



Independent
Evaluation Office
GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY

20
ANNIVERSARY

CELEBRATING TWO DECADES OF INFLUENCE



Join us as we commemorate our journey of
Excellence, Accountability, and Innovation

in safeguarding the planet for future generations.

ANNIVERSARY

MILESTONES

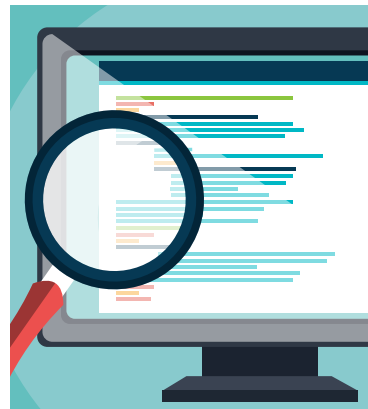
ANNIVERSARY

Established in 2003, the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) was founded with a clear mandate to provide independent and objective evaluations of Global Environment Facility (GEF) programs and projects. Over the years, the IEO has continuously evolved, adapting to the changing needs and

challenges in the field of environmental evaluation. The IEO has grown in stature and influence, gaining recognition for its rigorous assessments, adherence to international evaluation standards, and commitment to fostering accountability and learning within the GEF.

2003

The GEF Council approves the terms of reference for the creation of a Monitoring & Evaluation Office.



2004

Rob van den Berg is appointed as the first Director of the newly created Monitoring & Evaluation Office.

2006

The Office is renamed the GEF Evaluation Office, and develops the GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy.



2008

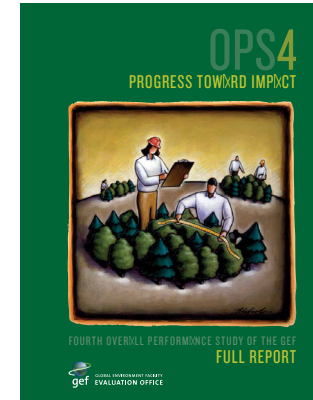
The Office prepares guidelines for the GEF Agencies in conducting terminal evaluations.

The Office conducts its first joint evaluation of the Small Grants Programme (SGP).



2010

The IEO conducts its first in-house comprehensive evaluation (OPS4).



The Office and the GEF Secretariat prepare a revised Monitoring and Evaluation Policy to better capture GEF processes and priorities.

2012

The IEO introduces the use of geospatial technology in its evaluations.



The Office conducts its first country cluster evaluation, of the OECS (Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States).

2014

Juha I. Uitto is appointed by the GEF Council as the second Director of the IEO.

LDCF
SCCF

The Office releases guidelines for conducting evaluations of the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund in line with the GEF M&E Policy.

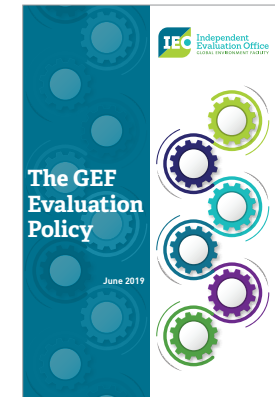
2018

The Office completes the Sixth Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF (OPS6), focusing on the GEF in the changing environmental finance landscape.

OPS6

2019

The IEO establishes a new Evaluation Policy, which fully separates GEF evaluation from the monitoring function.



2022



The Office completes OPS7; this comprehensive evaluation of the GEF focuses on working toward a greener global recovery.

THE ROLE OF THE IEO WITHIN THE GEF PARTNERSHIP

THE INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OFFICE plays a crucial role in the Global Environment Facility partnership by providing independent and objective evaluations of the GEF's policies, programs, and projects. The IEO assesses the effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of GEF initiatives, helping guide the organization's strategic direction and alignment with global environmental priorities.



WHAT IS INDEPENDENCE?

Independence is the cornerstone of the IEO's role within the GEF, and refers to the IEO's autonomy and freedom from external influence, ensuring unbiased evaluations of GEF performance and operations. To secure its independence, the IEO operates under a clear governance structure that safeguards its autonomy. By upholding independence, the IEO continues to play a crucial role in enhancing the effectiveness and impact of the GEF in addressing global environmental challenges.

THE IEO AND THE REPLENISHMENT PROCESS

THE INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OFFICE is integral to the GEF replenishment process, ensuring accountability and effectiveness in utilizing financial resources. As an independent evaluator, the IEO provides rigorous assessments of GEF programs and projects, examining their performance and impact. These evaluations contribute crucial insights to the replenishment process, helping decision makers and stakeholders make informed funding decisions.



“ We have used IEO evaluations as independent and credible references to support positions during the Council and inform policy decisions, especially during replenishment negotiations.

— GEF Council Member



STRENGTHENING DECISION MAKING

THE INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OFFICE places a strong emphasis on conducting country-level evaluations, with a particular focus on vulnerable contexts such as small island developing states, fragile and conflict-affected areas, and least developed countries. Recognizing the unique challenges and specific needs of these contexts, the IEO's evaluations

aim to assess the effectiveness of GEF interventions and strategies in addressing their environmental and developmental

priorities. By examining the outcomes and impacts of programs and projects at the country level, the IEO provides valuable insights into the relevance, efficiency, and sustainability of GEF support. These evaluations help identify best practices, lessons learned, and areas for improvement — contributing to the GEF's efforts to enhance its responsiveness and

effectiveness in supporting these countries. The IEO's country-level evaluations serve as important tools for evidence-based decision making, enabling the GEF and its Agencies to tailor their interventions to the specific circumstances and challenges faced by countries in their pursuit of sustainable development.

“ In the past two decades, the IEO’s growth has been nothing short of remarkable. From a small team with a big vision, we have expanded into a dynamic and influential entity that stands at the forefront of independent evaluation in the global environmental arena. Our Office has blossomed, both in terms of personnel and expertise, attracting top talent and fostering a culture of innovation and excellence.

— Juha I. Uitto, IEO Director



7 Comprehensive Evaluations/Overall Performance Studies



25+ Evaluation Partnerships

6 Geographic Regions Covered



184
Evaluations

93% find the evaluations relevant*

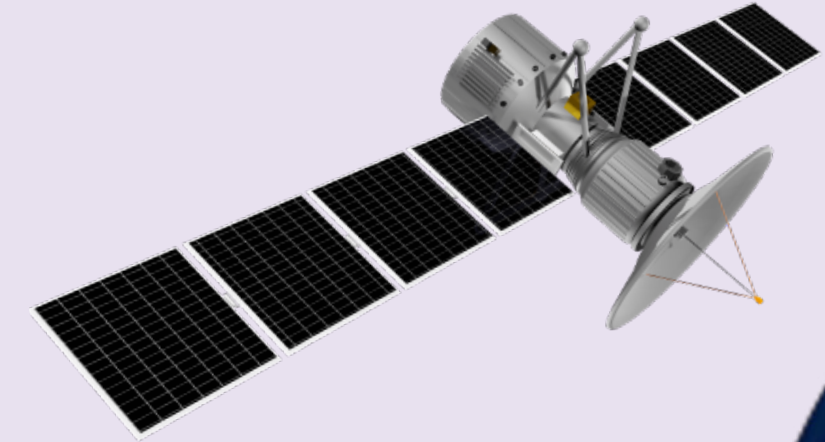
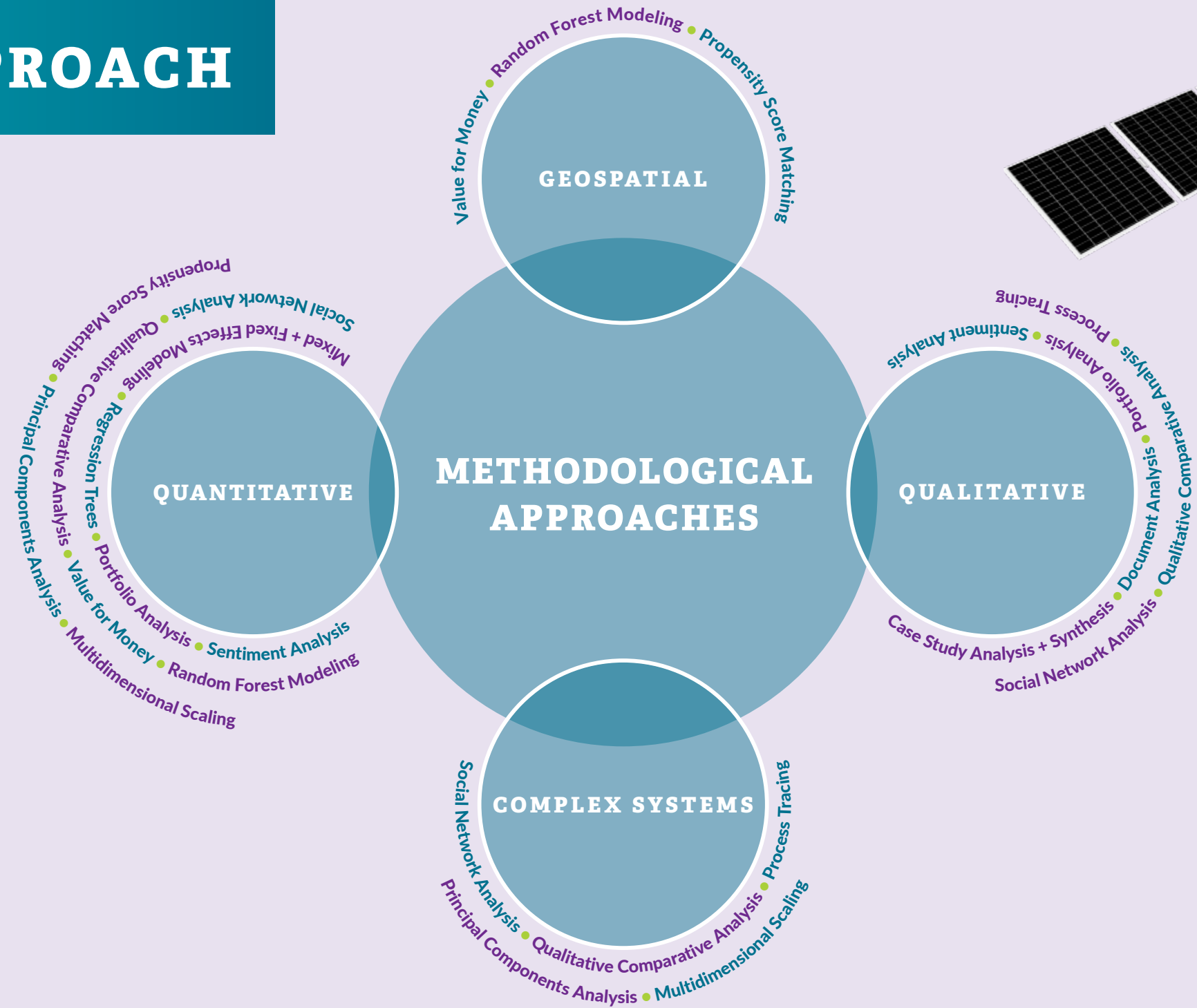
90% find the evaluation conclusions and recommendations useful*

92% find the quality to be good*

*recent user survey findings

MIXED-METHODS APPROACH

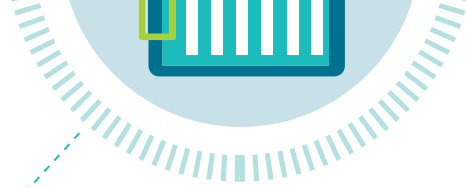
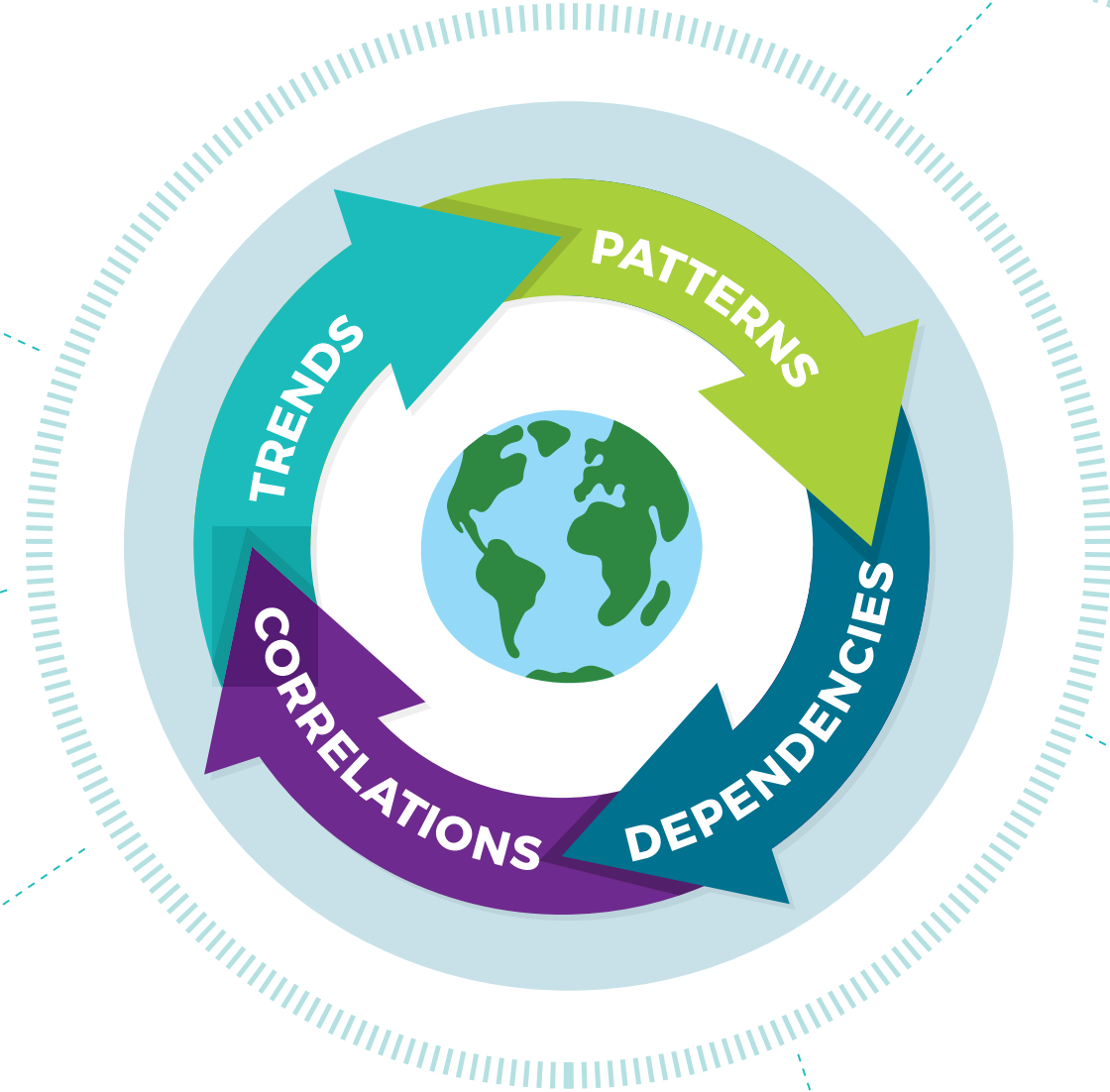
EVALUATING INTERVENTIONS IN INNATELY complex social-ecological systems requires addressing interactions among multiple stakeholders and sectors. It also requires finding solutions related to data gaps and limitations. At the GEF IEO, we combine systems thinking, geospatial approaches, and quantitative and qualitative methods from various disciplines to collect, analyze and triangulate evidence on what works, what doesn't, and the conditions for success or failure at different scales and contexts.



THEORY OF CHANGE

WE DEVELOPED A THEORY OF CHANGE FRAMEWORK that addresses the mismatch in time scales between changes in natural and human systems, and the time it takes to implement interventions. This framework considers the nonlinear nature of how impact occurs in complex systems, enabling us to assess an intervention's contribution to the desired long-term impact even if direct evidence of impact is not yet measurable.

REMOTE SENSING & DATA



SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS





CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

THE INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OFFICE PLACES SIGNIFICANT emphasis on addressing cross-cutting themes across all its evaluations, including safeguard policies, indigenous peoples, and gender considerations. Recognizing the importance of these issues in achieving sustainable and inclusive development, the IEO incorporates a comprehensive approach to assess their integration and effectiveness within GEF programs and projects.

Through its evaluations, the IEO evaluates the implementation and impact of safeguard policies to ensure environmental and social standards are upheld.

It also examines the engagement and participation of indigenous peoples, assessing the extent to which their rights, knowledge, and perspectives are considered and respected in GEF-funded initiatives.

Additionally, the IEO evaluates the integration of gender considerations, examining the differential impacts of GEF interventions on women and men, and assessing the extent to which gender equality is promoted and mainstreamed.

THE EVALUATIONS

We asked our stakeholders how our evaluations have been useful to their work.

These reports helped me in my work as a project manager.

— Former Ministry of Environment Staff

These reports helped us devise our government's approach in Council.

— GEF Council Member

All of them have been useful and provided guidance for my decision-making processes, especially in developing the country program strategy.

— GEF Agency Representative

These evaluations have resulted in my country improving its use of GEF resources.

— GEF Country Operational Focal Point/Political Focal Point

They helped in designing our country strategy.

— GEF Council Member

I use them regularly as reference materials.

— GEF Agency Representative

MANAGEMENT ACTION RECORD

THE MANAGEMENT ACTION RECORD (MAR) OUTLINES THE SPECIFIC actions and timelines to address the recommendations of the evaluations conducted by the Independent Evaluation Office. It is a tool for accountability, transparency, and continuous learning, ensuring the evaluation findings translate into concrete measures for improvement. Through the MAR, the IEO monitors progress on the actions taken that contribute to the GEF's effectiveness in achieving its sustainable development objectives.

378

*Recommendations
Tracked by MARs*



PARTNERSHIPS



In the world of evaluation, partnerships and collaboration are the lifeblood of our work. By joining forces with our peers, counterparts, and stakeholders, we amplify our impact, broaden our perspectives, and enhance the credibility of our evaluations. Together, we create a powerful network of knowledge and expertise, fueling innovation and driving meaningful change.

— Geeta Batra, IEO Chief Evaluation Officer

THE INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OFFICE PLACES great emphasis on partnerships and collaboration with its peers and counterparts. It actively engages with other evaluation offices and independent evaluators to share knowledge, experiences, and

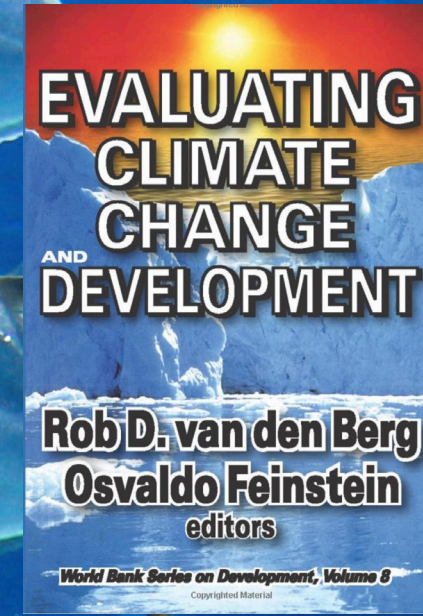
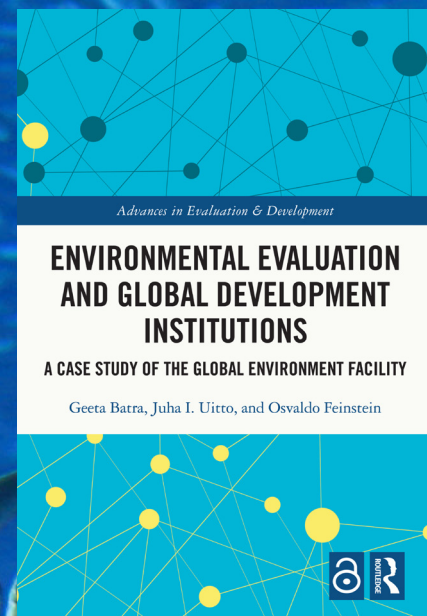
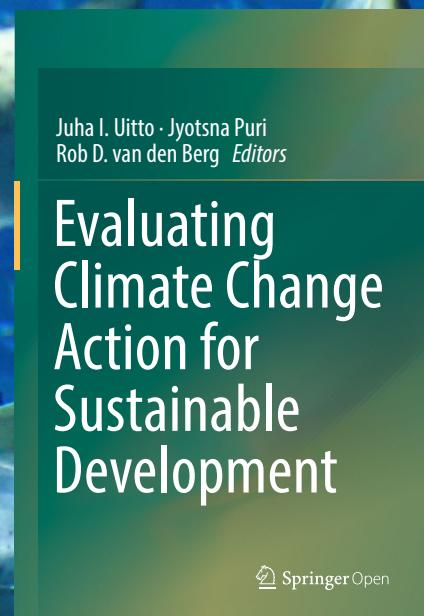
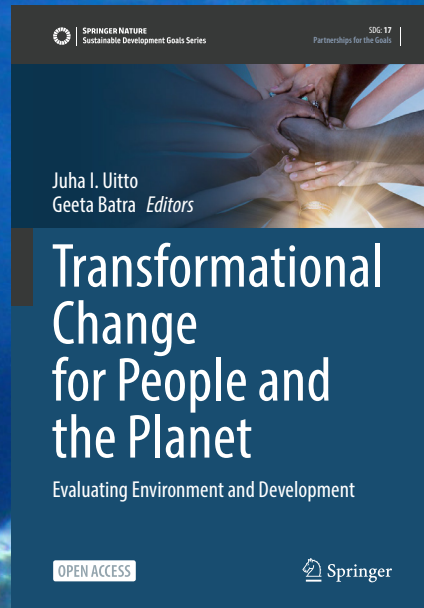
best practices in the field of evaluation. The IEO also works closely with GEF Agencies, implementing partners, and recipient countries to ensure that evaluations are comprehensive and inclusive, and reflect diverse perspectives. Through these

partnerships, the IEO fosters a culture of learning, improves evaluation practices, and contributes to the overall effectiveness of global environmental initiatives.



BEYOND EVALUATIONS

The Independent Evaluation Office not only conducts evaluations but also extends its influence by producing scholarly publications — books and academic papers that contribute to the knowledge base on global environmental challenges.



ACADEMIC PAPERS



Click on a book to view a full version.

Click to search



THE IEO STAFF

OVER THE LAST TWO DECADES, THE staff of the Independent Evaluation Office has played a crucial role in the organization's success and impact. Comprised of dedicated professionals with diverse backgrounds and expertise, the IEO staff bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to their work. They

possess a deep understanding of evaluation methodologies, environmental issues, and development practices, enabling them to conduct rigorous and independent assessments of GEF programs and projects. The staff's commitment to excellence, professionalism, and integrity ensures

that evaluations are conducted with the highest standards of quality and objectivity.

Their expertise contributes to the generation of valuable insights and recommendations that support evidence-based decision making and enhance the

effectiveness of the GEF in addressing global environmental challenges.

The IEO staff's passion for their work and their dedication to the organization's mission are instrumental in advancing the goals of the GEF and promoting sustainable development worldwide.

OUR VISION

THE INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OFFICE continually strives to expand and adapt to the GEF's evolving program. Looking ahead, the IEO envisions a future where its evaluations continue to serve as a catalyst for positive change in addressing global environmental challenges. With a commitment to sustainability, innovation, and accountability, the IEO actively embraces emerging evaluation methodologies, state-of-the-art technologies, and cross-cutting themes like gender equality, indigenous rights, and

safeguard policies. It maintains a forward-thinking approach, always seeking new opportunities for growth and progress within the GEF and the broader environmental community.

The IEO aims to strengthen partnerships and collaborations with stakeholders — including GEF Agencies, implementing partners, and countries — to ensure that its evaluations reflect diverse perspectives and promote inclusive decision-making processes.

By leveraging its expertise, independence, and rigorous evaluation practices, the IEO aspires to contribute to the GEF's mission of

safeguarding the global environment and achieving lasting environmental benefits for future generations.



ON OUR 20-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

“Happy 20th Anniversary!
Evaluations provide an essential function of learning from the steps we’ve taken and codifying knowledge for the future.
– GEF Agency Representative

“The IEO improved my personal understanding of approaches to evaluation, particularly post-hoc and project outcome evaluation.
– GEF-CSO Network Member

“The IEO has helped shape the way we develop our country program strategy and the methodology of the stakeholders’ analysis.
– UN GEF Agency Representative

“The IEO does great work. Keep it up!
– GEF Agency Representative

“Quality value added.
– GEF-CSO Network Member

“The IEO has been instrumental in improving our work starting from programming to project implementation and sustainability. Lessons learned are taken into consideration and can be easily implemented in our future work for greater impact on the environment.
– GEF Country Political Focal Point

“The IEO is an important component of the GEF’s work, improving GEF policies and how recipient countries use GEF resources.
– GEF Country Operational Focal Point/Political Focal Point

“The IEO has become a valued partner in the evaluation community, and its contribution is useful and used.
– GEF Agency Representative

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PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Juan Jose Portillo

ART DIRECTION

James Joseph Sylvester-Paz

DESIGN/PRODUCTION

Anne Marie Mascia Design + Illustration Inc.

COPYWRITING

James Joseph Sylvester-Paz

EDITING

Nita Congress

ART/GRAPHICS

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PHOTOGRAPHS/IMAGES

Cover: Anupam Anand/GEF IEO. **Page 2:** Envato Elements, *Fish Farm Aerial View*. **Pages 4, 5:** Freepik.com, *Zodiac Background*. **Page 6:** Anupam Anand/GEF IEO. **Page 12:** Envato Elements, *Aerial View of a Rocky Seashore*. **Page 13:** Envato Elements, *Aerial View of a Golden Rice Terrace*, *Aerial View of Asia in Indonesia Rice Fields*, *Aerial View of Woman on a Marigold Field*, *Carrots in the Hands of a Farmer*, *Indigenous Sri Lanka Tea Picker Harvesting*, *Young Nepali Woman Carrying Hay with a Tape on Her Forehead*; Anupam Anand/GEF IEO: *Man with Pole in Water*, *Woman Building a Fence*, *Women Factory Workers*, *Man Carrying Baskets*. **Page 14:** Envato Elements, *Group of Fish Swimming Underwater*. **Page 15:** Freepik.com, *Business People in Silhouette*. **Page 16:** Anupam Anand/GEF IEO.



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Independent Evaluation Office, Global Environment Facility

1818 H Street, NW Washington, DC 20433, USA

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