GEF EO Terminal Evaluation Review Form

1. PROJECT DATA				
			Review date:	15/11 2007
GEF Project ID:	1384		at endorsement (Million US$)	at completion (Million US$)
IA/EA Project ID:	341	**GEF financing:**	0.82 million USD	0.82 million USD
Project Name:	Biodiversity Indicators for National Use (BINU) in Ecuador, Kenya, Philippines and Ukraine	IA/EA own:	0.030 million USD	0.030 million USD
Country:	Ecuador, Kenya, Philippines and Ukraine	Government:	0.352 million USD	0.352 million USD
		Other*:	0.085 million USD	0.085 million USD
		Total Cofinancing	0.585 million USD	0.585 million USD
Operational Program:	OP 3	**Total Project Cost:**	1.46 million USD	1.46 million USD
IA	UNEP	Dates		
Partners involved:			Work Program date	PDF A inception workshop (June 2000) and start up= > 2 years
			CEO Endorsement	Approved 3/22/2002
		Effectiveness/ Prodoc Signature (i.e. date project began)		Implementation date 7/1/2002
		Closing Date	Proposed: 12/31/2004	Actual: completed 6/30/2005 (6 month no-cost extension)
Prepared by: Sandra Romboli	Reviewed by: Neeraj Negi	Duration between effectiveness date and original closing: 42 months	Duration between effectiveness date and actual closing: 48 months	Difference between original and actual closing: 6 months
Author of TE:	Josh Brann	TE completion date: May 2007	TE submission date to GEF OME: 20 June 2007	Difference between TE completion and submission date: Approx. One Month

* The other co-financers were: UK DEFRA, UK DFID, UNEP-WCMC, Swiss Agency for Environment Forests and Landscapes, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

2. SUMMARY OF PROJECT RATINGS				

Please refer to document "GEF Office of Evaluation Guidelines for the verification and review of terminal evaluations" for further definitions of the ratings.

	Last PIR	IA Terminal Evaluation	Other IA evaluations if applicable (e.g. IEG)	GEF EO
2.1 Project outcomes	S	S	S	MS
2.2 Project sustainability	**N/A**	ML	ML	ML
2.3 Monitoring and evaluation	**S**	**S**	S	S
2.4 Quality of the evaluation report	**N/A**	**N/A**	HS	S

Should this terminal evaluation report be considered a good practice? Why? Overall it can be considered a high quality report. Especially the section on sustainability was very thorough.
Is there a follow up issue mentioned in the TE such as corruption, reallocation of GEF funds, etc.? There is no follow-up issue. However, the TE does include a section assessing the proper use of funds and states that there were "no irregularities in the project's financial records" as per audit conducted.

3. PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND ACTUAL OUTCOMES

3.1 Project Objectives

- **What were the Global Environmental Objectives of the project? Were there any changes during implementation?**

  According to the CEO approved project document: "The medium-sized GEF project Biodiversity Indicators for National Use had the goal of promoting the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity by improving the information on which decisions are based".

  No changes were made during project implementation.

- **What were the Development Objectives of the project? Were there any changes during implementation?**

The project had four main objectives (as per CEO approved project document):
a) To operationalise ecosystem-specific indicator frameworks and core sets of indicators for use at national level, using a case study approach and building on work already carried out under the CBD.
b) To develop a methodology for biodiversity monitoring at national level (taking into account international reporting, especially in the context of the CBD).
c) To assist policy- and decision-makers to apply information supplied by biodiversity indicators to national planning and decision-making.
d) To support global and regional development of indicators under the CBD

  No changes were made during project implementation.

3.2 Outcomes and Impacts

- **What major project outcomes and impacts are described in the TE?**
The TE lists two major project achievements, as follows:
- demonstrating that functional national level biodiversity indicator frameworks can be created with data currently available; and
- the capacity built in the participating countries by bringing together diverse stakeholders working on biodiversity conservation-related issues and increase their knowledge base.

The TE further makes an effort to answer a number of "evaluation key questions" relating to project results sustainability, outcome and impact. For example: What is the extent of use of the ecosystem-specific indicator frameworks, To what extent has the project directly or indirectly assisted policy and decision-makers to apply information supplied by biodiversity indicators, has the project led to a systematic monitoring of trends in the status and use of biodiversity in focal ecosystems in the target countries etc.

Summary:
According to the TE the project was successful in developing a framework of indicators for the relevant ecosystems in each of the participating countries – the framework is in varying degrees in use in each of the respective countries and internationally. For example there has been an uptake of the indicators by state agencies in national statistical reporting, university curriculum, by other parties involved and by the government ministries to various degrees. It should be noted that the actual process of developing respective national biodiversity indicator frameworks is highly valuable in itself (capacity building). In this context the TE states that "measuring capacity continues to be a challenge in evaluation. Nonetheless, data gathered during this evaluation indicated that significant technical and institutional capacity had been built within each of the participating countries as a direct result of this project" (however TE points out that there is not pre-project baseline to compare to).

According to the TE the project did not fully achieve all of the objectives set out in the project document. In

particular, the project made very little progress in assisting policy- and decision-makers to apply information supplied by biodiversity indicators to national planning and decision-making. The TE deems the project document to have been overambitious in anticipating the policy influence the project would be able to achieve with the limited time and resources budgeted. This finding limits the sustainability of the project significantly.

As per the TE another weakness in the project that is important for the projects sustainability and possible impact is the fact that there is no mechanism in place to provide for the systematic aggregation of this data (the indicators) in the future. However, the BINU project and the indicator frameworks developed under the project were highlighted in the Third National Reports to the CBD of Kenya, the Philippines and Ukraine (Ecuador has not submitted a second or third national report to CBD). If the indicators will be used in the 2009 – fourth national report to the CBD remains to be seen.

According to the TE the M&E system of the project did not included any impact indictors and did not include a long-term M&E plan. However the TE states that the M&E reporting worked well throughout the project implementation.

4. GEF EVALUATION OFFICE ASSESSMENT

4.1.1 Outcomes (use a six point scale 6= HS to 1 = HU)

A Relevance	Rating: HS

The project is highly relevant in the international context of the global effort to understand the state of biodiversity, to decrease the rate of loss of biodiversity by 2010 and to the MDG 7 ensure environmental sustainability. The project also feeds into the national reporting to the CBD for each of the countries and serves as a first national framework of indicators for Biodiversity.

Furthermore, the project is highly relevant to the GEF Biodiversity Focal Area strategy and strategic programming for GEF4, in that the project is:
- contributing to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity;
- supporting institutional capacity building and the development of the appropriate policy frameworks to ensure sustainable biodiversity conservation.

B Effectiveness	Rating: MS

The project only partly achieved its objectives. While the project was successful in developing the national frameworks of indicators, it was unable to operationalise the frameworks in a systematic manner. In addition, the project did not sufficiently ensure uptake and integration of project results within national policy relevant to biodiversity.

However, it is unrealistic to envisage such results for a project of this type and length. While the project did not fully achieve the objectives set out in the project document it was implemented in an overall effective manner taking into account the projects size/length.

C Efficiency (cost-effectiveness)	Rating: S

The TE notes that the project was efficient, as follows: "Some adaptive management measures were taken throughout the project that helped ensure the achievement of objectives in a cost-effective manner. The project took notable measures to ensure that project funds were not misdirected, and there were no cases of misappropriation evident. The use of an institution based in a developed country where operational costs are extremely high reduced the overall cost-effectiveness of the project, even though UNEP-WCMC provided the project with extremely valuable institutional and technical capacity".

All the co-financing expected at the point of inception materialized.

Project personnel component amounted to 14% of the total GEF funding, which can be considered very reasonable compared to other similar GEF projects. The project expenditure table is not very detailed and it is therefore difficult to conduct further analysis on the project costs.

4.1.2 Impacts

The project can not be said to have achieved any significant impact as it stands today. As stated above, it was unable to operationalise the frameworks in a systematic manner and it did not sufficiently ensure uptake and integration of project results within national policy relevant to biodiversity.

However, the indicators developed under this project have, to varying degrees, been integrated into governmental statistics bodies, university curriculums on biodiversity, websites etc. and are reported on regularly (in some cases). The issue of concern is that this is happening in an ad-hoc form without any long-term sustainable strategy and the risk is that the process of maintaining this information source is highly dependent on one or a very few individuals.

4.2 Likelihood of sustainability. Using the following sustainability criteria, include an assessment of **risks** to sustainability of project outcomes and impacts based on the information presented in the TE. Use a four point scale (4= no or negligible risk to 1= High risk)

A Financial resources	Rating: ML

As stated above, some project results and processes have been incorporated in subsequent related initiatives at the national and international levels and the indicator development process remains with the various institutions and organizations that participated in the project. However, the financially sustainability is highly uncertain and the process of maintaining this information source is highly dependent on one or a very few individuals.

The TE pointed out that multiple sources cited the need for a "BINU 2" to follow-up on various aspects of the project. The GEF is not prepared to provide follow-on financial support and other sources of funding have not been forthcoming.

This lack of financial resources to support the future survival of the project jeopardizes the likelihood of its sustainability.

B Socio political	Rating: ML

According to the TE: "In multiple countries results of the project have been built on by other organizations and initiatives. In Ukraine, in particular, the incorporation of indicators in university courses dealing with biodiversity conservation makes it likely that BINU results will be sustained for a long time".

The almost complete lack of penetration on the political side of the results of the project on policies has left a lot to wish for on the sustainability side. If there is not sufficient buy-in on the national level government institutions (e.g. ministry of agriculture) the indicator frameworks will not have any significant policy impact (and will eventually – without funding – become outdated and unusable).

C Institutional framework and governance	Rating: ML

As per the TE: "The results of the BINU project will be sustained to some extent within the organizations that managed the project at the national level. Within each of the countries the knowledge and awareness created in the project process remains with the various institutions and organizations that participated in the project. Ukraine continues to maintain and update the BINU webpage on the ULRMC website. Again, however, the minimal impact at the national policy level hinders the institutional and governance sustainability".

The high turn-over of staff in the organizations/ministries involved in this project, also contributes to lower likelihood of sustainability, especially since the indicator frameworks have not been institutionalized / operationalised in a systematic manner.

D Environmental	Rating: L

As per TE: The project was intended primarily to allow understanding of ecological status. One of the project objectives was to leverage policy changes that lead to ecological sustainability, but this did not occur.

The TE further states that the project made very little progress in assisting policy- and decision makers to apply information supplied by the biodiversity indicators to national planning and decision making. This will mean that the environmental sustainable benefits of this project are very limited as the information generated from the framework is not used strategically or in changing or making environmentally friendly policies. Hence the impact of this project on the environment – from this perspective – is low.

The TE did not identify or flag any actual local physical environmental threats to the sustainability of the benefits of this project - and no such threats are identified by the reviewer of the TE.

4.3 Catalytic role

a. Production of a public good
According to the TE the project produced indicator frameworks for four countries in biodiversity. The project and the indicator frameworks developed under the project were highlighted in the Third National Reports to the CBD of Kenya, the Philippines and Ukraine (Ecuador has not submitted a second or third national report

to CBD). If the indicators will be used in the 2009 – fourth national report to the CBD remains to be seen.

b. Demonstration

According to the TE: There were multiple methods by which the countries disseminated information and demonstrated their BINU experiences, most notably in the SBSTTA side-events, which were well attended. There just is not, as yet, evidence that other countries have attempted to undertake the development of indicator frameworks.

c. Replication and Scaling up

As per TE: The project had no specific replication plan or strategy. There is evidence that the project results were relevant and of significant interest to other countries and some very limited replication of BINU has or is occurring. The TE further explains that some technical advisors that were involved in the project are now working on similar efforts in other parts of Latin America and Asia. Also, in Kenya some in-country replication took place. The TE concludes that the other than a few examples there has been very little replication. The BINU countries have limited, if any, cooperation with countries in their respective regions on the subject of indicator development.

However, in multiple countries results of the project have been built on by other organizations and initiatives and the indicator frameworks continue be regularly reported on (to varying degrees). The TE states: There were multiple methods by which the countries disseminated information about their BINU experiences, most notably in the SBSTTA side-events, which were well attended. There just is not, as yet, evidence that other countries have attempted to undertake the development of indicator frameworks. The TE further states that more replication may occur over the next two years as countries put together the next round of national reports for the CBD which will discuss progress toward the 2010 targets

There were a few examples of in-country replication for example KWS in Kenya received additional funding to develop indicator frameworks for all other ecosystem in the country. This work was apparently completed very quickly due to the experience gained through BINU. In Ukraine, the incorporation of indicators in university courses dealing with biodiversity conservation provides an opportunity for the BINU results to be replicated.

4.4 Assessment of the project's monitoring and evaluation system based on the information in the TE

A. M&E design at Entry	Rating (six point scale): MS

As per the TE: The M&E plan outlined in the project document is very general. The project objectives, outcomes, and activities have indicators listed which generally fit the SMART criteria. There are no impact indicators identified in the project document. In practice the monitoring aspect of the project was a dynamic process of communication between the central project management team and the national level project management units, although the regularity and depth of the communication between the individual countries and the project management team was not specified. This dynamic monitoring process allowed the project management team to make successful adaptive management decisions as outlined above. The project document did not include a long-term M&E plan. The project benefited from effective project management at the centralized level as well as at the national level for most of the countries, and as such the M&E plan outlined in the project document proved sufficient.

The M&E plan may not have been sufficiently sound in its design, but "proved sufficient" as per the TE statement above. This seems to have been more a result of the project management capacities than of the M&E system itself.

The section on M&E in the TE is very short and it is difficult to get a good picture of what kind of reporting that took place. However the regular reporting, considering the four-country involvement, says something about the well functioning of the system.

B. M&E plan Implementation	Rating (six point scale): S

The M&E system of the project did not included any impact indictors and did not include a long-term M&E plan. However the M&E reporting worked well throughout the project implementation and the project successfully fulfilled the monitoring and reporting requirements of the GEF and UNEP.

As per TE: Despite being a global project involving four countries in all different regions, the project successfully monitored project implementation throughout the length of the project. Quarterly progress reports were submitted to UNEP-GEF, the project successfully submitted Project Implementation Reports (PIRs) to the GEF, and the project completed a terminal report. The project also used the information gained through the monitoring process to make adaptive management decisions, such as the proposal of a second implementation workshop.

C.1 Was sufficient funding provided for M&E in the budget included in the project document?
Yes
C.2 Was sufficient and timely funding provided for M&E during project implementation?'
Yes
C.3 Can the project M&E system be considered a good practice?
In some parts possibly, however this is difficult to ascertain with the limited information provided. It seems the project management team was highly capable and may be the key underlying reason for the successful M&E reporting (rather than the M&E system itself)

4.5 Lessons and Recommendations
Project lessons and recommendations as described in the TE

What lessons mentioned in the TE can be considered a good practice or approaches to avoid and could have application for other GEF projects?
The following lessons are provided by the TE:

- The **involvement of stakeholders** in the BINU process was critical for the success achieved by the project. There was a variety of stakeholders involved within each of the countries, however it does not appear that there was clear guidance regarding which level of stakeholder should be involved or how a relevant stakeholder should be defined. In Kenya this lack of guidance lead to stakeholder identification beyond the relevant context. Furthermore, all stakeholders do not need to be involved in the technical aspects of the indicator development process. Policy-makers make decisions based on information provided by indicators, but policy development is a long and iterative process. The key questions to be answered by GEF projects that seek to influence policy must directly relate to key national policy questions in order for the project outputs to be relevant for decision-making processes.
- For all GEF projects the most **appropriate point for the terminal evaluation** should be evaluated. For projects with objectives heavily focused on influencing policy the most appropriate time for the evaluation will be when potential policy effects have had a chance to occur. Important insights and evidence can be gained by conducting evaluations some time after the project has been completed which would not be discernible if the evaluation were conducted immediately after the project finished.
- The project undertook at least two **valuable financial management approaches** that helped avoid any irregularities.
- The project was too short, had too few resources, and each country started from too basic a level of awareness and understanding of biodiversity indicators to achieve the full project objectives as outlined in the project document. An alternate approach for BINU, or for other countries attempting a similar process, would be **a two-phase project**.
- Project proponents should consider the utility of a **project launch workshop** during the project planning stages, especially if there has been a long time lag or activities gap from the PDF stage. The time from PDF to project start-up was more than two years, which made the project start-up process more difficult than it might have been.
- **The project was overambitious** with regard to its scope and with regard to its expected level of achievement. The objective of having discernible policy-related results within the short project timeframe was not realistic. Finally, the project was overambitious with regard to the amount of time required to achieve its stated objectives.

List (or if detailed summarize) the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation

Recommendations for UNEP-GEF:
- The significant time required for a project to put administrative procedures and structures in place before project activities can begin should be factored into the project timeframe.
- To reduce the time required for a project to put administrative and operational structures in place, UNEP-GEF should develop a "GEF Project Manager Handbook" which details the rules and procedures necessary for setting up and managing GEF projects for which UNEP is the implementing agency.
- As countries bring together their biodiversity data in order to report on the 2010 targets there will be opportunities to build awareness about the BINU experience, and to educate interested parties about the utility of biodiversity indicators in general

Recommendations for the GEF Secretariat:
- For GEF projects to have a higher likelihood of replication, the GEF Secretariat should ensure that all projects have an explicit replication plan before they reach final approval.
- The delay between the PDF phase and final project approval can negatively affect a project's ability to quickly ramp up, and may reduce the project's ability to deliver the anticipated results
- At final approval, the GEF Secretariat should ensure that a project's prospects for success have not been reduced due to the length of time required for approval.
- During the review process, the GEF Secretariat should strongly consider the cost-effectiveness of a project's management arrangements, and least-cost options that will still allow the project to achieve its

objectives should be evaluated.

4.6 Quality of the evaluation report Provide a number rating 1-6 to each criteria based on: Highly Satisfactory = 6, Satisfactory = 5, Moderately Satisfactory = 4, Moderately Unsatisfactory = 3, Unsatisfactory = 2, and Highly Unsatisfactory = 1. Please refer to document "GEF Office of Evaluation Guidelines for the verification and review of terminal evaluations" for further definitions of the ratings.

4.6.1 Comments on the summary of project ratings and terminal evaluation findings from other sources such as GEF EO field visits, etc.
No such information available to the reviewer

4.6.2 Quality of terminal evaluation report	**Ratings**
A. **Does the report contain an assessment of relevant outcomes and impacts of the project and the achievement of the objectives?**	HS
B. **Is the report internally consistent, is the evidence complete/convincing and are the IA ratings substantiated?**	S
C. **Does the report properly assess project sustainability and /or a project exit strategy?**	HS
D. **Are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive?**	S
E. **Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used?**	HS
F. **Does the report present an assessment of project M&E systems?**	MS
Not in adequate detail.	

4.6.3 Assessment of processes affected attainment of project outcomes and sustainability.

Co-financing and Project Outcomes & Sustainability. 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, and if it did affect outcomes and sustainability then in what ways and through what causal linkage did it affect it?
N/A
Delays and Project Outcomes & Sustainability. If there were delays in project implementation and completion, then what were the reasons responsible for it? Did the delay affect the project's outcomes and/or sustainability, and if it did affect outcomes and sustainability then in what ways and through what causal linkage did it affect it?
- Two years passed between the PDF-A inception workshop and the start of project implementation. According to the project management team, the slow start by the countries was also partially due to the long lag time since the Naivasha inception workshop; the national level inception workshop participants had become occupied with other activities during the two year project approval period, and could not immediately turn their attention to BINU. This situation led to the project management team's decision to modify the project workplan and hold national kick-off workshops to facilitate the start of project activities at the national level.   - "One area where the project has only been partially successful is the limited communication between the participating countries during the period July 2002 to June 2003, with delays by UNEP-WCMC in establishing the project website" (PIR 2003).   - The project was approximately nine months behind schedule in the Philippines (PIR 2003). This is due to delays in finalising the contractual arrangements with the lead implementing agency, BFAR. A payment mechanism avoiding Philippine government administrative delays was sought but not found   No other delays were identified by the TE.   The TE did not elaborate on the above delays having an impact on project outcome / sustainability.

4.7 Is a technical assessment of the project impacts described in the TE recommended? Please place an "X" in the appropriate box and explain below.	**Yes:**	**No:** **X**
Explain: Project impacts are sufficiently addressed in the TE.		

4.8 Sources of information for the preparation of the TE review in addition to the TE (if any)

CEO approved pro doc, PIR 2005, PIR 2004, PIR 2003, UNEP EOU assessment of TE