



Evaluation Update

GEF Council meeting 63

November 2022



Presentations in this Council

1 Review of the GEF Management Action Record

2 Evaluation of the Effects of the
COVID-19 pandemic on GEF Activities

3 Information documents

4 Knowledge Management



The GEF Management Action Record

November 2022

Background

Tracks the implementation of the **recommendations** of the **IEO evaluations endorsed by the GEF Council**.

KEY QUESTIONS

1.

Principal Themes and the GEF record in adoption and implementation

2.

Sufficiency for assessing the implementation progress of follow-up action

3.

Current practices across multilateral organizations

Background

METHODOLOGY

Classified **186 GEF IEO evaluation recommendations**, covering **59 evaluations** (presented between 2006 and 2021).

Assess the level of agreement with evaluation recommendations. **435 records of management's self-assessments** of the adoption of recommendations.

Interviewed **key stakeholders** involved in the GEF MAR process.

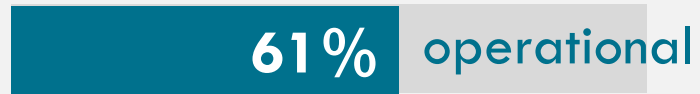
Compared the MAR systems of **nine peer multilateral organizations** with independent evaluation functions.



Key Findings

Types of recommendations

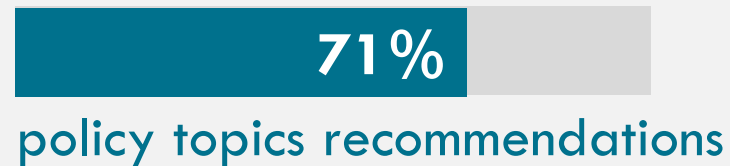
GEF IEO evaluation recommendations



Output-oriented



Outcome-oriented



A few important issues are repeated in IEO recommendations

Key Findings

Management response to recommendations

Management response rate

pre-reform

89%

100%

After MAR reform

GEF management agreement with IEO recommendations

*in GEF-3 when
MAR introduced*

76%

89%

After MAR reform

Level of detail in management responses

*include specific
actions with timelines*

31%

63%

After

Concurrence between management's self-assessment ratings and IEO validation

in GEF-3

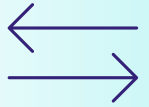
41%

68%

In GEF-7

Key Findings

Factors that affect the adoption of recommendations



Win-wins more likely to be adopted than those that involve trade-offs



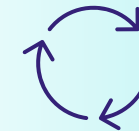
Alignment with GEF Secretariat's work plan on **corporate-level policies**



Time



Response rate



Specificity of follow-up actions

Key Findings

Lessons from the institutional comparison



GEF shares some of the good practices in institutions with independent evaluation units.



Identified gaps in the GEF MAR system

- Limited time for management to develop detailed action plans with timelines*
- Unclear articulation on the level of agreement with each recommendation*
- Management responses do not always include **action plans** with timelines*
- Absence of an **online platform** to record and monitor implementation of recommendations*

Conclusions

Recommendations adopted with full or substantial status: **74%**.

1

The concurrence in management's self-assessment and the GEF IEO's validation ratings has improved.

4

Unclear articulation on the level of management agreement with recommendations

2

Addressing existing gaps in system would make MAR an improved accountability and learning tool.

5

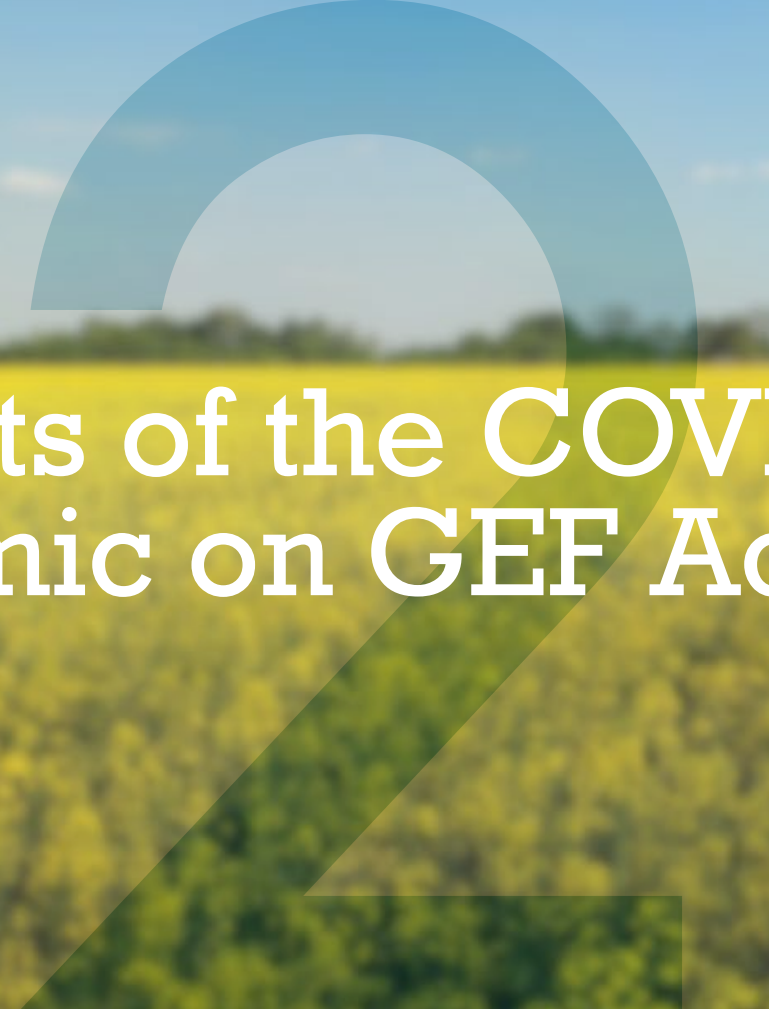
Management responses prepared after the MAR process reform provide a greater **level of detail** in action plans.

3

Recommendations

- Action plan included in the management response should list **specific actions** with timelines where appropriate.
- **MAR process and reporting** should be improved through a more participatory approach involving GEF Agencies.





Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on GEF Activities

November 2022

Key Questions

1

How has the **COVID-19 pandemic** affected **GEF activities** including preparation, design, implementation, and results of GEF projects?

2

How did the **GEF Secretariat and Agencies** respond to the **pandemic**?

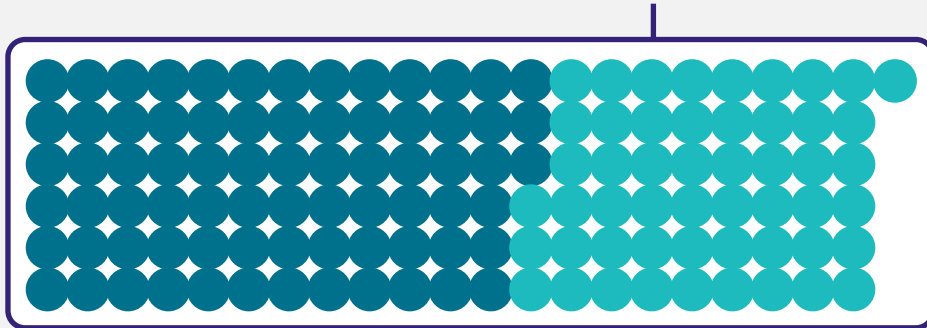
3

To what extent do GEF projects incorporate **resilience and adaptive management** elements into their design?

Methodology

Analysis of **GEF Portal data**.

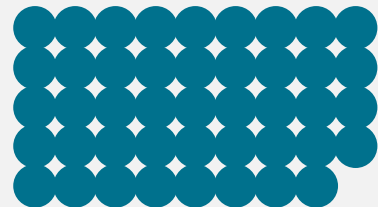
Review of project design in **127 FSPs**.



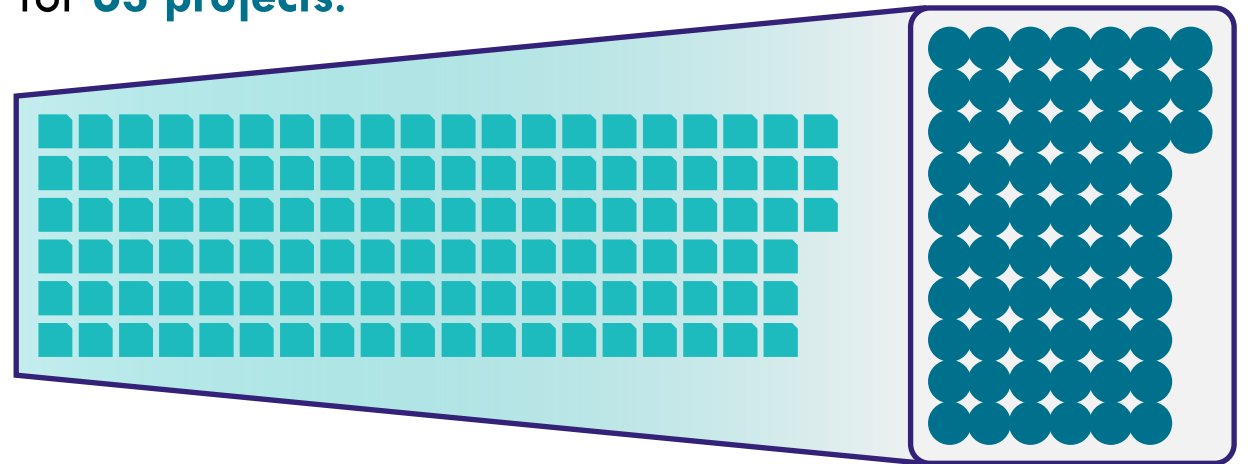
75 projects CEO
endorsed in FY2022.

52 projects CEO
endorsed in FY2019.

Analysis of the impacts
on **44** GEF-supported
Protected Areas.

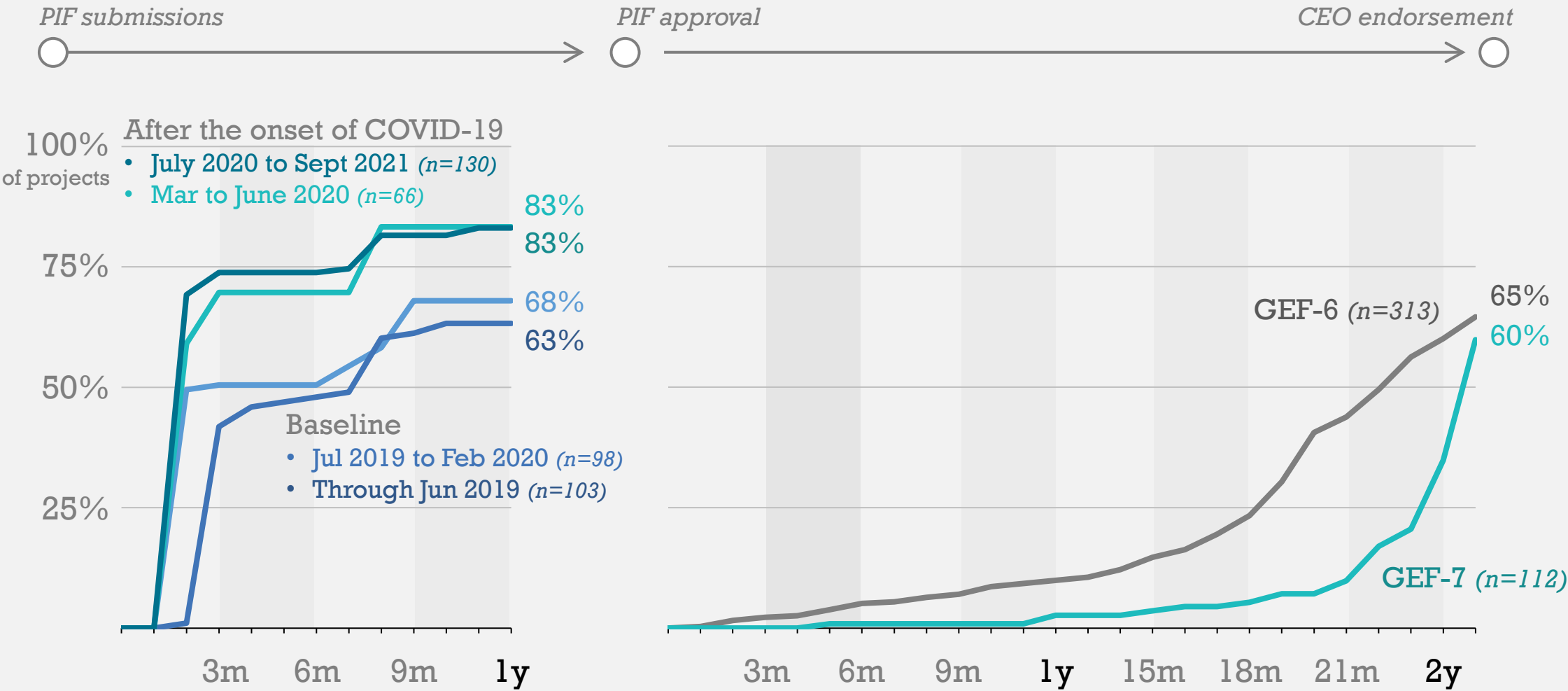


Analysis of **117 terminal evaluations** completed
from May 2020 onwards, mid-term reviews
and project implementation reports
for **63 projects**.



Analysis of the effects of COVID-19 within
GEF intervention areas and in **neighboring areas**
on vegetation productivity, and nighttime lights.

After the onset of COVID-19, PIF submissions took less time to achieve PIF Approval. PIF approvals took more time to achieve CEO endorsement



Findings



Projects endorsed after pandemic **incorporate** features associated with risk mitigation, adaptive management; use of climate risk screening and scenario-based planning low



44% of activities paused or put on hold.
In **19% project** at least one or more activities dropped.



Achievement of results affected in at least
28% of the projects.



Climate change projects were more likely to experience procurement-related challenges.



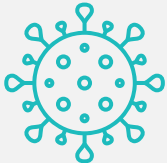
Project M&E: agencies faced difficulties
in conduct of **terminal evaluation** and **mid-term reviews.**

Positive Outcomes



Use of new technologies

- remote sensing to collect **better-quality forestry data**, shift to **online platforms**



COVID-19–related concerns

- **In 1/5 of projects**, activities became opportunities to respond to COVID-19–related concerns such as **food security**, **safety**, and **sanitation**, while promoting environmental interventions.

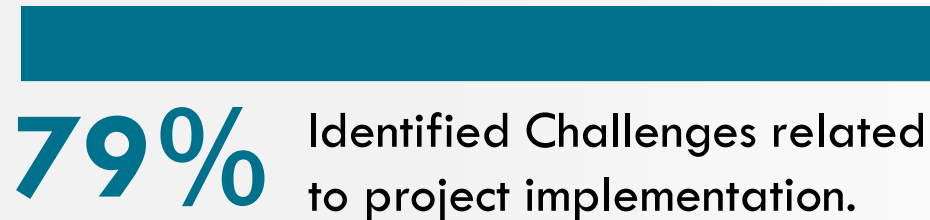
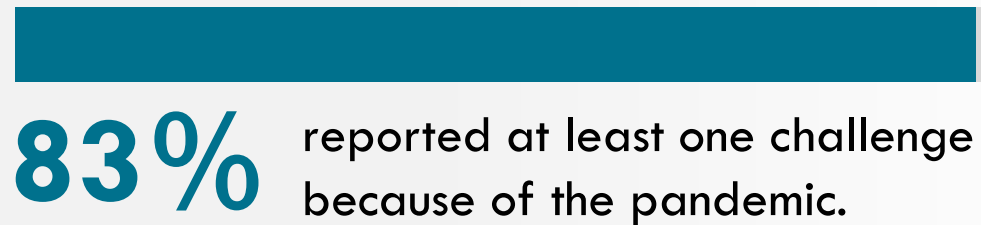
Factors influencing COVID-19 effects on project outcomes

- **Outcomes** more likely to be reduced in projects with internal challenges prior to the global lockdowns.
- **Negative COVID-19 effects** mitigated with highly adaptive project management team and collaborative partners.

Key Findings



Challenges from COVID-19



Implementation challenges

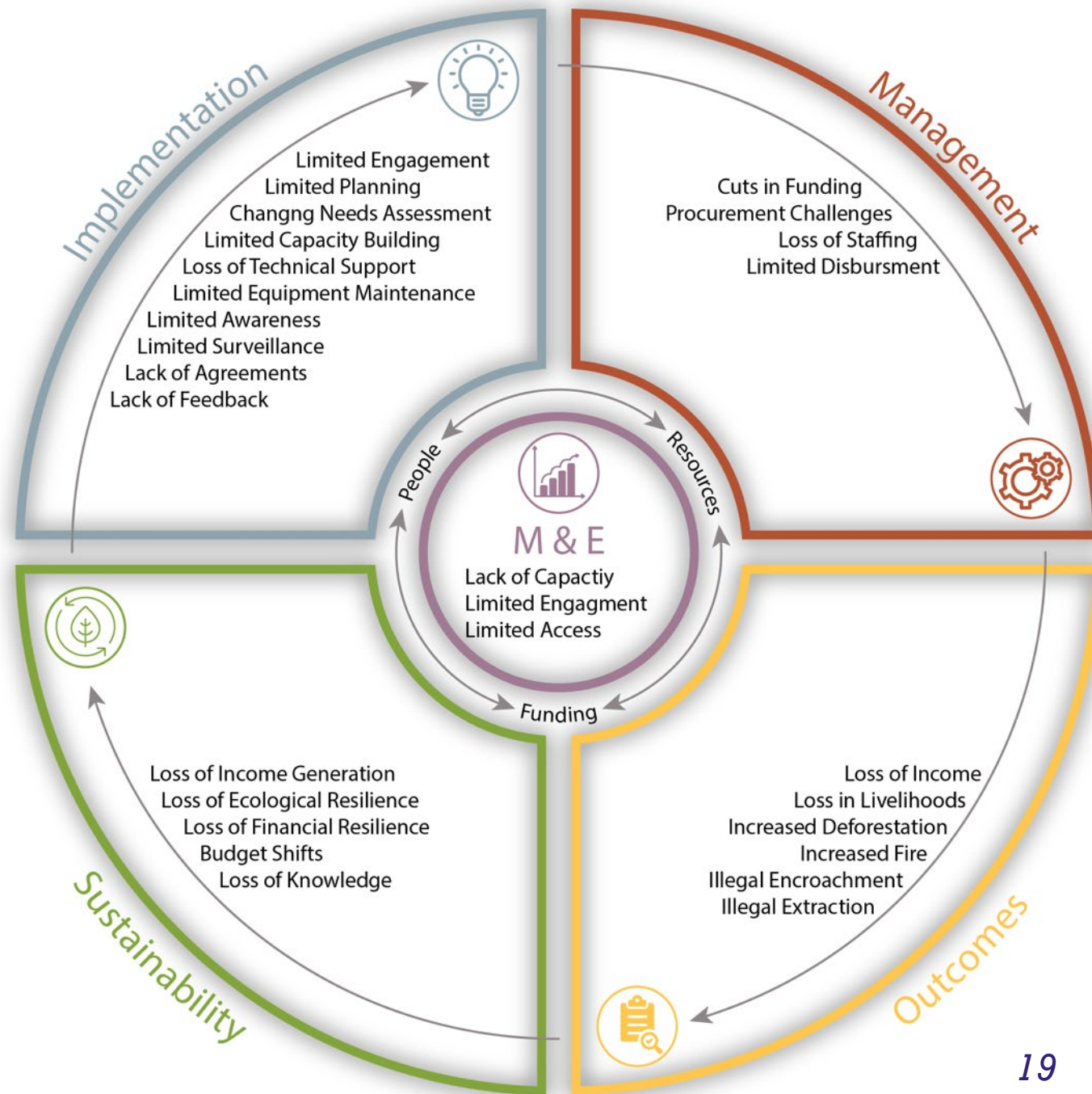
- stakeholder engagement
- conducting needs assessments
- preparation of work plans
- capacity building
- and technical assistance



Fewer law enforcement patrols and reduced community participation in environmental monitoring.

Key Findings

Challenges from COVID-19



Key Findings



Fire and Land Cover from Satellite



The majority of GEF-supported PAs experienced fire frequency and deforestation rates within the predicted range.



Mont Peko National park
example: increase in fire frequency

-414 fire observations from 2012–19 to average of 850 fires in 2020-21 despite stable precipitation.



Global distribution of PAs and predicted vs. observed fire frequency for the post pandemic period.

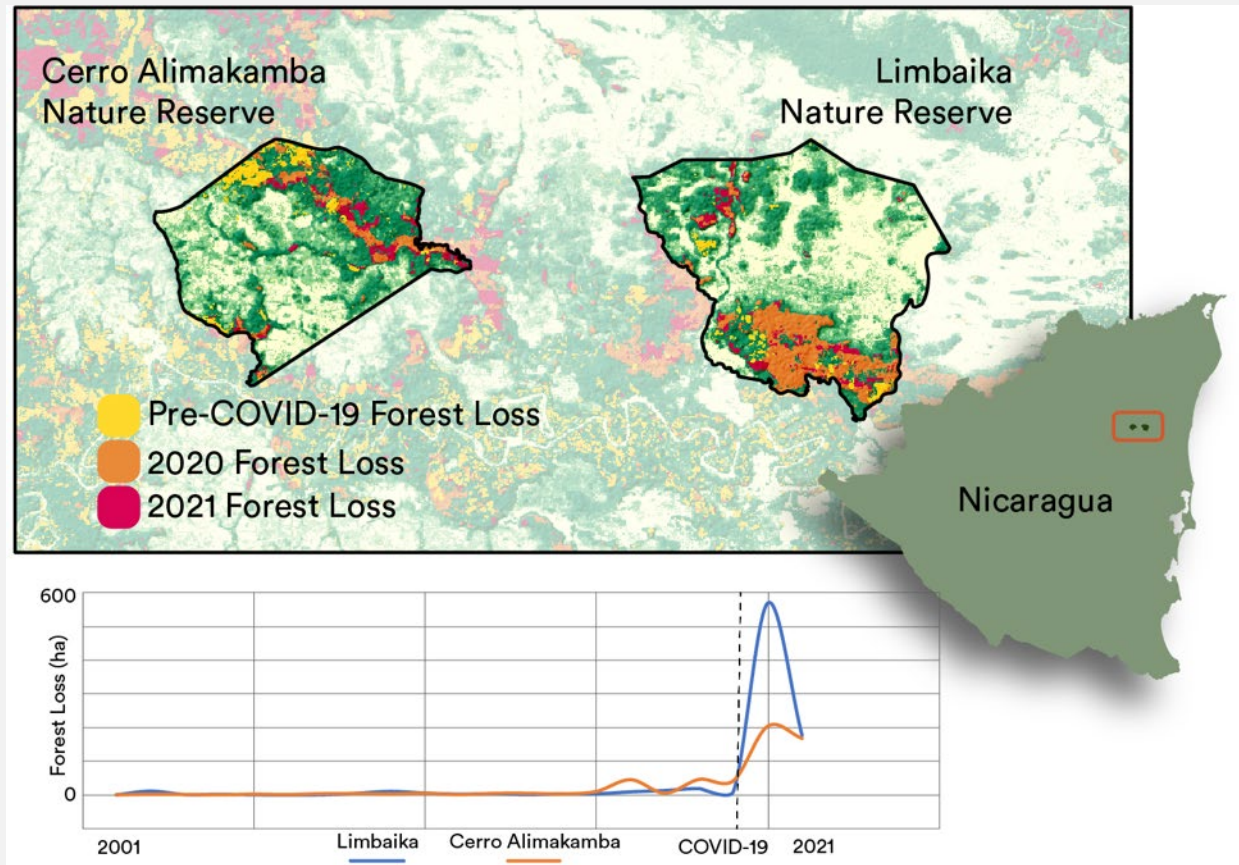
Key Findings



Fire and Land Cover from Satellite

Post-COVID-19 deforestation rates over 2020/21 within **expected range** for most of the **234** protected areas

65 protected areas (28%) experienced higher-than-expected rates of deforestation



Effects in countries based on satellite data



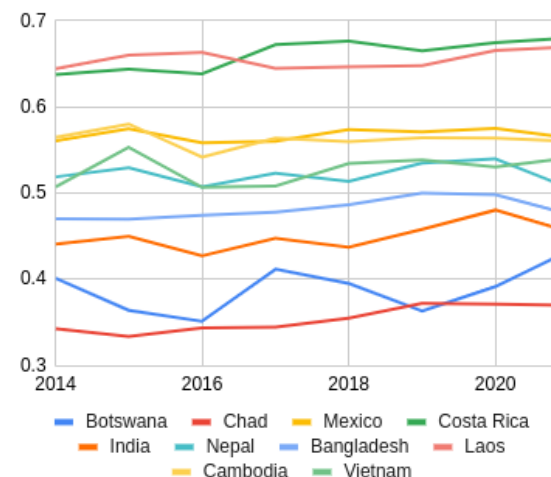
GEF intervention areas tended to improve local conditions of vegetation in **9 of the 10 study countries**.

Positive increases in vegetation in areas neighboring GEF interventions

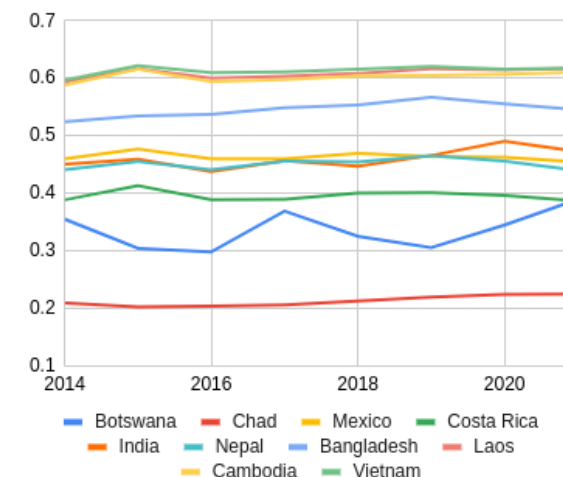


Increase in lights slowed within GEF areas.

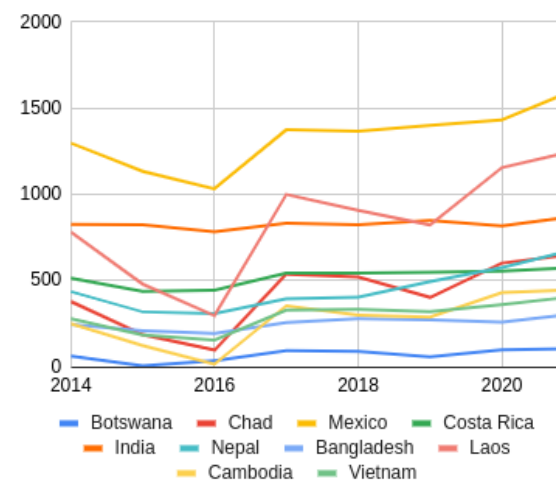
A. NDVI Average - Intervention Areas



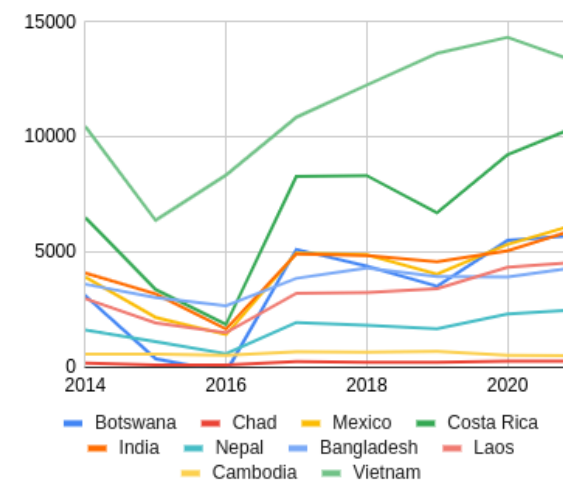
B. NDVI - Neighboring Areas



C. NTL Average - Intervention Areas



D. NTL - Neighboring Areas



Key Findings



Nighttime Lights from Satellite

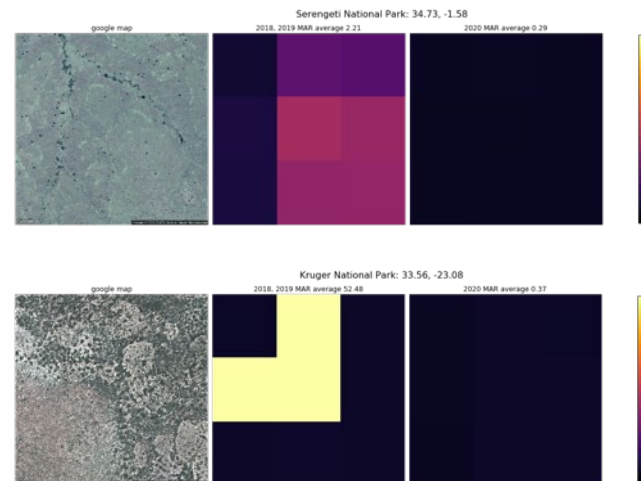
Decrease in light intensity in:



75% of protected areas
in Africa.



40 protected areas in the
GEF-supported Global
Wildlife Program (GEF ID 9071).



Measures taken by the GEF Partnership

GEF Partnership



- White Paper on a **GEF COVID-19** Response Strategy.
- The GEF-8 Programming Directions include **implications of the pandemic** for the GEF's work.
- **Deadline extended by three months** for CEO Endorsements and **approvals for projects** approved after the new GEF Policy (2019).
- ***“Project Design and Review Considerations in Response to the COVID-19 Crisis and the Mitigation of Future Pandemics”*** (2020) issued by the GEF Secretariat.
- Changes to the PIF template to **facilitate discussion on the topic in the proposals**.

GEF projects and Agencies



- Adapted to **minimize the effects of the shutdowns** — technology and virtual platforms.



Recommendations

GEF Secretariat

GEF Agencies

GEF Agencies

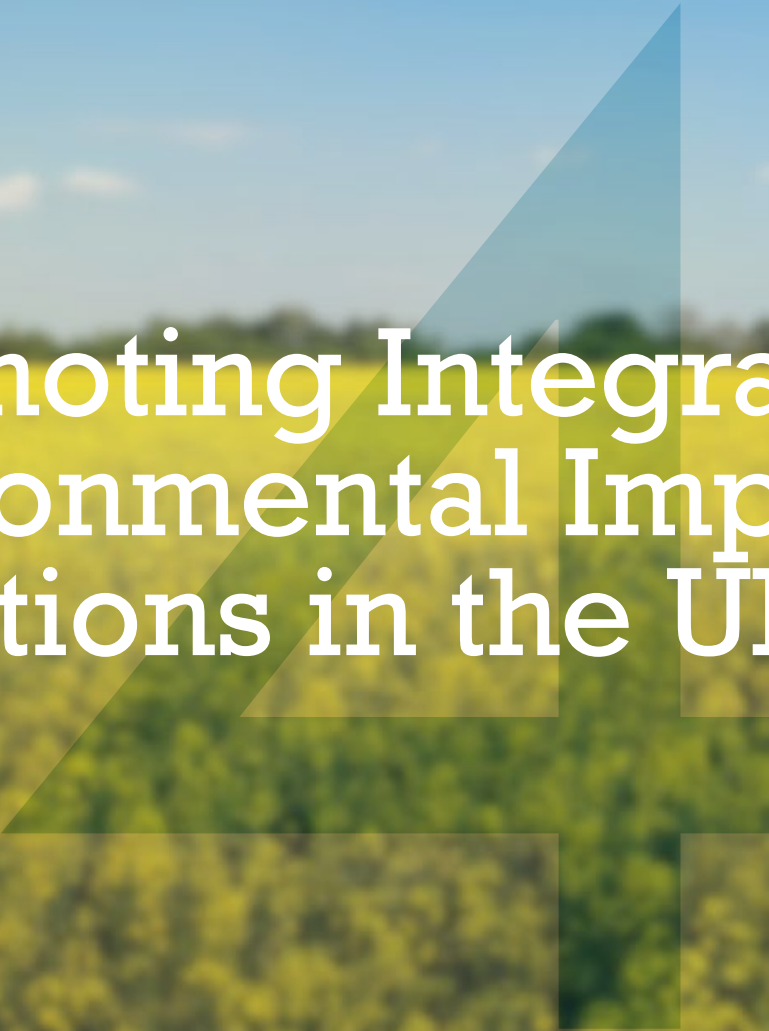
GEF Agencies

GEF Secretariat

1
Incorporate important features associated with systems thinking, resilience, and adaptive management in all project proposals

2
Include a broad suite of **livelihood options** and support diverse **income-generating activities**

3
Strengthen remote supervision by using a variety of appropriate tools and methods to identify areas which **require priority attention**



Promoting Integration of Environmental Impact into Evaluations in the UN System

November 2022

Promoting Integration of Environmental Impact into Evaluations in the UN System

Implementation challenges

Agencies work highly engaged with **social** aspects **70%**

Agencies work highly engaged with **environment** aspects **45%**

Agencies with environmental or **social** safeguard policies **60%**

Responding evaluation offices feeling that **social** considerations have not been well addressed **68%**

Responding evaluation offices feeling that **environmental** considerations have not been well addressed **84%**



A broad range of agencies realize that their activities may have unanticipated environmental effects.



Agencies welcome guidance as done for gender

Promoting Integration of Environmental Impact into Evaluations in the UN System

Advantages of UNEG developing guidance

- Its **institutional neutrality**
- Can be more detailed in **specific areas** than most agencies would be able to produce
- Can address **common needs** identified by a **broad range of agencies**

Guidance should:

- **Outline process** for agencies to map out connections between their types of intervention and environmental considerations
- **Promote strong coverage** of environmental considerations through the use of Theories of Change.
- **Provide Guidance** to ensure that environmental considerations are included in intervention design.
- **Match environmental considerations** to DAC criteria to raise their profile in evaluations
- **Ensure coherent evaluation** of environmental considerations through evaluation of inter-agency interventions

Promoting Integration of Environmental Impact into Evaluations in the UN System

Steps

1.

Development of the **guidance** supported by the UN Working Group.

2.

Adoption by UN General Assembly of a **resolution enshrining the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment** as a universal human right.

3.

Ensure coherent **evaluation of environmental considerations** through inter-agency interventions.

Conclusion

More needs to be done.

Opportunity to align **evaluation** with the overall **UN environment management** standards and systems.

Knowledge Management

Conferences and events



gLOCAL 2022

Using GIS for Evaluating in Context of Fragility, Conflict, and Violence



IDEAS Conference 2022

Power of Evaluation: Influencing Decision Making for a Better and More Equal World



Evaluating for Sustainability Transitions

Workshop with CLEAR South Asia



Asian Evaluation Week



Wilton Park

Transformational change towards a sustainable future



GCF IEU Virtual Talk

Programmatic approaches in environment and climate



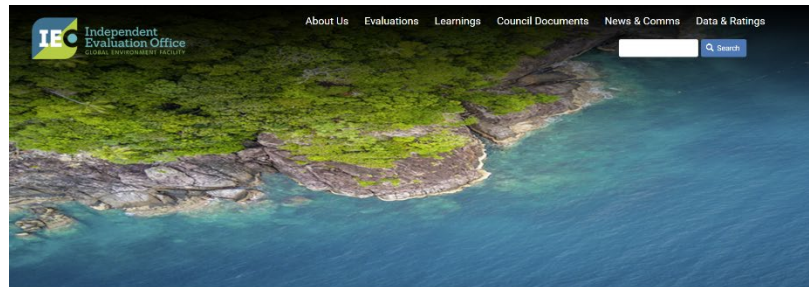
UNEG Evaluation Practice Exchange

Training

- Evaluation at the Nexus of Environment and Development: International Program for Development Evaluation Training (IPDET)
- Development of an online training course on Environmental Evaluation



Website Enhancements



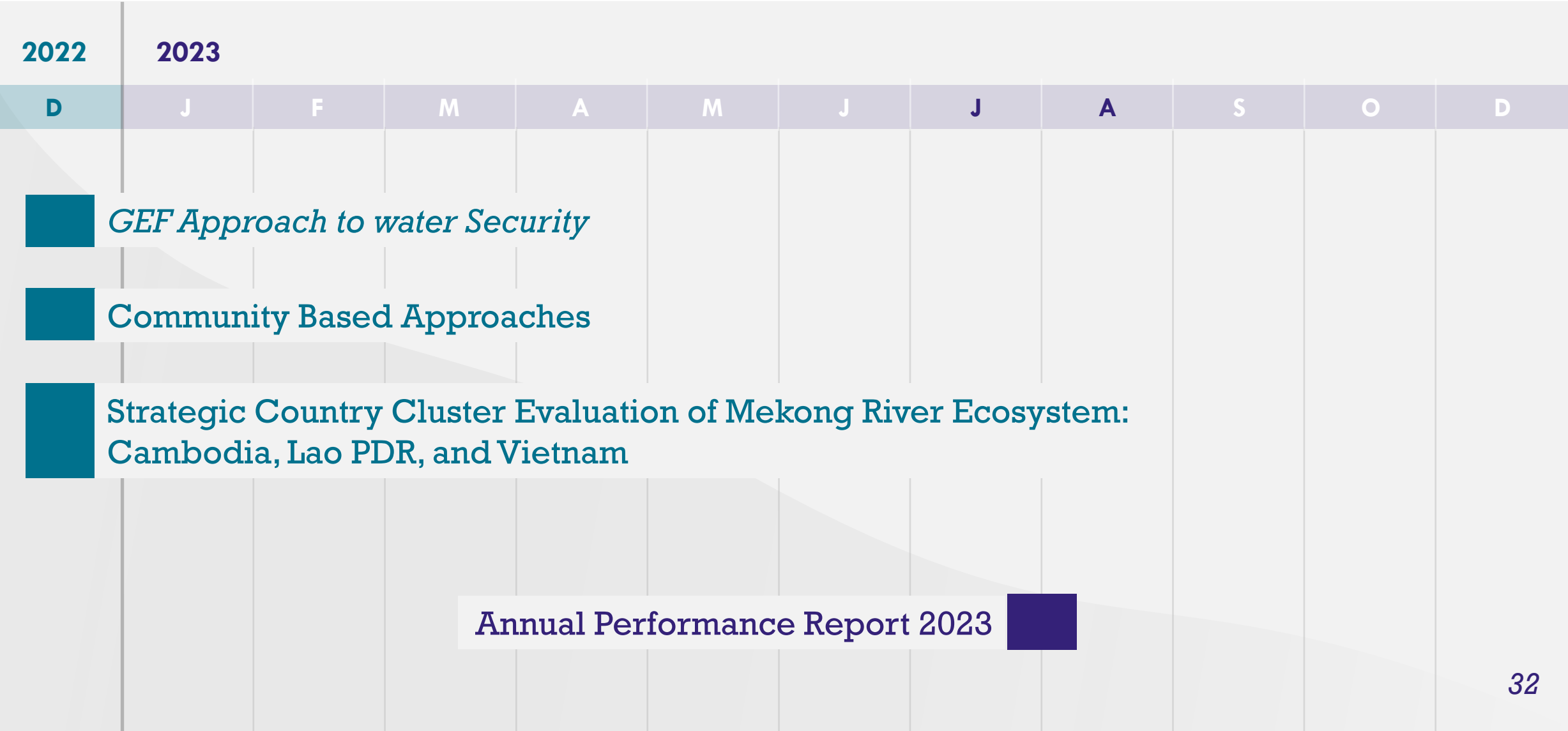
What's New



- Data & Ratings section:
country profiles and updated filters options
- **New section:** Blogs and Multimedia
- Terminal evaluations and reviews
and performance data for **1806 projects** available
for download
- Content **re-indexed**
- **188 evaluations** currently available

Website visits: **23,728** (July - November 2022)

Evaluation work under way for June





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