



Independent
Evaluation Office
GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY



Guidelines for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of Full-Size Projects

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About These Guidelines

- i. Summary.** The Global Environment Facility (GEF) [Evaluation Policy](#) (GEF IEO 2019) requires GEF Agencies to evaluate GEF-financed projects at completion. A terminal evaluation provides a comprehensive and systematic account of project performance, factors that affect performance, implementation, and project monitoring and evaluation. Terminal evaluations are aimed at supporting learning, accountability, transparency, decision making, and knowledge sharing across the GEF partnership. The purpose of these guidelines, issued by the GEF Independent Evaluation Office (IEO), is to support GEF Agencies in conducting terminal evaluations of full-size GEF projects, and to facilitate consistency and completeness of reporting.
- ii. Applicability.** These guidelines are applicable to projects financed through the GEF Trust Fund, the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF), the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF), and—where applicable—other GEF-administered trust funds.¹ They are applicable to all full-size projects including stand-alone projects, projects approved under programmatic approaches, and enabling activities that were processed as a full-size project.² They are applicable as well to full-size projects that are canceled after expenditure of more than \$2.0 million of GEF grant funds.
- iii. Precedence.** These guidelines replace guidance issued in 2017 by the GEF IEO for the preparation of terminal evaluations for full-size projects. They complement any guidance issued by the GEF Agencies for conducting terminal evaluations. These guidelines are effective January 1, 2024.
- iv. New information.** These updated guidelines specifically address shifts in GEF policies and programming, along with advancements in evaluation practices. The revised guidelines emphasize topics and themes that are of importance to the GEF. For instance, they delve at greater length into topics such as theory of change, additionality, coherence, integration, environmental and social safeguards, and

¹ In August 2006, the GEF Council decided that all GEF operational policies, procedures, and governance structures are to be applied to the LDCF and the SCCF unless the LDCF/SCCF Council decides otherwise (GEF 2006). Accordingly, the LDCF and the SCCF currently apply the [GEF Evaluation Policy](#).

² Multicountry enabling activities in which the subgrant for each of the participating countries is less than or equal to \$2.0 million are excepted even if the total project grant amount exceeds \$2.0 million. For such projects, the GEF IEO [Guidelines on Reporting on Completed Enabling Activities](#) are applicable.

knowledge management; they also give more attention to the evaluation of child projects approved under programmatic approaches.

- v. **Alignment.** These guidelines align with the updates presented in [Better Criteria for Better Evaluation](#) (OECD DAC 2019). This alignment ensures that the GEF's evaluation framework remains up to date and in accordance with international practices and standards. The rating scale used for the sustainability criterion has been harmonized with the rating scale used for other criteria.

1. Introduction

- 1. Definition of terminal evaluation.** The Global Environment Facility (GEF) [Evaluation Policy](#) defines evaluation as “Systematic and impartial assessment of planned, ongoing, or completed activities, projects, or programs in specific focal areas or sectors; policies; strategies and their implementation; or other topics relevant to the GEF partnership and organization” (GEF IEO 2019, 3). Minimum Requirement 3 of the policy requires that a GEF Agency that implements a GEF-financed project prepare a terminal evaluation at project completion.
- Terminal evaluations are aimed at supporting learning, accountability, transparency, decision making, and knowledge sharing across the GEF partnership. It contributes to GEF databases for aggregation and analysis. A terminal evaluation is expected to provide a comprehensive and systematic account of the evaluated project by assessing its design, implementation, and observed results at project completion. It should describe the factors that affected and are likely to affect project outcomes, instances of course correction and adaptive management, good practices, and lessons.
- 3. Purpose of guidelines.** The purpose of these guidelines is to support GEF Agencies in conducting terminal evaluations of full-size projects, to facilitate consistency and completeness of evaluation reports, and to ensure that the evaluations are useful and foster learning. These guidelines have been prepared within the framework of the [GEF Evaluation Policy](#) and draw upon the [GEF Evaluation Office Ethical Guidelines](#) of the GEF Independent Evaluation Office (IEO). They also draw on international norms and standards such as [Better Criteria for Better Evaluation](#) (OECD DAC 2019), [Norms and Standards for Evaluation](#) (UNEG 2017), and [Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation](#) (UNEG 2020).
- The guidelines explain [roles and responsibilities](#) across the GEF partnership in carrying out terminal evaluations, the [contents](#) of the terminal evaluation report, arrangements for [report submission](#), and [use](#) of terminal evaluations. They also explain the [rating scales](#) used to assess project performance on select criteria.

A terminal evaluation should describe the factors that affected and are likely to affect project outcomes, instances of course correction and adaptive management, good practices, and lessons.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 GEF Agencies

5. For every GEF-financed full-size project it implements, all GEF Agencies will do the following.
 - a. **Conduct a terminal evaluation at project completion.** A terminal evaluation may be started up to six months before project completion. It shall be completed within six months of the project's completion. In instances, where a terminal evaluation is completed more than six months after project completion, the Agency will discuss the reason for the delay.
 - b. **Develop specific terms of reference for the terminal evaluation.** Provide guidance, documentation, and support to the evaluation team.
 - c. **Archive information gathered** during project implementation and conduct of the terminal evaluation and, at the request of the GEF IEO, make this information available for follow-up studies and evaluations.
 - d. **Ensure appropriate evaluator expertise.** Ensure that the evaluation team is composed of evaluators with expertise in the thematic area addressed by the project, important elements of the project's design, fiduciary oversight, environmental and social safeguards, gender equality-related concerns, knowledge management, and—where applicable—private sector involvement.
 - e. **Ensure the evaluation team members are independent, unbiased, and free of conflicts of interest.**¹
 - f. **Seek feedback from relevant stakeholders** on the terms of reference and the draft report of the evaluation and address their feedback.
 - g. **Engage the relevant GEF operational focal points (OFPs)** in the conduct of the terminal evaluation (see [paragraph 9](#)). This requirement is applicable in all instances where an OFP's endorsement is mandatory for GEF financing of a project. The GEF Agency will share the terms of reference and the

¹ Specifically, when a terminal evaluation is commissioned, conducted, or managed by the evaluation unit of the Agency, the evaluators selected should not have been involved in project preparation and/or implementation. If a terminal evaluation is conducted as a self-evaluation by those in the implementation chain of command, it needs to be validated through an independent review. In the latter case, the requirement related to being free of conflicts of interest is applicable to the independent reviewers.

draft report of the evaluation with the OFP for feedback. It will allow the OFP at least a month to provide feedback and will address this feedback in the finalized documents. In cases where at least one of the evaluation recommendations is addressed to the OFP and/or the recipient country, the Agency will invite the OFP to contribute to the management response and include the response as an annex to the evaluation report.

- h. Prepare a terminal evaluation report** in English and submit it through the GEF Portal within two months of the terminal evaluation's completion date.
- i. Share the terminal evaluation report** publicly within six months of its completion. Share a copy of the report with the relevant OFP and with the relevant stakeholders.

6. Approaches to terminal evaluation. GEF Agencies can use either of two broad approaches—or a combination of the two—to ensure the independence of terminal evaluation. In the first approach, the evaluation unit of an Agency commissions, conducts, and/or manages a terminal evaluation. In the second approach, an Agency's operations unit manages, conducts, and/or commissions a terminal evaluation; the Agency evaluation unit then validates the evaluation and re-rates project performance.²

7. Lead Agency. For full-size projects that are jointly implemented by two or more GEF Agencies, the lead Agency will be responsible for preparation and submission of the terminal evaluation report. In such cases, the terminal evaluation will cover the entire project's performance. Other Agencies involved in project implementation will provide necessary support to the evaluation team. They will provide the team with documents and other sources of information on the implementation and results of the project components under their purview.

2.2 Evaluators

- 8.** The evaluators conducting the terminal evaluation of a full-size GEF project will perform the following.
 - a. Be independent.** Minimum Requirement 3 of the [GEF Evaluation Policy](#) requires that the evaluators who conduct a terminal evaluation be independent from activities related to design, approval, implementation, and execution

² In cases where an Agency evaluation unit cannot perform these functions, the GEF IEO will validate the terminal evaluation report and re-rate project performance for reporting to the GEF Council.

of the evaluated project. Alternatively, where an evaluator has been involved in any aspect of project preparation or implementation, he or she will transparently state the extent of this involvement in the terminal evaluation report.³

- b. Be knowledgeable of or become familiar with GEF policies** on the project cycle, monitoring, evaluation, cofinancing, fiduciary standards, gender equality, stakeholder involvement, environmental and social safeguards, knowledge management, and private sector involvement.
- c. Obtain the perspectives of all relevant stakeholders.** Evaluators will gather information from all key stakeholders to ensure that their perspectives are reflected in the analysis presented in the evaluation report. Where applicable, they will ensure that the perspectives of indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups are reflected in the evaluation findings.
- d. Use multiple sources to triangulate information** including the project monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system, field observations, key informant interviews, project documents, knowledge products produced by the project, and other sources.
- e. Seek the necessary contextual information** to assess the significance and relevance of observed results.
- f. Be impartial** and present a balanced account consistent with the evidence.
- g. Apply the criteria and rating scales provided in these guidelines** (see [paragraph 52](#)). Evaluators may address additional areas to increase the utility of the evaluation.
- h. Abide by the [GEF Evaluation Office Ethical Guidelines](#).**

2.3 GEF Operational Focal Points

- 9.** Minimum Requirement 4 of the [GEF Evaluation Policy](#) requires that, in conducting a terminal evaluation, the GEF Agencies should involve the GEF OFP of the country where the evaluated project was implemented. The OFPs will receive the draft terms of reference of the evaluation and a draft evaluation report for comment, as described in [paragraph 1.g](#). The OFP is encouraged to provide feedback on these documents to the respective Agency within a month. In cases where the terminal evaluation recommendations are directed at the recipient country, the OFP should also contribute to its management response.

³ This situation will arise in cases where a terminal evaluation is prepared as a self-evaluation, or where the evaluator engaged for the terminal evaluation conducted the midterm review as well.

3. Report Content

3.1 General Information, Introduction, and Background

10. The terminal evaluation report will provide general information on the project such as its name,⁴ GEF project ID, country covered, GEF Agency, executing entity, project milestones (e.g., start date, expected end date, actual/anticipated implementation completion date); and on its GEF financing, and promised and materialized cofinancing. The report will list the project's objectives and expected [outcomes](#), and include a brief overview of project components. It will also identify the intended beneficiaries of the project, and where applicable whether the beneficiaries include indigenous peoples and other marginalized communities.

Outcome: an intended or achieved short- or medium-term effect of a project or program's outputs (GEF IEO 2019).

3.2 Theory of Change

11. **Coverage and consistency.** The terminal evaluation report will discuss the project's theory of change including its expected [results](#), the causal pathways, and assumptions. The project's theory of change should be consistent with its objectives including its global environmental objectives. For a child project under a programmatic approach, the theory of change should also show how the project contributes to program objectives.

Results: include intervention outputs, outcomes, and progress toward longer-term impact including global environmental benefits; they should be discernible/measurable (GEF IEO 2019).

12. **Basis for evaluation.** Where available, the evaluators will use the theory of change presented in the project documents as a basis for the evaluation. If the theory needs to be updated, the evaluators may do so in consultation with the key stakeholders. If the project documents do not include a theory of change, the evaluators may develop a theory of change in consultation with the key stakeholders. The evaluators will assess and discuss whether the underlying assumptions of the project's theory of change hold, and whether, considering the evaluative evidence, further refinements are needed.

⁴ If the project is a child project under a GEF program, the report should also provide the name of the parent program.

3.3 Scope of Terminal Evaluation

13. **Defining the scope.** The evaluation team will define the scope of the evaluation considering the project's objectives, theory of change, supported activities, the context in which the project was designed and implemented, and its M&E system. The scope will also be determined based on the questions the evaluation seeks to answer, the boundaries of the system covered, project characteristics, geographical coverage, the period under review, and key users and likely uses of the evaluation.
14. **Child projects.** Evaluation of a child project approved under a programmatic framework will give attention to the issues related to the project's relationship with the program. An important area of inquiry will be to determine the project's contributions to program objectives and the extent to which there are additional benefits and costs of the project due to its being part of a programmatic approach. The level of collaboration and cooperation between the child project team and the program coordination team will also be addressed. The evaluation will also look at how the project was linked with other child projects of the program; as well as benefits, including sharing of knowledge and expertise and the costs of such linkages.
15. **Enabling activities.** The scope of a terminal evaluation of an enabling activity that was processed as a full-size project will be determined based on the project's design. The GEF [Project and Program Cycle Policy](#) defines an enabling activity as "a project for the preparation of a plan, strategy or report to fulfill commitments under a Convention" (GEF 2018, 3). Although these activities may generate global environmental benefits, such benefits are unlikely at project completion—and, when achieved, difficult to attribute to GEF support because of the upstream nature of the activities. Therefore, where the main product of an enabling activity is a document or report, a streamlined self-evaluation will suffice with a narrative of four to five pages focused on aspects such as timeliness in preparation of the planned document, fund utilization, stakeholder involvement, and implementation process. In cases where at least some actions of an enabling activity are expected to lead to attributable environmental results, a detailed terminal evaluation will be prepared.

3.4 Methodology

16. **Coverage.** The evaluation report will describe the evaluation methodology. It will discuss evaluation questions, analytical framework, and criteria, with reference to the project's theory of change; information sources; methods; and limitations.

The theory of change (see [3.2 Theory of Change](#)) provides a basis for the type of evidence needed to assess whether assumptions about causal relationships are consistent with the evidence, and the extent to which progress has been made in achieving the intended [impact](#).

- 17. Criteria.** The evaluation will apply the OECD (2021) criteria for evaluation—relevance (see [3.5.2 Relevance](#)), coherence (see [3.5.3 Coherence](#)), effectiveness (see [3.5.4 Effectiveness](#)), efficiency (see [3.5.5 Efficiency](#)), impact, and sustainability (see [3.5.6 Sustainability](#)). At project completion, it is still too early for impacts to be evident but progress through the causal chain may be observed. Evidence on progress to impact will be discussed within the framework of the effectiveness criterion; the likelihood of achievement of long-term impacts will be discussed within the framework of the sustainability criterion. The evaluation will also apply other GEF-relevant criteria such as additionality (see [3.5.1 Additionality](#)), implementation and execution (see [3.5.7 Implementation and Execution](#)), project M&E (see [3.5.8 Project Monitoring and Evaluation](#)), and cofinancing (see [3.5.9 Cofinancing](#)). It will assess the application of GEF policies and guidelines (see [3.5.10 Application of GEF Policies and Guidelines](#)) related to environmental and social safeguards; gender equality; knowledge management; and stakeholder engagement including, where applicable, involvement of the private sector. Additional criteria, themes, and topics may be covered to enhance the utility of the terminal evaluation.
- 18. Information sources.** The evaluation report will describe the information sources of the evaluation transparently. For example, an evaluation that draws upon desk reviews will discuss information on the documents reviewed, the rules for inclusion and exclusion of documents, and the instruments used for review. For interviews, the evaluation report will provide information on interviewees and the process through which these were selected. For field verifications, information such as the basis for site selection, which sites were visited and when, and who visited the sites will be provided. If surveys (including online surveys) are conducted, the report will discuss the sample frame, sampling approach, response rates, and period during which the survey was conducted. The report will discuss how the information from the various sources has been triangulated. It will provide information on which project stakeholders were consulted to provide inputs and how their input has been incorporated. The information on the stakeholder feedback process may be included either in the methodology section or as an annex.
- 19. Project M&E** is expected to gather information on environmental stress reduction (greenhouse gas emissions reduction, reduction of waste discharge, etc.) and environmental status change (change in population of endangered species,

Impact: positive or negative, primary or secondary long-term effect produced by a project or program, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended (GEF IEO 2019).

forest stock, pollutants in the waterbody, water retention in degraded lands, etc.). Project M&E is also an important source of information on project execution, M&E plan implementation, and adaptive management. The evaluation report will use information generated through implementation of the project M&E framework; it will also assess the information's quality.

20. Terminal evaluations should use information from a **geographic information system (GIS) and remote sensing** to assess and report on results of projects that target a geographical area. At the minimum, where georeferenced maps have been provided in a project's proposal, terminal evaluations will include these maps in demarcating planned and actual coverage.
21. Where unexpected changes in project context are observed, the evaluation will report on those changes and will discuss implications for project results and implementation.
22. **Fragile or hazardous settings.** In instances where project sites are inaccessible and it may be dangerous to conduct field verifications—such as a catastrophic natural event or accident, civil strife, war, or a pandemic—Agencies may prepare a terminal evaluation based on online interviews of key informants and information synthesized from data sources such as project information reports, midterm reviews, and financial records. If online interviews are not possible, Agencies may prepare a project completion/closure memorandum based on desk review of information already available to the Agency.⁵ The memorandum will, at a minimum, report on the status of project results, implementation, and utilization of resources at completion/closure based on the reviewed documents and will clearly note any information gaps. The report/memorandum will discuss the circumstances preventing field verification and/or key informant interviews.

3.5 Project Performance

3.5.1 Additionality

23. The terminal evaluation report will discuss the **additionality** of the evaluated project. To determine additionality, the evaluation will compare the benefits of GEF support to a scenario without GEF support. It will identify specific areas where GEF support has contributed additional results and what these additional results were. It will provide quantitative and qualitative evidence to support the findings.

Additionality: the extent to which GEF support to a project has contributed to environmental and socioeconomic impacts; legal, institutional, and financial results; socioeconomic benefits; learning; and innovation (GEF IEO 2020).

⁵ In such instances, the GEF IEO will consider submission of the completion/closure memorandum as fulfilling the requirement to submit a terminal evaluation.

24. If the project is a coordinating project or a child project under a programmatic approach, the report will discuss the extent to which being part of the programmatic approach affected the project results versus its having alternatively been a stand-alone project. If an integrated approach has been used, the report will discuss the additionality of the use of an integrated approach over other alternatives.

3.5.2 Relevance

25. The report will discuss a project's relevance by explaining the extent to which its objectives and design are responsive to the environmental and development priorities of the participating countries and are congruent with the GEF's strategic priorities and objectives, and the mandates of the GEF Agency and its executing partners. It will also assess the extent to which the project objectives and design are responsive to the needs and priorities of the intended beneficiaries. The report will discuss whether the project objectives and results remain relevant at project completion.

3.5.3 Coherence

26. The report will discuss the external and internal coherence of the project design. It will assess **external coherence** by analyzing a project's compatibility with other activities and strategies being implemented in the participating country, targeted sectors, and institutions by development partners and other organizations. It will discuss the socioeconomic synergies and trade-offs involved in the project. The report will also assess whether the project is well targeted (in terms of countries, regions, and/or communities covered) to generate global environmental benefits.
27. The report will discuss the **internal coherence** of the project by examining whether the project design provides a practical approach for addressing the targeted environmental concern. It will also discuss the extent to which the theory of change, project components, activities, and M&E system are aligned with the project objectives. It will explain whether and how the project design incorporated lessons from past GEF activities and relevant non-GEF interventions. It will address whether the project takes into account and builds on good practices in general. The report will consider the project's alignment with important GEF policies including environmental and social safeguards, gender equality, stakeholder engagement, and knowledge management.

3.5.4 Effectiveness

Output: product or service that results from the completion of activities implemented within a project or program (GEF IEO 2019).

Integration implies the use of systems thinking. It involves specifying system boundaries, addressing multiple drivers of environmental degradation simultaneously, addressing relationships among the system elements across scales, addressing key risks and vulnerabilities, considering system resilience, and establishing a feedback loop that facilitates timely course correction (GEF STAP 2018).

28. The evaluation report will discuss the extent to which the project objectives have been achieved. It will note changes in the project's design and/or expected results after the start of implementation.
29. **Achievement.** Consistent with Minimum Requirement 3 of the [GEF Evaluation Policy](#), the report will present an assessment of achievement of project [outputs](#) and outcomes, and its progress in achieving impact. The report will compare actual achievement with ex ante performance targets. It will discuss the extent to which progress has been made in achieving the intended long-term impacts.
30. **Adoption.** Where applicable, the report will point out the specific elements of the project that are being adopted beyond GEF support. For example, processes such as mainstreaming, replication, scale-up, and market change may be facilitating adoption of specific elements beyond what is directly addressed by the project activities. The report will discuss the extent to which, and how, this is happening.
31. **Approaches and strategies.** The evaluation report will discuss the effectiveness of approaches and strategies implemented and factors that influenced their effectiveness. For projects that use an integrated approach, the report will discuss whether [integration](#) was achieved and with what results. The evaluation will discuss the factors that affected the extent to which integration/systems thinking principles were applied.
32. **Transformational change.** Several projects aim at achieving transformational changes at scale. In such cases, attention to the assessment of such changes—including of causal factors and mechanisms—will be crucial (GEF IEO 2018; Uitto and Batra 2022). Several projects aim at scaling up interventions that were found to work through pilots or demonstrations. For such projects, it will be important to assess the extent the scaling-up delivered targeted results at scale and the factors that influenced their effectiveness (GEF IEO 2021).
33. **Factors affecting achievement.** The report will discuss factors that affected delivery of outputs and outcomes, and progress to impacts. These factors may include, but are not restricted to, aspects related to project design, knowledge gaps, implementation, risk mitigation, institutional capacities, linkages with other interventions, materialization of cofinancing, stakeholder involvement; and contextual constraints such as economic upheavals, pandemics, and political unrest. The report should explain how the identified factors affected delivery of results. Where a project is part of a programmatic approach, the evaluators should seek to compare the project's performance with that of other projects of the program.

- 34. Unintended effects.** The report should discuss whether the project had unintended—positive and/or negative—effects and, if so, assess the overall scope and implications of these effects. It should especially examine if there were any unintended effects that affected vulnerable and marginalized populations, and/or had gender equality–related implications. In cases where unintended negative environmental and/or socioeconomic effects are observed, the report should suggest mitigative measures.

3.5.5 Efficiency

- 35.** The report will discuss the extent to which the project was efficient in achieving its results. The criterion of efficiency is aimed at assessing the extent to which the inputs are converted into results in an [economic](#) and [timely](#) way (GEF IEO 2019; OECD 2021). Where feasible, evaluators should assess unit output costs and compare these with applicable benchmarks and standards, and conduct benefit-cost analysis. The report will identify areas of efficiencies and inefficiencies and how these affected project costs. Similarly, where applicable, it should highlight the use of cost-saving approaches and note incidences of duplication of effort.

3.5.6 Sustainability

- 36.** Minimum Requirement 3 of the [GEF Evaluation Policy](#) specifies that a terminal evaluation will assess a project’s [sustainability](#). The assessment will weigh risks to continuation of the net benefits of the project, including achievement of long-term impacts, considering the probability and magnitude of relevant risks. The report will discuss key risks and explain how these are likely to affect achievement of the project’s long-term objectives. For example, a project may face financial risks such as a lack of budget for follow-up activities, inadequate revenue streams, and economic shocks. It may face sociopolitical risks such as political unrest, armed conflicts, elite capture, lack of political support for follow-up, and policy reversal. It may also face risks due to inadequate institutional capacities of key partners, changes in the physical environment, etc.
- 37.** The report will discuss the extent to which the flow of project benefits is resilient. It should cover the measures that were undertaken and/or may be needed to mitigate risks.

Economic: the cost-effective conversion of inputs such as funds, expertise, personnel, equipment, etc., into results compared to feasible alternatives.

Timely: the extent to which project activities were started and completed within a reasonable time frame.

Sustainability: the continuation/likely continuation of positive effects from an intervention after it has come to an end, and its potential for scale-up and/or replication; interventions need to be environmentally as well as institutionally, financially, politically, culturally, and socially sustainable (GEF IEO 2019).

3.5.7 Implementation and Execution

38. The assessment of project implementation and execution will consider the performance of the GEF Agencies and their executing partners in discharging their responsibilities.
39. **Implementation.** The GEF Agency is responsible for the efficient use of project inputs and the delivery of the outputs. The report will describe how well the GEF Agency discharged its [responsibilities](#). It will discuss the implementation process, the challenges faced at different stages of implementation and how these were addressed, and the circumstances that aided or hindered implementation. It will describe the extent to which information from project monitoring was used for decision making, adaptive management, and learning. The report will discuss the extent to which the recommendations of the project's midterm review were implemented. It will focus on elements that were controllable from the GEF Agency's perspective. For a child project under a programmatic framework, the terminal evaluation report will address how well the given GEF Agency collaborated with other Agencies involved in the program. For a jointly implemented project, the evaluators will also assess how well the Agencies collaborated and worked together.
40. **Execution.** GEF activities are executed on the ground by executing partners of a GEF Agency; these executing entities are usually country or regional counterparts that receive GEF funds from the GEF Agency and are involved in the management and administration of a project's day-to-day activities under the oversight and supervision of the GEF Agency. The discussion on execution will present an assessment of executing entity performance. It will cover the extent to which an executing entity effectively discharged its role and [responsibilities](#). It will also discuss the extent to which the executing entity will facilitate follow-up to the project.

GEF Agency responsibilities: within the GEF partnership, a GEF Agency is involved in project identification, concept preparation, preparation of a detailed proposal, approval and start-up, oversight, supervision, completion, and evaluation (see GEF 2010, 2011).

Executing entity responsibilities: executing entities are responsible for the appropriate use of funds, as well as the procurement and contracting of goods and services in line with the regulations of the GEF Agency (GEF 2010, 2011).

3.5.8 Project Monitoring and Evaluation

41. Minimum Requirement 1 of the [GEF Evaluation Policy](#) calls for a fully developed and budgeted project M&E plan at the point of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) endorsement/approval; Minimum Requirement 2 calls for implementation of these plans. The evaluators will include an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the project M&E plan and its implementation.
42. **M&E design.** The report will present an assessment of the extent to which the project's M&E framework was practical and well thought out. It will assess the extent to which the M&E framework addresses the project's theory of change

and GEF M&E requirements, incorporates applicable core indicators/corporate results indicators, and provides baseline information. It will discuss whether each of the indicators are defined and if a methodology for measurement is provided; whether the indicators specified to track environmental, gender, socioeconomic, and other results are appropriate ([SMART](#)); whether the M&E plan specifies the planned M&E activities, responsibilities, and timelines; and whether the M&E activities were supported with adequate budget. For a child project under a programmatic framework (including the coordinating project), the report will discuss alignment of the project M&E design with the M&E arrangements at the program level, and how project M&E arrangements will contribute to program M&E.

- 43. M&E implementation.** The report will discuss the extent to which the M&E system operated as planned. If changes were made to the M&E plan, it will note these changes and the reasons for them, and comment on whether the changes were necessary and timely. The report will describe the extent to which information on the specified indicators was gathered systematically, in a timely fashion, and following a robust methodology. It will discuss whether the resources allocated for M&E were sufficient and used prudently. It will also discuss how the information from the M&E system was used in decision making and adaptive management. For child projects (including coordinating projects) under a programmatic framework, the report will also explain how its M&E arrangements contributed to program-level M&E and results reporting.

3.5.9 Cofinancing

- 44.** Use of [cofinancing](#) in GEF projects is important to ensuring that the GEF finances only the incremental (or additional) costs of generating global environmental benefits. Cofinancing may also enhance the scale of the supported activities, support sustainability, and strengthen partnerships. Timely materialization of cofinancing is crucial to ensure that sufficient resources are available for planned activities and that these activities are completed on time.
- 45.** The evaluation report will provide information on cofinancing sources, cofinancing commitments, and activities supported through cofinancing. It will report on the type of cofinancing mobilized: cash or in kind; grant, loan, or equity; investment mobilized and recurrent expenses; managed by the GEF Agency implementing the project or in parallel by other partner organizations. It will provide information on the extent to which expected cofinancing materialized and was timely. In cases where the materialization of cofinancing deviated from commitments, or where there was a delay in materialization, the report will discuss the reasons for these, and the effects on implementation and results.

SMART: specific; measurable; achievable and attributable; relevant and realistic; and time-bound, timely, trackable, and targeted.

Cofinancing: financing that is additional to GEF financing and that supports implementation of a GEF-financed activity and achievement of its objectives (GEF 2018).

3.5.10 Application of GEF Policies and Guidelines

- 46. Environmental and social safeguards.** It is expected that GEF activities will not cause any harm to the environment or to any stakeholder and that, where applicable, Agencies will take measures to prevent and/or mitigate adverse effects. The report will discuss the extent to which the GEF [Policy on Environmental and Social Safeguards](#) was applied during project preparation and implementation. It will note how project activities affected marginalized communities including, where applicable, indigenous peoples.
- 47. Gender equality.** In accordance with the GEF [Policy on Gender Equality](#), the report will discuss the extent to which gender considerations were addressed in designing and implementing the project. The report will provide information on whether a gender analysis was conducted, the extent to which the project was implemented in a manner that ensures gender-equitable participation and benefits, and whether gender-disaggregated data on beneficiaries were gathered. The report will discuss whether any of the project activities and outcomes are likely to disadvantage women. The evaluators will determine the extent to which relevant gender equality–related concerns were tracked through the project M&E.
- 48. Stakeholder engagement.** The GEF [Policy on Stakeholder Engagement](#) defines stakeholder engagement as a process involving stakeholder identification and analysis; planning of stakeholder engagement; consultations with, and participation of, stakeholders in monitoring, evaluation, and learning through implementation; addressing their grievances; and ongoing reporting to [stakeholders](#). The report will identify key stakeholders of the project and discuss their engagement in various project activities related to project preparation and implementation. The report will discuss how the project has used stakeholder engagement to build partnerships, draw on their expertise and capacities, and foster project ownership and the likelihood of follow-up. The report will discuss whether—and, where applicable, how—stakeholder engagement has affected implementation, results, and risks to project sustainability.
- 49. Knowledge management and learning.** The report will discuss whether existing lessons and good practices inform the design of the evaluated project. It will assess arrangements made to capture, manage, use, and share information and lessons generated through project activities. It will examine whether these activities were supported with adequate budget. It will discuss the knowledge products planned and delivered as part of the project, and how these have contributed and/or will contribute to learning.

Stakeholder: an individual or group that has an interest in a GEF-financed activity or is likely to be affected by it, such as local communities, indigenous peoples, civil society organizations, and private sector entities (GEF 2017b).

3.6 Lessons and Recommendations

- 50. Lessons.** The report will draw out lessons from the project. The lessons should describe aspects of the project approach that worked well as well as those that did not. It should summarize the reasons why something worked well (or did not) and its implications for future work. Wherever possible, an evaluation report should include examples of good practices in project preparation, design, and implementation that have led to effective stakeholder engagement, learning, successful adoption of GEF initiatives by stakeholders, and large-scale environmental impacts. The report should indicate the conditions under which these lessons and good practices may be applicable to future work.
- 51. Recommendations.** The evaluation report should provide recommendations based on evaluation findings. The recommendations should be well formulated and targeted to the management of the GEF Agency and executing entities.⁶ Recommendations should state the action to be taken, and specify the actor that needs to take the action and the time frame for action. The evaluation report should discuss the rationale for each recommendation; its likely effects; and, where applicable, other courses of action that may be considered. Those required to act should be invited to provide a response to the recommendations.

3.7 Performance Criteria and Ratings

- 52.** Project performance will be assessed based on the criteria discussed in the preceding sections of these guidelines. Performance on some of these criteria will be rated ([table 1](#)). The ratings will be on an even-number Likert scale—preferably a six-point scale. The ratings may be provided in a table in the main body of the report, embedded in the corresponding sections of the report, or as an annex to the report. Performance on the criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, and efficiency will be considered in determining an overall outcome rating. For more information on how performance should be rated on these criteria, see the [annex](#).

⁶ If the evaluation finds a gap in GEF policies and/or programming, it may be noted as an area of future action for the GEF.

Table 1: Rating Status of Terminal Evaluation Assessment Criteria

Criterion	Rated	Rating scale
Additionality	No	
Outcome	Yes	Six-point (highly satisfactory to highly unsatisfactory)
Relevance	Yes	
Coherence	Yes	
Effectiveness	Yes	
Efficiency	Yes	
Sustainability	Yes	Six-point (highly likely to highly unlikely)
Implementation	Yes	Six-point (highly satisfactory to highly unsatisfactory)
Execution	Yes	Six-point (highly satisfactory to highly unsatisfactory)
M&E design	Yes	Six-point (highly satisfactory to highly unsatisfactory)
M&E implementation	Yes	Six-point (highly satisfactory to highly unsatisfactory)
Cofinancing	No	
Application of GEF policies and guidelines	No	

4. Report Submission and Use

4.1 Submission of Terminal Evaluation Report

53. GEF Agencies will submit a terminal evaluation report through the GEF Portal within two months of completion of a terminal evaluation. The GEF IEO will confirm whether the correct document has been submitted and, if there is an error in submission, follow up with the respective Agency. In cases where the terminal evaluation has been conducted by an Agency's operations unit, the GEF Agency will also submit a validation report by its evaluation unit within a year of the terminal evaluation's completion. The GEF IEO will track and report on timeliness in submission of completed terminal evaluation reports.

4.2 Use of Terminal Evaluations

54. Terminal evaluations play a significant role in supporting learning and accountability across the GEF partnership. They are an important source of information for assessing adherence to and the effect of GEF policies.

55. GEF IEO. The GEF IEO aggregates and synthesizes information presented in the terminal evaluation reports to assess and report on performance of the GEF portfolio. The Office assesses and reports on the quality of the terminal evaluation reports submitted by the GEF Agencies. It also validates a sample of the terminal evaluation reports to assess consistency in validated ratings provided by the evaluation units of the GEF Agencies.⁷ Several knowledge products prepared by the GEF IEO, especially its annual performance reports, are based on evidence presented in the terminal evaluation reports. The GEF IEO shares the terminal evaluation reports publicly through a web page and publishes a data set of the validated project performance ratings.

56. GEF Secretariat. The GEF Secretariat uses terminal evaluations to inform its future work and for knowledge sharing. For example, the GEF Secretariat uses terminal evaluations for learning and evidence-based decision making. Also, the validated ratings of completed projects are an input to the Country Performance

⁷ The GEF IEO also validates terminal evaluation reports prepared by the operations unit of an Agency when that Agency's evaluation unit does not validate them or where there is an insufficient track record to assess consistency of ratings.

Index of the GEF System for Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR) formula to determine country allocations.

57. **GEF Agencies.** The GEF Agencies similarly use terminal evaluations to inform their future work and for knowledge sharing. Several GEF Agencies use terminal evaluations to prepare knowledge products covering their project portfolio and for evidence-based decision making.
58. **GEF Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP).** Several advisory products prepared by the STAP use information provided in the terminal evaluations.

Annex: Ratings

1. The evaluators will rate project performance on outcomes, sustainability, implementation, execution, M&E design, and M&E implementation. The rated dimensions are described here along with a description of the level of performance for a specific rating. In most instances, actual performance may not fully correspond to any of the rating descriptions. Therefore, a rating will be assigned based on the description that best fits the evidence. Where available evidence is insufficient to rate performance, performance will be rated as unable to assess.

A.1 Outcome Ratings

2. The overall rating of the project outcomes will be based on the following criteria.
 - a. **Relevance.** The evaluators will assess the extent to which the project outcomes aligned with the GEF focal areas/operational program strategies, country priorities, beneficiary needs, and the mandates of the GEF Agency and its executing partners. The evaluators will assess if the project is well targeted and the extent to which the project design is appropriate for delivering the expected outcomes.
 - b. **Coherence.** The evaluators will assess the extent to which the project is compatible with other relevant projects and programs in the recipient country—that is, the extent to which it supported and was supported by other relevant activities in the project context. They will assess internal coherence by determining the extent to which there is alignment among the project’s theory of change, governance structure, activities, and M&E system. They will assess alignment with GEF policies and guidelines, and integration of lessons from similar projects into the design.
 - c. **Effectiveness.** The evaluators will consider the extent to which project outcome achievements were commensurate with the ex ante targets. They will weigh the extent to which the project made the expected level of contributions to global environmental benefits. They will consider overall progress in achieving the long-term objectives. They will also consider the unintended consequences of the project and the extent to which these add to, or negate, project benefits.
 - d. **Efficiency.** This criterion is focused on the extent to which the project was cost-effective in delivering its intended results. The evaluators will consider

the project's cost/time versus outputs/outcomes equation, and, where feasible, compare the project's costs and benefits to alternatives. They will also consider the extent to which project activities were completed in a timely manner.

3. The project outcome rating will be based on the extent to which the expected outcomes were achieved (effectiveness), and the extent to which the project was relevant, coherent, and efficient. Although the evaluators will consider performance on these four criteria, the overall rating need not be a simple average of the criteria because a criterion may be more or less important depending on the type of project and its operational context. A six-point rating scale is used to assess outcome. The top three ratings comprise the satisfactory range and the bottom three (excluding unable to assess) the unsatisfactory range.
 - a. **Highly satisfactory.** The outcomes exceed targets and are highly relevant, coherent, and cost-effective.
 - b. **Satisfactory.** The level of outcomes achieved meets targets. The outcomes are relevant, coherent, and cost-effective.
 - c. **Moderately satisfactory.** The level of outcomes achieved was generally close to the targets. The majority of the targets were met or almost met, but some were not. The outcomes are generally relevant, coherent, and cost-effective.
 - d. **Moderately unsatisfactory.** Overall, the level of outcomes achieved is lower than the targets, although some outcomes were substantially achieved. The outcomes are generally relevant but not sufficient given the costs or, alternatively, are generally cost-effective but not adequately relevant and coherent.
 - e. **Unsatisfactory.** The expected outcomes were not achieved, or achievement was substantially lower than expected, and/or the achieved outcomes are not relevant or coherent. Alternatively, the outcome was cost-ineffective compared to alternatives.
 - f. **Highly unsatisfactory.** A negligible level of outcomes was achieved and/or the project had substantial negative consequences that outweigh its benefits.
 - g. **Unable to assess.** The available information does not allow assessment of the level of outcome achievement.

A.2 Sustainability Ratings

4. The rating for likelihood of sustainability will be based on the probability of occurrence of a risk and the magnitude/severity of its effects on continuation of net

benefits and achievement of long-term project objectives should it materialize. The assessment also considers the resilience of the project benefit stream to the likely risks. It will assess the likelihood of continuation over a time frame reasonable for the given project. At the time of the evaluation, a project may not face the consequences of the risk materializing, or the risk may be just beginning to materialize. The assessment should be based on the evidence of risks available at the time of evaluation. Most risks may be categorized as financial, sociopolitical, institutional, or environmental.

- a. Financial risks.** The evaluators will assess both the likelihood that financial resources will be available to continue the activities that sustain project benefits and the risks associated with their availability. They should, for example, look at support for income-generating activities that promote environmentally friendly behavior, regular government budget allocations for activities supported by the GEF project, and trends suggesting the future adequacy of financial resources for sustaining project outcomes. In cases where a project supported a business model, evaluators should consider risks that undermine the financial viability of the model.
- b. Sociopolitical risks.** The evaluators will assess the extent to which social or political risks may undermine the longevity of project outcomes. They will assess the extent to which the level of stakeholder ownership is insufficient to allow for project outcomes/benefits to be sustained, as well as the extent to which the interests of key stakeholders are aligned to support continuation of project benefits flow. For example, there may be a risk of policy reversal that will negate the progress made by the project, or enabling conditions that will alternatively lead to supportive policies. Evaluators will also assess the extent to which there is sufficient knowledge and public/stakeholder awareness of the project's long-term objectives and the progress made so far by the project in achieving these objectives.
- c. Institutional framework and governance risks.** The evaluators will assess if the legal framework, policies, governance structures, and processes pose any threat to the continuation of project benefits. In assessing these risks, the evaluators will consider if the requisite systems for accountability and transparency, and the necessary technical and institutional know-how, are in place.
- d. Environmental risks.** The evaluators will assess if there are any environmental risks that can undermine the future flow of project benefits. The evaluators should assess whether certain activities in the project area will pose a threat to the sustainability of project outcomes. For example, project outcomes may be especially vulnerable to climate change risks. Similarly,

biodiversity-related gains made by a project targeting marine protected areas may be affected by an increase in pollutant accumulation.

5. Additional risks that do not fall into the above categories also need to be considered in determining the overall sustainability rating. Once the probability of incidence of all relevant risks and the magnitude of their effect/severity have been taken into account, the following six-point scale for the overall likelihood of sustainability should be used.
 - a. **Highly likely.** There is negligible risk to continuation of benefits and based on the progress made so far it is expected that the long-term objectives of the project will be achieved.
 - b. **Likely.** Either there is negligible risk to continuation of benefits or there are some risks, but the magnitude of their effect is too small and/or the probability that they will materialize is too small. Overall, it is likely that the net benefits of the project will continue.
 - c. **Moderately likely.** There are some risks to sustainability, and they may have some effect on continuation of benefits if they materialize. However, probability of materialization of these risks is low. Net benefits are more likely to continue than abate.
 - d. **Moderately unlikely.** There are significant risks to sustainability. The effect on continuation of benefits would be substantial if these risks materialize and the probability of materialization of these risks is significant. Overall, net benefits of the project are likely to abate.
 - e. **Unlikely.** Because of the high risks it is unlikely that net benefits of the project will continue to accrue, and the progress made so far is likely to be lost. It is unlikely that the project will achieve its long-term objectives.
 - f. **Highly unlikely.** It is expected that the project will not achieve its long-term objectives. Major risks have either already materialized and halted accrual of net benefits or have high probability of materializing soon and will halt accrual of net benefits when they materialize.
 - g. **Unable to assess.** Unable to assess the expected incidence and magnitude of risks to sustainability.

A.3 Implementation and Execution Ratings

6. The performance of the GEF Agency and the executing entity will be considered separately.

- 7. Implementation (GEF Agencies).** The GEF Agency is responsible for activities related to project identification, concept preparation, preparation of a detailed proposal, project approval and start-up, oversight and supervision, completion, and evaluation. The Agency is also responsible for efficient utilization of project inputs and delivery of project outputs. Quality of project implementation will be rated based on assessment of GEF Agency performance in carrying out its responsibilities ([table A.1](#)).
- 8. Execution (executing entities).** GEF activities are executed on the ground by the executing entities, which are involved in the management and administration of the project's day-to-day activities under the oversight and supervision of a GEF Agency. The executing entities are responsible for the appropriate use of funds, as well as the procurement and contracting of goods and services in line with the regulations of the GEF Agency. Quality of project execution will be rated based on assessment of the performance of the executing entity (or entities) in carrying out its responsibilities ([table A.1](#)).

A.4 Project M&E Ratings

- 9.** The quality of M&E arrangements will be rated at the project level in terms of both design and implementation. The quality of M&E on these two dimensions will be assessed separately on a six-point scale ([table A.2](#)).
 - a. Design.** The review will assess the quality of the M&E plan at the point of CEO endorsement/approval. It will consider the extent to which the M&E plan was practical and well thought through. It will assess the extent to which the M&E plan addresses the project's theory of change and GEF M&E requirements, incorporates applicable core indicators/corporate results indicators and tracking tools, and provides baseline information. It will determine whether the indicators specified to track environmental, gender equality, socio-economic, and other results are appropriate (SMART—specific, measurable, attributable, realistic, and time-bound). For child projects and coordinating projects under a programmatic framework, the review will assess how well the M&E plan aligns with and is likely to contribute to the program M&E plan.
 - b. Implementation.** The review will assess the extent to which the M&E system operated as planned. Where applicable, it will consider if weaknesses in the M&E plan were addressed in time. It will consider if data on specified indicators were gathered systematically and as scheduled, and the extent to which data on relevant GEF core indicators/corporate results indicators and/or tracking tools were analyzed and reported. It will consider the appropriateness of the methodological approaches used to analyze the data and

Table A.1: Scale for Rating Project Implementation and Execution

Rating	Implementation (GEF Agency)	Execution (executing entity) ^a
Highly satisfactory	Performance of the GEF Agency was exemplary. Project preparation and implementation were robust. The Agency ensured that relevant GEF policies were applied in project preparation and implementation. Project supervision was strong—the Agency identified and addressed emerging concerns in a timely manner. The Agency ensured that project implementation stayed on track and project activities were completed on time.	Performance of the executing entity was exemplary. Execution of project activities was timely and of high quality. Relevant GEF policies and requirements were adhered to. Guidance from the GEF Agency was followed, and any corrective actions required were taken promptly. Measures were undertaken to mitigate risks to sustainability, and steps were taken to support follow-up to the project. Project activities were completed on time.
Satisfactory	Performance met expectations and did not have any salient weaknesses. Project preparation and implementation were robust, and relevant GEF policies were applied. The GEF Agency supervised the project well—it identified and addressed emerging concerns in a timely manner. The Agency ensured that project implementation was on track.	Performance met expectations and did not have any salient weaknesses. Execution of project activities was timely and of good quality. Relevant GEF policies and requirements were adhered to. Guidance from the GEF Agency was followed. Measures were undertaken to mitigate risks to sustainability of project outcomes.
Moderately satisfactory	Performance had some weaknesses but met expectations overall. Project preparation and implementation were adequate and relevant GEF policies were applied, although there are some weak areas. Project supervision was adequate—the GEF Agency identified and addressed emerging concerns, although some may have been inadequately addressed. Project implementation had minor delays, and a few activities may have been dropped.	Performance had some weaknesses but met expectations overall. Execution of project activities was generally timely but with some instances of delay. Relevant GEF policies and requirements were adhered to, although some minor slip-ups may have been observed. Guidance from the GEF Agency was followed, and problems were fixed. There were some areas for improvement in execution.
Moderately unsatisfactory	Performance did not meet expectations, although there were some areas of solid performance. Project preparation and implementation had weaknesses, although these were not too severe. Project supervision was somewhat weak—although the GEF Agency identified most emerging concerns, many remained unaddressed or inadequately addressed. Project implementation was delayed, and a few activities were dropped or reduced in scale because of issues that were largely under Agency control.	Performance did not meet expectations, although there were some areas of solid performance. Execution of project activities was delayed, and executing entity capabilities observably limited project execution. Several slip-ups in adherence to GEF policies and requirements were observed. Guidance from the GEF Agency was generally followed and problems were fixed, but such actions usually were not timely. There were several areas for improvement in execution.
Unsatisfactory	Performance did not meet expectations. Project preparation and implementation were weak. Project supervision was weak—emerging concerns were not identified in time and remained unaddressed or inadequately addressed. Activities were not implemented in time or were not undertaken. Project implementation was delayed, and several activities were dropped or reduced in scale.	Performance did not meet expectations. Execution of project activities was delayed, and at least some activities were dropped due to factors largely under the control of the executing entity. Many slip-ups were observed in adherence to GEF policies and requirements. Guidance from the GEF Agency was not put into practice, or was applied with considerable delay.

(continued)

Table A.1: Scale for Rating Project Implementation and Execution (continued)

Rating	Implementation (GEF Agency)	Execution (executing entity) ^a
Highly unsatisfactory	Performance had severe shortcomings. The GEF Agency mismanaged project implementation, and its supervision was poor. Emerging concerns were not identified in time, including those that should have been obvious. Although instances of mismanagement were discovered, corrective actions were not undertaken. Project activities were poorly implemented, and several had to be dropped.	Performance had severe shortcomings. There were several instances of mismanagement by the executing entity. Emerging concerns were not addressed in time, including those that should have been obvious. Most activities were very poorly executed and/or experienced delays, and some activities were dropped. GEF policies and requirements were not applied.
Unable to assess	The available information is not sufficient to allow rating of performance.	The available information is not sufficient to allow rating of performance.

a. When multiple entities are involved in project execution, the rating should be based on their collective performance. The rating needs to take into account the performance of the individual executing agencies, their level of responsibilities, and their performance as a collaborative and coordinated arrangement.

the extent to which the resources allocated for M&E were sufficient. It will also consider the extent to which the information from the M&E system was used to improve project implementation and effectiveness. For child projects and coordinating projects under a programmatic framework, the review will assess how well the project M&E arrangements aligned with and contributed to program-level M&E.

Table A.2: Scale for Rating M&E Plan and Implementation

Rating	M&E plan	M&E implementation
Highly satisfactory	The M&E plan is a good practice and does not have any weaknesses. Its alignment with the project theory of change is robust. Complete baseline data have been provided. The specified indicators are appropriate, and arrangements for plan implementation are adequate. Overall, the M&E plan exceeds expectations and is exemplary.	M&E plan implementation was excellent. Weaknesses in the M&E plan, if present, were addressed promptly. M&E activities were conducted in a timely manner, and data from M&E were used to improve project implementation. Overall, M&E implementation exceeds expectations and was exemplary.
Satisfactory	The M&E plan is robust and has no or only minor weaknesses. Its alignment with the project theory of change is robust. Baseline data are provided or their collection is planned at project start. The specified indicators are appropriate, and arrangements for M&E plan implementation are adequate. The plan meets expectations.	M&E plan implementation was generally robust. Weaknesses in M&E were addressed in a timely manner. M&E activities were conducted in a timely manner, and data from M&E were used in improving project implementation. Overall, M&E implementation meets expectations.
Moderately satisfactory	The M&E plan is solid overall. Its alignment with the project theory of change is solid. The specified indicators are generally appropriate, and arrangements for M&E plan implementation are adequate. There are areas where the M&E plan could be strengthened but, overall, it is adequate.	M&E plan implementation was generally robust, with some weaknesses. Weaknesses in M&E were generally addressed although some remained. Some M&E activities were delayed. M&E data were used for reporting but had little use in improving project implementation. Overall, M&E implementation meets expectations with some areas of low performance.
Moderately unsatisfactory	The M&E plan is weak overall, although it has strengths in some areas. Its alignment with the project theory of change is somewhat weak. The specified indicators are generally appropriate but additional indicators are required to adequately capture project results, and/or arrangements to gather data on indicators are not adequate. The plan needs several improvements to meet expectations.	M&E plan implementation was weak and/or did not address weaknesses in the original plan. Most M&E activities were completed, with some either dropped or delayed. M&E data were not reported in a timely manner, and there is little evidence to suggest that the data were used to improve project implementation. Overall, M&E implementation does not meet expectations, although there are some areas of adequate performance.
Unsatisfactory	The M&E plan has severe shortcomings. Its alignment with the project theory of change is weak. No baseline data are provided nor is there any indication that these would be collected at project start. Indicators do not adequately address project outcomes and other results; relevant indicators have not been specified for several results. There are gaps in arrangements for M&E plan implementation. Either no budget or an inadequate budget has been provided for M&E.	M&E plan implementation was flawed and/or did not address severe weaknesses in the original plan. Several M&E activities were either dropped or were incomplete. The data collection methodology was not sound. M&E data were not reported in a timely manner, and there is little evidence to suggest that the data were used to improve project implementation. M&E implementation does not meet expectations.
Highly unsatisfactory	No M&E plan was prepared.	No, or negligible, M&E activity was implemented other than conduct of the project evaluation.
Unable to assess	Unable to assess because project documents are not available.	Unable to assess because the terminal evaluation does not cover M&E implementation adequately.

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The Office cooperates with professional evaluation networks on developing evaluation approaches, setting standards, and delivering training—particularly with regard to environmental evaluation and evaluation at the interface of environment and socioeconomic development. We also collaborate with the broader global environmental community to ensure that we stay on the cutting edge of emerging and innovative methodologies.

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