

July 3, 2013

Comments from the United Kingdom on Approval by Mail: Bolivia: Climate Resilience - Integrated Basin Management Project (IBRD)

Dear colleagues

Thank you for sending this project approval through. Overall the UK is highly supportive of this important project. However we have one major concern we would like to see addressed before we are able to endorse, which is around the need for a greater role in the project for the Ministry of Planning (and the Ministry of Hydrocarbons) and sustainability of the institutional arrangements. These concerns were raised in the UK comments on the SPCR in November 2011 and by the expert review (both attached here) which the November 2011 co-chairs summary stated would be addressed in project documentation.

At a minimum we would like to receive clarification as to how these previously raised concerns have been and will be addressed in project design and implementation. Relevant passages are pasted below.

We wanted to highlight this concern straightaway so as to avoid delaying the project more than necessary. However given this concern and the size of the project which will require internal approval in our organisation at a higher level than normal, we would be grateful for an extension to the deadline of a few days. Grateful if you could also let us know an estimated timeframe for when we might get a response on the concern raised here. We also have a few additional comments on which our endorsement is not conditional, which we will submit before the deadline

Many thanks for your help

Juliet Field
DFID

From UK comments on Bolivia SPCR (November 2011):

- The UK welcomes Bolivia's SPCR and the work undertaken to develop it. We approve, subject to the Ministries of Planning and Energy and Hydrocarbons taking a greater role in its coordination.
- Co-ordination: In order to fully comply with the objective of integrating climate resilience into development planning, we recommend that the Ministry of Planning should play a larger role in taking the SPCR forward, and in the planning process for a climate resilient economy. (The SPCR currently focuses on a technical planning process in the water sector.)

- The Bolivian Ministry of Energy and Hydrocarbons is currently placing much importance on renewable energies, particularly hydro-power. In order to achieve a holistic approach, it would therefore be advisable to liaise with the Ministry of Energy and Hydrocarbons on water management planning.

From Expert Review recommendations (October 2011):

- ‘First, since the main objective of the PPCR is to integrate climate resilience into development planning, the Ministry of Development Planning should be more involved in this program and receive training just like PNCC and SENAMHI. VIPFE, for example, has to approve all public investments in Bolivia, so it would be good if the staff received training that would qualify them to judge whether proposed investments are climate resilient. Strategic Planning staff also needs to be more aware of climate change impacts and strategies to reduce adverse effects. In the current institutional setup, the program is very much concentrated in the Ministry of Environment and Water, which is a good choice as implementing agency, but it should not be limited to that. The proposed institutional setup reflects the widespread perception in the Government that climate change is mainly an environmental problem, while in reality it is a development and planning problem.
- Second, it is important that the Strategy explains how it envisions its transformative impact to take place, especially considering the temporary character of the National Unit of Program Coordination (UNCP) and the ad hoc advisory committee. It would be good if the Strategy could propose a way to overcome PNCC’s current weaknesses and thus contribute to a real institutional strengthening, as this program (at least Component 1) ideally should be managed by a permanent government institution with the mandate of promoting climate change adaptation. Since climate change is really a development and planning problem, it would greatly advance the main objective of the PPCR if PNCC could be moved back to the Ministry of Development Planning, instead of languishing under an environmental viceministry, and the Strategy could try to open a door for that opportunity.’