

LATIN AMERICAN EXPORT BANK
Form 6-K
April 24, 2009

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM 6-K

Report of Foreign Private Issuer
Pursuant to Rule 13a-16 Or 15d-16
under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934

Long form of Press Release

BANCO LATINOAMERICANO DE EXPORTACIONES, S.A.
(Exact name of Registrant as specified in its Charter)

LATIN AMERICAN EXPORT BANK
(Translation of Registrant's name into English)

Calle 50 y Aquilino de la Guardia
P.O. Box 0819-08730

El Dorado, Panama City

Republic of Panama
(Address of Registrant's Principal Executive Offices)

(Indicate by check mark whether the registrant files or will file annual reports under cover of Form 20-F or Form 40-F.)

Form 20-F Form 40-F

(Indicate by check mark whether the registrant by furnishing the information contained in this Form is also thereby furnishing information to the Commission pursuant to Rule 12g-3-2(b) under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.)

Yes No

(If "Yes" is marked, indicate below the file number assigned to the registrant in connection with Rule 12g3-2(b). 82__.)

SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized.

April 22, 2009

Banco Latinoamericano de Exportaciones, S.A.

By: /s/ Pedro Toll

Name: Pedro Toll

Title: Deputy Manager

BLADEX REPORTS FIRST QUARTER NET INCOME OF \$16.7 MILLION, OR \$0.46 PER SHARE. NET INCOME, OPERATING INCOME, CAPITALIZATION, CREDIT RESERVE COVERAGE, DEPOSITS, LOAN DISBURSEMENTS, FEES AND LENDING MARGINS STRENGTHEN.

PANAMA CITY, April 22, 2009 – Banco Latinoamericano de Exportaciones (NYSE: BLX, “Bladex”, or “the Bank”) announced today its results for the first quarter ended March 31, 2009.

Business Highlights

- Net income amounted to \$16.7 million in the first quarter 2009, compared to a net loss of \$4.3 million in the fourth quarter 2008, and compared to a net income of \$19.2 million gain during the first quarter 2008.
 - Net operating income(1) for the first quarter 2009 amounted to \$22.3 million, compared to a net operating loss of \$4.5 million in the fourth quarter 2008, and compared to a \$19.2 million in net operating income in the first quarter 2008.
 - Net interest income in the first quarter 2009 amounted to \$15.4 million, an increase of \$0.7 million, or 5% from fourth quarter 2008, mainly due to increased lending spreads.
 - Deposits as of March 31, 2009 increased \$47 million (4%) from the fourth quarter, 2008.
 - The Bank’s Tier 1 capital ratio as of March 31, 2009 stood at 21.7%, compared to 20.4% as of December 31, 2008, and compared to 20.4% as of March 31, 2008. The Bank’s leverage ratio as of these dates was 6.8x, 7.6x and 8.3x, respectively. The Bank’s equity consists entirely of common shares.
 - As of March 31, 2009, the Bank reported zero past due credits in its portfolio. The ratio of the allowance for credit losses to the commercial portfolio strengthened to 3.2%, compared to 2.8% as of December 31, 2008, and 2.0% as of March 31, 2008.
 - Commercial Division’s net operating income for the first quarter 2009 was \$12.8 million, a decrease of \$1.0 million from the fourth quarter 2008, and \$2.2 million from the first quarter 2008, mostly due to a lower average loan portfolio balance, partially offset by wider lending margins.
 - Asset Management Division’s net operating income for the quarter increased to \$8.5 million, compared to \$1.3 million in the fourth quarter 2008, and compared to \$3.1 million in the first quarter 2008, mostly driven by trading gains in the Investment Fund.
 - Treasury Division reported net operating income of \$1.0 million, compared to a net operating loss of \$19.6 million in the fourth quarter 2008, and compared to a net operating income of \$1.0 million in the first quarter 2008, mostly due to the appreciation of trading securities.
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CEO's Comments

Mr. Jaime Rivera, Bladex's Chief Executive Officer, stated the following regarding the Bank's results: "The results for the quarter confirm Bladex's ability to operate profitably and soundly in the midst of unusual volatility in the financial markets, and a generally weakening global economic environment. The results also confirm the benefits of the diversified business model that the Bank has built during the last four years, incorporating a wide variety of clients and industries, while combining a balanced and prudent mix of credit and market risk.

In Latin America, the effects of the financial crisis have been felt later than in other regions of the world. While the Region was well prepared to face economic adversity, Bladex believes that, in many of the Bank's markets, the full impact of lessened demand and tighter credit availability has yet to be felt, and are managing the Bank accordingly.

The Bank's short term goals are to protect Bladex's financial fundamentals and, equally important, preserve resources and flexibility so that once economic growth resumes, the Bank can make full use of the new opportunities. In-line with these goals, and working within an environment of gradually improving credit demand, liquidity, asset appreciation, lending margins, the Bank's financial indicators were strengthened further during the first quarter. Furthermore, the Bank's operating expense base run-rate was reduced, and the collection of potentially vulnerable credit exposures was continued, with reserve coverage strengthening in-line with increasing risk levels in the Region. Finally, the Board of Directors set a new dividend level, commensurate with the heightened uncertainty and volatility levels in the markets. With these measures in place, Bladex finds itself in a privileged position within its areas of expertise to execute the actions best suited for its business going forward.

Strategically, the results of the April 15 Shareholders Meeting, during which shareholders of all Classes approved a set of changes to the Bank's Articles of Incorporation, will prove very important to the Bank's long-term ability to fuel growth and maximize shareholder value. While the impact of the changes is likely to be felt only in the medium-to-long term as conditions in the markets stabilize, they provide the Bank with the flexibility needed to remain a leader within the financial industry."

RESULTS BY BUSINESS SEGMENT

The Commercial Division incorporates the Bank's financial intermediation and fee generation activities. Net operating income includes net interest income from loans, fee income, and net allocated operating expenses.

(US\$ million)	1Q08	4Q08	1Q09
Commercial Division:			
Net interest income	\$ 19.8	\$ 18.6	\$ 17.0
Non-interest operating income(2)	1.8	1.4	2.5
Net operating revenues (3)	\$ 21.6	\$ 20.0	\$ 19.5
Operating expenses	(6.5)	(6.2)	(6.7)
Net Operating Income	\$ 15.0	\$ 13.8	\$ 12.8

Net operating income for the first quarter 2009 amounted to \$12.8 million, compared to \$13.8 million in the fourth quarter 2008, and compared to \$15.0 million in the first quarter 2008. The \$1.0 million, or 7%, decrease during the quarter was primarily due to decreased average loan balances (\$553 million, or 17%), as the Bank collected on potentially vulnerable exposures and concentrations, and imposed stricter credit standards, partially offset by increasing lending margins on the loan portfolio. Credit disbursements during the first quarter were \$831 million, 21% higher than in the fourth quarter 2008, and 58% below the level in the first quarter 2008.

Weighted average lending spreads(4) increased 33 bps, or 17%, during the first quarter 2009, and 97 bps, or 78% higher than during the previous year same period. Weighted average lending spreads on new disbursements during the first quarter 2009 increased 28 bps versus the previous quarter.

The following graph illustrates the trend in quarterly lending spreads:

The average commercial portfolio decreased 15% from the fourth quarter 2008, reflecting collections of potentially vulnerable exposures, and/or concentrations. (Please refer to Exhibit X for the Bank's distribution of credit disbursements by country.)

The commercial portfolio includes loans, letters of credit, country risk guarantees and loan commitments pertaining to the Bank's client-oriented intermediation activities, and continues to be short-term and trade-related in nature, with 62%, or \$1,743 million, maturing on or before December 31, 2009. Trade financing operations represent 64% of the exposure. See Exhibit VIII for information related to the Bank's commercial portfolio distribution by country.

As of March 31, 2009, the Bank had zero credits in non-accruing or past-due status.

The Treasury Division incorporates the Bank's liquidity management and investment securities activities. Net operating income is presented net of allocated operating expenses, and includes net interest income on treasury activities and net other income (expense) related to treasury activities (12).

(US\$ million)	1Q08	4Q08	1Q09
Treasury Division:			
Net interest income	\$ 2.3	\$ (3.0)	\$ (0.6)
Non-interest operating income (loss)(2)	0.2	(14.4)	3.8
Net operating revenues (3)	2.4	(17.5)	3.2
Operating expenses	(1.4)	(2.1)	(2.2)
Net Operating Income (Loss)	\$ 1.0	\$ (19.6)	\$ 1.0

Treasury Division's net operating income for the first quarter of 2009 was \$1.0 million, compared to a net operating loss of \$19.6 million in the fourth quarter 2008, and net operating income of \$1.0 million during the first quarter 2008.

The first quarter's net operating income of \$1.0 million reflects the combined effects of \$3.2 million in gains from trading securities due to the appreciation of the underlying instruments, \$1.7 million in gains on derivative and hedging instruments associated with the trading securities, and a \$1.1 million foreign currency exchange loss.

The portfolio of securities available for sale as of March 31, 2009 totaled \$590 million, representing a 3% decrease from December 31, 2008, and a 15% decrease from March 31, 2008. The portfolio consisted entirely of readily quoted Latin American securities, 82% of which were sovereign and state owned risk in nature (please refer to Exhibit IX for a per country distribution of the treasury portfolio).

Liquid assets (11) reached \$563 million as of March 31, 2009, compared to \$826 million as of December 31, 2008, and compared to \$482 million as of March 31, 2008. As of March 31, 2009, deposit balances totaled \$1,216 million, \$47 million, or 4% higher than December 31, 2008, and \$140 million, and 10% lower than March 31, 2008.

The Asset Management Division incorporates the Bank's asset management activities. The Division's Investment Fund follows a Latin America focused macro strategy, utilizing a combination of products (foreign exchange, equity indices, interest rate swaps, and credit derivative products) to establish long and short positions in the markets. As of March 31, 2009, Bladex owned 96.89% of the Fund.

Capital preservation is one of the Fund's driving objectives, with a trading strategy emphasizing high liquidity, moderate volatility, and low leverage.

The Division's Net Operating Income is presented net of allocated operating expenses, and includes net interest income on Investment Fund, as well as net gains (losses) from Investment Fund trading, and other related income (loss).

(US\$ million)	1Q08	4Q08	1Q09
Asset Management Division:			
Net interest income	\$ (0.9)	\$ (0.9)	\$ (1.0)
Non-interest operating income (loss)(2)	5.4	3.6	11.7
Net operating revenues (3)	\$ 4.5	\$ 2.7	\$ 10.7
Operating expenses	(1.3)	(1.4)	(2.2)
Net Operating Income (Loss)	\$ 3.1	\$ 1.3	\$ 8.5

Net operating income in the first quarter 2009 totaled \$8.5 million, compared to net operating income of \$1.3 million in the prior quarter, and compared to net operating income of \$3.1 million in the first quarter 2008. The increase in the first quarter 2009 when compared to the fourth quarter 2008 was due to increased trading gains.

As of March 31, 2009, the Investment Fund's balance totaled \$160 million, compared to \$151 million as of December 31, 2008, and compared to \$133 million as of March 31, 2008, when balances under management included \$65 million in funds placed with the Bank.

As of March 31, 2009 return of the Investment Fund was 5.74%.

CONSOLIDATED RESULTS OF OPERATIONS

KEY FINANCIAL FIGURES AND RATIOS

(US\$ million, except percentages and per share amounts)	1Q08	4Q08	1Q09
Net Interest Income	\$ 21.1	\$ 14.7	\$ 15.4
Net Operating Income (Loss) by Business Segment:			
Commercial Division	\$ 15.0	\$ 13.8	\$ 12.8
Treasury Division	\$ 1.0	\$ (19.6)	\$ 1.0
Asset Management Division	\$ 3.1	\$ 1.3	\$ 8.5
Net Operating Income (Loss)	\$ 19.2	\$ (4.5)	\$ 22.3
Net Income (Loss)	\$ 19.2	\$ (4.3)	\$ 16.7
Net Income (loss) per Share(5)			