

1. Project Data

Summary project data			
GEF project ID		1156	
GEF Agency project ID		1024	
GEF Replenishment Phase		GEF-3	
Lead GEF Agency (include all for joint projects)		UNDP	
Project name		Mainstreaming Conservation and Sustainable Use of Medicinal Plant Diversity in Three Indian States	
Country/Countries		India	
Region		Asia	
Focal area		Biodiversity	
Operational Program or Strategic Priorities/Objectives		OP 3 – Forest Ecosystems	
Executing agencies involved		Ministry of Environment and Forests	
NGOs/CBOs involvement		None involved	
Private sector involvement		None involved	
CEO Endorsement (FSP) /Approval date (MSP)		January 2008	
Effectiveness date / project start		March 2008	
Expected date of project completion (at start)		UA	
Actual date of project completion		June 2015	
Project Financing			
		At Endorsement (US \$M)	At Completion (US \$M)
Project Preparation Grant	GEF funding	0	0
	Co-financing	0	0
GEF Project Grant		4.94	4.94
Co-financing	IA own	0	0.12
	Government	6.45	8.92
	Other multi- /bi-laterals	0	0
	Private sector	0	0.01
	NGOs/CSOs	0.03	0.08
Total GEF funding		4.94	4.94
Total Co-financing		6.48	9.12

Total project funding (GEF grant(s) + co-financing)	11.41	14.05
Terminal evaluation/review information		
TE completion date	November 30, 2015	
Author of TE	Prof. A.K.Bhatnagar, and Dr.T.S.Nayar	
TER completion date	May 11, 2018	
TER prepared by	Spandana Battula	
TER peer review by (if GEF IEO review)	Molly Watts Sohn	

2. Summary of Project Ratings

Criteria	Final PIR	IA Terminal Evaluation	IA Evaluation Office Review	GEF IEO Review
Project Outcomes	S	HS	MS	MS
Sustainability of Outcomes		L	MU	L
M&E Design		MU	S	MS
M&E Implementation		HS	S	S
Quality of Implementation		MS	S	MS
Quality of Execution		HS	S	S
Quality of the Terminal Evaluation Report		-	MU	S

3. Project Objectives

3.1 Global Environmental Objectives of the project:

The Project's Environmental Objective is to "conserve globally significant medicinal plant diversity in three Indian states" (PD pg 17).

3.2 Development Objectives of the project:

The Development Objective of the project is to "mainstream the conservation and sustainable use of medicinal plants into the productive forest sector of three Indian states, with particular reference to Globally Significant Medicinal Plants (GSMPs)" (PD pg 22). The project intended to achieve its objective through the following outcomes:

Outcome 1: An enabling environment for mainstreaming the conservation and sustainable use of MAPs into forest management policies and practices at the national level;

Outcome 2: Forest management policies in the three project states that promote and support the conservation and sustainable use of MAPs;

Outcome 3: Conservation and sustainable use of MAPs are mainstreamed at the local level into government and community forest management norms and practices at demonstration sites in the three project states; and

Outcome 4: Materials and methods developed for replicating the successful models of conservation and sustainable use of medicinal plants across other sites in the three states, and more broadly.

3.3 Were there any **changes** in the Global Environmental Objectives, Development Objectives, or other activities during implementation?

There were no changes to the project's objectives.

4. GEF IEO assessment of Outcomes and Sustainability

Please refer to the GEF Terminal Evaluation Review Guidelines for detail on the criteria for ratings.

Relevance can receive either a Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory rating. For Effectiveness and Cost efficiency, a six point rating scale is used (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory), or Unable to Assess. Sustainability ratings are assessed on a four-point scale: Likely=no or negligible risk; Moderately Likely=low risk; Moderately Unlikely=substantial risks; Unlikely=high risk. In assessing a Sustainability rating please note if, and to what degree, sustainability of project outcomes is threatened by financial, sociopolitical, institutional/governance, or environmental factors.

Please justify ratings in the space below each box.

4.1 Relevance	Rating: Satisfactory
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The project is consistent with GEF's Biodiversity focal area and Operational Program 3 on Forest Ecosystems. The project is also aligned to the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC), which was adopted by the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity in April 2002 (PD pg 21). The TE states that the "Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has three goals viz. conservation of biological diversity, sustainable use of its components, and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from genetic resources. The project is designed and adaptive management practices are used to address all the three goals of CBD" (TE pg 72). In addition, the project is also relevant to the three pilot states in India and it is aligned to the 1999 National Policy and Macro-level Action Strategy on Biodiversity (PD pg 10).

4.2 Effectiveness	Rating: Satisfactory
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The TE deemed the project to be effective and rated the overall quality of project outcomes as Highly Satisfactory. The project managed to attain most of its planned indicators and targets. The studies initiated under the project have been thoroughly reviewed and recommendations are being implemented. The TER rates the effectiveness as Satisfactory because it managed to mainstream conservation of medicinal plants in forest management policies at national, state and local levels. Below is a detailed assessment of achievements per outcome:

Outcome 1: An enabling environment for mainstreaming the conservation and sustainable use of MAPs into forest management policies and practices at the national level:

The project did moderately well in revising relevant policies, strengthening capacity of National Medicinal Plant Boards (NMPB), and improving intersectoral cooperation at national level. Under this outcome, the project conducted a study which identified gaps in Joint Forest Management guidelines for

conservation and sustainable use of Medicinal Plants. The recommendations for the revised guidelines were shared with various ministries for necessary action. The project also submitted a report for strengthening national and state level medicinal boards to act as nodal agencies for the medicinal plants sector. As per the TE “the recommendations of the study led to NMPB core support to all SMPBs by providing Rs. 40 to 50 lakhs as nucleus/core funds for staff remuneration, purchase of equipment, office expenses etc.” (TE pg 51). For intersectoral strengthening, the project set up a technical committee at the national level involving various ministries, departments and institutions, and it also prepared a national intersectoral strategy which is pending approval. However, the project was not able to achieve a few of its targets in commissioning studies, for example it failed to commission two studies at regional level to assess the supply chain of medicinal plants.

Outcome 2: Forest management policies in the three project states that promote and support the conservation and sustainable use of MAPs:

Under this outcome the project identified gaps and provided recommendations for strengthening legal mechanisms to protect community interests through a study commissioned by The Energy and Resources Institute. As per the TE, the report on “legal mechanism to protect TK related to harvest, cultivation and use of MAPs including the drafted sui generis regime for TK on Medicinal Plants in India has been shared with all relevant stakeholders” (TE pg 53). The project also revised state forest policies and report on the revisions for Arunachal Pradesh which led to the State approving a Medicinal Plants Conservation and Sustainable Use policy. On intersectoral cooperation, the project helped in State-level intersectoral & technical coordination committees, for example in Uttarakhand a sub-inter sectoral committee was constituted to assess proposals regarding medicinal and aromatic plants (TE pg 57).

Outcome 3: Conservation and sustainable use of MAPs mainstreamed at the local level into government and community forest management norms and practices at demonstration sites in the three project states:

Under this outcome, the project aimed to establish Medicinal Plant Conservation and Development Areas, bring forest area under active management for sustainable use, develop sustainable harvesting techniques, and improve knowledge about medicinal and aromatic plants. According to the TE, “a total of 24047 hectares is protected through 20 Medicinal Plant Conservation and Development Areas (MPCDAs). The state-wise breakdown of MPCDA sites are as follows: Arunachal Pradesh 8743 ha; Chhattisgarh 6100 ha; and Uttarakhand 9204 ha” (TE pg 58). The project made contributions to the revision of the National Forest Working Plan Code, and also prepared course curriculum and material for frontline staff of Forest Departments of the three project states and training to new recruits. Even village botanist courses were conducted to train 105 local community and frontline forest department staff. On sustainable harvest techniques, “sustainable collection protocols have been developed for 10 medicinal plant species by FRLHT in cooperation with the local communities and are being practiced by the community” (TE pg 60). The project also identified harvest sites where the local community members are harvesting various medicinal and aromatic plants.

Outcome 4: Materials and methods developed for replicating the successful models of conservation and sustainable use of medicinal plants across other sites in the three states, and more broadly:

Under this outcome, the project was successful in creating knowledge products, organizing workshops for knowledge sharing, and developing proposals to replicate best practices. The project developed more than 100 knowledge products including Brochures/booklets, Films, Jingles, and Radio programmes. These products were disseminated in more than 10 national and 5 international workshops, training programmes and conferences. The project team participated in various conferences and summits and presented the results of the studies. The TE states the “project achievements and results were shared at the third meeting of Intergovernmental Committee for the Nagoya Protocol (ICNP-3) on Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)” (TE pg 65). In addition, the Chhattisgarh medicinal plants board received funding of approximately \$1,087,847 for replicating project activities in new sites.

4.3 Efficiency	Rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory
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The TE states the project was not efficient due to financial mismanagement and extension of completion deadline. UNDP was responsible for management of project finances but it “incurred costs of more than US\$500,000 in 2012 under Outcome 4, which was more than 50% of the total outcome of the budget. There was a huge difference between the actual expenditure incurred and budgeted amount under every Outcome indicating that the project finances were not handled efficiently”. However, the co-financing received were duly audited and the coordination in getting the funds was deemed as highly efficient. In terms of time efficiency, the project was extended twice, however the extensions were justified on the basis that process driven projects take time to mature and deliver the envisaged results. Therefore, considering the efficiency in co-financing but shortcomings in UNDP’s expenditures and time delays, the TER gives a Moderately Unsatisfactory rating for efficiency.

4.4 Sustainability	Rating: Likely
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The sustainability of the project is Likely due to strong sociopolitical support by stakeholders, improvements in institutional framework, and potential funding by the state governments. Due to these factors, the TER gives a Likely rating to sustainability of the project.

Financial resources: As per the TE “the Government of India has sufficient budget for the Medicinal Plants sector. The project activities can be replicated and sustained with government funding” (TE pg 71). Additionally, the project helped in building the capacity of the state level medicinal boards which have been notified by the state governments and would receive funding from the state and central government. Therefore, the financial sustainability of the project seems likely.

Sociopolitical: The TE rates the sociopolitical sustainability as likely because “two of the four project Outcomes were aimed at revising policies at the national and state levels and mainstreaming conservation and sustainable use of medicinal plants in the forestry sector. The studies and works initiated under these outcomes, when implemented in letter and spirit, are likely to result in achieving

the project objectives” (TE pg 71). The project also had strong support from the state governments and had set up state level medicinal plant boards which could lead to political sustainability.

Institutional framework and governance: The project helped in building capacity of state boards, national boards, State Forest Departments and local communities on medicinal and aromatic plants. It also revised forest policies to favor sustainable use of plants that would help mainstream medicinal plants in forestry sector. Thus, the institutional framework is likely to be sustainable for the project.

Environment: The TE states “there may be risks stemming from habitat fragmentation, loss of pollinators and seed dispersers, pollution and climate change affecting medicinal plant species”, however these issues are beyond the scope of the project. (TE pg 72).

5. Processes and factors affecting attainment of project outcomes

5.1 Co-financing. To what extent was the reported co-financing essential to the achievement of GEF objectives? If there was a difference in the level of expected co-financing and actual co-financing, then what were the reasons for it? Did the extent of materialization of co-financing affect project’s outcomes and/or sustainability? If so, in what ways and through what causal linkages?

The project received a higher co-financing amount of \$9,116,000 than the expected amount of \$6,479,121. The TE mentions that “various activities planned under the project were supported at different stages of implementation by the national, state and local governments, which may be attributed towards co-financing” (TE pg 34).

5.2 Project extensions and/or delays. If there were delays in project implementation and completion, then what were the reasons for it? Did the delay affect the project’s outcomes and/or sustainability? If so, in what ways and through what causal linkages?

The project received an extension of 18 months. The TE mentions “in process projects, before the project is implemented, the capacity of main stakeholders is very low, the issues are numerous and often treated in silos and there is very little understanding and prioritization of the issues. Thus, process projects such as this project need to build staff capacities, identify and prioritize issues, and then coordinate efforts in addressing the issues. Accordingly, the project extensions are justified” (TE pg 74).

5.3 Country ownership. Assess the extent to which country ownership has affected project outcomes and sustainability? Describe the ways in which it affected outcomes and sustainability, highlighting the causal links:

The project received strong support from national and state governments as well as from local communities in implementation of activities.

6. Assessment of project's Monitoring and Evaluation system

Ratings are assessed on a six point scale: Highly Satisfactory=no shortcomings in this M&E component; Satisfactory=minor shortcomings in this M&E component; Moderately Satisfactory=moderate shortcomings in this M&E component; Moderately Unsatisfactory=significant shortcomings in this M&E component; Unsatisfactory=major shortcomings in this M&E component; Highly Unsatisfactory=there were no project M&E systems.

Please justify ratings in the space below each box.

6.1 M&E Design at entry	Rating: Moderately Satisfactory
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The project document provided a detailed M&E plan and budget with provision for project inception report, annual project report, project implementation review, quarterly progress reports, technical reports, mid-term and terminal evaluation. The logical framework provided performance and impact indicators for implementation along with means of verification. The total M&E budget was planned for \$493,000 (PD pgs 38-46). The TE states that the vertical logic of the log frame helped to analyze an existing situation and establish a causal link between inputs, activities, results, purpose and overall objective. However, the indicators and corresponding targets? at outcome and output levels were repeated many times (TE pg 23). Considering both minor flaws in indicators but provision of important M&E activities designed in the project, the TER gives a Moderately Satisfactory rating to M&E design at entry.

6.2 M&E Implementation	Rating: Satisfactory
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According to the TE, the project “engaged a fulltime Project Monitoring Officer who ensured that the project achieved its envisaged indicators through fulfillment of the targets” (TE pg 27). The project monitored implementation regularly, and conducted an inception workshop and steering committee meetings. It also regularly submitted project implementation reviews, and informed periodic status through quarterly progress reports. “The project made special efforts to get the opinions, views and suggestions of all relevant stakeholders on the various activities, especially the studies commissioned under the project by organizing frequent review meetings and national consultations. The project organized review meetings and partner workshops prior to each NPSC meeting for cross learning, review and sharing of results. The draft reports of the studies were also subjected to peer-review by experts” (TE pg 27). Thus, the TER gives a Satisfactory rating to M&E implementation.

7. Assessment of project implementation and execution

Quality of Implementation includes the quality of project design, as well as the quality of supervision and assistance provided by implementing agency(s) to execution agencies throughout project implementation. Quality of Execution covers the effectiveness of the executing agency(s) in performing its roles and responsibilities. In both instances, the focus is upon factors that are largely within the

control of the respective implementing and executing agency(s). A six point rating scale is used (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory), or Unable to Assess.

Please justify ratings in the space below each box.

7.1 Quality of Project Implementation	Rating: Moderately Satisfactory
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UNDP was responsible for project implementation, and the TE rates UNDP’s quality assurance as highly satisfactory but financial management as moderately satisfactory. At the beginning of the project, UNDP successfully conducted the inception workshop and finalized the inception report. It also helped in submitting the annual progress reports and implementation reports. UNDP was responsible for effective achievement of the project objective, and the TER finds that the project attained most of the indicators and targets, and the outcomes are sustainable. However, there was mismanagement of finances due to disproportionate expenditure by UNDP. “There was a huge difference between the actual expenditure incurred and budgeted amount under every Outcome indicating that the project finances were not handled efficiently. While the expenditure incurred by the three project States were duly audited by Chartered Accountants every year, expenditure incurred by UNDP were never audited” (TE pg 74). Therefore, the TER gives a Moderately Satisfactory rating to quality of implementation.

7.2 Quality of Project Execution	Rating: Satisfactory
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The project’s executing agency was Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Climate Change (MoEFCC) which was responsible for operational implementation, overall administrative support, and management of materialized co-financing. During project implementation, the Ministry helped in operations, and steered and guided the project by providing the required time, attention and taking appropriate actions. The TE states that the coordination and timing in getting co-finance to the project by MoEFCC with other relevant institutions was commendable and efficient. Thus, the TER gives a Satisfactory rating to project execution.

8. Assessment of Project Impacts

Note - In instances where information on any impact related topic is not provided in the terminal evaluations, the reviewer should indicate in the relevant sections below that this is indeed the case and identify the information gaps. When providing information on topics related to impact, please cite the page number of the terminal evaluation from where the information is sourced.

8.1 Environmental Change. Describe the changes in environmental stress and environmental status that occurred by the end of the project. Include both quantitative and qualitative changes documented, sources of information for these changes, and how project activities contributed to or hindered these changes. Also include how contextual factors have contributed to or hindered these changes.

As per the TE “A total of 24047 hectares are protected through 20 Medicinal Plant Conservation and Development Areas (MPCDAs)” (TE pg xii).

8.2 Socioeconomic change. Describe any changes in human well-being (income, education, health, community relationships, etc.) that occurred by the end of the project. Include both quantitative and qualitative changes documented, sources of information for these changes, and how project activities contributed to or hindered these changes. Also include how contextual factors have contributed to or hindered these changes.

No socioeconomic changes were reported.

8.3 Capacity and governance changes. Describe notable changes in capacities and governance that can lead to large-scale action (both mass and legislative) bringing about positive environmental change. “Capacities” include awareness, knowledge, skills, infrastructure, and environmental monitoring systems, among others. “Governance” refers to decision-making processes, structures and systems, including access to and use of information, and thus would include laws, administrative bodies, trust-building and conflict resolution processes, information-sharing systems, etc. Indicate how project activities contributed to/ hindered these changes, as well as how contextual factors have influenced these changes.

a) Capacities: The project has helped in capacity building of senior, mid and frontline staff of the Forest Departments by getting medicinal plants included in their training course curriculum. It has also developed sustainable collection protocols for 10 medicinal plant species which are being practiced by communities (TE pg xiii).

b) Governance: No governance related changes were reported.

8.4 Unintended impacts. Describe any impacts not targeted by the project, whether positive or negative, affecting either ecological or social aspects. Indicate the factors that contributed to these unintended impacts occurring.

No unintended impacts were reported.

8.5 Adoption of GEF initiatives at scale. Identify any initiatives (e.g. technologies, approaches, financing instruments, implementing bodies, legal frameworks, information systems) that have been mainstreamed, replicated and/or scaled up by government and other stakeholders by project end. Include the extent to which this broader adoption has taken place, e.g. if plans and resources have been established but no actual adoption has taken place, or if market change and large-scale environmental benefits have begun to occur. Indicate how project activities and other contextual factors contributed to these taking place. If broader adoption has not taken place as expected, indicate which factors (both project-related and contextual) have hindered this from happening.

The TE does not mentioned adoption of GEF initiatives at scale.

9. Lessons and recommendations

9.1 Briefly describe the key lessons, good practices, or approaches mentioned in the terminal evaluation report that could have application for other GEF projects.

The TE provides the following lessons (TE pg 77):

- 1) A financial plan for the project should have been developed with more prudent financial management. The expenditure incurred by UNDP should have been audited.
- 2) MPCDAs as an evolving conservation concept need to be evaluated for its socio-economic and ecological benefits.
- 3) The project is based on the premise that there is a huge dependence of local communities on medicinal plants for primary health-care needs and threat status of medicinal plants is due to gaps in demand and supply. These assumptions need to be supported with scientific facts and figures.

The TE provides the following good practices (TE pg 77):

- 1) The project performed regular monitoring and reviewed studies by all the concerned stakeholders, which created a sense of ownership, ensured pragmatic and implementable recommendations, and communicated the results to stakeholders. This also led to leveraging of co-finance from all stakeholders. This endeavour of the project is noteworthy.
- 2) Developing state specific communication strategies and tools helped garner the support and active involvement of the local communities for implementing the project.
- 3) Establishing state project management units and constant capacity building of staff led to fully functional SMPBs.

9.2 Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation.

The TE provides following recommendations for actions to follow-up (TE pgs 75-76):

- 1) Inter-sectoral strategies for conservation and sustainable use of medicinal plants formulated at both national and state level must be implemented in right spirit and earnest;
- 2) National and State level policies on Forests and Traditional Knowledge must be revised as deemed appropriate so as to address the concerns of conservation and sustainable use of medicinal plants;
- 3) Course modules developed for IFS and frontline staff of the Forest Department must be included in the training course curriculum; and
- 4) Chapter on NTFPs including medicinal plants must be referred to and implemented while revising Forest Divisional Working Plans.

10. Quality of the Terminal Evaluation Report

A six point rating scale is used for each sub-criteria and overall rating of the terminal evaluation report (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory)

Criteria	GEF IEO comments	Rating
To what extent does the report contain an assessment of relevant outcomes and impacts of the project and the achievement of the objectives?	The report provides adequate information on relevant outcomes and their outputs achieved. However, the impact section is short and needs more analysis.	S
To what extent is the report internally consistent, the evidence presented complete and convincing, and ratings well substantiated?	The report is internally consistent, and provides appropriate evidence	S
To what extent does the report properly assess project sustainability and/or project exit strategy?	The report gives substantiated information on sustainability, but does not have an exit strategy.	MS
To what extent are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive?	The lessons learnt are sufficient and well supported by evidence.	S
Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used?	The report provides actual and expected co-financing amounts and costs per outcomes.	S
Assess the quality of the report's evaluation of project M&E systems:	The report gives adequate assessment of M&E design and implementation of the project.	S
Overall TE Rating		S

11. Note any additional sources of information used in the preparation of the terminal evaluation report (excluding PIRs, TEs, and PADs).

The TER did not use any other sources for preparation.