

GEF EO Terminal Evaluation Review Form

1. PROJECT DATA				
GEF Project ID:	2344		Review date:	12/15/07
IA/EA Project ID:	NA	GEF financing:	<u>at endorsement</u> (Million US\$)	<u>at completion</u> (Million US\$)
Project Name:	Desert Margins Programme (DMP) Tranche 2	IA/EA own:	5.62	4.95
		Government:	7.07	8.00
		Other*:	5.18	10.55
Country:	Botswana, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Mali, Namibia, Niger, Senegal, South Africa, Zimbabwe	Total Cofinancing	12.25	18.55
Operational Program:	1, 12 & 13	Total Project Cost:	17.87	23.50
IA:	UNEP	Dates		
Partners involved:	International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT)	Work Program date		12/07/01
		CEO Endorsement		11/16/04
		Effectiveness/ Prodoc Signature (i.e. date project began)		01/01/05
		Closing Date	Proposed:	Actual: NA
Prepared by:	Reviewed by:	Duration between effectiveness date and original closing:	Duration between effectiveness date and actual closing:	Difference between original and actual closing:
Ines Angulo	Neeraj Negi	24 months	NA	NA
Author of TE:		TE completion date:	TE submission date to GEF OME:	Difference between TE completion and submission date:
William Critchley		02/06/07	03/01/07	1 month

* Other is referred to contributions mobilized for the project from other multilateral agencies, bilateral development cooperation agencies, NGOs, the private sector and beneficiaries.

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	MU	U	U
2.2 Project sustainability	N/A	MS	MS	ML
2.3 Monitoring and evaluation	N/A	U	U	U
2.4 Quality of the evaluation report	N/A	N/A	S	S

Should this terminal evaluation report be considered a good practice? Why?

The TE provides a clear overall assessment of a regional project, and provides a comprehensive assessment of the project M&E and insightful lessons and recommendations.

Is there a follow up issue mentioned in the TE such as corruption, reallocation of GEF funds, etc.?

No.

3. PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND ACTUAL OUTCOMES**3.1 Project Objectives**

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

<p>during implementation?</p> <p>According to the Project Document, the Global Environmental Objective is to conserve and restore biodiversity in the Desert Margins through sustainable utilization</p> <p>There were no changes during implementation.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What were the Development Objectives of the project? Were there any changes during implementation? <p>According to the Project Document, the Development Objective is to develop and implement strategies for conservation, restoration and sustainable use of dry land biodiversity (to enhance ecosystem function and resilience).</p> <p>While there is no specific mention of changes during implementation, the TE identifies that the guiding documents of the project (the Project Document; the Logical Framework; the Phase II Program of Work and Budget; the Technical and Financial Project Reports and the Project Implementation Reviews) are confusing and marked with contradictions on issues regarding project objectives, outputs, outcomes, milestones, targets and indicators.</p>
<p>3.2 Outcomes and Impacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What major project outcomes and impacts are described in the TE? <p>The TE concludes that there's still a long way to go with regards to the attainment of project objectives. Chief amongst the project achievements are the strength (and strengthening) of a coalition of partners, a portfolio of creative technologies and approaches to tackle the problems of the desert margins, and an identity, while not fully exploited, that cannot be currently matched in Africa.</p> <p>In addition, several of the DMP initiatives are novel and imaginative – making active use of the comparative advantage of the resources in the desert margins. These include organic <i>Rooibos</i> tea production in South Africa; the <i>Pomme du Sahel</i> (grafted <i>Ziziphus</i> sp.) in West Africa; micro-dosing in Niger; and the evolving participatory range management strategies in Namibia. The development and promotion of these represents core strength of DMP.</p>

4. GEF EVALUATION OFFICE ASSESSMENT

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

A Relevance	Rating: S
This project is relevant to GEF and participating countries. It created are well-defined country-programs that are also used by the countries to strengthen their UNCCD and CBD implementation plans.	
B Effectiveness	Rating: U
<p>The TE reports that this project had a very ambitious set of objectives and that there is a strong feeling throughout that DMP is failing to make adequate progress towards its targets.</p> <p>On the basis of what is presented in the TE key outputs have not been verified as delivered and comments suggest that outputs have been piecemeal rather than elements of a project where the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.</p> <p>The report mentions many problems / issues in relation to co-ordination between north and south, a lack of exchange visits between the two, seemingly ad hoc approaches, lack of clarity and consistency in reporting and planning documents.</p> <p>The TE also identifies that some of the recommendations of the Phase 1 evaluation have not been addressed yet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the need for more up-scaling; (b) strengthened program management and coordination; (c) publicity and outreach; (d) increasing cross-border visits by farmers; and (e) improved data collection. 	
C Efficiency (cost-effectiveness)	Rating: MS
<p>The TE mentions that there is a concern regarding the impact/ cost-effectiveness of the collaboration with the International Agricultural Research Centres (IARCs) and the Advanced Research Institutes (ARIs) since the international organisations' costs are especially high, particularly because there appears to be a lack of a coordinated research program connecting these organizations.</p> <p>It also assesses that while the general structure and the steering committees (at regional and national levels) have worked effectively, there are several ways in which the Global Coordination Unit of the project can improve its cost-effectiveness (acknowledging that an 18% coordination allocation is high, but that a</p>	

strong coordination is needed for regional projects such as this one).
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4.1.2 Impacts

According to the TE, the overall impact of the program on poverty is not yet proven: it is “assumed and believed” – according to the CGU - that DMP has generally helped impact positively on families in the desert margins. While there is no hard evidence to back this up, there is no reason either to dispute it. In addition, DMP has almost certainly had significant impact at the level comprising awareness raised, capacity built, partners supported, and advocacy– though this is understandably hard to measure.

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
The TE mentions that possibilities from further GEF funding and other donors / in-kind for the phase 3 exist.	
B Socio political	Rating: ML
Attempts to inform and influence policies that would support DMP initiatives have been limited to date, but the project has had a strong stakeholder participation in all countries.	
C Institutional framework and governance	Rating: ML
The dispersed nature of DMP might pose risks to sustainability however strong partnerships established should mitigate this.	
D Environmental	Rating: NA
Non applicable	

4.3 Catalytic role

a. Production of a public good

The South Africa program published a book entitled “Alternative Livelihoods: Technologies in selected countries in Africa” , and the ICRISAT published the “Best-bet technologies adopted in DMP Member Countries”

Two outputs, videos, have been produced by/ through DMP. The first, namely “*Voices of the Drylands*”, has been accepted for a film festival in Europe. Also a newsletter and a website have been created for the project.

b. Demonstration

Exchange and spread has happened within the West and Central African sub-Region, and to a lesser extent between countries in Southern and East Africa.

Several technologies demonstrated by the DMP are novel and imaginative – making active use of the comparative advantage of the resources in the desert margins. Notable in this respect are organic *Rooibos* tea production (see Photo Annex VII), and the use of bird inventories as indicators of range condition in South Africa; the *Pomme du Sahel* (“Apple of the Sahel”: grafted *Ziziphus* sp. in West Africa; micro-dosing in Niger; and the evolving participatory range management strategies in Namibia.

c. Replication

There is some evidence of localised exchange and transfer of information and technologies. Extension campaigns that are working include those around the *Pomme du Sahel* and African Market Garden within the Sahel.

d. Scaling up

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): MU
The logframe gives both indicators and means of verification for the wider (goal) and specific (purpose) objectives. But it should be noted that these indicators are so general and at such a high (almost abstract) level that they are practically impossible to assess (e.g. “Improved ecosystem stability”, “Improved livelihoods”). On the other hand, indicators for outputs are much more straightforward, including the methodology for measuring them (but it fails to identify who is responsible for carrying out these activities). Annual internal evaluations would be carried out by the Global and Sub-regional Co-ordinators, and at the end of each phase, including the final evaluations of output will be carried out by external consultants contracted by UNEP in consultation with ICRISAT.	
B. M&E plan Implementation	Rating (six point scale): U
The mechanisms for financial monitoring are in place and function effectively, though it is noted that countries are slow in reporting. But apart from the financial monitoring, there seems to be a general weakness in monitoring activities and achievements (including data collection and quantification of achievements in reports).	

<p>In addition, poor reporting standards, in terms of timeliness and quality – especially from the Global Coordination Unit – are a source of concern to many of those consulted for the TE. The country reports are assimilated in Niamey, but the composite report (the TFPR) does not always do justice to the country submissions and is often delayed: this causes understandable frustration</p> <p>The TE also concludes that there is a lack of consistency in reporting: taking for example the compiled reports of the IARCs and ARIs their dissimilarity is striking (not simply in presentation, but in content and lack of cross-reference) – and it is tempting to view this as an indication of an uncoordinated approach to their input.</p>
<p>C.1 Was sufficient funding provided for M&E in the budget included in the project document? Yes. According to the Project Document, the budget for monitoring and evaluation of the project is US\$120,000, and in addition, the logframe included a component on Ecological Monitoring and Assessment.</p>
<p>C.2 Was sufficient and timely funding provided for M&E during project implementation? Yes. There is no mention of any problem regarding funding for M&E activities.</p>
<p>C.3 Can the project M&E system be considered a good practice? No. Outstanding amongst the project's limitations is the confusion and contradictions within the various guiding documents (the Project Document; the Logical Framework; the Phase II Program of Work and Budget; the Technical and Financial Project Reports and the Project Implementation Reviews) regarding <i>Objectives, Outputs, Outcomes, Milestones, Targets</i> and <i>Indicators</i>. This is compounded by the contradictions in the various documents regarding targets – and where these targets belong.</p> <p>In addition, the TE found that there was a lack of consistency in the reporting.</p>

4.5 Lessons and Recommendations

Project lessons and recommendations as described in the TE

<p>What lessons mentioned in the TE that can be considered a good practice or approaches to avoid and could have application for other GEF projects?</p>
<p>Generally targets cited in programs of this nature are ambitious: non-achievement should not, therefore, always be attributed to poor performance, but (often) to over-optimism at the project formulation stage. Realistic targets should be a feature of future project design.</p> <p>A regional program needs to focus on capacity building, partnership and policy. In future programs of a similar nature a greater proportion of resources need to be dedicated to capacity building in its broadest sense. "Vertical" achievements (institutionalization, etc) should be given more prominence than "horizontal" achievements (area and human targets, etc).</p> <p>Monitoring and evaluation, and impact assessment depend on good data and/ or reliable estimates. These are often difficult and time consuming exercises, but should be given more strategic priority. The difficulty of providing accurate data should not detract from the imperative for high standards of estimation/ best judgment; and of consistency.</p> <p>Conservation and sustainable use are functions of value attachment to the land, and to its biodiversity. If value can be established – in terms of sales of produce or other goods and services – then the incentive to protect and produce is established. This demonstrates the need to concentrate on output-led conservation wherever possible.</p> <p>It is difficult to separate out the GEF-incremental impact from the on-going baseline initiatives in such programs. Monitoring and evaluation should take better account of the distinction between baseline and incremental inputs and outputs.</p> <p>Programs under GEF that seek to improve land management should not try to artificially differentiate between "land rehabilitation", "land under improved management", "land under improved management of biodiversity", "plantations with carbon sequestration benefits" as this is counter to the whole concept of improving ecosystems.</p>
<p>List (or if detailed summarize) the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation</p>
<p>DMP must strive for better coherency overall, integrating its various components, through:</p> <p>(a) developing the West/ Central Africa – Southern/ Eastern African linkages and interchanges; and</p> <p>(b) combining the efforts of the IARCs and ARIs into a cohesive scientific program which is distributed better over the whole region with a clearer thematic focus on the link between land management and livelihoods. Specific ways and means need to be negotiated at the forthcoming steering committee meetings, and this requires the Global Coordinator taking a more proactive role in these two aspects, or clear delegation to the sub-Regional coordinators.</p> <p>Profile-raising should be achieved at various levels and by various means. Articulation and dissemination of</p>

achievements can be addressed by:

- (1) a professional video featuring up to two DMP initiatives each from four countries, with cross-cutting themes of biodiversity; land conservation; poverty alleviation etc
- (2) attractive and informative brochures and briefing notes developed
- (3) at least a list, but better an annotated bibliography, of DMP's publications

It is recommended that the capacity of the Global Coordination Unit be strengthened by employing (or delegating) an assistant who is able to relieve the Global Coordinator of some of his regular reporting duties, allowing him – while maintaining accountability for reporting - to spend more time on travel-based hands-on coordination.

The forthcoming book (as yet untitled) must be completed and published as a matter of urgency – and the time and effort it takes to produce such a book must not be underestimated, thus a careful schedule and division of responsibilities should be drawn up.

Specific best-bet technologies should be presented in a much more attractive, standardized way: including diagrams/ photographs, cost-benefit indications etc.

Thought should be given to investigating further possibilities for labeling of products under an “origin-based product” scheme to exploit a market niche and to cash-in on comparative advantage – as is has been done for organic *Rooibos* tea in South Africa. The *Pomme du Sahel* is a case in point.

There is an urgent need for DMP to come up with “policy option papers” supported by (standard format) “policy briefs” – on a country basis, but also DMP-overall policy briefs.

Strategic exchange/ cross-visits between countries – of personnel at all levels – though costly, should be a hallmark of any further phase. Exchange visits between scientists, community leaders and students will improve the integrated nature of the DMP.

To speed up the exchange of information and upscaling of best-bet practices more attention should be given to farmer exchange visits and the use of farmer field-schools.

DMP must make the link with climate change more evident, and work towards practical policy pointers.

Further surveys need to be put in place to determine the impact on poverty of (at least specific) DMP interventions in each country. This should have a particular focus on women and youth.

Before embarking on a Phase III it is essential that the logframe is adjusted to take into account the new outcomes, targets (etc) that have been developed during the course of the project, and all monitoring and reporting be realigned to conform to this. Learning from the limitations of, and confusions in, the Phase II PWB, a clear and agreed Program of Work and Budget for Phase III should be drawn up and used to guide the process.

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.
None

4.6.2 Quality of terminal evaluation report	Ratings
<p>A. Does the report contain an assessment of relevant outcomes and impacts of the project and the achievement of the objectives?</p> <p>Yes, the TE contains an assessment of the project achievements and limitations (within the limitations created by the unclear and sometimes incomplete information presented in the project logframe and other relevant documents). Project achievement of project components is presented and compared with the information provided in the PIR 2006.</p>	S
<p>B. Is the report internally consistent, is the evidence complete/convincing and are the IA ratings substantiated?</p>	MS

The report was consistent and ratings were justified by the text. However it is important to note that evidence to substantiate findings was not complete – but the TE suggests that this problem lies with the project (unclear objectives, indicators and targets) rather than being a weakness of the evaluation. The TE found that there was little evidence available or presented to support any of the claims for project performance. Achievements rely heavily on the PIR and progress reports and remain unsubstantiated. The veracity of the PIR is questioned by the TE.	
C. Does the report properly assess project sustainability and /or a project exit strategy? The assessment of the project sustainability is somewhat superficial, but information related to this issue is reflected in other sections of the TE. Also, the TE highlights that sustainability of the project is heavily dependant on the implementation of Phase 3.	MS
D. Are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive? Lessons identified in the TE are comprehensive and supported by the evidence presented.	HS
E. Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used? The TE includes all the required information. There are large variances in the budget versus expenditure table, and on the levels of co-financing, however the report does not provide any explanation for this.	MU
F. Does the report present an assessment of project M&E systems? An assessment of M&E was provided. The evaluator made considerable work to generate a full logframe from inconsistent project documentation, in order to clarify performance indicators and project outcomes. It also provides interesting information on a couple of successful M&E approaches originated and applied by Namibian land users.	HS

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?
According to the TE there was a significant raise of co-financing in this project (the TE mentions that there is confusion with regard to how co-funding is calculated, and the accounting for co-funding: this has been (apparently) consistently under-reported), but it does not provide any assessment on how this affected project achievements.
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?
No mention of delays in the TE.

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: x	No:
Explain: The overall DMP envisaged a three phase program, continuing until the end of 2008. This is an evaluation of Phase 2, and the final impacts of the project should be assessed at the end of the 3 rd phase.		

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

Project Document, UNEP EOU Assessment of project ratings and performance using the Terminal Evaluation report for the project entitled "Desert Margins Programme – Phase II", PIR2006.
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