

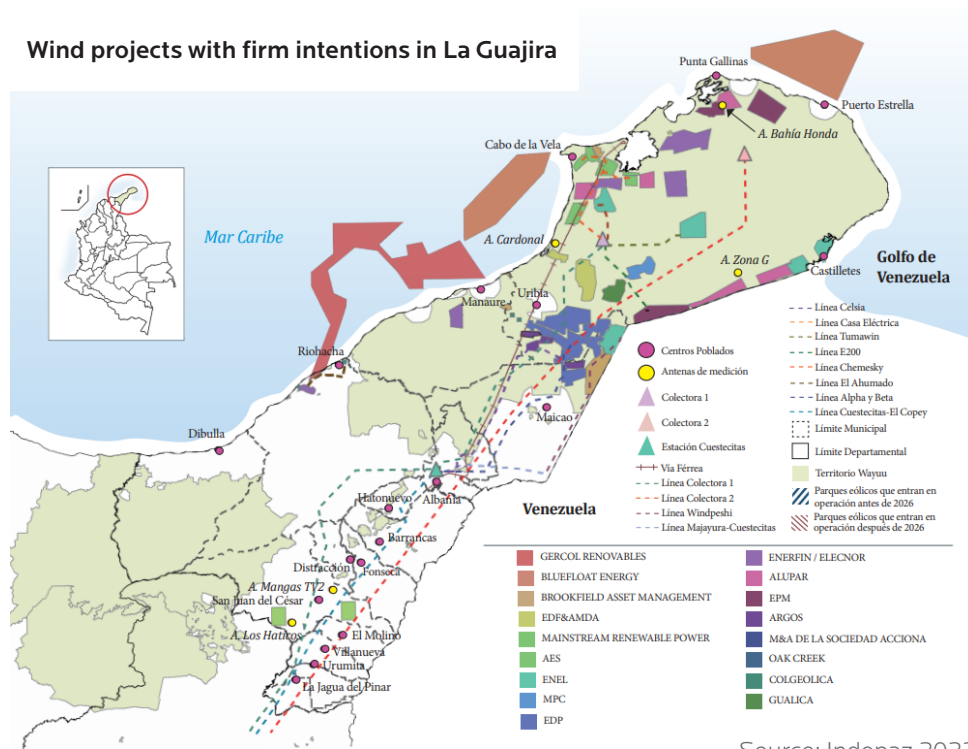
CONCEPT NOTE – APRIL 2024

# Sector Wide Human Rights Impact Assessment of the Wind Sector in La Guajira, Colombia

## INTRODUCTION

For the green transition to be a just transition, the human rights of affected communities and workers need to be respected when developing energy projects. This means that communities and workers should be engaged in the identification of human rights risks and opportunities of energy developments in a timely and safe manner, and that their input is meaningfully reflected in project plans.

La Guajira in Colombia is one of the regions with the highest wind potential in the world – both on shore and offshore. It is a territory rich in resources and culture, but it also has a fragile ecosystem inhabited by vulnerable communities, including Wayúu indigenous peoples. La Guajira has been under pressure from coal extraction, suffered from more than 40 years of armed violence, and is very vulnerable to climate change. There is a serious risk that the development of at least 45 wind projects in La Guajira exacerbates the vulnerability and human rights challenges affecting the Wayúu, especially Wayúu women.



Source: Indepaz 2023

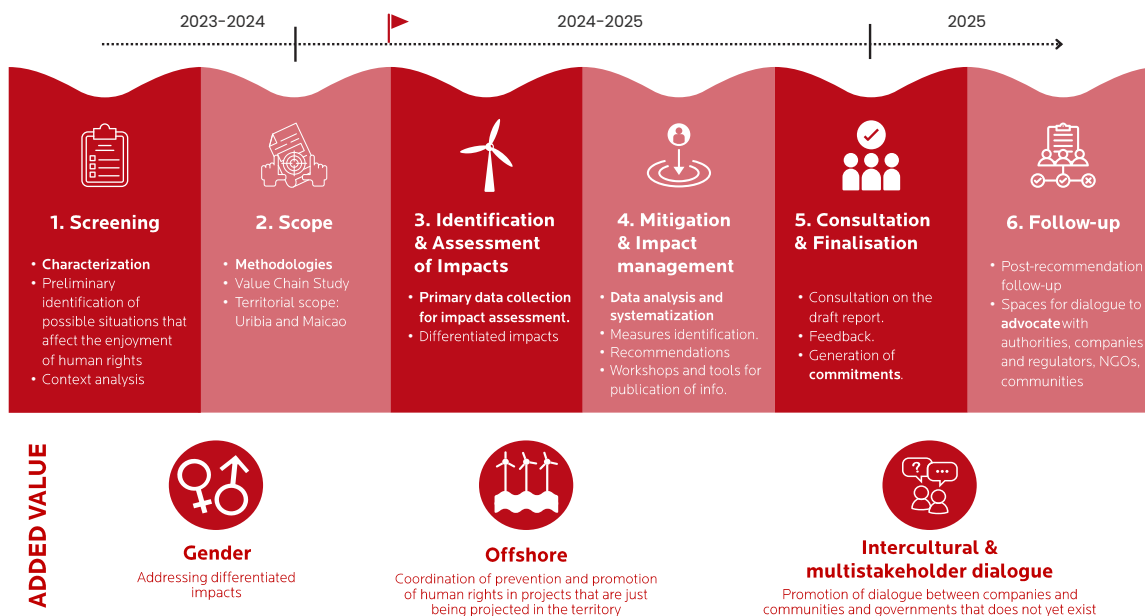
The Danish Institute for Human Rights (the Institute) and the Colombian NGO Centro Regional de Empresas y Emprendimientos Responsables (CREER) are developing a sector wide human rights impact assessment to look at the combined impacts of the wind sector in the region. The expected results from the project are:

- A systematic and robust identification of actual and potential impacts in human rights related to the wind developments that can inform decisions;
- Recommendations for companies and government on how to prevent and address such human rights impacts;
- The creation of safe spaces for dialogue and learning between parties that currently have serious problems listening and understanding each other;
- A robust improved methodological approach, that can be implemented in any energy corridor, in complex social settings like indigenous territories, that is consistent with new developments and best practice;
- Better outcomes for the communities hosting these projects.

## METHODOLOGY AND SCOPE

The central methodology is a [Sector Wide Human Rights Impact Assessment](#) (SWIA), which consists of 6 phases (see graphic). The SWIA is based on a collaborative approach to ensure that communities and specific groups are involved in decision-making processes, can access information and receive capacity building on the topics of their concern, as well as ensure that their experiences and expectations reach energy companies and decision makers. Moreover, key business and governmental actors are invited to dialogue and capacity building sessions to discuss the findings and identify shared solutions. The screening and scoping stages were completed in 2023. This included a mapping of all relevant actors, planned projects and companies involved in La Guajira, as well as of the relevant legal framework, policies, and procedures.

The Institute and CREER worked with local indigenous experts to understand the unique and complex land rights and gender dynamics of the Wayúu people and understand how to ensure respectful and meaningful participation of community actors in future processes. Good relationships were established with organisations and individuals, including state actors, energy companies, and community organisations.



The proposed scope of the study comprises actual and potential human rights impacts of land-based wind projects as well as of planned off-shore wind in the municipalities of Uribia and Maicao in La Guajira, Colombia. The scoping phase of the study identified, among the key issues:

- Inadequate procedures for Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC);
- Conflicting mandates and legitimacy of traditional authorities and representatives, as well as exclusion of specific community groups during engagement and land access agreements;
- Impacts to intangible cultural heritage and disruption of sacred areas;
- Gender based violence and exclusion of women from decision-making;
- Inadequate and opaque benefit-sharing agreements;
- Increased conflict and violence.

Fundraising is now being undertaken to develop the project further. Once funding has been secured a governance structure will be established. This will consist of a multi-stakeholder steering committee to ensure participation of relevant stakeholders in the decision-making elements of the project and further elaboration of the subsequent 4 steps.

## BUDGET AND TIME PLAN

Once funding is secured, it is expected that the SWIA will require 2 years to be completed. The estimated budget is EUR €300.000. The budget includes desktop study, field studies, data gathering, analysis of primary and secondary information, dialogue and capacity building with the communities, companies, government actors, and civil society organisations, among others. The budget includes particular focus on ensuring the participation of vulnerable groups and adequate safety arrangements for all persons to safely engage in a conflict prone and logistically challenged area.

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If you are interested in knowing more about the project or how you can support this initiative, please contact: GABRIELA FACTOR  
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