Terminal Evaluation Review form, GEF Evaluation Office, APR 2014

1. Project Data

Summary project data	
GEF project ID	173
GEF Agency project ID	n/a
GEF Replenishment Phase	Pilot Phase
Lead GEF Agency (include all for joint projects)	UNEP
Project name	Global Biodiversity Assessment
Country/Countries	Global
Region	Global
Focal area	Biodiversity
Operational Program or Strategic Priorities/Objectives	Short-Term Response Measures
Executing agencies involved	UNEP
NGOs/CBOs involvement	The TE states some NGOs were involved but their names and roles are unknown.
Private sector involvement	Not involved.
CEO Endorsement (FSP) /Approval date (MSP)	5/1/1993
Effectiveness date / project start	5/1/1993
Expected date of project completion (at start)	5/30/1995
Actual date of project completion	9/1/1995

Project Financing		At Endorsement (US $M)	At Completion (US $M)
Project Preparation Grant	GEF funding	0	0
	Co-financing	0	0
GEF Project Grant		3.3	3.2
Co-financing	IA own	0	0
	Government	0	0
	Other multi- /bi-laterals	0	0
	Private sector	0	0
	NGOs/CSOs	0	0
Total GEF funding		3.3	3.2
Total Co-financing		0	0
Total project funding (GEF grant(s) + co-financing)		3.3	3.2

Terminal evaluation/review information	
TE completion date	2/22/1996
TE submission date	3/13/1996
Author of TE	Dr. William H. Mansfield III
TER completion date	
TER prepared by	Shanna Edberg
TER peer review by (if GEF EO review)	Joshua Schneck

2. Summary of Project Ratings

Criteria	Final PIR	IA Terminal Evaluation	IA Evaluation Office Review	GEF EO Review
Project Outcomes	n/a	n/a	n/a	S
Sustainability of Outcomes	n/a	n/a	n/a	U/A
M&E Design	n/a	n/a	n/a	MU
M&E Implementation	n/a	n/a	n/a	U/A
Quality of Implementation	n/a	n/a	n/a	MS
Quality of Execution	n/a	n/a	n/a	MS
Quality of the Terminal Evaluation Report	n/a	n/a	n/a	MU

3. Project Objectives

3.1 Global Environmental Objectives of the project:

The global environmental objective of the project is to complement the Convention on Biological Diversity by providing a synthesis of current scientific knowledge of biodiversity, which will enable governments and institutions to better conserve the planet's biological wealth. The project will enable "the first comprehensive peer review ever undertaken on the relevant theories and issues of biodiversity" (Project Document, page 2).

3.2 Development Objectives of the project:

The development objective of the project is to produce a peer-reviewed report and a policymakers' guide assessing the globe's biological diversity. The report will involve the contributions of hundreds of scientists and will consider topics such as the dynamics of biodiversity, its magnitude and distribution, biodiversity monitoring, ecosystem functioning, socioeconomic dimensions of biodiversity, the consequences of human action, and methods for conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of biodiversity.

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

No significant changes were reported; minor changes were made to the organization of the report for editorial reasons.

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 **Relevance**	Rating: **Satisfactory**

Although the project is global and does not fall under any single Operational Program, it is clearly relevant to the GEF's program of work on biodiversity. The GEF is committed to addressing threats to global biodiversity and fulfilling the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and this project was proposed as a parallel activity in support of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The project would fulfill a need for an updated and scientific overview of biodiversity issues, and would bring awareness to knowledge gaps, priorities for action, and the effectiveness of conservation strategies. The project was intended to aid policymakers, scientists, and environmental organizations for future conservation efforts.

4.2 **Effectiveness**	Rating: **Satisfactory**

The project produced the intended report: the Global Biodiversity Assessment, including a policymakers' guide and an executive summary available as a separate booklet. The Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical, and Technological Advice of the Convention on Biological Diversity accepted the draft version of the Global Biodiversity Assessment at their first meeting in Paris, and the final published version of the Assessment was launched at the second Conference of the Parties. The TE reports that "the publication was well received, and it is quite evident that the Global Biodiversity Assessment will be used as the common reference by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical, and Technological Advice of the Convention on Biological Diversity in their future work" (TE, page 5). The Global Biodiversity Assessment also "provides an invaluable baseline for all science-based implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity" (TE, page 6). The TE reports that the Assessment is "already being used at the national level," but does not explain in what way or by whom (TE, page 6). Ongoing GEF biodiversity projects as well as GEF strategies for biodiversity will also benefit from the Assessment, but the TE does not explain how this will occur or whether plans have been made to integrate the findings of the Global Biodiversity Assessment into GEF operations.

2,300 copies of the report were distributed by UNEP, as of a few months after publication. Around 4,000 copies of the Summary for Policy Makers were also distributed. The TE reports that "some of the coordinators expressed doubts about the effectiveness of the launching of the book" and "some frustration has…been expressed over the fact that the distribution of the book has been slower than expected," but does not elaborate on these points (TE, page 5). Project effectiveness is rated satisfactory for the completion and distribution of the Global Biodiversity Assessment.

4.3 **Efficiency**	Rating: **Moderately Satisfactory**

Several issues were reported regarding project efficiency, although "the quality of the project output compared to the time restrictions imposed on the project demonstrates that project management in

general must have been relatively efficient" (TE, page 8). At the start of the project, "there was a lack of concrete planning and correct appreciation of the logistics involved" (TE, page 8). Too few staff members were assigned to the project by UNEP, which caused a number of delays. There were also delays in finalizing subcontracts, which caused frustration among the subcontracted institutions. In addition, the TE states that "the production of the Summary for Policy Makers proved to be difficult and caused substantial controversy during the editorial workshop in Panama" but does not describe the cause or outcome of this (TE, page 4). The project deadline was extended from April to November 1995, but the TE does not explain why.

In the words of the TE: "The actual value of the work put down by professionals in the Global Biodiversity Assessment process is vastly higher than the project budget of USD 3.3 million. The value of 1,300 experts' efforts would by normal costing probably reach at least the same amount. Thus the substantive output is very good value for money, and is to a large extent testimony to the importance of the Global Biodiversity Assessment as seen by the scientific community" (TE, pages 9-10).

4.4 **Sustainability**	Rating: **Unable to assess**

Financial: **Unable to assess**; the TE states that the Global Biodiversity Assessment needs to be updated regularly to remain relevant, but does not state whether there are any mechanisms in place to ensure this.

Sociopolitical: **Unable to assess**; there is no information in the TE regarding sociopolitical risks. The TE reports that "the Global Biodiversity Assessment is already being used at the national level" but does not describe how or where it is being used (TE, page 6).

Institutional: **Unable to assess**; there is no information on institutional risks.

Environmental: **Not applicable**.

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?

Not applicable; there was no co-financing.

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 was completed four months later than planned, but the TE does not explain why this occurred or what the effects were.

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:

This was a global project involving the efforts of the world's scientists. Country ownership is only applicable insofar as governments make use of the Global Biodiversity Assessment to inform their policy decisions. To that end, the TE reports that "the Global Biodiversity Assessment is already being used at the national level" but does not describe how or where it is being used (TE, page 6).

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 Unsatisfactory**

The Project Document did not contain many specifics on M&E design. It stated that a team will be selected to monitor progress, and the Task Manager is responsible for semiannual progress reports. There are no targets specified for the project's indicators; the Project document lists the following under its Achievement Indicators: "Use and discussion of the report by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical, and Technological Advice of the Convention on Biological Diversity, targeted distribution of and public demand for the report, the policy makers' guide, and the executive summary documents, [and] scientific interest and follow-up of the discussion, manifested in scientific papers and articles" (Project Document, page 4).

M&E design is rated moderately unsatisfactory for the lack of targets and specific monitoring mechanisms.

6.2 **M&E Implementation**	Rating: **Unable to Assess**

The TE does not contain any information on project M&E.

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**

Project design was adequate, although there were no mechanisms for producing policy recommendations as part of the Global Biodiversity Assessment. This was due to political concerns that any recommendations in the Global Biodiversity Assessment could potentially preempt the deliberations and implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The TE suggests that future assessments should contain mechanisms for developing policy and management recommendations. In addition, "the project document…is characterized by a lack of detail as to the work plan and assessment process" (TE, page 4).

The TE states that the lack of a work plan in the project document was overcome by the planning efforts of the project implementers. However, the TE also criticizes UNEP's planning process: "Although UNEP has a tradition for informal in-house ad-hoc solutions to solve problems, project planning and budgeting should not rely on this mechanism" (TE, pages 8-9).

7.2 **Quality of Project Execution**	Rating: **Moderately Satisfactory**

UNEP was both the project implementer and executor. Minor problems with project execution included too few staff assigned to the project and delays in finalizing subcontracts. The TE reports that at the start of the project, "there was a lack of concrete planning and correct appreciation of the logistics involved" (TE, page 8). But in the end, the project was completed according to specifications.

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.

Not applicable to the 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.

Not applicable to the project.

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 Global Assessment of Biodiversity contains a synthesis of current knowledge on biodiversity, as well as a comprehensive reference list. The TE states that it is "of immense practical usefulness to all scientists and managers" (TE, page 4). It provides a basis to identify priority areas for research and conservation action, including future GEF policies. The TE states that GEF Biodiversity projects "will substantially benefit from the outputs of the Global Biodiversity Assessment" (TE, page 7). No further information is available.

b) Governance

The project intended to improve national and global governance on biodiversity, but there were no specific governance impacts that resulted directly from the project. The TE reports that "the Global Biodiversity Assessment is already being used at the national level" but does not describe how or where it is being used (TE, page 6). No further information is available.

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 reports that as a side effect of the project, many scientists are now more aware of the wider context in which their field of expertise operates. This new perspective may make them more useful in the future to management and policymakers. No other information is available.

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's approach of synthesizing knowledge on one topic from scientists around the world was being replicated at the time of writing of writing of the TE. A report on the human values of biodiversity, particularly as seen by indigenous peoples, was in process. There were other thematic assessments being proposed at the time, such as an assessment of forest biodiversity. No other information is available in the TE.

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.

No key lessons or good practices were mentioned in the TE.

9.2 Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation.

Mechanisms should be created for developing policy and management recommendations in future assessments.

Projects should be operated by full-time personnel throughout the project, including a task manager and fund manager.

An electronic version of the Global Biodiversity Assessment should be developed and updated regularly.

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 is very short: 10 pages long, not including annexes. Therefore it is not detailed. It is missing an assessment of the quality of the Global Biodiversity Assessment. It focuses on the output (the fact that the Assessment was completed and distributed) rather than the outcomes (the utility of the Assessment).	MU
To what extent is the report internally consistent, the evidence presented complete and convincing, and ratings well substantiated?	The report is internally consistent but not complete. It states that the Global Biodiversity Assessment will be useful and has been used, but does not explain how, when, and by whom the Assessment was used. The TE mentions some problems with implementation but does not explain further; for example, the controversy over the policymakers' summary remained unexamined.	MU
To what extent does the report properly assess project sustainability and/or project exit strategy?	Two sentences are devoted to the sustainability of the Global Biodiversity Assessment. The analysis is inadequate and too little information is given.	U
To what extent are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive?	The recommendations presented were adequate, but there were no lessons learned listed in the TE.	MS
Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used?	No, but the TE was written prior to financial closure of the project. The TE's breakdown of costs between the umbrella project and sub-projects add up to 2.3 million rather than 3.3 million, so there may be an error in the financial management section.	MU
Assess the quality of the report's evaluation of project M&E systems:	The TE does not describe or assess project M&E.	HU
Overall TE Rating		**MU**

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