



Subject: Request for Information (RFI)
Posting Date: May 11, 2021
Deadline to submit feedback: June 3, 2021
Anticipated activity title: Nature Tourism Activity
Anticipated mechanism type: Contract
Anticipated timeframe: 5 years, 2022-2027
Anticipated total budget: \$20-30 million

To All Interested Parties:

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is seeking feedback through this Request for Information (RFI) from entities interested in the attached Draft Concept Paper for the provisionally-titled "Nature Tourism Activity." This Activity will build sustainable business models for Colombia's nature tourism that support community development, conserve the country's rich biodiversity, and reduce drivers of land use change.

Any interested organizations are invited to provide feedback, comments, opinions, and/or recommendations on the concepts and approaches for the future activity described in Attachment A. The main purpose of this RFI is to determine the soundness and robustness of the general design, as well as to incorporate new, innovative ideas and feedback from nature tourism international, private sector and community stakeholders. Attachment B includes guiding questions, not all of which need to be answered in respondents' feedback. Incorporation of any feedback is subject to internal Mission discussions and approval.

This is NOT a Request for Proposals/Applications and is NOT to be construed as a commitment by the U.S. Government to issue any solicitation/notice of funding opportunity or to pay for any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of comments/answers to this RFI. Responding to this RFI will not give any advantage to any firm or organization in any subsequent procurement and will not lead to an organizational conflict of interest. Responses will strictly be held confidential. Potential offerors/applicants should not expect a direct response from the U.S. Government to any of the comments/suggestions.

Please strictly limit any response to the questions included in this RFI and to comments/suggestions about the document. To expedite USAID's review and be considerate of respondents' time, responses should be kept to no more than three (3) pages in length. Note that not all questions need to be answered. Responses to the notice must be written in 11-point font and may be submitted in English or Spanish.

Responses to this RFI must be sent by the closing date and time to:

- bogotausaidoaa@usaid.gov
- Angela Garcia, Acquisitions & Assistance Specialist at anggarcia@usaid.gov

Thank you for your interest in USAID/Colombia programs and we look forward to your comments.

R. Clark Pearson
Contracting/Agreement Officer
USAID/Colombia

List of Attachments:

- Attachment A: Draft Concept Paper for Nature Tourism
- Attachment B: Response Format and Guiding Questions for RFI

ATTACHMENT A

USAID/Colombia Nature Tourism Activity Concept Paper

Anticipated mechanism type: Contract

Anticipated total budget: \$20-30 million

Anticipated timeframe: 5 five years, 2022 – 2027

Introduction: Colombia's tremendous biodiversity offers an enormous market opportunity for nature tourism, especially in conflict-affected PDET regions.¹ PDET regions hold 45 percent of the country's natural parks², and they house unique ecosystems that are economically and culturally vital to rural and ethnic communities. Yet, 55 percent of the population in PDET regions live in poverty and have a long history of state abandonment.³ Rural and ethnic communities in PDET regions also face increasing pressure to engage in illicit and unsustainable economic activities, like coca production and illegal mining, that lead to ecosystem degradation. In 2016, 78 percent of the country's deforestation took place in PDET territories⁴, negatively affecting local resources like soil and water that are essential for social stability and economic prosperity.

Colombia has been recognized as a top trending tourist destination worldwide because of its natural and cultural assets. The number of international visitors in Colombia increased by 85 percent between 2011 and 2019⁵, and the U.S. Tour Operators Association chose Colombia as the number one trending destination for 2020.⁶ In terms of competitiveness and sustainable development, however, the country's tourism sector still faces multiple challenges. According to the World Economic Forum, in 2019 Colombia ranked 55 out of 140 countries in the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI), and 89th in the dimension assessing the sustainable development of tourism.⁷ Colombia's TTCI performance demonstrates that the country is less competitive than other key regional actors in the tourism industry such as Costa Rica, Peru, and Brazil.⁸

Factors like the low quality of services, human resources, and infrastructure are the cause of Colombia's low tourism competitiveness score, and they affect Colombia's nature-based tourism potential. Tourism service providers are highly informal and provide low-quality services.⁹ In 2019, 30 percent of tourism providers including hotels, restaurants and commercial facilities that were supported by the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism were categorized as informal.¹⁰ Trained tourism personnel are also scarce. Only six tourism professional academic programs have received quality accreditation, and very few incorporate biodiversity conservation training in their curriculums.¹¹ When compared to other Latin American countries,

¹ PDET refers to Planes de Desarrollo con Enfoque Territorial, Spanish for Territorial Focused Development Plans.

² PDET en Cifras. Agencia para la Renovación del Territorio. Web. 2020.

³ Peace, Stability and Prosperity. Country Development Cooperation Strategy 2020-2025. USAID. 2020.

⁴ Biodiversidad y Construcción de Paz. Instituto Alexander von Humboldt. Web. 2020.

⁵ En 2019 el Turismo en Colombia Rompió Records. Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism (a). 2020.

⁶ USTOA Tour Operator Members Reveal Top Travel Trends for 2020. United States Tour Operators Association. 2019.

⁷ The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report, Travel and Tourism at a Tipping Point, World Economic Forum, 2019.

⁸ World Economic Forum. 2019.

⁹ Tourism Service Providers are all businesses offering tourism services and experiences to consumers when the latter are travelling and performing tourism activities. These businesses include transport companies, hospitality companies, travel agents and tour operators and other tourism-related companies directly involved in servicing tourists' needs.

¹⁰ Tourism Sectoral Plan, Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, 2018.

¹¹ Plan Sectorial de Turismo 2018-2022. Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, 2018.

Colombia's availability of efficient and accessible transportation and connectivity to key business centers and tourist attractions is low.^{12 13} Governance mechanisms for sustainable nature tourism are also weak. Only 15 percent of all Colombian municipalities have tourism development plans, and just one department, Nariño, has a Nature Tourism Strategic Plan.¹⁴ Yet, communities, especially in conflict-affected PDET regions, see tourism as a promising economic alternative. Of 170 municipalities in PDET regions, 157 believe tourism will support these regions' peace development.¹⁵

Improving the competitiveness and long-term sustainable development of tourism is an opportunity for Colombia, especially for nature tourism products. International high spending travelers from the US, United Kingdom and Germany are particularly motivated by nature and wildlife factors where Colombia has a lot to offer.¹⁶ Further, USAID Nature Tourism Market Research concluded that experiencing biodiversity was the highest nature-based motivation to visit Colombia.¹⁷ Domestic travelers are also particularly motivated to visit nature tourism areas to enjoy their landscape beauty and wildlife, and to interact with rural communities.¹⁸

Despite USAID/Colombia's experience supporting nature and cultural tourism activities, a 2019 Rapid Assessment showed that tourism enterprises in remote and conflict-affected regions still require more planning and coordination between actors. The assessment also identified the need to develop community capacities to provide nature tourism services, improve public goods, and increase nature tourism community based organizations and local business access to financial services.

Purpose: The Nature Tourism Activity will build sustainable business models for Colombia's nature tourism¹⁹ that support community development, conserve the country's rich biodiversity, and reduce drivers of land use change.

Development Hypothesis: If the market for sustainable nature tourism is developed, and governance of sustainable nature tourism destinations is improved, then communities will use nature tourism as a sustainable development tool to generate income, conserve biodiversity, and reduce land use change drivers.

Objective 1: Develop the market for sustainable nature tourism in targeted destinations. This objective will improve sustainable nature tourism's markets by strengthening supply chains,²⁰ increasing consumer demand, and improving public and productive infrastructure. It will do this by building the capacities of

¹² World Economic Forum, 2019.

¹³ According to the Ministry of Communications Technology, only 6.2% of rural households have access to the internet. Yet, all PDET municipalities are interconnected to existing data networks.

¹⁴ Sustainable Tourism Policy. Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, 2020.

¹⁵ Nature Tourism Rapid Assessment. USAID. 2019.

¹⁶ Nature Tourism Market Analysis, Draft Demand Analysis. USAID, 2020.

¹⁷ USAID, 2020.

¹⁸, USAID, 2020.

¹⁹ This document adopts the concept of sustainable nature tourism combining the definitions by the Government of Colombia of sustainable tourism and nature tourism. Sustainable tourism is a type of tourism that takes into consideration current and future economic, environment and socio-cultural implications of tourism activities, and develops those in response to the needs of visitors, destinations, hosting communities, and the tourism industry. Nature tourism is a type of tourism that makes emphasis on the interrelation and appreciation of nature in its pure state. It is conceived as an umbrella product, with eco-tourism, adventure tourism and rural tourism as subproducts, each with specialized segments. Cultural, wellness and scientific tourism are complementary products.

²⁰ The tourism supply chain is a network of actors supplying all tourism goods and services delivered to end-consumers. It involves public and private organizations managing natural attractions, tourism products and service providers like hotels, restaurants, handicrafts, transportation services, guides; inbound and outbound tour operators, travel agents and wholesalers.

Community-Based Organizations and Local Businesses (CBO/LB)²¹ to provide high-quality services and connect with other actors in the supply chain. This objective will also increase national and international travel demand for the Activity's regions. It will do this by positioning these regions as sustainable nature tourism destinations and by promoting behavior change in tourists to favor business models that enhance community development while conserving Colombia's biodiversity.

Intermediate Result (IR) 1.1. Strengthened sustainable nature tourism supply chains in targeted destinations.

Under this IR, the Activity will address the existing human, technical, and financial gaps within the supply chain and build the capacity of CBO/LBs to provide high-quality services to increase tourism's competitiveness.²² Capacity building programs will be tailored for each specific destination, and informed by previous USAID activities, international donor projects, and government programs. Training topics may include: marketing; communications; bilingualism; quality standards for tourism services; business and financial management; compliance with national and local regulations; and sustainable management practices. The Activity will explore collaboration with the national learning agencies, the private sector, and other actors such as Peace Corps Colombia to improve the technical and language training programs. Training programs supported by the Activity will strengthen local guides' capacity to communicate the value of natural assets and engage tourists with conservation actions. The Activity will also support CBO/LBs to identify natural assets and nature corridors with potential touristic value and develop tourism conservation products like sea turtle "voluntourism", a nature tourism product where tourists are given the opportunity to become involved in monitoring and researching sea turtles.²³

The Activity will enhance tourism destinations' capacities to penetrate national and international travel markets. It will do this by adopting digital technology, and developing fair and meaningful partnerships among actors in the supply chain, including private sector investors. The Activity will also foster CBO/LBs engagement in business formalization processes by supporting local and national authorities' programs and by increasing the benefits from business formalization, like better marketing. Finally, the Activity will increase CBO/LBs access to financial services through the use of electronic and online payments and through better access to loans to improve service provision. The Activity will explore the use of the Development Finance Corporation's Development Credit Authority or other financial instruments as a tool to mitigate financial risks or leverage private sector finance and improve the presence of financial institutions in targeted regions.

Sub-Intermediate Results:

- Strengthened CBO/LBs capacity to provide quality tourism and biodiversity conservation products and services.
- Improved CBO/LBs capacity in business management and partnerships, including capacity in using digital technology.
- Increased CBO/LBs access to financial services.

²¹ Local Business (LB) include small and medium enterprises originally from the destination or region where they operate.

²² Tourism competitiveness is defined as "...the ability of the place to optimize its attractiveness for residents and non-residents, to deliver quality, innovative, and attractive tourism services to consumers and to gain market shares on the domestic and global marketplaces, while ensuring that the available resources supporting tourism are used efficiently and in a sustainable way." Based on Dupeyras, A., & MacCallum, N. (2013).

²³ Tourism conservation products offer tourists the opportunity to contribute with biodiversity actions. For example, coral reef monitoring, helping with sea turtles nests protection, contributing with tree-planting in prioritized ecosystems, offering tourists packages that include monetary contributions to biodiversity monitoring. Based on Tourism and Conservation. Sustainable Models and Strategies. USAID, 2011.

IR 1.2. Increased travel demand for sustainable nature tourism in targeted destinations.

This IR will improve the travel demand for select nature tourism destinations by implementing communication and marketing strategies that target national and international tourists. The Activity will leverage the capacities of local communication groups to highlight the destinations' level of biodiversity conservation, cultural richness, and its sustainable tourism model. The Activity will reach out to different types of tourists, especially tourist types that are growing the most.²⁴ The Activity will use regular and alternative marketing channels, including social media and social media influencers. It will also include the prioritized destinations in regional and national government promotion campaigns. The Activity will assist CBO/LBs to participate in national and international tourism fairs and competitions such as ANATO²⁵ and the Global Big Day.

The Activity's communication and marketing efforts will also de-stigmatize conflict-affected destinations, and raise national and international awareness of Colombia's mega-biodiversity and unique ecosystems. Communications will build a narrative around the idea that tourists can enjoy unique experiences, learn, and act on biodiversity conservation, conserve native and endangered species, enjoy cultural heritage, and support community development. The goal of these efforts is to change tourists' behaviors and attitudes, by increasing alignment between tourists' interests and the social development and biodiversity conservation objectives of the destinations.

Sub-Intermediate Results:

- Increased potential tourist awareness of targeted destinations and their natural wealth.
- More sympathetic tourist attitudes toward biodiversity conservation and social development.

IR 1.3 Improved public goods and services and productive infrastructure for sustainable nature tourism.

Under this IR, the Activity will promote public²⁶ and private sector investments to enable infrastructure for the development of sustainable nature tourism in targeted regions. The Activity will identify small-scale public infrastructure, like internet connectivity and tertiary roads, required to operate sustainable nature tourism services, and support local stakeholders to obtain the abilities to operate and maintain it. The Activity may also boost third party investments to improve tourism service infrastructure like trails, boardwalks, bridges, viewpoints, visitor centers, and/or other destination-specific investments.

Where appropriate, the Activity will also foster the creation of public, private partnerships to upgrade existing infrastructure, or to invest in new infrastructure. This will improve the quality of the services provided and strengthened through IR 1.1. The Activity will support CBO/LBs efforts to advocate for government investments in public goods and services to improve tourism competitiveness, and for the proper operation and maintenance of small-scale infrastructure, in harmony with the governance mechanisms supported in IR 2.3.

²⁴ According to USAID's Market Analysis, Colombia should target "skilled in nature" and "comfort in nature" tourists from the national and international markets. The first type of tourist shows high interest and knowledge in the destination and in the activities that will be undertaken and is prepared to stay in remote locations. The latter type of tourist is more common, has a casual interest in the destination and requires appropriate accommodation and guidance.

²⁵ Colombian Association of Travel and Tourism Agencies.

²⁶ In this context, it refers to public Colombian national and local entities.

Sub-Intermediate Results:

- Increased public and private investments in tourism's small-scale infrastructure.
- Improved local capacity to operate and maintain small-scale infrastructure.

Target 1A: Competitiveness of targeted nature tourism destinations improved by 50% in an index based on the World Economic Forum's TTCI.

Target 1B: Number of tourists visiting targeted sustainable nature tourism destinations increased by 30%.

Objective 2: Improve evidence-based governance and coordination of sustainable nature tourism in targeted destinations. This objective will improve governance of destinations by providing tools to local authorities, communities, and CBO/LBs to plan, manage and monitor nature tourism. The tools will also enable local authorities, communities, and CBO/LBs to use nature tourism to promote biodiversity conservation, to reduce land based greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and enhance social and economic development. It will generate and use data to manage tourist destinations, improving tourists' experiences and engagement with conservation actions. It will strengthen public officials, communities, and businesses' capacities to make decisions about nature tourism that maximize conservation results while responding to demand trends and local realities. Under this objective, the Activity will also support existing or new multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms that improve planning of tourism activities, address potential conflicts, and use evidence to position regions as sustainable nature tourism destinations.

IR 2.1 Increased use of data and information to plan, manage, and monitor nature tourism results.

Under this IR the Activity will identify information needed by CBO/LBs, regional and national actors to improve their management of destinations and to strengthen biodiversity conservation objectives. Based on international standards, the Activity will identify key social, economic, and environmental indicators to measure the performance of tourism businesses and destinations in terms of biodiversity conservation, reduced deforestation or land degradation, community benefits, and economic development. In addition to the capacity building actions in IR 1.1, the Activity will support the generation of capacities in CBO/LBs and local governments to measure and monitor inclusive indicators and to use them for tourism planning and management.

The Activity will also support CBO/LBs' access to nature tourism demand trends as identified by local, national, and international business organizations through the use of digital technologies. The Activity will establish communication channels between CBO/LBs and tourists through digital technology and will use these communication channels to measure tourists' level of engagement with conservation activities and their satisfaction with their tourism experience. The Activity will also support regional and national government efforts to implement information management plans within the National Sustainable Tourism Policy 2020-2030. The Activity will provide technical support to the Government of Colombia (GOC) in the generation and publication of statistics that measure nature tourism's contribution to the country's economic, conservation, reduced land use change and sustainable development objectives.

Sub-Intermediate Results:

- Nature tourism statistics developed and made available through government and private sector information systems and observatories.
- More local stakeholders use nature tourism, biodiversity conservation, and land-use statistics in destination management.

IR 2.2 Strengthened government capacities to plan, manage and monitor nature tourism.

Under this IR, the Activity will perform a capacity assessment of selected regional and local governments to plan, monitor, and manage nature tourism. The assessment will be used to identify sustainable nature tourism planning instruments, like carrying capacity studies to determine the maximum number of visitors accepted without harming the physical environment of a tourist site. The assessment may also evaluate local authorities' technical and financial capacities to plan, implement, and monitor tourism activities.

The Activity will use the assessment to inform the development and implementation of local institutions' capacity building plans. These plans will be used to increase local institutions' incorporation of social economic and conservation development objectives in the planning and management of nature tourism activities. Capacity building plans may include: the execution of priority carrying capacity studies; the preparation of Tourism Development Plans or Nature Tourism Strategic Plans; and the implementation of sustainable nature tourism planning, monitoring, and management training programs for local government officials. Under this IR the national government may also receive technical assistance to regulate the tourist industry under the new Tourism Law. Subnational governments may be assisted in law's implementation, through actions like the establishment of tourism checkpoints where statutory tourism fees can be charged and the revenue generated funds conservation efforts.

Sub-Intermediate Results:

- Carrying capacity studies, institutional capacity assessments, and Tourism Development Plans applied to nature tourism management in targeted regions.
- Improved local and national government capacities in sustainable nature tourism management and Tourism Law implementation.

IR 2.3 Increased coordination among nature tourism and conservation stakeholders.

The Activity will foster and strengthen functional coordination arrangements that serve as venues for conflict resolution, investment planning, tourism attraction prioritization, and negotiation with national and international stakeholders. The Activity will identify and create local and national opportunities for multi-stakeholder coordination arrangements for nature tourism destination management. The Activity will also encourage the participation of CBO/LBs and other private sector actors in existing coordination arrangements through technical assistance.

Coordination arrangements will be used to increase awareness among local communities about the value of the region's natural assets and the potential economic and environmental benefits of nature tourism. In this regard, environmental authorities, like the National Parks Agency, will be encouraged to participate in these coordination arrangements. The Activity will promote the creation of coordination arrangements in regions where they do not presently exist, based on local dynamics and by promoting active CBO/LBs participation. Finally, the Activity will identify areas where it can work with the GOC to improve coordination among sectors, especially with environment institutions, to implement the National Sustainable Tourism Policy.

Sub-Intermediate Results:

- Coordination and advocacy arrangements strengthened and/or established to resolve conflicts, implement policy, conserve biodiversity, manage destinations, and achieve community development objectives.
- Increased Collaborating, Learning and Adapting among nature tourism stakeholders.

Target 2A: Active participation of local stakeholders in sustainable nature tourism coordination mechanisms increased by 40%

Target 2B: Number of cooperation arrangements among local stakeholders in target regions increased by 50%

Geographic and population targeting: The Activity will focus primarily in PDET regions where sustainable nature tourism is a valid strategy to promote community development, biodiversity conservation and to reduce land use change drivers. Targeted regions should have sustainable nature tourism potential demonstrated by: the existence of natural attractions whose conservation is a priority; the presence of nature tourism supply chain actors; the existence of nature tourism governance, planning, and institutional mechanisms; stable security conditions; and the potential for domestic and international tourism demand. Some regions outside PDET areas may receive support based on their sustainable tourism potential and their capacity to eventually draw tourists to a broader region, thus having a positive impact in adjacent PDET municipalities. Work at the policy level will happen nationally and regionally. This targeted approach aligns with the Mission's critical and environmental geography for implementation under the CDCS 2020-2025.

Risks and Assumptions: The Nature Tourism Activity will operate under the following assumptions:

- The National Government will continue to support the implementation of the Peace Accord and PDETs initiatives will be funded and implemented at the local level.
- The national legal framework for sustainable tourism activities, reflected in the National Sustainable Tourism Policy and the modification to the General Tourism Law, will continue to have political buy-in needed to be approved and sufficiently funded.
- The sustainable tourism policy framework is incorporated into municipal and departmental development plans and other policy instruments allowing local governments to allocate resources to advance the nature tourism industry in their territories.
- Restrictive health measures relating to COVID-19 will ease with time and both national and international tourists will be able to visit Colombia's tourism destinations.
- Security conditions may worsen in some supported destinations, thus a close coordination with communities and authorities is required.
- CBO/LBs will remain open to improving their performance.
- Infrastructure built and improved in response to the Activity will minimize potential impacts on the environment, and be resilient to climate events.

The main risks that the Activity will face are:

- Potential beneficiaries may be targeted by illegal groups for participating in the Activity, especially as increased income opportunities are consolidated.

- Conflict worsens in targeted regions affecting the perception of security, making it more difficult to develop nature tourism.
- Corruption from public and private tourism actors could create barriers for the strengthening of CBO/LBs.
- Climate change may affect the access to and capacity of potential tourism sites.
- The COVID-19 crisis extends for a long period of time due to difficulties in rolling out the GOC vaccination plans affecting tourism travel.

Adaptive Management: In order to address and mitigate the risks identified during the planning and implementation period, the Activity will maintain close coordination and communication with CBOs, local tourism service providers, and local leaders and authorities who will inform on local conditions and anticipate security and other risks that could affect actions and sub activities. Regarding travel restrictions due to COVID-19, the Activity's IR 1.2 will first focus on the national market and will aim to activate national demand for tourism services. As the pandemic situation enables international travel and bio-security restrictions allow for larger groups, the Activity will also include actions that will promote Colombia's nature tourism sites at the international level.

The Activity Collaborating, Learning and Adapting (CLA) plan will also incorporate a continuous learning approach based on pause and reflect moments and scenario planning. This approach will provide sufficient information for the Activity to adapt and create positive feedback loops. Collaboration with other activities will also be promoted, especially with those activities that have developed tourism actions such as Natural Wealth, Paramos and Forests, Partnerships for Reconciliation, Energy for Peace²⁷, and Community Development and Licit Opportunities. The Activity will also collaborate with Inter-Ethnic Alliance for Peace, Empropaz, and the new Ethnic Inclusion Activity to strengthen the nature tourism supply chains and increase access to financial services. The Activity will engage with these mechanisms early to incorporate best practices and lessons learned from USAID's past programming. The Activity will also collaborate with other donors such as the Global Green Growth Institute, the United Nations Development Program, and the Swiss cooperation which have wide experience in supporting nature tourism in the country. As part of the monitoring efforts, the Activity will develop a robust set of contextual indicators that will flag political, environmental, and security concerns and track trends at the national and local level, thus enabling the Activity to adapt if conditions require.

Finally, the Activity will include a project fund to respond to short-term and unexpected situations during implementation. This fund will support the development of trust between communities and the Activity by allowing quick response to specific needs of investments in collaboration with local governments and communities.

Alignment: The sustainable nature tourism business model developed by this Activity will further USAID's efforts to expand licit livelihood opportunities and promote more competitive licit economies, aligning with the CDCS' Development Objective 3 "Promote Equitable and Environmentally Sustainable Economic Growth" and Intermediate Results 3.1 "Expanded Licit Livelihood Opportunities" and 3.2 "More Competitive Licit Economies". The Activity will also contribute with the CDCS' Performance Management Plan, particularly with Target No. 11 "Environmental sustainability increases by 15% in the target geography by 2025" from the basket of strategic targets.

²⁷ The Nature Tourism Activity will work in close collaboration with the Energy for Peace Activity to improve the sustainability and competitiveness of nature tourism sites, by providing cost effective and reliable renewable solar electricity to productivity hubs.

Cross-cutting Issue Integration: This Activity will work closely with vulnerable populations, including Afro-Colombians, indigenous peoples, youth, women, and potentially Venezuelan migrants, to engage them as active members of the tourism supply chain. Youth and women will have an especially significant role in activating tourism opportunities in prioritized municipalities. The Activity will include a Positive Youth Development approach that includes youth as active participants in the development and leadership of initiatives on the ground. When implementing or introducing new digital technology to beneficiaries, the activity will apply the Principles for Digital Development to ensure technology is effective and best meets user needs. The final prioritization of municipalities and potential tourism sites will define the level of engagement this Activity will have with ethnic populations. Depending on the final geography selected, the inclusion of ethnic governing bodies will be essential to consolidate a positive relationship between the activity and local communities. The economic empowerment of ethnic communities will also highlight these communities' cultural assets and heritage as part of the site development process.

Given the Activity's focus, environmental considerations are at the core of the design, planning, and implementation process. Similarly, working on a new model for sustainable nature tourism requires significant private sector engagement, understanding the private sector not only as larger companies but also micro and small local businesses that will have economic interest in the tourism supply chain. Taking into consideration USAID/Colombia's experience, the Activity will identify private firms, SMEs and other relevant small businesses interested in investing and, or working in Nature Tourism in targeted regions, and will support the consolidation of sustainable and profitable businesses under a shared value/risk approach.

ATTACHMENT B
USAID/Colombia
Request for Information
Nature Tourism Activity

Guiding Questions:

USAID is seeking feedback on the concept detailed in Attachment A. The purpose of this RFI is to determine the soundness and robustness of the conceptual design. This is a Request for Information (RFI) and not a Request for Proposal (RFP). Please submit your feedback regarding the desired results outlined in the concept (the “what”) rather than describing how your organization would propose to achieve the results (the “how”). Questions below are guiding questions, and as such, not all questions need to be answered in your feedback.

1. Which do you consider to be the **strengths** of the concept?
2. Which do you consider the **weaknesses** of the concept and why?
3. Is the proposed results chain (objectives and intermediate results) **sufficient** to build sustainable business models for nature tourism that conserve Colombia’s biodiversity, reduce drivers of land use change, and support community development?
4. Is the proposed results chain (objectives and intermediate results) **strategic** to create enough change to get the expected impact?
5. Are there any elements **missing** from the design structure, or for which you would suggest an **adjustment** and how could these elements be connected to the results chain?
6. Do you have comments or suggestions regarding the proposed **geographic and population targets**? Please support your suggestions
7. Do you consider the stated risks and assumptions to cover **the main issues** that would need to be considered during the execution of the Activity? If you see gaps, please provide suggestions.
8. Do you have any recommendations or considerations for how this Activity could support the **development of trust** between communities and the government/private sector?
9. Do you have any **recommendations or considerations** for how this Activity could guarantee an effective integration with initiatives that target vulnerable populations such as migrants, youth, women, and ethnic communities?
10. Do you have any **considerations** regarding how the Activity can more effectively engage the private sector?
11. Are there elements outside the current design structure in which this activity could support economic recovery efforts **post COVID**?

12. How should the concept note better consider **security issues** that represent risks to the Activity and the industry?
13. Would your organization be interested in applying to this upcoming opportunity or partnering with another organization to participate? Please explain your experience on this topic

[END OF ATTACHMENT B]