

**CONSULTATION PHASE  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY**

**TO:** Victoria Márquez-Mees, Executive Secretary  
**FROM:** Isabel Lavadenz Paccieri, Project Ombudsperson  
**CC:** Independent Consultation and Investigation Mechanism  
**REFERENCE:** Rurrenabaque-San Buenaventura Bridge  
**COUNTRY:** Bolivia  
**DATE:** 13 April 2011  
**DETERMINATION  
OF ELIGIBILITY:** The request is eligible for the consultation phase.

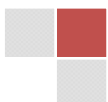
---

**I. Summary of request**

- 1.1 On 15 March 2011, civil society organizations and citizens (the Requesters), including the Bolivian Fund on Environment and Development, submitted to the Independent Consultation and Investigation Mechanism (ICIM)<sup>1</sup> a request related to the potential environmental and social impacts of building a bridge, and access to it, connecting Rurrenabaque and San Buenaventura, in Bolivia. Some of the Requesters have asked that the ICIM maintain confidentiality in dealing with this request.
- 1.2 The Requesters allege that construction and subsequent use of the bridge, and the access thereto, in the planned location could cause significant environmental and social impacts. The Requesters also allege that the handling of information and the public consultation were inadequate. The main points raised in the request are summarized as follows:

---

<sup>1</sup> The terms Mechanism, Management, Executive Secretary, Project Ombudsperson, Panel, Mechanism Policies, Eligibility, Consultation Phase, Evaluation and all other relevant terms used in this memorandum shall be construed according to the meaning ascribed to them by the Policy Establishing the Independent Consultation and Investigation Mechanism approved on 17 February 2010 and available at: [www.iadb.org/mici](http://www.iadb.org/mici).



#### 1.2.1 Environmental impacts

- According to the Requesters, the routes providing access to the bridge would cause a change in the use of mountainous land that is considered to be a municipal reserve.
- The siting of the bridge and its access points in areas prone to flooding and leaching could exacerbate the impact of such phenomena on the population.
- The improved highway connections could increase the possibility of changes in land use in areas adjacent to the bridge and its access points, causing, among other things, greater pressure on the Madidi National Park and Natural Integrated Management Area, as well as on the Pilon Lajas Indigenous Territory and Biosphere Reserve located close to the area of the proposed project.

#### 1.2.2 Social impacts

- According to the Requesters, the access route to the bridge via the historic district and central area of Rurrenabaque would cause the following social impacts: (i) increased air pollution would affect the health of the population, both during construction and in subsequent use of the bridge and its access points; and (ii) noise pollution would impact the population, both during construction and in subsequent use of the bridge and its access points.
- The increase in traffic in the center of the city, and the increased potential for changes in land use in the adjoining Indigenous Territories and Biosphere Reserve would adversely affect local livelihoods, particularly with regard to ecotourism.

#### 1.2.3 Access to information

The Requesters allege that, from the outset, there has been inadequate public consultation and handling of information, including:

- Informational meetings that failed to provide a technical response to the concerns expressed by those who would be affected by the project.
- An inadequate communications campaign, which provided incomplete information on construction of the bridge and its access points.
- Unsatisfactory handling of information, particularly in communicating environmental, economic, and social impacts and ways of mitigating them.

Project Ombudsperson

Independent Consultation and Investigation Mechanism – Inter-American Development Bank

1300 New York Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20577 USA

Tel: (202) 623 3952 | Fax: (202) 312 4057 | Email: [mecanismo@iadb.org](mailto:mecanismo@iadb.org) | [www.iadb.org/mici](http://www.iadb.org/mici)



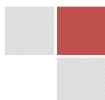
1.3 The actions, omissions and impacts outlined in the request and described in the preceding paragraphs relate to the following IDB operational policies:

- Environmental safeguards
- Access to information
- Indigenous peoples
- Involuntary resettlement
- Disaster and risk management

## **II. Background**

2.1 The project referred to in the request is a reallocation of funds from loan 1833/SF-BO, Northern Corridor Highway Improvement Program, Santa Bárbara-Rurrenabaque Section, and loan 1597/SF-BO, Northern Corridor Highway Program, La Paz-Caranavi Segment. The executing agency, Administración Boliviana de Carreteras [Bolivian Highway Administration] (ABC), decided not to carry out the following activities that had been planned as part of said operations: (i) the gravel-surface maintenance of the Santa Bárbara-Caranavi and Caranavi-Quiquibey stretches of road; and (ii) a study on environmental and engineering feasibility for the Santa Bárbara-Caranavi segment. The ABC requested that the IDB use the funds intended for these activities to instead finance the Rurrenabaque-San Buenaventura bridge and its access points.

2.2 According to the information received by the ICIM, the ABC presented to the IDB a “Technical/Economic Feasibility, Environmental Impact and Final Design Study for the Rurrenabaque-San Buenaventura Bridge,” conducted by the consulting firms CARL BRO (a Danish company) and CAEM (a Bolivian company). The feasibility study was financed by the Nordic Development Fund. The original content of the feasibility study was modified during the implementation process, in order to eliminate public consultation and preparation of a population resettlement and compensation program. According to CARL BRO and CAEM, the strong opposition that the inhabitants of Rurrenabaque expressed at the first public consultation to the proposed siting of the bridge and its access points made it impossible to properly carry out these activities. The feasibility study was deemed by the IDB to be acceptable.



### III. Eligibility analysis

- 3.1 The Policy Establishing the Independent Consultation and Investigation Mechanism (the “Policy”) states, in Section 38, that “the purpose of the Consultation Phase is to provide an opportunity, applying consensual and flexible approaches, to address the concerns of a party that believes it has been or could reasonably be expected to be directly, materially adversely affected by the failure of the IDB to follow its Relevant Operational Policies in a Bank-Financed Operation.”
- 3.2 The Eligibility Analysis was conducted based on the criteria established in Sections 40 and 37 of the Policy. The Consultation Process begins once the Requester is declared eligible and proceeds through the following stages: Assessment, Dialogue, and Monitoring.
- 3.3 The results of the Eligibility Analysis are indicated in the following table:

**Summary of Eligibility Analysis**

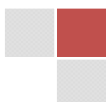
Eligibility Criteria	DETERMINATION OF THE OMBUDSPERSON	COMMENTS
Names and contact information of the Requesters provided	Yes	The contact information for the requesting organizations and for the representatives of the civil society organizations and citizens are registered with the ICIM.
Project or operation duly identified	Yes	Reallocation of funds from loans 1833/SF-BO and 1597/SF-BO for the construction of the Rurrenabaque-San Buenaventura bridge and its access points.
Requesters reside in the country where the operation is being implemented	Yes	The Requesters reside in Bolivia.

Project Ombudsperson

Independent Consultation and Investigation Mechanism – Inter-American Development Bank

1300 New York Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20577 USA

Tel: (202) 623 3952 | Fax: (202) 312 4057 | Email: [mecanismo@iadb.org](mailto:mecanismo@iadb.org) | [www.iadb.org/mici](http://www.iadb.org/mici)



Eligibility Criteria	DETERMINATION OF THE OMBUDSPERSON	COMMENTS
None of the exclusions set forth in Section 37 of the Policy apply	No	None of the exclusions in Section 37 applies to this Request.
The Requester has reasonably asserted that it has been or could be directly, materially, and adversely affected by an action or omission of the IDB <u>in violation of one or more relevant operational policies.</u>	Yes	The Requesters have enumerated in detail the potential adverse impacts they could suffer, in the context of the proposed project, as a result of the possible violation of IDB policies.
The parties are amenable to a consultation or mediation exercise.	Yes	The parties are amenable to participating in the consultation process, with the agenda still to be determined. The possibility of initiating mediation, in the framework of the ongoing dialogue set in motion by the ABC, has also been mentioned.
The Requesters have taken steps to bring the issue to the attention of Management.	Yes	The Requesters have expressed their concerns to the executing agency and to various sections within the IDB.

#### IV. Conclusion

- 4.1 The Project Ombudsperson, in the exercise of her functions and under the authority granted her by the Policy, has determined that the request described herein is **eligible for the consultation phase**.
- 4.2 The Determination of Eligibility does not imply any judgment on the part of the ICIM regarding the basis or merits of the issues presented in the request.



- 4.3 Within the next 5 business days, the Executive Secretary will record this in the Registry and notify the Requesters, the Board of Executive Directors, the President, the project team, and the executing agency of this Determination of Eligibility.

**Isabel Lavadenz Paccieri**  
**Project Ombudsperson**

