made it possible for the women and groups consulted to take greater ownership of the GAP development process.

**The development of the GAP was combined with a gender-sensitization process on gender and forest-related issues at the national and local levels.**

Through the activities implemented as part of the gender analysis, it was possible to sensitize and share information both for the public officials interviewed and for the communities visited. On the other hand, holding two awareness-raising workshops at the national level provided information to a wide range of actors at the national level.

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### 4. National REDD+ Strategy, Forests and Gender in Costa Rica

#### Forest condition

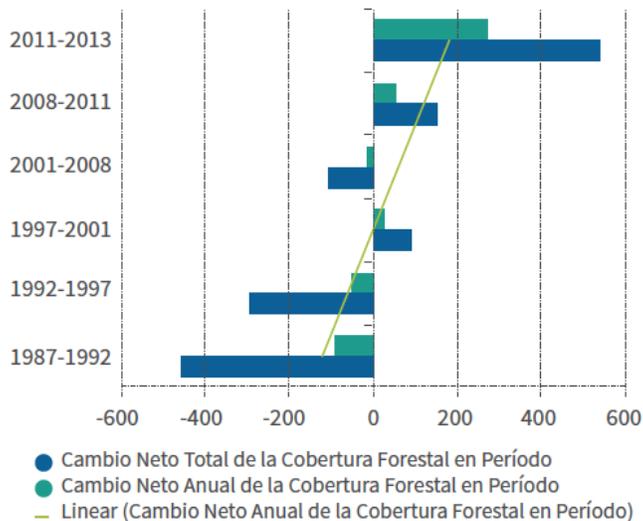
*Costa Rica has made great strides in the creation of public policies that have promoted the creation of protected wilderness areas and payment programs for environmental services, which have made it possible to combat deforestation, the recovery of forest cover, sustainable forest management, the creation of support institutions and the development of financial instruments for the conservation and recovery of forest ecosystems.* Costa Rica has 3,218,468 ha of forest cover, of which 2,418,940 ha are mature forests. Between 1986-2013, annual gross anthropogenic deforestation has remained in the range of 23,255 to 54,442 hectares per year; forest regeneration has increased substantially and the coverage of growing secondary forests has increased steadily over time.

*As a result of these efforts, Costa Rica's forest cover shows a clear recovery trend.* The country went from being a loser to a net winner of native forests. Between 1997 and 2013 the net deforested area fell steadily from the beginning of the period and the net regenerated area grew consistently towards the end of the period, evidencing a trend of increased coverage, as shown in Figure 2. This evidences the country's success in designing early forest policies that allowed it to reduce emissions in the sector and maintain vital critical ecosystem functions, improving its resilience to climate change and providing access opportunities to key environmental and economic resources to local communities, especially in rural areas.

Figure 2. Change in the forest area of Costa Rica for the period between 1987-2013 (km<sup>2</sup>).

Source EN-REDD+ COSTA RICA

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*However, the problem of deforestation and degradation in Costa Rica has not been eradicated.* Although forest cover is growing, there are other areas where deforestation continues and land use changes continue moving from forest to other uses. Analysis of the time series of land use change shows a gradient of deforestation in mature forests that is inversely related to the level of restriction of the management category, where unprotected areas suffer 40% more deforestation than those outside Protected Wilderness Areas (ASP). The conversion of forests for agricultural and livestock use, access to wood and the prohibition on land use change set by Costa Rican legislation, which makes land owners avoid the recovery of forest cover from becoming forest, are among the causes to which deforestation is attributed to. On the other hand, small forest producers and farmers argue that over-regulation and the administrative ban on sustainable forest management of primary and secondary natural forests; the restriction of access to PES or recognition of the value of the standing tree to owners and possessors of natural forests; the lack of competitiveness of forest use against alternative use; and the weakness of the State in the implementation of control mechanisms, are also elements that encourage deforestation and degradation.

### National Environmental Policy

*Costa Rica has an environmental regulatory framework that guarantees its inhabitants the right to a healthy and ecologically sustainable environment.* This right is reaffirmed in article 50 of the Constitution, where the State defends and preserves this right in order to

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ensure greater well-being for all the inhabitants of the Nation. In addition, Costa Rica has signed and ratified the most relevant international and regional environmental agreements and has promulgated laws and regulations to give content and operation to the constitutional precept, in particular through the Organic Law on the Environment No. 7554 and the Forestry Law No. 7575. This regulation represents the third generation of rights for Costa Rican citizens and having these rights has generated a significant change in the behavior and culture of the Costa Rican population since it has allowed them to appropriate or assume conservation and the sustainable management of natural resources.

*On the topic of gender, environmental policies show a positive evolution over time.* The country has a specific and robust legal framework to promote gender equality. In addition, it is a signatory and has ratified the main declarations and agreements to promote women's rights, the National Women's Institute (INAMU), and currently the National Development Plan for 2019-2022 is based on a rights and gender equality approach. These social policies have had a great impact on environmental policies since the policies of the 1990s, such as the Organic Law of the Environment and the Forestry Law, do not mention the gender approach. However, the policies and plans proposed in the last decade address gender considerations and recognize the importance of developing conservation and sustainable management activities of natural resources with this approach. This pattern is observed in environmental, forest and climate change policies which have evolved from a gender-neutral approach to a gender-sensitive or responsive one (see Figures 3, 4, and 5).

Figure 3. Gender Timeline of Biodiversity-related Policies

1998 →	Law of Biodiversity →	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Includes gender as a general principle.</li> <li>* Intra- and intergenerational equity.</li> </ul> <p>It mentions that the possibilities and opportunities for the use of biodiversity and its benefits are guaranteed in a fair manner for all sectors of society.</p>	→ Gender-Neutral
2015 →	National Biodiversity Policy →	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Acknowledges that increasing inequality and persistent conditions of poverty, particularly for females as heads of household.</li> <li>* One of its guidelines is to educate, sensitize and generate citizen awareness and commitment to the value of biodiversity and its services with a gender-based and inclusive approach.</li> <li>* It recognizes the contributions to conservation by local communities and indigenous peoples, and accepts different forms of governance, favoring those groups of greater social, economic and cultural vulnerability, such as women.</li> </ul>	→ Gender-Sensitive

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2016→	National Biodiversity Strategy→	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*The Strategy was developed under a human rights and gender approach.</li> <li>*It proposes that strategic issues be developed in a context of social equity and gender equality.</li> <li>* 1 national goal, 3 strategic objectives, 6 national goals and 2 indicators address gender considerations.</li> </ul>	→Gender-Responsive
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Figure 4. Gender timeline of policies related to climate change

2000→	First National Communication→	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* It does not mention gender equity or equality nor does it present a human rights approach.</li> </ul>	→Gender-Blind
2009→	National Climate Change Strategy→	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* It does not mention gender equity or equality nor does it present a human rights approach.</li> </ul>	→Gender-Blind
2009→	Second National Communication→	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* It does not mention gender equity or equality nor does it present a human rights approach.</li> </ul>	→Gender-Blind
2014→	Third National Communication→	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Includes data disaggregated by sex but not a gender analysis.</li> </ul>	→Gender-Neutral
2015→	Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) →	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Reaffirms the facilitating role of the government in generating the conditions that allow sectors, communities and society in general to define their own gender-sensitive options.</li> <li>*It defines that climate policies and actions will be based on the country's historical commitment to the universal principles of human rights and gender equity.</li> <li>*It recognizes that the country is in favour of a transformational gender approach in climate governance and supports the participation of women in the definition of policies and the implementation of climate actions.</li> </ul>	→Gender-sensitive
2015→	Action Plan ENCC→	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*The work was analysed from a gender perspective in order to integrate equity and human development considerations.</li> <li>* It includes some considerations to improve gender aspects in the proposals of the strategic plan of the transport sector.</li> <li>* Recognizes women as agents of change in the energy sector.</li> <li>* Proposes a gender-specific vulnerability analysis as part of the early warning system.</li> <li>* Creates the gender-sensitive National Information System for Integrated Water Resources Management.</li> <li>* The water agenda considers gender and climate change.</li> <li>* Establishes the Water Adaptation Fund for at least US\$ 20 million,</li> </ul>	→Gender-Responsive

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		with a line item aimed at women or women's groups.	
2015 →	Strategy and Action Plan for the Adaptation of Costa Rica's Biodiversity Sector to Climate Change	Acknowledges that gender equity is a key element in achieving an efficient implementation of the strategy.	
2018 →	National Policy for Adaptation to Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Recognizes gender-differentiated vulnerabilities.</li> <li>* Includes participation and inclusion as principles to guarantee gender equality and social equity.</li> <li>* The policy is based on rights and gender equality approaches.</li> <li>* 3 axes and one guideline address gender considerations.</li> <li>*Promotes the collection of sex-disaggregated data.</li> </ul>	→ Gender-Responsive

### National Forest Development Policy

*Currently, the official planning instrument for the use, management and protection of forest resources is the National Forest Development Plan (PNDF) 2011-2020.* The PNDP proposes a policy framework organized into 1 superior policy and 12 specific policies, which in turn are disaggregated into objectives and implementation strategies. The Government of Costa Rica is promoting, through a program composed of several initiatives, to encourage the implementation of the current PNDP, called the Program on Forests and Rural Development.

*The National Forest Development Plan 2011-2020 is the first forest policy to recognize gender as a cross-cutting theme.* The Plan recognizes that, in order to ensure the conservation of the biological diversity of forest lands and their use, as well as cultural diversity and respect for the rights of society, the gender perspective must be incorporated and full participation of citizens in decision-making must be guaranteed. Although this is an important step in forestry legislation, it needs to be taken as a starting point, as the gender dimension must include actions beyond women's participation in decision-making.

*In the case of forest policies, these evolve from being gender-blind to being gender-sensitive* (see Figure 6). Although the Forestry Law does not mention gender, some of its articles can be interpreted to include the gender dimension. For example, Article 10 alludes that the National Forestry Office (ONF) has as one of its functions, to promote the constitution and strengthening of associations and organized groups for the development of the forestry sector, with emphasis on the incorporation of farmers and small producers; therefore, it is

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key to strengthen the gender capacities of the ONF to promote, in an equitable manner, the constitution and strengthening of associations and organized groups of both women and men. In addition, the ONF should recognize the roles, capacities and needs of women farmers and small producers so that they can organize themselves and use, market and industrialize forest products. These recommendations are applicable to implement article 10 of the Parks Service Act, which assigns as one of the functions of the ONF, to encourage programs aimed at rural communities to incorporate small landowners in reforestation programs.

Figure 5. Gender timeline of forest-related policies

1996 →	Forestry Law →	* It does not mention gender equity or equality nor does it present a human rights approach.	→ Gender-blind
2011 →	National Forestry Development Plan →	* Acknowledges that the gender dimension is a cross-cutting theme. * It emphasizes that the gender perspective is an essential issue to ensure the conservation of forests, cultural diversity and respect for the rights of society.	→ Gender-sensitive
2015 →	NAMA Livestock → (NAMA Ganadería)	* It recognizes the contribution women make to productive activities on cattle farms. * It proposes to measure and monitor the variation in the resilience of livestock areas according to the social component in families who raise cattle, including gender equity.	→ Gender-sensitive
2018 →	National REDD+ Strategy Costa Rica →	* It reaffirms its commitment with the 1/COP16 Decision and highlights paragraph 72, which calls on REDD+ countries to address gender considerations when developing and implementing their national strategies and action plans. * Recognizes women as a marginalized group.	→ Gender-sensitive
2018 →	Costa Rican National REDD+ Strategy Implementation Plan →	* It includes the realization and operation of the gender sub-strategy as part of its goals.	→ Gender-sensitive

### National REDD+ Strategy

*For more than two decades, Costa Rica has generated REDD+ policies and actions that have been the roadmap of governments of different political parties.* Since their creation in 1986,

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the Forest Fertilizer Certificate programs and later the Payment for Environmental Services (PES), have been financed mainly with national resources, such as regular budgets and the single tax on fossil fuels, and with two loans from the World Bank, complemented with donations from bilateral and multilateral sources and with the development of public-private initiatives at the national level, which highlights Costa Rica's sustained commitment and international recognition of the protection of its natural resources.

*Costa Rica's National REDD+ Strategy was built from a long consultation process with the PIR between 2011 and 2017.* Its Policies, Actions, and Measures (PAM) are the product of the systematization of a multiplicity of social, political, environmental risks, and commitments derived from the applicable safeguards; and of the alignment with the official planning framework of the Costa Rican forest sector (the PNDF 2011-2020), so that both complement each other. The six National REDD+ Strategy policies are presented in the figure below:

- Policy 1: Promotion of low-carbon production systems.
- Policy 2: Strengthen prevention and control programs for land-use change and fires.
- Policy 3: Incentives for conservation and sustainable forest management.
- Policy 4: Restoration of landscapes and forest ecosystems
- Policy 5: Participation of indigenous peoples
- Policy 6: enabling conditions.

*Since 2011, Costa Rica began to integrate the gender approach in the Readiness phase of REDD+.* In that year, FONAFIFO, with the support of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), organized the first sensitization workshop on gender and forests. Thanks to this recognition and initial institutional sensitization, gender was discussed in several of the processes of the readiness phase in Costa Rica. For example, during the self-assessment workshop with the PIR, participants identified the gender approach as a necessity, so during the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) workshop, attendees discussed the issue during the sessions. The SESA document includes specific actions to address gender issues, but mentions that the PIR expressed that not addressing the issue would lead to the exclusion and invisibility of women; it also recognizes that limitations prevail to incorporate gender issues in the country's REDD+ process.

*As a result of these efforts, the National REDD+ Strategy reaffirms its commitment to Decision 1/COP16 and highlights paragraph 72 calling on REDD+ countries to address*

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*gender considerations when developing and implementing their national strategies or action plans.* In order to fulfill this mandate, Costa Rica defined the actions to develop the Gender Action Plan in such a way that this plan is articulated with the MAPs included in the National REDD+ Strategy. In addition, the Costa Rican National REDD+ Strategy Implementation Plan and the Benefit Sharing Plan of the Emission Reduction Program to the FCPF Carbon Fund, begin to include specific actions to address gender considerations. The National REDD+ Strategy Implementation Plan recognizes that making and operating a component to address the participation of special groups and gender as an enabling condition.

*As a first step towards addressing gender issues in 2016, the Road Map for Gender and Costa Rica REDD+ was developed.* The roadmap was developed through a *multi-stakeholder* participatory process during the workshop *Defining the design of the critical path for addressing gender in the REDD+ process*, with support from the WISE program. The overall objective of the workshop was to explore the gender considerations that should be considered in REDD+ processes in Costa Rica and to propose a plan to appropriately address these considerations. The national workshop was attended by 32 representatives from government, NGOs, academia, international cooperation, indigenous women's organizations, community associations and rural women linked to the generation of the Costa Rica REDD+ and working on REDD+ projects at the local level. As a result of this workshop, a roadmap was defined with 4 axes of action and 10 relevant gender considerations for the REDD+ process in Costa Rica. For each axis, expected results, actions and organizations that could lead them were proposed. In addition, this roadmap was used as a guide for the development of the Gender Action Plan for the National REDD+ Strategy.

### 5. Analysis of gender roles, gaps and opportunities

*This GAP is based on a comprehensive gender analysis that recognizes gender-differentiated roles, gaps and opportunities in the forest sector.* Traditionally, gender analysis tends to focus only on gender gaps; but a comprehensive gender analysis goes beyond highlighting disparities and also examines differences in the roles, activities, needs, opportunities and rights that exist between men, women, girls and boys in certain situations and contexts<sup>4</sup>. Conducting a holistic gender analysis allows for an understanding of the complexity of the social landscape and can have positive impacts by implementing more comprehensive actions. As a result, the objectives and actions proposed in the GAP have the potential not only to close the gaps identified, but also to create new paths for

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<sup>4</sup> Methodology based on UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, UN Women. "Gender Equality, UN Coherence and You".

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Costa Rican women and men who live in, depend on, and protect the country's forests and biodiversity.

***Gender analysis made it possible to better understand the reality of Costa Rican women and to obtain quantitative and qualitative data on gender roles, gaps and opportunities.*** At the local and national levels, women face gender inequalities in land tenure, participation in decision-making, training and access to information, access to and control over economic resources and the child care responsibilities. On the other hand, many women from different regions are interested in various types of activities to reduce deforestation and forest degradation. The following is a summary of the data and information obtained from the gender analysis that are relevant to the National REDD+ Strategy GAP. It should be noted that there is a wide range of gender inequalities at the national level, for example, those related to domestic violence or the care economy, which are not included in this document as the analysis used to develop the GAP focused on those roles, gaps and opportunities directly related to natural resources that were mentioned during interviews, local focus groups and workshops held as part of its development.

### Gender Roles

***Rural women in Costa Rica are involved in various activities related to agricultural and forestry production.*** A recent study by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG) identified that women are involved in the production of agricultural products and other related goods and services such as the processing of agricultural products and administrative functions<sup>5</sup>. The study confirms that women's participation is linked to multiple activities in the production cycle on a permanent basis. However, during the focus groups it was mentioned on multiple occasions that women's agricultural work and labours are not recognized by institutions, communities or by themselves.

***At the national level, there are specific gender roles associated with agricultural and forestry activities.*** On the farms of women producers, there is a smaller percentage of women doing agricultural work and a larger concentration in administrative and other work compared to men, who concentrate more on the development of agricultural activities. Women tend to be more involved in other tasks such as by-products, rural tourism, and waste treatment (Figure 6)<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> Ministry of Agriculture (MAG). 2017. [Cuaderno Nuestra Finca 2017 "Women Agricultural Producers"](#).

<sup>6</sup> Based on INEC, 2017. An Agricultural Sector Vision Based on CENAGRO 2014.

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Figure 6. Main tasks carried out on farms differentiated by gender

	Men	Women
Farming tasks	75%	60%
Administrative tasks	23%	31%
By-products	0.3%	1.1%
Waste treatment	0%	0.1%
Rural tourism	0.1%	.2%

*Women and men carry out different productive activities and, in some cases, produce different crops.* The main productive activities are different for women and men. Coffee is the most important activity for the female producers, while for the male producers the main activity is livestock, followed by coffee production (Figure 7)<sup>7</sup>. It is also important to mention that a greater percentage of women are dedicated to the management and protection of natural forests in comparison to men.

Figure 7. Main productive activities carried out on farms and differentiated by gender

H	%	M	%
Cattle	28.9	Coffee	28.1
Coffee	25.6	Cattle	20
Other fruits	5.8	Other fruits	6.6
Bean	4.6	Poultry	5.8
Other vegetables	3.3	Banana	5.7
...		...	
Natural forest management and protection	1.3	Natural forest management and protection	1.7

In terms of crops, coffee is predominant in all regions of the country, both in the number of farms, as well as in the land area it occupies for both sexes of producers. However, apart from coffee, men and women grow different crops. In the farms of male producers, the five main crops that stand out in terms of the land extension planted after coffee are rice, palm oil, beans, corn and sugar cane. In the case of women producers, the five crops that occupy the largest land area after coffee are palm oil, corn, bananas, beans, and sugar cane (Figure 8)<sup>8</sup>. Another example is given in livestock activities where 62% of the cattle are owned by men and only 5% by women, the rest belong to legal persons<sup>9</sup>. In the case of

<sup>7</sup> INEC. 2017. An Agricultural Sector Vision Based on CENAGRO 2014.

<sup>8</sup> INEC. 2017. An Agricultural Sector Vision Based on CENAGRO 2014.

<sup>9</sup> This term is used in the agricultural census and refers to legal entities.

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poultry farms, 75% of the farms are owned by men and 17% are owned by women, the rest by legal persons.

Figure 8. Main crops in terms of planted land area and differentiated by gender

H	Extension (ha)	M	Extension (ha)
Coffee	51,820.9	Coffee	5,700.6
Rice	21,643	Palm Oil	3,425.7
Palm oil	21,564.7	Corn	1,507.5
Beans	15,241.5	Banana	1,477
Corn	12,302.2	Beans	1,334.3

*Women's farms are almost as diverse as men's in terms of crops, despite having fewer farms and less land to plant<sup>10</sup>.* Farms run by women producers get a total of 278 crops, while the farms belonging to male producers have 359 crops. This diversity means that it is possible to involve both women and men in projects that promote agroforestry development, especially farms with avocados, cocoa, coffee, heart of palm, plantain and banana crops where agroforestry systems could be established. The programs to strengthen agroforestry systems and the extension services provided should recognize that there are differences in the sizes of the farms, so the proposed models and practices should be able to be implemented in this diversity of farms. This diversity also allows for the creation of productive landscapes that involve both women and men, even though they have fewer properties and are smaller in size.

*Although the main land uses are similar between farms of female and male producers, there are differences related to preferences between different uses.* When analysing the information of the agricultural census in a disaggregated way<sup>11</sup>, it is observed that the main use of the land for both the male and female producers are the natural pastures, occupying 28% of their farms. This reflects, to a certain extent, the involvement of women in livestock activities; however, the number of heads of cattle and the intensity with which women carry out livestock, is less than men. The difference between men's and women's land use can be seen in the percentage of hectares devoted to forests, permanent crops and improved pastures. In the case of male producers, the main uses are improved pastures (23% of the total ha of their farms), natural forests (20% of the total ha), followed by permanent crops (10% of the total ha). These data are consistent with the greater involvement of men in livestock activities. In the case of women producers, the order of importance varies since the main uses are natural forests (20% of the total of their farms),

<sup>10</sup> See land tenure data included in the breccia section.

<sup>11</sup> INEC. 2017. A vision of the agricultural sector based on CENAGRO 2014.

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permanent crops (16%) and improved pastures (14%). These data are consistent with the increased involvement of women in small-scale agroforestry activities in plots close to their homes. Finally, although other uses occupy a smaller percentage of hectares, it is interesting to note that men have a little more reforestation area (3% and 2% of the total hectares of the farms of the male and the female producers respectively) while women have a little more natural regeneration area (1% and 3% of the farms of the male and the female producers respectively) (Figure 9)<sup>12</sup>. These data are also consistent with forest production activities differentiated by sex, since men are generally more interested in marketing timber and women in selling and using non-timber forest products such as seeds, medicinal plants, among others.

Figure 9. Main land uses disaggregated by gender

MEN	%	WOMEN	%
Natural pastures	28	Natural pastures	28
Improved pastures	23	Natural forests	20
Natural forests	20	Permanent crops	16
Permanent crops	10	Improved pastures	14
Annual crops	5	Annual crops	5
Thickets	5	Thickets	5
Reforestation areas	3	Reforestation areas	2
Natural regeneration areas	1	Natural regeneration areas	2
Other Uses	24	Other Uses	8

### Gender gaps

*The gender gap analysis took as its starting point the conceptual framework on social equity recognized at the last conference of the parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)<sup>13</sup> as guidance on effective and equitable governance models and has been used to analyse REDD+ processes<sup>14</sup>.* The conceptual framework proposes that social equity has three dimensions: recognition, procedure and distribution. As agreed by countries in the CBD, "**recognition** refers to the recognition of rights and the diversity of identities, values, knowledge systems and institutions of rights-holders and stakeholders; **procedure** refers to the principle of inclusiveness in rules and decision-making; and **distribution** implies that the costs and benefits resulting from natural resource management must be shared

<sup>12</sup> INEC. 2017. A vision of the agricultural sector based on CENAGRO 2014.

<sup>13</sup> CBD 2018. Decision CBD/COP/14/L.19.

<sup>14</sup> (2014); Franks, P. et al., (2014); Franks, P. et al., (2016a); Franks, P. et al., (2016b); Quesada-Aguilar, A. et al., (2015).

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equitably among different actors<sup>15</sup>. These three dimensions are framed in a broader context, so the gender inequalities identified for each dimension must consider the pre-existing inequalities created by political, economic and social conditions, which determine who can enjoy their rights, participate and benefit from benefit sharing. This conceptual framework was used specifically for Costa Rica's interest in: (a) harmonizing the international environmental mandates of various conventions (see Annex 3); (b) implementing novel methodologies that reflect the rights and social equity approach that the country promotes; and (c) having a neutral structure that allows the country flexibility to seek support to implement the proposed actions.

The summary of the gender gap analysis is presented below. The gaps are divided into the three dimensions of social equity mentioned above, and for each one the quantitative and qualitative data obtained during the analysis are included in the development of the GAP. Qualitative data come from focus group discussions and information obtained during interviews.

Table 3. Summary of gender gaps in forest management and conservation in Costa Rica

Recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invisibilization of women in the agricultural and environmental sector.</li> <li>• Women have fewer farms and are smaller in size.</li> <li>• Gender-specific contributions and knowledge related to forest conservation and management are not recognized.</li> </ul>
Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women find it more difficult to participate in forestry activities and projects because they have more care responsibilities.</li> <li>• Gender stereotypes limit women's participation in forestry activities and projects.</li> <li>• Fewer women participate in decision-making processes related to natural resource management.</li> <li>• Women producers have less access to information and their farms receive less technical support and extension services.</li> <li>• There is a lower percentage of professional women doing technical work and extension work.</li> <li>• Officials of environmental institutions have limited capacities to implement gender-sensitive or responsive initiatives.</li> </ul>
Distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women producers show higher poverty rates.</li> <li>• The farms of women producers receive less financial support.</li> <li>• The number of women-owned farms included in the PES has been decreasing in recent years.</li> </ul>

<sup>15</sup> CBD 2018. Decision CBD/COP/14/L.19.

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Gender gaps related to recognition

### Invisibilization of women in the agricultural and environmental sector

*In Costa Rica there are about 12,598 women producers<sup>16</sup>; however, in many cases they themselves do not recognize their contributions and consider these activities as part of their domestic chores<sup>17</sup>.* During the field visits it was verified that many women work in productive activities that are not recognized on family farms. This invisibility of their contributions in field work is also due to the fact that women have a greater participation in the development of by-products, surpassing men by twice as much (11,645 women and 5,637 men).

*Women's farm work is generally considered informal and unpaid.* Data from the 2014 Agricultural Census show that 72.8% of the women who work on the farms, in general, do not receive any type of payment or compensation. An analysis of these data shows that 17.2% of women have permanently paid labour, 48% of women have permanently unpaid labour, 9.9% of women have temporarily paid labour and 24.8% of women have temporarily unpaid labour. In contrast, 27.6% of men have permanently paid labour, 45.8% of men have permanently unpaid labour, 9.3% of men have temporarily unpaid labour and 17.3% of men have temporarily unpaid labour (Figure 10)<sup>18</sup>.

Figure 10. Percentage of compensation for work on farms differentiated by gender

Permanently paid labour	
MEN	28%
WOMEN	17%
Permanently unpaid labour	
MEN	46%.
WOMEN	48%.
Temporarily unpaid labour	
MEN	17%.
WOMEN	25%.

<sup>16</sup> INEC. 2017. An Agricultural Sector Vision Based on CENAGRO 2014.

<sup>17</sup> Focus groups conducted in Golfo Dulce, Hojancha, Sarapiquí, and Bribri and Cabécar indigenous territories as part of the development of the Gender Action Plan.

<sup>18</sup> INEC. 2017. An Agricultural Sector Vision Based on CENAGRO 2014.

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*Programs and projects generally consider the productive and environmental sector as a uniform sector.* During several of the field interviews conducted, it was detected that one of the problems in the agricultural and environmental sector is the use of a language that is not inclusive and only refers to producers and does not evidence the diversity of actors and activities carried out by both sexes. However, at the national level there are specific gender roles associated with agricultural and forestry activities.

*Women, in many cases, are not considered producers with differentiated roles, characteristics and needs because they are associated with domestic and care activities.* During the field visits, participants were asked to identify the activities carried out by men and those carried out by women, and many of the activities carried out by women are in the domestic and care environment, while men were more often associated with economic activities<sup>19</sup>. When asked for more details about agricultural activities, participants said that, in many cases, women and men carry out the same activities on the farm, except for those that they considered to require strenuous physical effort such as cutting down trees. This pattern coincides with the findings of INAMU which emphasize that "rural women combine domestic work with very diverse tasks such as raising animals (cattle, birds, goats, rabbits, tilapias), making and selling products (cheeses, breads, handicrafts), sowing and harvesting basic grains for subsistence, among others"<sup>20</sup>. The 2014 Agricultural Census also recognizes that a high percentage of women's crops are grown for self-consumption (Figure 11)<sup>21</sup>. In addition, analysis of data on other agricultural activities shows that, on chicken farms, the highest percentages of women producers are found on subsistence agriculture farms<sup>22</sup>.

Figure 11. Percentage of agricultural activities carried out for self-consumption differentiated by sex

	H	M
Basic grains (rice, corn, beans)	69.4	74.4
Cattle	22.9	32.4
Other livestock (pigs, goats, sheep)	67.3	73.4

### Women have fewer farms and are smaller in size

*In Costa Rica, only 15.6% of farm owners are women according to the 2014 Agricultural Census.* In the country there is a total of 80,987 (87%) farms belonging to a natural person;

<sup>19</sup> Focal Groups conducted in Golfo Dulce, Hojancha, Sarapiquí and the indigenous territories Bribri and Cabécar as part of the development of the Gender Action Plan.

<sup>20</sup> Executive Secretariat for Agricultural Sector Planning, 2003. Gender policy and strategic action plan 2002-2010.

<sup>21</sup> Based on INEC data. 2017. A vision of the agricultural sector based on CENAGRO 2014.

<sup>22</sup> INEC. 2017. A vision of the agricultural sector based on CENAGRO 2014.

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these farms represent 54.7% of the total agricultural area, corresponding to 1,316,807.3 hectares. Of these farms owned by natural persons, most of them (84.4%, or 68,389 farms) are titled with the names of men, for a total of 1,210,243.8 hectares (91.9%) and only 12,598 (15.6%) of the farms are titled with the names of women, with an area of 106,563.6 hectares (8.1%) (Figure 12)<sup>23,24</sup>. The CEDAW committee's report also reveals that rural women face great obstacles in accessing land titles and ownership, which excludes them from the possibility of participating in some projects or receiving environmental and agricultural support or incentives.

Figure 12. Number of farms and extension of agricultural area differentiated by gender

	MALE PRODUCERS	WOMEN PRODUCERS
Number of titled estates	84.4% (68,389)	15.6% (12,598)
Agricultural area (hectares)	91.9% (1,210,243.8)	8.1% (106,563.6)

***Women's properties cover a smaller area and are smaller than men's properties.*** At the national level, 45.3% of the agricultural area (1,089,611.1 ha) belongs to corporations; 50.3% (1,210,243.8 ha) is owned by men, and 4.4% (106,563.6 ha) is owned by women. For the present gender analysis, a characterization was made according to the size of the farms and some ranges were defined (see Figure 13), where it is possible to determine that the greatest number of women producers are concentrated in the range of less than 1 hectare (26%). When analysing the data in a general way, it can be observed that practically most of the women's farms have less than 10 hectares (81%) and only 300 farms have more than 50 ha (3%)<sup>25</sup>. Compared to men's farms, the biggest difference observed is that male producers' farms tend to be larger, where 46% of farms are larger than 5 ha and 4,000 farms have more than 50 ha (7%).

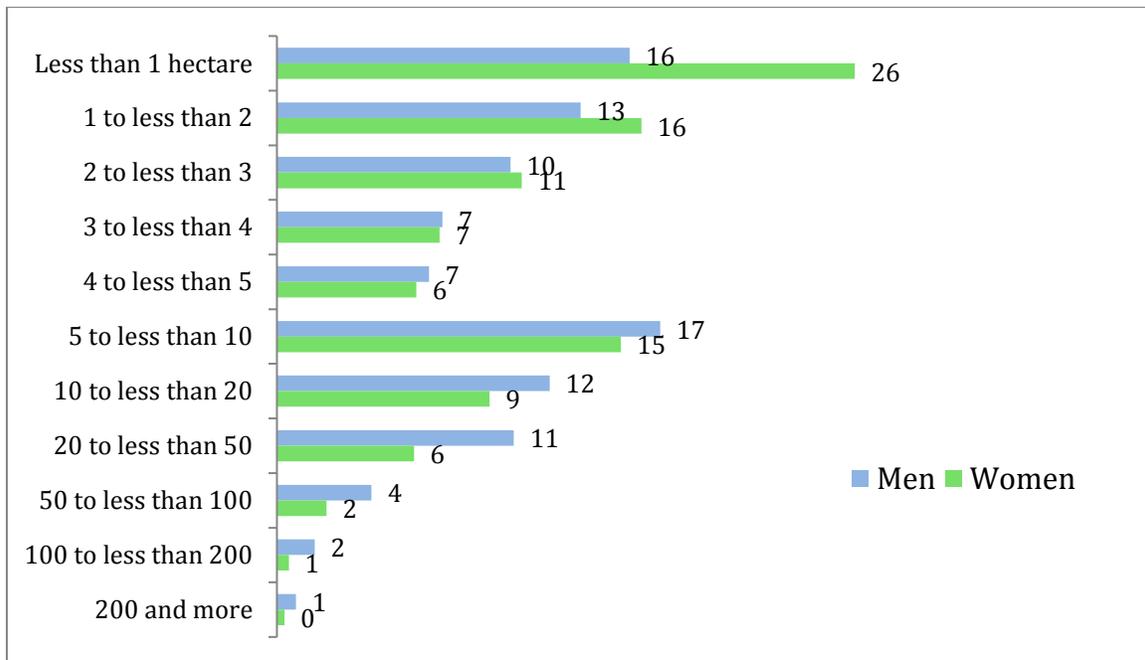
Figure 13. Percentage of farms owned by male and female producers by range of area (hectares)

<sup>23</sup> INEC. VI National Agricultural Census, 2014.

<sup>24</sup> INAMU.2017. Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women -Concluding observations on the seventh periodic report of Costa Rica.

<sup>25</sup> INEC. VI National Agricultural Census, 2014.

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Source INEC. VI National Agricultural Census, 2014. Prepared by the authors.

**Most of the spaces with agricultural production that are not farms, belong to women<sup>26</sup>.** A disaggregated analysis of this information shows that 53.8% of these spaces are run by women. This situation was evidenced in interviews and focus groups where it was determined that women carry out productive activities generally close to their homes and it is more difficult for them to formalize their land tenure. This pattern, where the number of productive spaces that are not farms is greater for women, is similar in all provinces except Heredia. It is interesting to note that the province with the greatest difference between men and women is Limón, which makes one presume that perhaps women from Limón have more barriers to formalize their land tenure than those of other provinces.

**There are now regulations and policies to promote women's land tenure.** In 1990, the Agrarian Development Institute (IDA, now INDER Rural Development Institute), changed the way land was allocated and titled due to the Law on the Real Equality of Women. As part of these efforts, one begins to: (a) register title to property in the names of men and women when the applicants are married or are domestic partners; and (b) implement

<sup>26</sup> According to the Agricultural Census, spaces with agricultural production that are not farms are those properties where agricultural activities related to housing are carried out, such as the presence of poorly organized crops or animals for livestock production, mainly for self-consumption, provided that they are maintained during the productive period.

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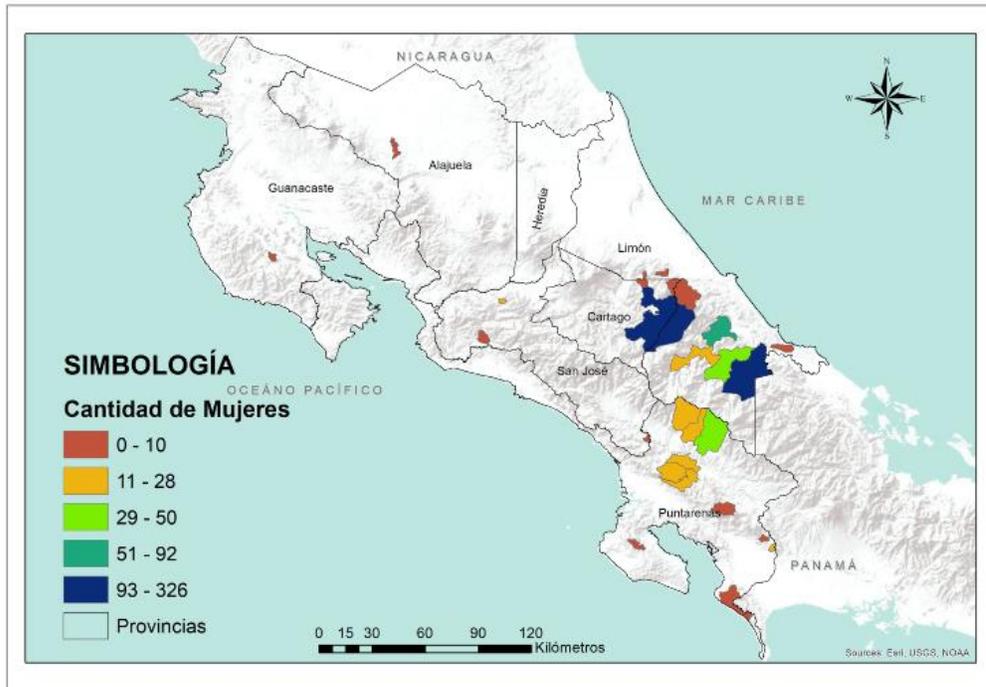
specific regulations for allocating land to female heads of household who apply for it. According to INDER, between 2014-2016 a total of 303 farms have been allocated to women nationwide and during the same period 740 titles of ownership were also held throughout the country. During this period women had 30% more access to land than men. Despite these regulations, however, Costa Rican women continue to experience enormous gender inequality in land tenure.

***The land tenure gap between men and women in Indigenous Territories is much smaller than in lands that are not Indigenous Territories.*** In the country's 24 indigenous territories, 32.7% of the farms owned by indigenous producers are owned by women. The 2014 census identified 4,813 farms with agricultural production within indigenous territories, of which 3,051 are run by indigenous female producers (2,052 are run by men and 999 by indigenous women). It should be noted that the smallest differences in land tenure can be observed in the Bribri area, where 470 farms are run by indigenous men and 348 by indigenous women. The indigenous territory with the smallest difference in land tenure is Talamanca Bribri, where 287 farms are managed by indigenous men and 275 farms by indigenous women.

***The Bribri and Cabécar villages are those where there is the largest number of indigenous women running farms.*** Map 1 shows that the indigenous territories where there is greater participation of indigenous women in agricultural production are Chirripó with 326 women, Cabécar and Talamanca Bribri with 275 women. Other Cabécar ethnic territories also stand out, such as TaynÍ, with 92 women, and Talamanca Cabécar, with 50 indigenous women producers, and Cabagra territory of the Bribri ethnic group, with 44 women. These villages maintain a matrilineal system where women inherit the land and in turn succeed the ancestral lines to their sons and daughters. During the field visits to the Bribri and Cabécar territories of Talamanca, the communities reaffirmed that, for them, it is of utmost importance to value and maintain in force the ancestral practices and traditions, which include this matriarchal system. Despite this matrilineal structure and the support of the communities, many women claim that they still do not have formal recognition of property.

Map 1. Range of distribution of farms of indigenous women producers.

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Source INEC. VI National Agricultural Census. 2014. SNIT. Political-administrative division, 2018. Prepared by the authors.

### Gender-specific contributions and knowledge related to forest conservation and management are not recognized.

*At the national level, women are actively involved in the conservation and sustainable management of resources; however, many of these experiences are not documented or recognized.* In reviewing the literature during the gender analysis, it was observed that, despite the efforts of some institutions, much of the information on experiences of gender-sensitive forestry projects in Costa Rica is not documented and details of such projects are found as anecdotes, notes or newspaper articles. SINAC's institutional gender gap analysis<sup>27</sup> showed that of the 216 officials surveyed, 78% said they were unaware of environmental experiences or initiatives that incorporate a gender perspective. It should be noted that those public officials who are aware of environmental initiatives that incorporate the gender perspective mentioned at least 25 projects that contribute to the conservation and management of biodiversity and promote gender equality. During the

<sup>27</sup> UNDP Costa Rica. 2018. Institutional gender gap analysis UNDP, GEF and SINAC.

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field visits<sup>28</sup> it was possible to corroborate that these initiatives are real and that women from different regions are carrying out conservation and sustainable management activities of natural resources. In the five regions visited, it was observed that women maintain agroforestry systems on their plots and farms where they mix various productive species such as cocoa, pepper, banana and fruit trees with species of timber and non-timber trees and spices for personal consumption. Some women also lead ecotourism initiatives that combine guided tours of ecologically important sites with the sale of services such as food and handicrafts made from non-timber forest products. Another activity in which women are engaged is the organic production of vegetables, medicinal plants and ornamental plants. In the Chorotega Region, a very interesting case was documented, where women are actively involved in fire prevention brigades carrying out various tasks as forest firefighters. Many of these projects or initiatives are not widely disseminated at the national level or in the relevant<sup>29</sup> government institutions.

*In the different regions of the country, women are the driving force behind efforts to conserve forests and improve the conditions of their communities, but they do not receive recognition or compensation for this work.* INEC data show that 22.6% of women and 19% of men perform unpaid work to support other households and the community. The data also show a difference in terms of the average effective time spent on these activities: women occupy 5.1 hours and men 4.5 hours per day; with respect to social time, women spend 1.1 hours per day and men 0.6 hours per day<sup>30</sup>. During the field visits, it was possible to observe this increased level of organization and contributions of women, especially in the area of the Osa Peninsula. When interviewing many of them, it was evident that one of their major concerns is the lack of coordinated community development. They have detected that in their communities "few people take on the responsibility" and there is a lack of communication, awareness and solidarity between men and women<sup>31</sup>.

### Gender gaps related to procedures

**Women find it more difficult to participate in forestry activities and projects because they have more care responsibilities.**

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<sup>28</sup> Focus groups conducted in Golfo Dulce, Hojancha, Sarapiquí, and Bribri and Cabécar Indigenous Territories Forest Reserve as part of the development of the Gender Action Plan.

<sup>29</sup> REDD+ Secretariat and FCPF. 2018. Case studies on gender equality and forests in Costa Rica.

<sup>30</sup> System of Gender Indicators - ENHAO - INEC, Costa Rica.

<sup>31</sup> Focus groups and interviews conducted in the Golfo Dulce Forest Reserve as part of the development of the Gender Action Plan.

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***Caregiving and domestic activities usually fall on women, limiting their ability to participate in environmental activities and projects.*** At the national level, INEC data for 2017 on unpaid domestic work show that the participation rate for women in the care of children under 12 is 41.2% while the participation rate for men is 26.9%. These data also show that the rate of participation of women in the care of totally dependent household members is 3.7% while for men it is 1.4%. The INEC system of indicators reports that by 2017 the gender ratio of the inactive population that cannot work because of family or personal obligations (men and women) is 1.5%<sup>32</sup>.

***The women interviewed highlighted how complicated it is to get involved in activities when one has young children because they lack support networks to ensure safe care.*** Many women in Costa Rica have difficulties related to care, so during the focus groups, several of them requested support to cover their care expenses. However, providing specific resources for care has not yet been formalized in most environmental initiatives, and during the development of the roadmap women indicated that recognizing care work is a priority within their plans to increase women's participation<sup>33</sup>. According to the MAG<sup>34</sup>, productive activities developed by women in rural areas tend to advance more slowly, because they experience greater barriers such as limited access to credit and means of production, and lack of time due to their domestic and care responsibilities. The overload of domestic and care work limits the economic autonomy of these women as they are at a disadvantage in terms of access to, control over and benefit from the resources of time, work and income.

### **Gender stereotypes limit women's participation in forestry activities and projects.**

***Many women do not participate in forestry and conservation initiatives because discriminatory stereotypes prevail, especially in demanding activities such as extinguishing fires, thinning activities and forest monitoring.*** Because of these stereotypes, in many cases, women are relegated to administrative or support positions related to cooking or logistics. SINAC's gap analysis shows that the majority of women and men surveyed consider that there are stereotypes in SINAC's organizational culture; for example, park rangers are perceived to be men rather than women. The effect of this stereotype is reflected in the number of female forest rangers currently hired, as only 29.4% of all forest rangers in the country are women<sup>35</sup>.

<sup>32</sup> System of Gender Indicators - ENHAO - INEC, Costa Rica.

<sup>33</sup> Focus groups and interviews conducted in the Golfo Dulce Forest Reserve as part of the development of the Gender Action Plan.

<sup>34</sup> MAG. Nuestra Finca 2017 Notebook. "Women farmers".

<sup>35</sup> UNDP Costa Rica. 2018. Institutional gender gap analysis, UNDP, GEF and SINAC.

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*During field visits in the Chorotega Region it was possible to document that these gender stereotypes also occur in fire brigades.* Some of the female fire first responders mentioned that they initially experienced different levels of discrimination, but that little by little the male first responders have recognized the value of their work, especially because they are more careful and effective at "completely extinguishing" the fire. Some of them also mentioned that because of gender stereotypes they have to constantly demonstrate that they can do many of the activities because their male peers doubt their abilities. Some female brigade members mentioned that the men of the brigade believed that they would not be able to walk long distances carrying the equipment and the heavy boots of the uniform, and many of them had to prove during the exercises that they were capable and it is only until that moment that they obtained the recognition and validation from their co-workers.

### Fewer women participate in decision-making processes related to the management of natural resources.

*Many women are not able to fully and effectively participate in decision-making and this prevents them from obtaining the benefits offered by many development projects or environmental incentives.* The lower degree of participation in decision-making spaces was one of the most frequently mentioned gender inequalities during focus groups and interviews<sup>36</sup>. This pattern is observed at different levels of governance, from environmental government institutions to development partnerships (ADI)<sup>37</sup>. At the national level, INAMU data presented in the seventh report to CEDAW show that by 2013 the percentage of women in management positions in the public sector was 47.6%, while in the private sector this percentage was 31.9%<sup>38</sup>. In the case of SINAC, when reviewing the percentage of women that make up the National Council of Conservation Areas (CONAC), they represent 28% of the 25 members. In the regional councils the gap is smaller since 47% of the collegiate bodies are women<sup>39</sup>.

*At the local level, significant inequalities are also observed in conservation committees.* When analysing the participation of women in the Local Councils of Conservation Areas (COLAC), it was observed that the greatest gender gap is in the Forest COLAC, which is

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<sup>36</sup> Focal Groups and Interviews conducted in the Golfo Dulce Forest Reserve as part of the development of the Gender Action Plan.

<sup>37</sup> Development associations are first-degree community bodies with a given territorial circumscription (Article 11 Regulation Law 3859)

<sup>38</sup> INAMU.2015. Tables and Graphs CEDAW Report 2015

<sup>39</sup> UNDP Costa Rica. 2018. Institutional Analysis of Gender Gaps. UNDP, GEF and SINAC

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composed only of men. The gap is smaller in the Protected Areas COLAC (composed of 43% women) and Biological Corridor Management COLAC (composed of 43% women)<sup>40</sup>. In the case of development associations, in 2014 the Associations Act was amended to define that the boards of development associations have equal representation of both sexes. However, when asked about this during the focus groups<sup>41</sup> and roadmap workshop,<sup>42</sup> it was recognized that although there is greater representation of women, it is difficult for one to become president of the association, and that women always tend to occupy lower job positions in ADIs. Finally, the gender gap in decision-making is also a daily challenge; for example, in the case study on the participation of women and young people in livestock activities in Turrialba, it was observed that few women participate in decision-making and this has a negative impact since they have an impact on production and marketing, but the final decision does not necessarily depend on them<sup>43</sup>.

### Women producers have less access to information and their farms receive less technical support and extension services.

*Women have little access to capacity building processes and information that are relevant to their productive systems because they are not recognized as producers or conservation agents since many of their activities are carried out on a smaller scale and close to their homes.* The country's seventh CEDAW report noted that there is a lack of access to women's information in general for various sectors. A differentiated analysis of the Agricultural Census data showed that only 19.8% of farms obtained any type of technical assistance between 2013 and 2014; of the total number of farms that received assistance, only 13.5% were headed by women. The female producers received assistance in agricultural production (79.6%), livestock production (12.3%), agribusiness development (5%) and administration (3.2%). This technical support was provided mostly by MAG (35.9%), cooperatives (29.2%) and INA (16.7%)<sup>44</sup>.

*During the field visits some women said they would be interested in participating in various forest-related activities, but many do not have the information or skills.* For example, in Osa they ensure that there is a prevailing lack of disclosure of the activities that can be carried

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<sup>40</sup> UNDP Costa Rica. 2018. Institutional Analysis of Gender Gaps. UNDP, GEF and SINAC

<sup>41</sup> Focal Groups and Interviews conducted in the Golfo Dulce Forest Reserve as part of the development of the Gender Action Plan.

<sup>42</sup> REDD+ Secretariat. 2016. Workshop Definition of the design of the critical path for the gender approach of the REDD+ process

<sup>43</sup> Rivas, S.C. 2015. Women's participation and decision-making in livestock activities, Santa Cruz de Turrialba district, Costa Rica.

<sup>44</sup> INEC. 2017. A vision of the agricultural sector based on CENAGRO, 2014.

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out in the region and when meetings are held they do not receive information on agreements and follow-up. Likewise, other participants state that they are not able to develop projects because they do not know how to make a project profile. For example, in Sarapiquí they lack information on financing options for implementing forestry activities.

### There is a smaller percentage of professional women doing technical work and extension work.

*In spite of the fact that a higher percentage of women manage to graduate, in comparison with men, there is an important specialization by gender<sup>45</sup>.* For example, there are areas such as agriculture, forestry and fishing where few women participate. At the national level, data from the National Household Survey show that the percentage of professional and technical women among the total number of employed persons is 17.3%, while this percentage is 23% for men. INEC data for 2017 on the workforce by activity type show that the agriculture, livestock and fishing sectors represent 17.2% of the jobs performed by men, while in the case of women it is only 4.1%.<sup>46</sup>

*Many professional women with attestations do not engage with environmental institutions.* For example, in SINAC there is a great disparity in the number of men and women who work for the institution, 70% are men and 30% are women. In addition, many professional women accredited as forest regents do not participate in the processes to accredit farms within the PES. When reviewing the database of forest regents registered in the College of Agronomist Engineers, it was observed that by 2018, 784 active forest engineers were reported, of whom 578 were men (74%) and 206 women (26%). Of the Active Forest rangers, 17% are women (48 women out of 289 rangers). In the case of the PES for 2017, 93% of the projects contracted were managed by male forest professionals and only 7% by female forest professionals, suggesting that many of these professionals are not serving as rangers. This pattern is similar to that of other technical and scientific areas where women graduate in a higher percentage, but many more men exercise the job on the field.

### Officials of environmental institutions have limited capacities to implement gender-sensitive or responsive initiatives.

*One of the greatest challenges faced by officials working on environmental issues is acquiring the appropriate skills and tools to incorporate a gender perspective into their initiatives, programs and projects.* In many cases, these professionals have expressed a

<sup>45</sup> State of the Nation Program. 2017. Chapter 5: The evolution of higher education.

<sup>46</sup> System of Gender Indicators - ENHAO - INEC, Costa Rica.

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willingness and interest in mainstreaming the gender perspective, but indicate that they face different barriers, for example: (a) they find the theory to be hard to understand; (b) many perceptions and myths on gender prevail; (c) the methods in which gender information is presented do not use examples related to environmental issues; (d) gender tools are not easily adapted to environmental issues; (e) tools that link gender to environmental issues are unknown, or are found only in English. For example, 80% of the officials who responded to the survey during the SINAC gender gap analysis acknowledged that they had not received any training on <sup>47</sup>gender equality. In this survey most officials indicated that they did not understand the linkages between gender equality and the protection and sustainable use of biodiversity and very few are familiar with the linkages between the CBD and its relationship to gender equality or gender mandates included in international instruments such as the Sustainable Development Goals; and the UNFCCC REDD+ mechanism. Finally, most are unaware of national environmental legislation that includes gender considerations.

### Gender gaps related to distribution

#### Women producers show higher poverty rates.

*Poverty<sup>48</sup> and inequality are linked to gender gaps in employment in terms of participation and income, especially in households headed by women.* According to data from INAMU, by 2013 the percentage of households headed by poor women was 15.4% while for male heads of household the figure was 13.7%. In rural areas, this difference is even greater, where 19.7% of female-headed households are poor, while 16.2% of male-headed households are poor. The analysis of data on extreme poverty in rural areas shows that 11.6% of households headed by women live in extreme poverty, compared to 8.3% of households headed by men.

*INAMU found that many women living in poverty are unable to generate income because they need to care for their daughters, sons and other dependents.* The average weekly hours dedicated to paid labour for women is 20.1 hours while for men it is 38.6 hours. On the other hand, the unemployment rate for women is 13.1% and 8.6% for men, according to the State of the Nation Report on 2018 Sustainable Human Development.

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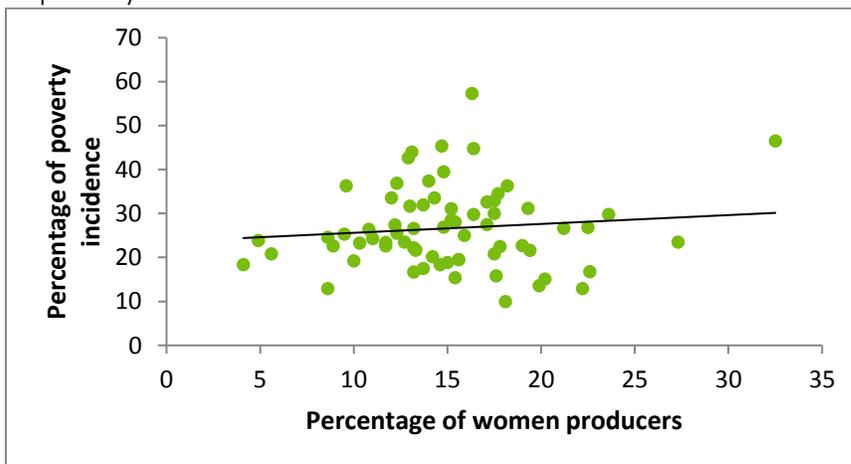
<sup>47</sup> UNDP Costa Rica. 2018. Institutional Analysis of Gender Gaps. UNDP, GEF and SINAC

<sup>48</sup> Costa Rica uses a multidimensional poverty index that uses households as the unit of analysis and focuses on five dimensions: education, health, housing and internet use, work and social protection. This Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) complements the measurement of income poverty or poverty line shortfall.

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*In some regions of the country there is a slight correlation between the percentage of women producers and the percentage of poverty incidence (see Figure 14).* According to data from the State Policy for Costa Rican Territorial Rural Development (PERDT), in the cantons of Talamanca, Limón, Corredores, Santa Cruz, Poás, Valverde Vega, Sarapiquí, Matina, Osa and Dota, a high percentage of women producers and a high incidence of poverty persist. This pattern observed in these cantons reflects the gender inequalities that affect productive opportunities.

Figure 14. Correlation between the percentage of women producers and the percentage of poverty incidence.



Source: State Policy for Costa Rican Territorial Rural Development. Prepared by the authors.

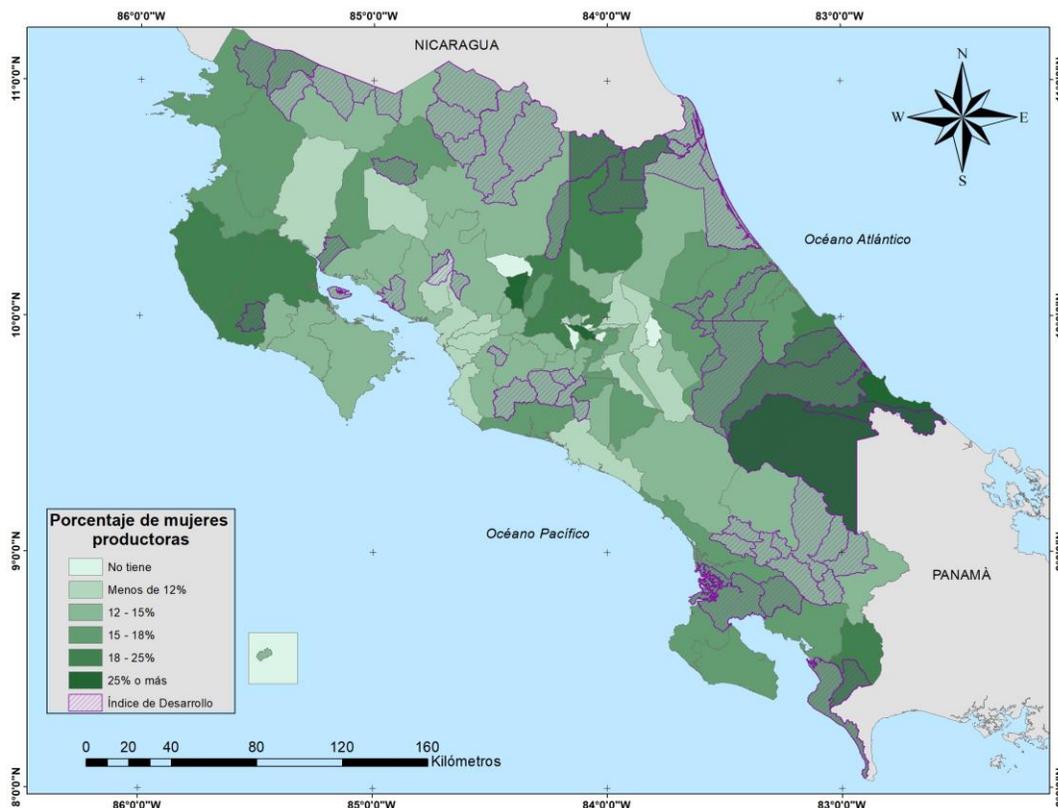
*Some of the cantons in the country with the lowest social development indices<sup>49</sup> coincide with areas where there is a higher percentage of women producers and which have a higher forest cover.* This relationship can be observed especially in the South Caribbean, in the Talamanca sector; in the South Pacific, in the sectors of the Osa Peninsula and Corredores, and in the Huetar Norte Region, specifically in the Sarapiquí canton (see Map 2). Likewise, these three areas with the highest percentage of women producers and the lowest social development index coincide with: (a) five of the country's most important conservation areas (Osa Conservation Area, Amistad Caribe Conservation Area, Central Volcanic Conservation Area, Huetar Norte Conservation Area, and Tortuguero Conservation Area); and (b) with priority areas for strengthening conservation and sustainable forest

<sup>49</sup> The social development index is operationalized in terms of the population being able to access and enjoy a set of basic rights, which are grouped into five dimensions: economic, social participation, health, education and security, and is constructed on the basis of 14 socio-economic indices. See <https://www.MIDEPLAN.go.cr>.

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management. These data confirm that for certain regions, the poverty levels of women producers are related to sites that still have forests.

Map 2. Areas with a lower social development index (less than 40%) and percentage distribution of women producers by canton.



Source INEC. VI National Agricultural Census, 2014; and Social Development Index data, FONAFIFO. Prepared by the authors.

### The farms of women producers receive less financial support.

*In general, very few farms receive funding, but women's farms receive much less.* Of the total number of farms registered by INEC, 9.1% of the farms of the women producers and 14.3% of the farms of the male producers received some type of financing. The farms of women producers that did not receive financing were due to various reasons, because they

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did not apply for funding (89.3 %), because of their limited ability to pay (2.3 %), because they lacked title to the land (2.2 %), because of the lack of a collateral (1.5 %) and because of their credit history (0.1 %) <sup>50</sup>. Access to financial resources or incentives is generally limited in many cases because women do not have <sup>51</sup>bank accounts; moreover, if they receive the monetary resources, they often do not have control over them. This information is consistent with some of the main gender gaps that were mentioned during the field visits.

*There is an important gender difference in the entities that grant credit to women and men in the agricultural sector.* Data from the Ministry of Economy, Industry and Commerce (MEIC) based on information from financial institutions report that, in 2013, only 31.7% (6,492) of loans were granted to women. In the agricultural sector, the same data indicate that this percentage is even lower, as only 20% (992) of the loans were granted to women. Most of them were lines of credit for working capital (708) and for the purchase of assets (278), which represent 16% and 22% of all loans granted for these two lines of credit. Men receive the largest amount of financing from public banks (2,597 loans granted), followed by foundations (1,312 loans granted). On the contrary, women obtain the largest amount of funding from foundations (513 loans granted), followed by public banks (474 loans granted). It should be noted that the greatest inequalities are seen in private banking since only 9% of agricultural loans were granted to women.

### The number of women-owned farms included in the PES has been decreasing in recent years.

*15.1% of PES contracts from 1997 to 2017 were signed with women owners.* This equates to a total of 2,552 women owners of the total of 16,712 contracts signed in the Program between 1997 and 2017. The number of women owners with PES contracts increased considerably between 2004 and 2013 (Figure 15). This increase occurs largely because Costa Rica signed two loans with the World Bank which included an indicator to increase women's participation and the efforts made by FONAFIFO to increase the number of women owners receiving PES. However, as of 2014, many of the farms that entered the Program were registered as corporations and it is not possible to determine who receives the PES payment; therefore, there is a decrease in the contracts signed with both men and women <sup>52</sup>.

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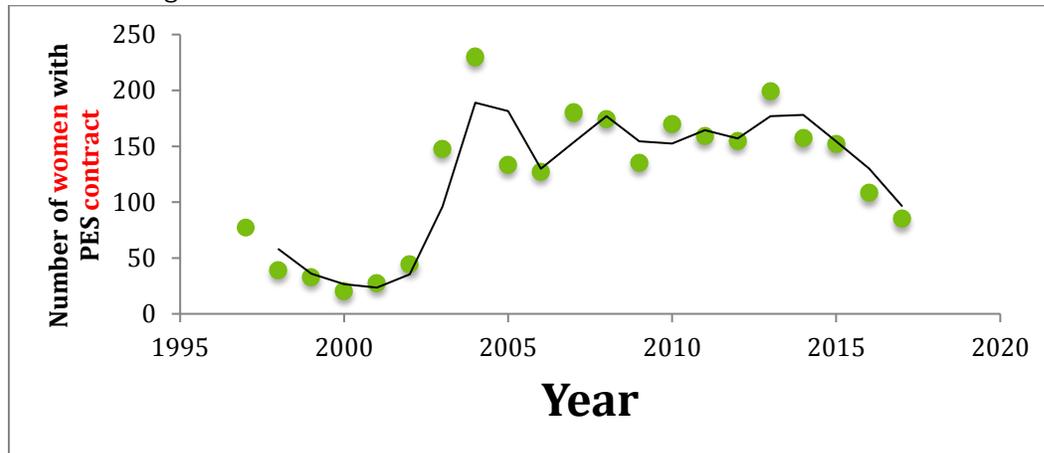
<sup>50</sup> INEC. 2017. A vision of the agricultural sector based on CENAGRO, 2014.

<sup>51</sup> State of the Nation Program in Sustainable Human Development (Costa Rica). 2016. Twenty-second State of the Nation Report on Sustainable Human Development.

<sup>52</sup> Interviews with staff of FONAFIFO's PES Program.

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Figure 15. Number of women with contracts under the Payment for Environmental Services Program<sup>53</sup>.....



Source: Department of Environmental Services Management, SIAP-gePSA FONAFIFO. Prepared by the authors.

### Opportunities

*There is great potential to increase the participation of women from different regions of the country in environmental projects and initiatives as they are interested in a wide range of activities to reduce deforestation and forest degradation.* During the focus groups conducted as part of the development of the GAP, women participants were asked which activities they would be interested in undertaking to contribute to REDD+ efforts (Table 3)<sup>54</sup>. Most of the communities visited during the focus groups indicated their preference for reforestation actions, followed by those related to tourism. Some women told of tourist routes in their territories that offer multiple job opportunities related to food, handicrafts or as tour guides that could serve as an example for other women. Among the prioritized activities, it is worth noting that many of these activities such as cocoa, plant nurseries, home gardens and non-timber forest products (medicinal plants, seeds or species for construction) can be developed in agroforestry systems near the homes of these women, which would allow them to be part of the activities proposed to implement the PAM of the National REDD+ Strategy.

<sup>53</sup> Cut-off date, February 23, 2018.

<sup>54</sup> Focus groups conducted in Golfo Dulce, Hojancha, Sarapiquí, and Bribri and Cabécar indigenous territories as part of the development of the Gender Action Plan.

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Table 3. REDD+ activities prioritized by women in focus groups.

	La Palma, Osa	Hojancha, Guanacaste	Sarapiquí, North Zone	Bribri, Talamanca Indigenous Territory	Cabécar, Talamanca Indigenous Territory
Reforestation	*	*	*		*
Tourism	*	*	*		
Cocoa	*			*	
Home gardens		*		*	
Plant nurseries				*	*
Non-timber forest products	*			*	
Community development	*				*
Conservation	*				

*The priorities for women coincide, in many cases, with many of the gender inequalities they face.* By asking women which enabling condition they would prioritize to allow them to implement activities to reduce deforestation and forest degradation, their answers coincide with many of the gender inequalities discussed in the previous section. The enabling condition that was prioritized by the highest number of women (17.6%) in all the different sites was access to economic benefits. Other priorities that became evident were access to agricultural resources, the opportunity to carry out jobs different from those traditionally developed by women, access to tools and equipment, full and effective participation in decision-making, and access to training and education. An interesting detail that was observed was that the priorities of indigenous women are different from those of rural women. Rural women focused on access to economic benefits while indigenous women prioritize access to agricultural resources, different job opportunities and full and effective participation in decision-making<sup>55</sup>.

*Forestry activities proposed by women to reduce deforestation and forest degradation can have a major impact on priority areas for the conservation and sustainable management*

<sup>55</sup> It is important to mention that the priorities included related to Indigenous Peoples' participation are those mentioned during the EN-REDD+ consultation process in the 24 Indigenous Territories.

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*of forests.* A detailed analysis of maps 3 and 4 shows that many of the priority areas where activities are needed to strengthen conservation and sustainable management of forests or where ASPs exist coincide with cantons where there is a large number of women producers. Having a Gender Action Plan that prioritizes the activities proposed by these women makes it possible to establish a strategy that guarantees resources, support and follow-up to develop activities that have a great impact on priority forest areas of the country and empower and help the women of these regions (Nicoya, Osa, Talamanca and the Northern Zone), who are true agents of conservation and sustainable management of the forests<sup>56</sup>.

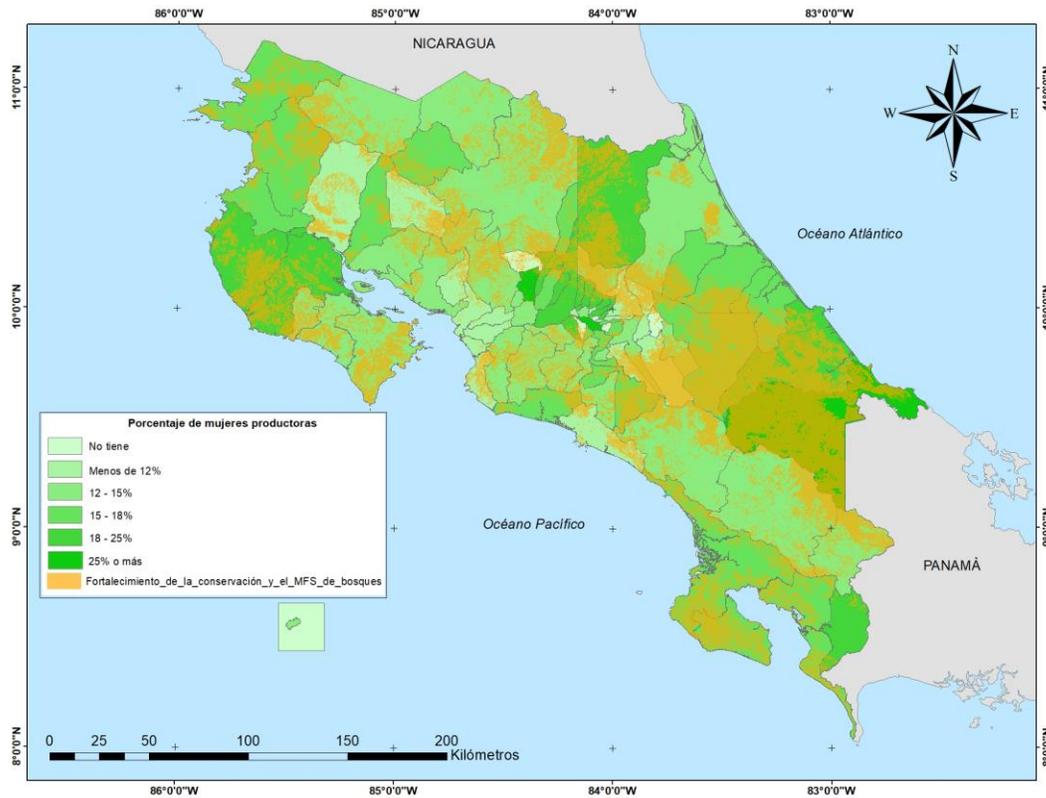
Map 3. Priority areas for the conservation and sustainable management of forests and percentage distribution of women producers by canton<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> The maps are for illustrative purposes and show areas where opportunities exist to engage women as agents of change. They do not have a linear correlation between the variables.

<sup>57</sup> The priority areas for conservation and sustainable management of forests are those where forest cover converges with multiple other benefits, according to the REDD+ Secretariat analysis. Multiple benefits considered include: (1) greenhouse gas mitigation; (2) natural scenic beauty for tourism purposes; (3) biodiversity conservation; (4) support for communities that are vulnerable to water stress; (5) socio-economic improvement potential; (6) water erosion control; and (7) potential for improved governance.

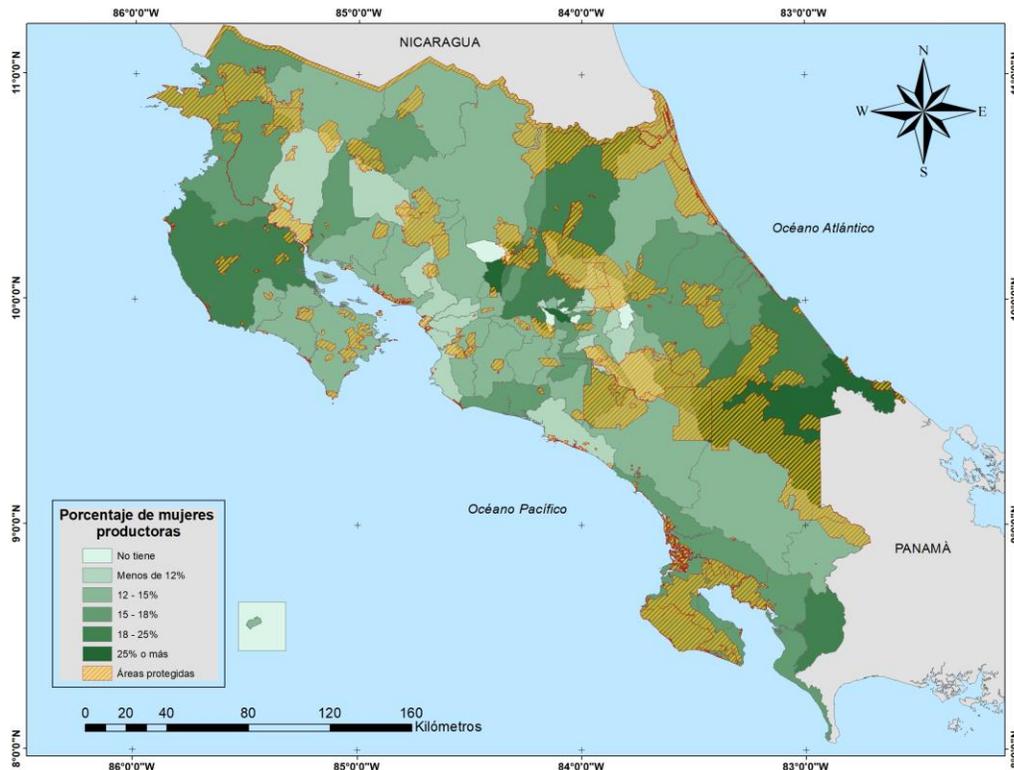
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Source INEC. VI National Agricultural Census, 2014 and Carrión et al, 2017. Mapping the social and environmental benefits of REDD+ in Costa Rica. Prepared by the authors.

Map 4. Wild Protected Areas and Percentage Distribution of Women Producers by Canton

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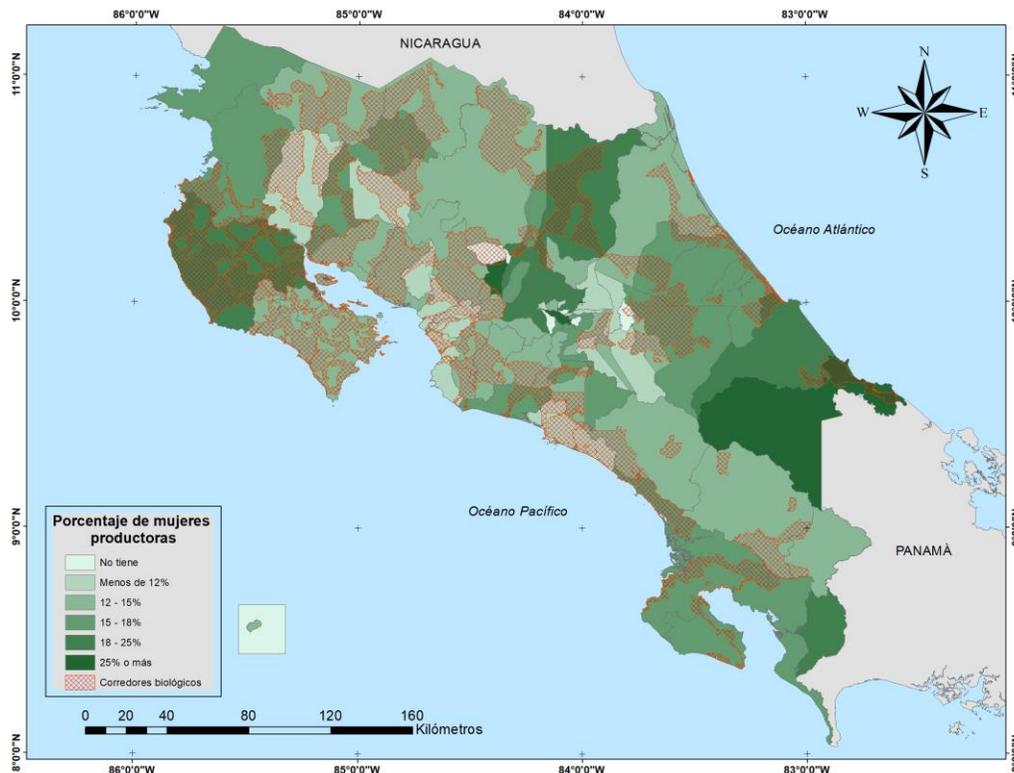


Source INEC. VI National Agricultural Census, 2014 and FONAFIFO-SINAC. Protected Areas Data. Prepared by the authors.

*Forest conservation and sustainable management activities performed by women can have a major impact on biological corridors and unprotected forest areas.* As map 5 reveals, there is a percentage of women producers in very important conservation areas such as the Nicoya Peninsula, the Huetar Norte region and the Osa Peninsula. Implementing activities such as those mentioned in Table 2, or providing support and incentives for these women to engage in new conservation or resource management initiatives, has the potential to increase forest cover and reduce forest ecosystem degradation in unprotected areas, where, in turn, there is the greatest loss of carbon due to forest degradation.

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Map 5. Biological corridors and percentage distribution of women producers by canton



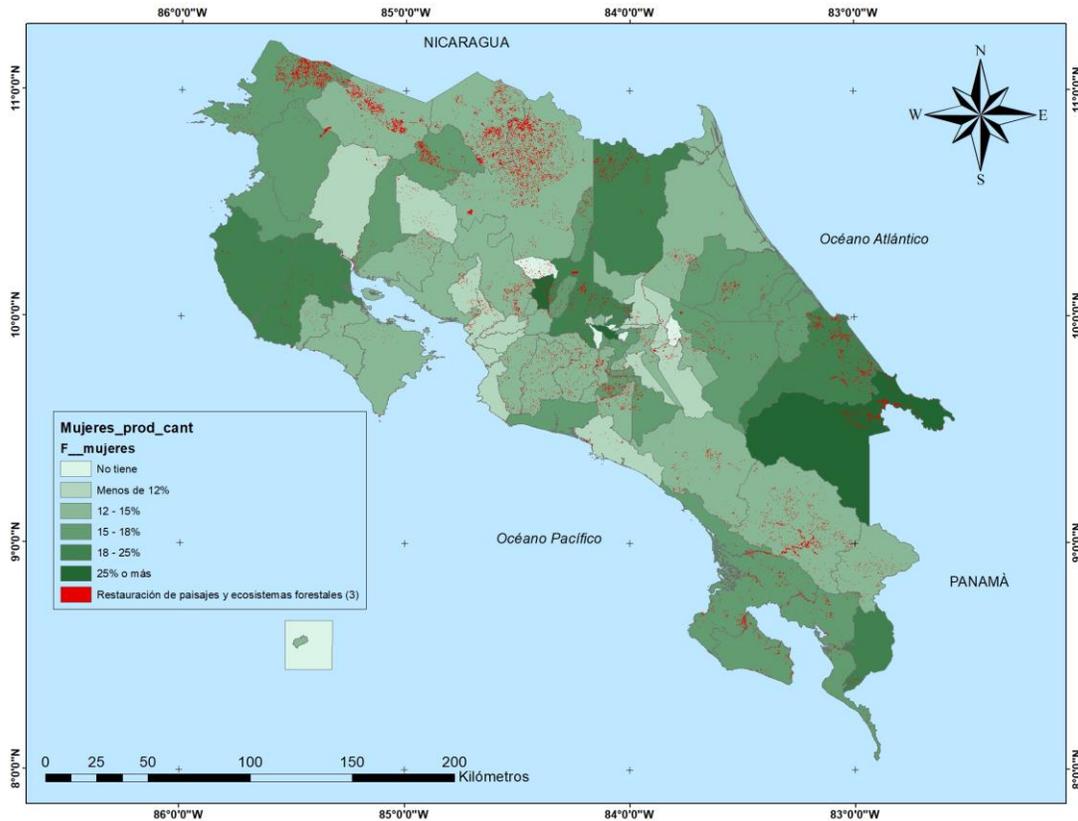
Source INEC. VI National Agricultural Census, 2014; and FONAFIFO-SINAC. Data from Biological Corridors. Prepared by the authors.

*Women can play a key role in the restoration of forest landscapes and ecosystems.* Reforestation is one of the main activities proposed by women in the different regions that were visited (see Table 3) and many of the priority areas for the restoration of landscapes and forest ecosystems coincide with cantons where there is a larger number of producers with their own farms (Map 6). Proposing actions that engage women in restoration could also be a way of strengthening reforestation or analog forestry creation initiatives that are being carried out by various women's groups throughout the country. These activities could be a way of initiating a generational shift since, according to the focus group participants, they are activities that are generally of interest to the youth population and,

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in the future, could be converted into innovative formal green jobs that allow them to stay in their communities.

Map 6. Priority areas for landscape and forest ecosystem restoration and percentage distribution of women producers by canton<sup>58</sup>



Source INEC. VI National Agricultural Census, 2014; Carrión et al, 2017. Mapping the social and environmental benefits of REDD+ in Costa Rica. Prepared by the authors.

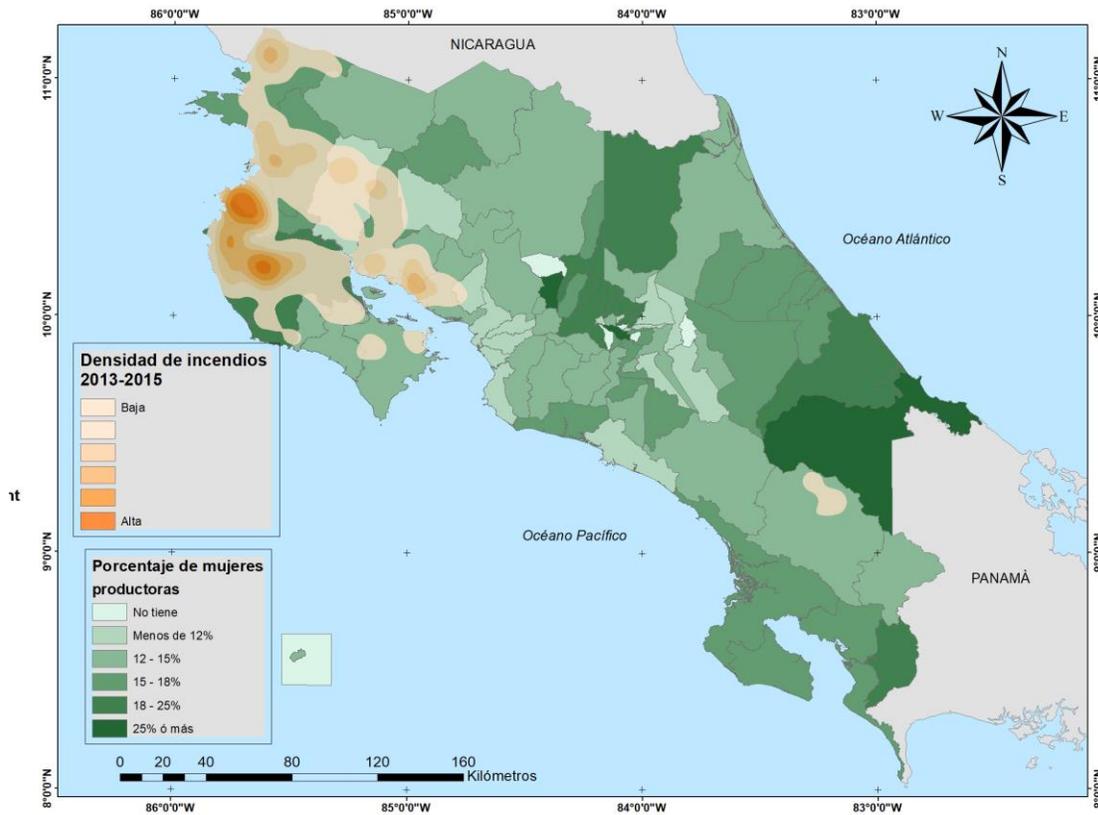
<sup>58</sup> The priority areas for forest landscape and ecosystem restoration are those where the coverage of secondary forests and bare soils converge with other multiple benefits, according to the REDD+ Secretariat analysis. Benefits considered include: (1) greenhouse gas mitigation; (2) biodiversity conservation; (3) support to communities that are vulnerable to water stress; (4) socio-economic improvement potential; (5) water erosion control; and (6) potential for improved governance.

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*Recognizing and valuing the contributions of women brigade members is key to reducing forest fires and represents an opportunity to generate green jobs.* Looking at map 7, you can see how many of the areas that are more prone to forest fires match the areas where there are more women's farms. Therefore, they could play an important role in fire prevention and care. During the field visits it was possible to document that the fire brigades of the Tempisque Conservation Area (ACT) and the Guanacaste Conservation Area (ACG) have a large number of female forest brigade members. Many of these women carry out work in support of the brigades, such as logistics and food, but there are many forest firefighters who attend to the fires and prepare the land during the rainy season. Although they initially reported experiencing different levels of discrimination, the male brigade members gradually recognized the value of their work. Proposing actions to support these women represents an opportunity to formalize decent green jobs for women and change gender stereotypes.

Map 7. Areas with the highest incidence of forest fires and percentage distribution of women producers by canton

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Source INEC. VI National Agricultural Census, 2014; Carrión et al, 2017. Mapping the social and environmental benefits of REDD+. Prepared by the authors.

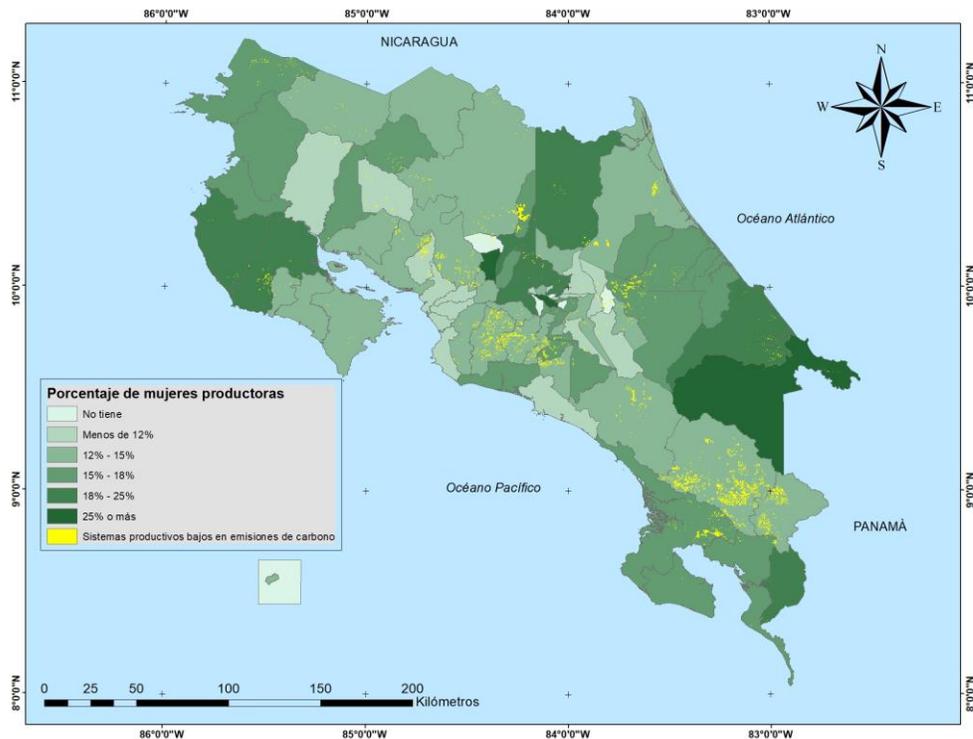
*Recognizing and supporting agroforestry systems in farms that belong to women producers is key to promoting low-carbon production systems*<sup>59</sup>. During the field visits, it was possible to determine that many of the farms run by women producers have agroforestry systems, information that is consistent with the trends observed in the agricultural census data. Map 8 shows that supporting and strengthening these agroforestry systems could have a great impact in areas such as the Central Region, Central Caribbean and South Pacific where there is a percentage of low-carbon production systems. Given that in these areas women producers have fewer farms and these are smaller in size, initiatives could consider

<sup>59</sup> EN-REDD+ defines these systems as farms that are currently in agricultural production, in which there is no change of economic activity, but the forest biomass is increased, either by planting trees under agroforestry or silvopastoral systems, or even by the creation or conservation of forest patches within them. It is also expected that, with greater use and profitability of the soil, the incentives to deforest other forest areas will diminish due to the loss of productivity of the current areas.

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the creation of conservation units that unite several farms with agroforestry systems to improve production systems, in order to make them low in emissions and committed to maintaining a percentage of the land with forest cover. This also represents an opportunity to strengthen the capacities of the female producers on a novel issue and to establish a national carbon market that will allow for directing economic incentives that recognize and value these conservation units led by female producers that are contributing to the country's decarbonization goals.

Map 8. Priority areas of low-carbon production systems and percentage distribution of women producers by canton<sup>60</sup>



Source INEC. VI National Agricultural Census, 2014; and Carrión et al, 2017. Mapping the social and environmental benefits of REDD+. Prepared by the authors.

<sup>60</sup> The priority zones for the promotion of agroforestry practices are those where agricultural use areas converge with other multiple benefits, according to the analysis of the REDD+ Secretariat. Multiple benefits considered include: 1) support to communities that are vulnerable to water stress, 2) potential for socio-economic improvement, 3) control of water erosion and 4) potential for improved governance.

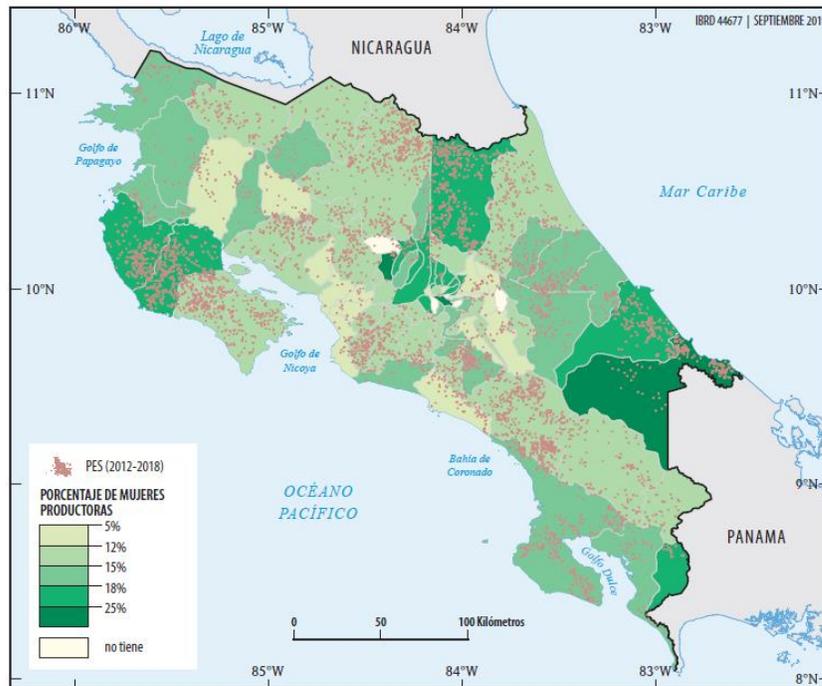
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*Traditional indigenous farms are agroforestry systems of great importance to women and conservation.* The Bribri culture identifies production spaces that are relevant to the economy of families and the exchange of communities. Women play an important role in the agroforestry systems adjacent to housing, known as the *Ù itö* or house in Bribri. In this system, medicinal plants and domestic animals such as pigs and chickens abound. In addition, these farms integrate the cocoa production systems, where a great diversity of cocoa coexists such as Creole and white cocoa, of great value. Farms are generally small, ranging from 5 to 10 hectares, and there is a great diversity of timber and fruit species that play an important role in protecting ecosystem services, such as water springs. These production systems are relevant systems for the transmission and teaching of the indigenous culture.

*Many of the PES contracts between 2012 and 2018 correspond to cantons where there is a high percentage of women producers and where areas of importance for conservation prevail (Map 9).* An analysis of the most recent data shows that between 2016 and 2017 the spatial distribution of properties of women beneficiaries of PES increased. By 2016, these properties tended to concentrate in the Nicoya Peninsula, Northern Zone, Limon and Central Region. In 2017, properties in the central highlands were increased. This variation shows how women carry out conservation activities in different forest ecosystems and in priority conservation areas. In 2016 and 2017, most of their properties were engaged in forest protection activities, followed by agroforestry systems. It should be noted that the map also shows that there are priority areas where more women could be supported to get involved in the PES program, through modalities that take into account the characteristics of their farms and the gender gaps they face in terms of land tenure, access to information and the lack of technical support and resources to hire regents and carry out the necessary procedures.

Map 9. PES contracts (2012-2018) and percentage distribution of women producers by canton

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Source INEC. VI National Agricultural Census, 2014; and FONAFIFO. PES data (2012-2018). Prepared by the authors.

*During the field visits, some of the landowners mentioned that they would be interested in participating in PES, but many lack information, skills, or do not own properties with the necessary characteristics to be part of PES.* In order to increase the number of women in the PES program, it is necessary to think about specific or simplified modalities that allow them to access incentives and recognitions, even though they have smaller farms. It is also essential to improve the dissemination of information about these incentives, support for filling out the forms and empowering women to negotiate. FONAFIFO is currently implementing a PES for farms smaller than 10 ha and recognizes established trees, forest areas, regardless of size and even if they do not meet the Forest Act definition of forest, and natural regeneration areas.