

# GEF IEO Terminal Evaluation Review form (retrofitting of APR2004 cohort)

This form is for retrofitting of the TERs prepared for APR2004. While several topics covered in this form had already been covered in the earlier form, this revised form adds several other performance and impact related concerns.

## 1. Project Data

Summary project data			
GEF project ID		14	
GEF Agency project ID		GF/4030-00-xx	
GEF Replenishment Phase		GEF - 2	
Lead GEF Agency (include all for joint projects)		UNEP	
Project name		Regionally-Based Assessment of Persistent Toxic Substances RBA/PTS	
Country/Countries		Global	
Region		Global	
Focal area		International Waters	
Operational Program or Strategic Priorities/Objectives		10- Contaminant-Based Operational Program, 14- Persistent Organic Pollutants	
Executing agencies involved		UNEP-DTIE Chemicals Unit (lead executing agency); Secretariat of the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP); SCAR; NAFTA CEC; RECETOX - TOCOEN, Czech Republic; SPREP, Samoa; Associacio per el Desenvolupament de la Ciencia i la Tec., Spain; University of Ibadan, Nigeria; Industrial Toxicology Research Centre, India; Hong Kong Baptist University; University of the Philippines; Central American Institute for Studies on Toxic Substances, Costa Rica; University of Concepcion, Chile.	
NGOs/CBOs involvement		NGOs, through consultation and beneficiaries.	
Private sector involvement		Through consultation.	
CEO Endorsement (FSP) /Approval date (MSP)		7/21/2000	
Effectiveness date / project start		1/9/2000	
Expected date of project completion (at start)		9/1/2002	
Actual date of project completion		12/31/2003	
Project Financing			
		At Endorsement (US \$M)	At Completion (US \$M)
Project Preparation Grant	GEF funding	0.34	0.34
	Co-financing		
GEF Project Grant		2.66	2.66
Co-financing	IA/EA own		
	Government		
	Other*		
Total GEF funding		3	3
Total Co-financing		1.69	1.99
Total project funding (GEF grant(s) + co-financing)		4.69	4.99
Terminal evaluation/review information			
TE completion date		1/15/04	
TE submission date		8/31/04	
Author of TE		Arne Jernelöv	
Original GEF IEO TER (2004) preparer		Antonio del Monaco	
Original GEF IEO TER (2004) reviewer		Robert Varley	

Revised TER (2014) completion date	6/4/14
Revised TER (2014) prepared by	Dania Trespalacios
TER GEF IEO peer review (2014)	Neeraj Negi

\*Includes contributions mobilized for the project from other multilateral agencies, bilateral development, cooperation agencies, NGOs, the private sector, and beneficiaries.

## 2. Summary of Project Ratings

Criteria	Final PIR	IA Terminal Evaluation	IA Evaluation Office Review	GEF EO Review
Project Outcomes	S	HS/S		S
Sustainability of Outcomes	Not rated	MS		MU
M&E Design	Not rated	S		U
M&E Implementation	Not rated	S		S
Quality of Implementation	Not rated	HS		S
Quality of Execution	Not rated	HS		S
Quality of the Terminal Evaluation Report		S		--

## 3. Project Objectives

### 3.1 Global Environmental Objectives of the project:

The Global Environmental Objective is to deliver a comprehensive regionally based assessment of the damage and threats posed by persistent toxic substances, and to identify the priorities between chemical related environmental issues at the regional level in order to focus subsequent interventions on the most important and pressing issues. The project includes an assessment of the sources of persistent toxic substances in the environment, their concentrations and impact on biota, their transboundary transport, and an assessment of the root causes of the problems and capacity to manage these problems. (Project Document pg. 1)

### 3.2 Development Objectives of the project:

Neither the Project Document nor the TE explicitly state development objectives. A potential development objective would be the increase of global capacity to understand and respond to the threats posed by persistent toxic substances. The project outcomes that contribute to this development objective include: a scientific assessment of the sources, existence and threats posed by persistent toxic substances to the environment and human health; assessment of the existing alternatives to their use and remediation options; and identification of the barriers that prevent their good management.

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

**No changes** were observed in the Global Environmental Objectives during implementation.

#### 4. GEF EO 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 <b>Relevance</b>	Rating: <b>Satisfactory</b>
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This project's outcome was a scientific assessment of the threats posed by persistent toxic substances to the environment and human health. (Project Document pg. 4) This outcome contributes to that GEF phase's focal area strategies number 10, on the "Contaminant-Based Operational Program", and number 14, on "Persistent Organic Pollutants".

The Project Document does not explain how this activity is in line with individual country priorities. It notes that the UNEP Governing Council decided in February 1997 that immediate international action should be initiated to protect human health and the environment through measures which will reduce and/or eliminate the emissions and discharges of twelve persistent organic pollutants (POPs). (Project Document pg. 3) The TE also does not mention how this project is in line with individual country priorities, but does comment on the high level of collaboration and agreement between participants from many countries during the 62 regional and global meetings held as part of this project. (TE pg. 11) The TE states that "when it came to the regional and global priority setting meetings, agreement or near agreement was reached on all the regional and global priorities". (TE pg. 5) The TE rates regional ownership as 'very good' and 'highly satisfactory'. (TE pg. 21, 23)

Therefore, this project seems to be in line with country priorities.

4.2 <b>Effectiveness</b>	Rating: <b>Satisfactory</b>
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According to the Project Document, the specific components of this project include:

- establishment of a global network or participating individuals and institutions
- technical coordination and management of the project, including regional coordinators, a project manager, a steering group
- development of guidelines for inventorying sources, screening chemicals for hazards and risk, and for priority setting among chemicals
- completion of regional assessments, and of a global synthesis
- dissemination of products (Project Document pg. 5-13)

According to the TE, the project "met its overall objective of providing a comprehensive, regionally-based assessment of the damage and threats posed by persistent toxic substances." (TE pg. 2) The project produced 12 regional reports and one global report,

and established a broad and wide-ranging network of experts that the TE characterized as “impressive”. (TE pg. 14) The TE explains that the twelve Regional Reports include assessments of the sources of persistent toxic substances in the environment, their concentrations and impact on biota and their transboundary transport, as well as an assessment of the root causes of the problems and the capacity at the regional level to manage them. The project also created a global network of PTS experts who successfully collaborated to produce the regional and global reports. (TE pg. 2)

The TE notes that the project lagged in efforts to disseminate information (TE pg. 4) and to ensure project sustainability (TE pg. 3). Dissemination of products and the creation of awareness of Persistent Toxic Substances and related environmental problems was one of the expected outcomes of this project. (Project Document pg. 5, 8) However, the reviewer notes that more could have been done to disseminate information, and that at project completion the future usefulness and accessibility of project outcomes was uncertain.

The TE concludes that “the overall impression of the RBA/PTS project is that it has succeeded very well indeed with a very challenging task of making the first global assessment of PTS, and to base that assessment on regional priorities that a wide range of experts could agree on. The task was made no simpler by the fact that networks of regional experts had to be created and tools such as questionnaires, database and data-handling system, were developed within the project.” (TE pg. 4) Therefore, this project is given a satisfactory rating for effectiveness.

4.3 <b>Efficiency</b>	Rating: <b>Satisfactory</b>
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During implementation GEF funding was fully utilized, and total co-financing increased minimally. The TE notes that, in general, the funding level for the project seems to have been adequate. (TE pg. 18) The project was able to accomplish its stated objectives with a 15 month extension on the initial project expected time span.

The TE does describe project inefficiencies. The Sub-Saharan Africa Region experienced temporary but severe problems with money transfers, and that the Central America and Caribbean Region had delayed payments. (TE pg. 4) The TE comments on the effect of project sustainability on project efficiency, in the case that “the products have limited or no use after the termination of the project”. (TE pg. 3).

The TE explains that this is a complex global project involving significant coordination of resources and people, development of information systems and generation of data, and in general regards the project as efficient, based on the achievement of its goals. (TE pg. 3, 4, 17-18))

4.4 <b>Sustainability</b>	Rating: <b>Moderately Unlikely</b>
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The TE states that while the project has achieved its expected outcomes, the sustainability of these is uncertain. The TE notes that “while the project has contributed to the implementation of the Stockholm Convention on POP, it might be overshadowed by it,

leaving the other parts of the PTS assessments to become obsolete.” (TE pg. 3) The TE states that the future of the multinational expert network is uncertain, pending available funding and potential tasks. The sustainability of the database created during the project is also in question, because the data is not usually publicly or easily accessible, and because many regions are data poor. Perhaps most relevant to the project’s sustainability is the poor dissemination of project results: the TE notes that more could and should have been done. (TE pg. 4, 15)

The TE notes that environmental NGO representatives promulgate the findings of the project, but that industry representatives were not actively or fully engaged in this project. Industry stands out as virtually absent in the regional activities, despite invitations, and with very limited participation also at the global level. (TE pg. 19) Industry representatives were very suspicious of the open-ended nature of PTS, and thought that the regional approach was mismatched between the global or national character of industrial organizations. (TE pg. 14)

The TE notes that the project has contributed to improved knowledge and understanding of the threats posed by PTS to the environment among scientists and decision-makers, but that the effect on industrial managers and the public at large is small. (TE pg. 14)

Because there are significant risks that affect the usefulness and longevity of project outcomes and the continuation of project activities, sustainability is rated as moderately unlikely.

## **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?

It seems that co-financing did not affect the attainment of project outcomes. The amount of co-financing was less than the GEF grant amount, and it increased only marginally between endorsement and completion. Implementation challenges were resolved without any mention of an increase of funding. The TE mentions co-financing once to report that “there were few problems with co-financing” (TE pg. 19) However, additional information on these problems has not been provided in the terminal evaluation.

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 actual project completion date was 15 months past the expected completion date. The Sub-Saharan Africa Region and the Central America and Caribbean Region had severe delays with payments and money transfers. (TE pg. 4) Delays in payments often irritated participants of regional meetings. (TE pg. 15) Some Regional Coordinators and participants reported confusion and delay in action as a result of an unclear distribution of responsibilities between the UNEP offices in Nairobi and Geneva. (TE pg. 19) Although the TE comments on these delays to describe the inefficiencies or problems of the project, there is no suggestion that these delays affected the attainment of project outcomes as a whole.

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 TE does not discuss country ownership explicitly, but does discuss examples that indicate country ownership of the project. Stakeholder groups, including NGOs and industry, participated in regional meetings. The meetings often reached general consensus, despite participants from more than 100 countries. The TE states that at regional and global priority setting meetings, agreement or near agreement was reached on all the regional and global priorities. (TE pg. 5) It rates regional ownership as ‘very good’ and ‘highly satisfactory’. (TE pg. 21, 23) The extent to which country ownership has affected project outcomes and sustainability remains unclear.

## 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.

<b>6.1 M&amp;E Design at entry</b>	Rating: <b>Unsatisfactory</b>
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The Project Document describes the M&E activities as quarterly and half-yearly reports on substantive and financial matters, including a mid-term internal evaluation and a final desk evaluation. (Project Document pg. 16) The TE notes that no specific monitoring and evaluation plan was developed by the project beside the quarterly and half-year reports and the mid-term review. (TE pg. 15) The TE notes that no specific baselines were identified and the indicators in the logical framework of the project were not developed as a specific management tool within the project, and were not all “applicable”. (TE pg. 20) The M&E plan did not specific evaluation time frames for M&E activities, or standards for outputs. The original TER notes that the project design did not address the needs for an M&E system beyond that of the project's own management system, and limited objectives. (TER pg. 4) Due to these major shortcomings, M&E design at entry is rated unsatisfactory.

<b>6.2 M&amp;E Implementation</b>	Rating: <b>Satisfactory</b>
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The TE finds that the monitoring and evaluation system, although largely an informal one, resulted in effective management of the project (TE pg. 20) The Steering Group discussed both policy and managerial aspects of the project, and the two Directors were available for discussions whenever the Project Manager felt a need. The Regional Coordinators kept track of the progress in their region, and the Project Manager intervened on an ad hoc basis, as needed or on the Project Manager’s request. All the persons interviewed, including all the Regional Coordinators, have expressed satisfaction with the backstopping provided by the Project Manager. Of the nineteen recommendations in the mid-term review, eleven

were acted upon and all were considered. (TE pg. 15) Thus the M&E system initially planned for was implemented well and allowed the timely tracking of results and progress toward project objectives throughout the project. The information provided by the M&E system was used to improve and adapt project performance. Therefore, M&E implementation is rated satisfactory.

## 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 executing 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.

<b>7.1 Quality of Project Implementation</b>	Rating: <b>Satisfactory</b>
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The TE notes that the project results “could only be reached thanks to an approach of clever flexibility with a strong managerial hand”. (TE pg. 4) The implementing agency remained strict in the project objectives and general goals, but allowed each region some flexibility in the amount and type of data included in the reports. This enabled all regions to contribute, despite inconsistency in data among regions and in some instances lack of complete information on some of the dimensions. However, sufficient uniformity was maintained across regions to allow for a meaningful global synthesis of results. Considering the complexity of the project and the corresponding administrative arrangements, the TE notes that the quality of project implementation is “impressive”, and should be used as a case study of a flexible implementation approach. (TE pg. 19) The TE notes that the overall results are better than satisfactory, and that the organizational structure functioned very well.

<b>7.2 Quality of Project Execution</b>	Rating: <b>Satisfactory</b>
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The project organization was quite complex, with much of the practical work in the regions. The TE notes that on the whole, the regional approach functioned well, and provided a way to integrate very different regional assessments into a balanced global picture. (TE pg. 12) The TE comments on the high quality of the assessments: well balanced, well founded, reached in consensus, adequate and quality controlled data. (TE pg. 13) Project staffing seemed adequate. (TE pg. 19)

There was a clear difference in project execution between regions. The Sub-Saharan Africa Region and the Central America and Caribbean Region had administrative delays that potentially affected project outcomes. On some occasions, entire meetings were at risk when the participants had arrived but funds for meeting rooms and accommodation had not. (TE pg. 19)

Despite shortcomings in some regions, project execution in general was effective and successful, and thus the quality of project execution is rated satisfactory.

## **8. Assessment of Project Impacts**

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.

The project outcomes included data generation, information dissemination, and indirect capacity building. The project objectives did not include actual reductions in emissions of persistent toxic substances or persistent organic pollutants. Therefore, there were no changes in environmental status as an immediate and direct result of this project.

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.

There were no document changes in human well-being.

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 capacity to understand and potentially act on the pollution resulting from emissions of POPs and PTSs increased at a global, regional and national level, albeit in differing quality and quantity between regions. The project outcomes include increased knowledge of the damage and threats posed by persistent toxic substances (regional and global reports, global database), increased awareness (dissemination of reports, new global network of experts), and increased infrastructure (new website and tools for gathering and reporting information). However, the sustainability of these outcomes is in question.

### **b) Governance**

The network of experts and the information sharing system are new forms of governance. Contextual factors in each region influenced the efficiency of the project and the likelihood



of success in each region. As with new capacities, the sustainability of these new governance systems is in question.

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.

The TE does not mention unintended impacts.

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 project has great potential for mainstreaming, particularly if the network of experts and the database of information remain in use. However, the project does not specify or establish any mechanism for the continuation of these project outcomes. The TE notes that “the network will wither away if unused for ... a relatively long period”. (TE pg. 20)

The TE rates ‘replicability’ as ‘good’ and ‘satisfactory’, but notes the whole project concept of a region-based assessment of an open-ended group of chemicals runs the risk of being overtaken by the concepts of the Stockholm Convention on POP. The Convention has a finite and short list of substances and complex procedures to add new ones. In contrast, this project favored an open-ended group of substances. The Convention favors a ‘global priorities’ scheme (with an option to add substances on national or regional bases) while this project sets priorities on a regional basis. The TE concludes that, given the momentum of the Stockholm Convention and the POP concept, there is a clear possibility that the PTS concepts of this project may be lost. (TE pg. 13, 14, 22)

## 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 development of techniques and methodologies to prioritize between non-commensurable units and highly varying amounts of information were challenging. Using cutting edge technologies helps maintain the viability and relevance of project outcomes into the future.
- The approach of using a “representative region” should be used cautiously.
- The TE characterizes the project approach of dealing with variation across regions as “flexibility in content, rigidity in form”. Flexibility to allow for data poor regions and inconsistencies between regions, yet sufficient rigidity to allow for a meaningful global synthesis of results.

- Development of data handling systems are time and resource consuming and should generally not be done ac hoc for short term uses.

## 9.2 Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation.

If the activities of this project are to continue, the TE recommends the following:

- Make additional efforts to communicate the findings of the RBA/PTS project to a wider group of decision-makers, managers and the public at large.
- The database should be maintained and updated and regional based efforts should be initiated to fill data gaps. Here the established networks would come in handy.
- A new regional based evaluation should be made in five years' time.

If the activities of the project will not continue, but instead efforts to control POP will follow Stockholm Convention guidelines, the TE recommends the following:

- Determine whether the database and the network from the project would be useful in the Stockholm Convention context or in other global or regional undertakings relating to persistent chemicals in the environment.
- Further specific the prerequisites for adding new substances to the Stockholm Convention to clarify how PTS can become POP.

Other general recommendations:

- Study the trans-boundary and trans-regional transports of POP and other PTS (candidate POP), and the releases of PAHs, PCDD/PCDFs and other PTS from open burning.
- A global strategy for technology transfer should be developed and mechanisms for its implementation be identified to fill the competence and resource gaps identified regarding regional capacities to deal with matters related to PTS.
- Project design could have built in mechanisms to ensure a broader mix of national and regional stakeholders as well as international experts at every step of implementation rather than only mainly during the priority setting meetings, to help build country ownership and potential political momentum for follow up.

## 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 EO 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 TE assesses the relevant outcomes of the project, the achievement of objectives, and comments on the impacts of the project.	HS
To what extent is the report internally consistent, the evidence presented complete and convincing, and ratings well substantiated?	The report is internally consistent, the evidence presented complete and convincing, and the ratings are well substantiated.	HS
To what extent does the report properly assess project sustainability and/or project exit strategy?	The TE discussed project sustainability significantly, with useful evidence, and addresses the subject with importance.	HS

To what extent are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive?	Although the TE clearly lists recommendations, and discusses the lessons of the project, it could have done so in a much clearer and explicit way.	<b>S</b>
Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used?	The report does not include project costs per activity.	<b>U</b>
Assess the quality of the report's evaluation of project M&E systems:	The report addresses M&E systems clearly and seemingly accurately.	<b>S</b>
<b>Overall TE Rating</b>		<b>S</b>

**(0.3) (12) + (0.1)(18) = 5.4, S**

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

- Project Document