Project reference	*31-011*
Project title	*Coffee for nature: Restoring Nicaraguan biodiversity through coffee agroforestry*
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	*Nicaragua*
Lead Organisation	*ECOM Agro-industrial Corp. Limited*
Partner(s)	*Cornell Lab of Ornithology, More People More Trees*
Project Leader	*Edgardo Alpizar*
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	*October 2025* *HYR2*
Project website/blog/social media	*N/A*

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed project implementation timetable (if your project started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up to end of September).

During this reporting period, the project "Coffee for Nature: Restoring Nicaraguan biodiversity through coffee agroforestry" continued to strengthen field implementation, community engagement, and institutional collaboration.

Output 1 – Scalable biodiversity monitoring methodology

The launch of the methodological manual and stakeholder workshop was delayed due to national legal reforms affecting institutional engagement. However, collaboration advanced through a cooperation agreement with the National Autonomous University of Nicaragua (UNAN–CUR Matagalpa), co-signed by Tree Rich Nicaragua, the local consulting branch of More People More Trees (ANNEX I)

Output 2 – Guide for biodiversity restoration and conservation

• 2.1 Update of biodiversity completeness map: An update was not required during this period, as reforestation and restoration efforts are still in early stages and measurable landscape changes have not yet occurred.

• 2.2 Decision-making guide for biodiversity restoration: The guide has been fully drafted and finalised, aligned with the methodological manual, but has not yet been published or shared pending completion of the national outreach approval process.

• 2.3 Stakeholder presentations/webinars: As outlined under Output 1, legal reforms affected coordination and outreach activities. The project is currently identifying the most appropriate mechanisms for dissemination, and this activity is now planned to take place between March and May 2026.

Output 3 – Increased biodiversity and landscape connectivity

• 3.3 Second reforestation cycle: A total of 13,500 shade-tree seedlings were delivered to 40 participating producers, resulting in the establishment of 75 hectares—meeting 100% of the target for this cycle.

• 3.4 Monitoring of tree survival and growth: Monitoring activities have not yet commenced, as planting was delayed during this cycle. Monitoring will begin in 2026 once the newly established plots are in place.

• 3.6 Evaluation of species richness and abundance: Ninety-two permanent monitoring points were established, each surveyed multiple times, yielding 5,291 bird observations representing 171 species across forest, coffee, and restoration habitats. A detailed report and data analysis are provided in ANNEX II.

Output 4 – Livelihood improvement and resilience

• 4.4 Establishment of agroforestry coffee crops: Coffee plants covering 83 ha were delivered to 47 producers, representing 111 % of the annual target, including part of the second planting cycle. A location map of the participating producers is attached as ANNEX III.

• 4.5 Technical assistance: Field technicians continue regular visits to each participating farm, providing agronomic and financial guidance at least twice per month.

• 4.3 Revolving fund disbursements Implementation of the revolving credit mechanism is ongoing, with approximately 15% of participating producers having applied for credit under the scheme. Updated financial details, agreement template and requirements are provided in ANNEX IV.

Output 5 – Capacity building and gender equality

Two major capacity-building events were completed during this period:

• 5.1 The Participatory Rural Appraisal Workshop held in Matagalpa brought together 34 coffee producers. Participants identified local challenges—including labour shortages, substance use, and environmental pollution—while reinforcing gender inclusion and participatory planning for future community actions.

• 5.2 and 5.5 A Gender Equality and Human Rights Workshop held in Matagalpa engaged 47 coffee producers from six communities, facilitating reflection on gender roles, inequalities, and shared responsibilities in sustainable coffee production.

Reports for both workshops (in Spanish, with English summaries) are attached as ANNEX V and ANNEX VI, respectively).

Two additional workshops—on sustainable coffee management and biodiversity conservation and on safeguarding and financial literacy—are scheduled for February 2026, timed to avoid overlap with the coffee harvest season.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Reflection

The project's MEL system remains effective and appropriate. Indicators are relevant and data collection functions well. No major risks have emerged, and all assumptions remain valid.

2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

During April–September 2025, no major problems were encountered, but several lessons informed adaptive management.

• Planning and time management: Coordinating technical and financial schedules improved efficiency. Lesson – agricultural activities require seasonal flexibility. Impact – rescheduled within plans; no budget effect.

• Producer participation and sustainable practices: Adoption of agroforestry improved when benefits were clear. Lesson – linking awareness to incentives drives uptake. Impact – demonstration plots remain priorities within budget.

• Gender and inclusion: Women's participation was lower than expected but consistent. Lesson – inclusion requires tailored strategies (shared plot management, credit access, targeted training). Impact – integrated into workplans without extra cost.

• Biodiversity monitoring: eBird, PROALAS, and Cornell tools proved effective. Lesson – engaging producers enhances data quality and ownership. Impact – approach continues using existing resources.

• Adaptive management and scalability: Monitoring enabled timely adjustments and stronger commitment. Lesson – learning by doing strengthens outcomes. Impact – supports scalability and legacy with no change to budget or schedule.

Operational lessons this semester improved coordination, inclusiveness, and adaptive management. None are expected to affect the project's timetable, outputs, or budget, and all contribute to long-term sustainability and replication of the Coffee for Nature model.

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3. Have any of these issues been discussed with NIRAS and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with NIRAS:	No
Formal Change Request submitted:	No
Received confirmation of change acceptance:	N/A
Change Request reference if known:	

4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2025 – 30 September 2025)

Actual spend: ████████

4b. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g. more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this financial year (ending 31 March 2026)?

Yes ☐ **No X** Estimated underspend: £ N/A

4c. If you expect an underspend, then you should consider your project budget needs carefully. Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

N/A

5. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to BCFs management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

N/A

6. Project risk management

6a. If your project has an Overseas Security and Justice assessment, please provide an update on any related risks, and any special conditions in your award paperwork if relevant for your project.

N/A

7. Please use this section to respond to any feedback provided when your project was confirmed, or from your most recent Annual Report. As a reminder, all projects that were scored as 'Not Yet Sensitive' in the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) assessment of their latest Annual Report should demonstrate how they are meeting the minimum GESI-Sensitive standard.

Key feedback points from the Annual Report Review have been addressed. As outlined in Section 1, outreach and consultation with decision makers were postponed due to recent legal reforms; however, a cooperation agreement with UNAN-CUR Matagalpa provides a platform to resume these activities once conditions allow. A strengthened dissemination strategy is being developed with national partners to help position the project as a model of national significance, and the distinction between the methodological manual, practitioner guide, and biodiversity map has been clarified.

On Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI), targeted measures are being implemented to increase women's participation in agroforestry through shared plot management and training. Monitoring tools are being updated to capture qualitative data on livelihood improvements. No SEAH incidents have been reported, and safeguarding protocols remain in place with no new risks identified, therefore no updates or modifications to the project's risk register are deemed necessary.

Checklist for submission

Have you responded to **feedback from your latest Annual Report Review?** You should respond in section 6, and annexe other requested materials as appropriate.	
Have you reported against the most **up to date information for your project?**	X
Have you **clearly highlighted any confidential information** within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website?	
Include your **project reference** in the subject line of submission email.	
Submit to **BCF-Reports@niras.com**	
Please ensure claim forms and other communications for your project are not included with this report.	