

GEF EO Terminal Evaluation Review Form

1. PROJECT DATA				
		Review date:		3/2/2010
GEF Project ID:	2571		<u>at endorsement</u> (Million US\$)	<u>at completion</u> (Million US\$)
IA/EA Project ID:	3153	GEF financing:	0.748	0.748
Project Name:	Distance Learning and Information Sharing Tool for the Benguela Coastal Areas (DLIST-Benguela)	IA/EA own:		
Country:	South Africa, Namibia, Angola	Government:		
		Other*:	0.780	0.437
		Total Cofinancing		
Operational Program:	IW OP 8 and OP 10	Total Project Cost:	1.528	1.185
IA	UNDP	<u>Dates</u>		
Partners involved:	UNOPS (executing agency), International Knowledge Management, EcoAfrica.	Effectiveness/ Prodoc Signature (i.e. date project began)		October 1, 2005
		Closing Date	Proposed: October 2008	Actual: December 2008
Prepared by: Luisa Lema	Reviewed by: Ines Angulo	Duration between effectiveness date and original closing (in months): 36 months	Duration between effectiveness date and actual closing (in months): 38 months	Difference between original and actual closing (in months): 2 months
Author of TE: Anthony J. Hooten AJH, Environmental Services		TE completion date: December 2008	TE submission date to GEF EO: September 2009	Difference between TE completion and submission date (in months): 9 months

* 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 AND KEY FINDINGS

Please refer to document GEF Office of Evaluation Guidelines for terminal evaluation reviews for further definitions of the ratings.

Performance Dimension	Last PIR	IA Terminal Evaluation	IA Evaluation Office evaluations or reviews	GEF EO
2.1a Project outcomes	HS	S	—	S
2.1b Sustainability of Outcomes	N/A	N/A	—	ML
2.1c Monitoring and evaluation	N/A	HS	—	HS
2.1d Quality of implementation and Execution	NA	NA	NA	HS
2.1e Quality of the evaluation report	N/A	N/A	—	HS

2.2 Should the terminal evaluation report for this project be considered a good practice? Why?

Yes, the terminal evaluation provides a complete report of project implementation, outputs and finances, as well as a careful assessment of outcomes and sustainability.

2.3 Are there any evaluation findings that require follow-up, such as corruption, reallocation of GEF funds, mismanagement, etc.?

No such irregularities were reported.

3. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

3.1 Project Objectives

a. What were the Global Environmental Objectives of the project? Were there any changes during implementation?

According to the project appraisal document, the environmental objective of the project was “to ensure that collaborative management arrangements for stress reduction are in place to protect the ecological integrity of the transboundary BCLME and sustain living marine resources vital to the sustainable development of coastal communities.”

As per the terminal evaluation, the objective remained unchanged during the project.

b. What were the Development Objectives of the project? Were there any changes during implementation? (describe and insert tick in appropriate box below, if yes at what level was the change approved (GEFSEC, IA or EA)?)

As per the project appraisal document, the development objective of the project was “to bridge the information gap by using innovative ICT applications to provide access to training and to increase the flow of information between experts, institutions, networks and coastal players including communities, as well as between themselves, so a “common pool of knowledge” is created and maintained.”

As per the information provided in the terminal evaluation, there were no changes in the development objective of the project during implementation.

Overall Environmental Objectives	Project Development Objectives	Project Components	Any other (specify)	
c. If yes, tick applicable reasons for the change (in global environmental objectives and/or development objectives)				
Original objectives not sufficiently articulated	Exogenous conditions changed, due to which a change in objectives was needed	Project was restructured because original objectives were over ambitious	Project was restructured because of lack of progress	Any other (specify)

4. GEF EVALUATION OFFICE ASSESSMENT OF OUTCOMES AND SUSTAINABILITY

4.1.1 Outcomes (Relevance can receive either a satisfactory rating or a unsatisfactory rating. For effectiveness and cost efficiency a six point scale 6= HS to 1 = HU will be used)

a. Relevance

Rating: S

The project is relevant to GEF’s International Waters focal area, specifically to its Operational Programs 8 and 10, Waterbody-based and Contaminant-Based. The Waterbody-based Operational Program aims at helping groups of countries to work collaboratively with the support of implementing agencies in achieving changes in sectoral policies and activities so that transboundary environmental concerns degrading specific waterbodies can be resolved. The Contaminant-based Operational Program aims at developing and implementing International Waters projects that demonstrate ways of overcoming barriers to the use of best practices for limiting releases of contaminants causing priority concerns in the International Waters focal area, and to involve the private sector in utilizing technological advances for resolving these transboundary priority concerns, respectively.

The outcomes of the project are also relevant to the countries’ commitments under the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Law of the Sea, the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, the Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage, and the Framework Convention on Climate Change.

DLIST -the knowledge-sharing platform strengthened through this project- benefits not only its originally targeted programs (i.e. the Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem and the Benguela Environment Fisheries Interaction and Training), but also additional national programs, such as the Namib Coast Biodiversity Conservation and Management project.

Finally, the terminal evaluation found the project relevant “to the development priorities for the region as a whole and for each of the participating countries”.

b. Effectiveness

Rating: S

Most of the expected outcomes were achieved during project implementation. The project successfully established and promoted a web platform for coastal stakeholders in the Benguela Current region, which had been piloted in a previous project. The major challenge encountered was the expansion of the platform from the pilot sites, in South Africa and Namibia, to Angola, where activities and community involvement remained incipient.

The major outcomes of the project included:

- The project put in place DLIST -a user-friendly web-based platform for knowledge sharing amongst the coastal stakeholders of the Benguela Current region, improving and adding new features to the previously piloted platform. DLIST included a forum -which was very active during project implementation, a newsletter, a digital library, and a feature to request information from experts. The total number of DLIST members and contributors almost doubled over the life of the project, but Angolan representation was still incipient at completion. Barriers related to Internet access and language created clear differences between use of the platform and actual representation of the target coastal players in the total network membership.
- In partnership with local universities, the project improved a distance-learning course in Environmental Engineering in South Africa and developed a new distance-learning course on Integrated Coastal Zone Management in Namibia, both available to academic stakeholders. In spite of the concerted effort to establish a course based in Angola, this did not occur. As per the terminal evaluation, certification through these distance-learning courses led to either college credit or access to employment opportunities that would not have otherwise been available to some participants.
- The project promoted free access and flow of information between regional scientific programs and coastal communities through web resources and in-person workshops. Recognizing the Internet access limitation, the project worked to introduce radio programs, support interpretive centers, and employ individuals and volunteers to serve as information coordinators for outreach, but these latter alternatives showed varying levels of success.
- The project reached out to coastal communities to make DLIST accessible and used as a tool for empowerment and motivation to remain involved with the network. The outreach activities included an innovative film festival, which received great acceptance and reached a broad audience.

c. Efficiency (cost-effectiveness)

Rating: S

The terminal evaluation found the costs by objective, outputs and activities to be realistic for the project. Implementation was on track and even under-budget in some periods. The document reports the good performance of the executing agency during implementation and highlights the good use of adaptive management through self-monitoring and internal evaluation.

The evaluation found DLIST to be a pioneer in developing a communication and social network at the regional level. The document notes that the forum thread (one of DLIST’s major features) “has been more active (and thus successful) than similar attempts at a broader, multi-regional scale that predated DLIST and were more technologically advanced.” The evaluation compared the platform with the models of the Global Water Partnership and the International Coral Reef Initiative, which did not demonstrate the active and engaged user-base participation in discussion threads that DLIST did.

As reported above, the efforts to incorporate communities in Angola in the project were less than successful. The terminal evaluation informs that attempts to engage interested stakeholders within Angola were genuine, but the response from the stakeholders was poor. Finally, the terminal evaluation does recognize that in spite of the quality of the features made available through the DLIST platform, some of them have not been used to a significant degree by communities (e.g. the document library).

4.1.2 Impacts: summarize the achieved intended or unintended impacts of the project.

The project successfully established and promoted a user-friendly web-based platform for coastal stakeholders of the Benguela Current region. As of this review, the DLIST website still provided users with free access to documentation and a forum to share information and exchange opinions and experiences. Distance learning courses remained to be offered through the platform as well. The impacts on communities are still largely limited to those with consistent Internet access, which is limited in the target area.

The impact of the use of DLIST in accomplishing the environmental objective of the project (to ensure that collaborative management arrangements for stress reduction are in place to protect the ecological integrity of the transboundary BCLME and sustain living marine resources vital to the sustainable development of coastal

communities) is unknown.

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= Likely (no or negligible risk); 3= Moderately Likely (low risk); 2= Moderately Unlikely (substantial risks) to 1= Unlikely (High risk)). The ratings should be given taking into account both the probability of a risk materializing and the anticipated magnitude of its effect on the continuance of project benefits.

a. Financial resources	Rating: ML
As per the terminal evaluation, DLIST remained dependent on donor funding to continue its activities and outreach; “the care, feeding and maintenance of the network clearly require recurrent financial resources, even if the stakeholder commitment to participate remains strong.” No sustainable financial support or strategy for sustainability beyond the project period had been defined at the time when the evaluation was completed. The document also points that, even with immediate financial support after the GEF project, the platform would be faced with the same challenges of sustainability in the future. There are no evidences of further funding for the project; however, the EO evaluator was able to verify the continued use of some of DLIST’s on-line features beyond the life of the project (see http://www.dlist-benguela.org ; e.g. forum and library). Given the social support and use of the platform in other national programs, the evaluator presumes that resources for the maintenance of the platform, which remains active at least to some degree, will come from local stakeholders.	
b. Socio political	Rating: L
As stated in the terminal evaluation, as a community of practice, DLIST would not be functional if there was no stakeholder participation. The platform reportedly had a strong social network of users and supporters amongst local communities, academic institutions, NGOs, and private sector, in Namibia and South Africa. There are no reported risks that could undermine the sustainability of the project in these countries. The case is not the same in Angola, where the level of ownership was not significant; it is uncertain if the few interested stakeholders in the country will have enough influence to guarantee the continuation of the use of the network amongst Angolans. Even without the engagement of the entire Benguela Current region, the platform will most likely continue at some scale with the support leveraged through the project.	
c. Institutional framework and governance	Rating: L
There are no known political or legal threats to the continuation of project benefits. Actually, governmental bodies in Namibia and South Africa have shown to be supportive of the DLIST platform.	
d. Environmental	Rating: UA
The environmental impacts of the project are unknown, thus there is no certainty of any environmental risk that could threaten the benefits of the project.	

4.3 Catalytic role

a.. Production of a public good
The project established a web-based platform for knowledge sharing, which remains to be used by stakeholders in the Benguela Current region.
b.. Demonstration
This GEF project is actually the full-size implementation of a DLIST pilot implemented in the early 2000s, with support from several different programs. The overall project has served as a model to be replicated in other areas of Africa, as will be explained below.
c.. Replication
Provided that it applies the lessons learnt during this project, particularly through the expansion to Angola, the DLIST-Benguela experience has a large potential to be applied in other bioregions. The final PIR (2008) already noted that the success of this project led UNDP to include a DLIST component in other GEF International Waters projects. Then, the agency had the intention to use DLIST as a vehicle for incorporating broad stakeholder input into the TDA/SAP preparation processes for the Agulhas and Somali Current Large Marine Ecosystem Program.
d.. Scaling up
Although the DLIST platform was used beyond the initially targeted Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem and Benguela Environment Fisheries Interaction and Training projects, there is no evidence of any systematic action that involves project scaling-up.

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4.4 Assessment of processes and factors affecting attainment of project outcomes and sustainability.

<p>a. Co-financing. To what extent was the reported cofinancing (or proposed cofinancing) essential to achievement of GEF objectives? Were components supported by cofinancing well integrated into the project? 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 it did, then in what ways and through what causal linkages?</p>
<p>The project received about 60% of the expected co-financing; this was partially due to USAID incapability to provide the amount pledged for satellite link ups, training and community radio stations, which represented ~26% of the expected total. Co-financing was still significant in relation to total project costs, and covered a large part of project needs, including some staff time, facilities, travel expenses and improvement of distance learning courses. The sources of co-financing included local academic institutions, private sector, and NGOs, which demonstrates the strong local involvement with the project. Co-financing was well integrated in the implementation of the project, and the reduction of the total amount received did not affect the project outcomes or sustainability</p>
<p>b. 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 it did, then in what ways and through what causal linkages?</p>
<p>The project demonstrated good implementation levels from inception, and did not have delays in the execution of any of the activities.</p>
<p>c. 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.</p>
<p>The terminal evaluation noted the different level of engagement of the governments of the three countries where the project was executed. According to the document, Namibian local and national governmental bodies demonstrated the most regular engagement, while the engagement in South Africa was variable, and there was poor participation of Angolan government. Nonetheless, the different outcomes in each country were not attributed to government ownership. South Africa was actually the country where the project was strongest from inception. In the same way, the under-achievements in Angola were not attributed to country ownership, but to the standard time that it takes to develop a network, added to reluctance to share information, limited internet access, and language barriers.</p>

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

<p>a. M&E design at Entry Rating (six point scale): S</p>
<p>The project appraisal document includes a timeline for specific activities and a complete logframe to summarize the project design. The logframe includes appropriate outcomes, clear quantifiable indicators, baseline information, mid-term and final targets, means of verification and an assessment of the risks for every outcome. The narrative of the document also includes a monitoring plan, with field visits, focal point assessments, and feedback from users, apart from standard UNDP/GEF M&E procedures. The project planned for a mid-term internal review and a final evaluation. The budget does not allocate a separate line for M&E, but the narrative explicitly states that these costs are embedded in other activity costs.</p> <p>The terminal evaluation observes that the metrics defined in the logframe did not fully assess the progress of the project when dealing with difficult-to-quantify issues, such as the extent to which messages were internalized and applied within the community of practice, versus number of messages sent.</p>
<p>b. M&E plan Implementation Rating (six point scale): HS</p>
<p>According to the terminal evaluation “DLIST’s monitoring and evaluation effort [was] one of the program’s strengths.” Annual project reports were complete and provided relevant information on project outputs and risk assessment. The terminal evaluation found the internal mid-term review and the recommendations and adjustments coming from it to be thoughtful, fair and objective in assessing progress. The regular and appropriate use of the logframe throughout reviews, in addition to work plans, steering committee meeting minutes and quarterly reports, allowed using real-time feedback as a trigger to adaptation management, including the addition of non-web-based components to the project, such as a public film festival to increase outreach. Beyond the project scope, DLIST also produced two GEF Experience Notes to present lessons learned.</p>
<p>b.1 Was sufficient funding provided for M&E in the budget included in the project document? Yes. Monitoring and evaluation costs were accounted for within project activities.</p>
<p>b.2a Was sufficient and timely funding provide for M&E during project implementation? Yes. All the activities related to monitoring and evaluation took place timely.</p>
<p>b.2b To what extent did the project monitoring system provide real time feed back? Was the information that was</p>

provided used effectively? What factors affected the use of information provided by the project monitoring system? The program was highly consistent in using the logframe analysis and in incorporating monitoring input as a tool for project adaptation.

b.3 Can the project M&E system (or an aspect of the project M&E system) be considered a good practice? If so, explain why.
 Yes. The project designed a thorough monitoring and evaluation system, with appropriate indicators, which was fully implemented and provided real-time feedback for management adaptation.

4.6 Assessment of Quality of Implementation and Execution

a. Overall Quality of Implementation and Execution (on a six point scale): HS

b. Overall Quality of Implementation – for IA (on a six point scale): HS

Briefly describe and assess performance on issues such as quality of the project design, focus on results, adequacy of supervision inputs and processes, quality of risk management, candor and realism in supervision reporting, and suitability of the chosen executing agencies for project execution.

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 UNDP had a major role in the success of this project. The project design clearly incorporated the lessons learnt from previous experiences, compiled in a high quality guide for the implementation and monitoring of DLIST. The document accounted for requirements and risks due to the foreseen extension to Angola, including the need to provide information in Portuguese and the recognition of technological barriers in the country. The agency closely followed and provided input for the improvement of project implementation. Annual project reports were complete and supplied relevant information on project outputs and risk assessment. The execution of the project by UNOPS through International Knowledge Management and EcoAfrica, was clearly a good choice. The terminal evaluation highlighted the importance of the strong relationship developed between UNDP and the executing partners in making the project successful.

c. Quality of Execution – for Executing Agencies¹ (rating on a 6 point scale) S

Briefly describe and assess performance on issues such as focus on results, adequacy of management inputs and processes, quality of risk management, and candor and realism in reporting by the executive agency.

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 This project was executed by UNOPS, who contracted field execution with International Knowledge Management and EcoAfrica. The terminal evaluation noted the good organization of project management, which clearly defined the roles and responsibilities of the parties, and benefited from the experience gained by the different actors during the pilot phase. The review also reports on the organizations’ strong ability to manage adaptively based on feedback and user demand. As mentioned before, the evaluation also found that the efficient delivery of the outcomes was the result of strong relationships between EcoAfrica, International Knowledge Management, the UNDP country office in Namibia, technical assistance from the UNDP office in South Africa, and UNOPS, based in New York.

The good performance of the executing organizations was key to strengthen and enlarge the community of practice. The executing organizations succeeded at engaging strong partners in the network, including academic organizations and NGOs. The terminal evaluation found that the effort of EcoAfrica “laid an important foundation in developing trust among this region’s constituents.”

Regarding the poor results in Angola, the terminal evaluation noted the commitment of the project management unit (EcoAfrica) to help build the distance learning course in the country, and the numerous efforts to engage the coastal communities in the project. As stated before, these efforts failed to trigger a successful response.

5. LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Assess the project lessons and recommendations as described in the TE

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

- Trust -embodying keeping promises, following through on commitments, and being consistently credible with information- is a major determinant of whether any network has the potential to be sustained.
- Information and communication technology is only a small part of a larger challenge in developing and

¹ Executing Agencies for this section would mean those agencies that are executing the project in the field. For any given project this will exclude Executing Agencies that are implementing the project under expanded opportunities – for projects approved under the expanded opportunities procedure the respective executing agency will be treated as an implementing agency.

<p>maintaining a community of practice. Technology merely provides a supportive, facilitating role and it is the relationships among people with similar interests in distant locations that will remain the most important ingredient.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While maintaining a large network takes time and money, leveraging resources in small amounts and seeking win-win arrangements among local stakeholders fosters a sense of ownership, and has been proven as a successful strategy. • Identifying champions/leaders and then offering the appropriate leverage to realize a vision or dream for their local communities provides the kind of empowerment that proves a network's worth, and fosters longer-term commitment by its members, and future leaders to assume the helm.
<p>b. Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation</p> <p>The following recommendations were suggested to the continued implementation of the project in the area, and to the expansion of the model to other locations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The platform should have continuous updates in its technology and guarantee the quality of the information posted. 2. DLIST should evaluate the uptake potential of each local community and tailor the most effective suite of tools in sharing information. 3. The program should strongly encourage participating national governments to provide its natural resource and social professionals with appropriate IT access. 4. The platform should include a list of resource expertise, similar to the Linked-In model. 5. The program should have distance learning offerings for different capacities and learning styles. 6. Scope for "champions" as a first step in expanding the program into new locations. 7. Ensure high-level governmental support and participation. 8. Leverage effort and resources to enable activities within a new locale. 9. Focus on establishing communication in local languages and translation of content. 10. Future expansion should consider the following steps in establishing a sustainable on-line presence: 1. Establish the List-Server/Discussion Forum, 2. Create a document library, 3. Review, vet and provide synthesis and translation of relevant content, 4. Structure administrative organization.

6. QUALITY OF THE TERMINAL EVALUATION REPORT

6.1 Comments on the summary of project ratings and terminal evaluation findings based on other information sources such as GEF EO field visits, other evaluations, etc.

The evaluator did not consult other sources of information for this review.

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 terminal evaluations review for further definitions of the ratings. Please briefly explain each rating.

6.2 Quality of the terminal evaluation report	Ratings
<p>a. To what extent does the report contain an assessment of relevant outcomes and impacts of the project and the achievement of the objectives? The document presents a thorough assessment of project outcomes and impacts.</p>	HS
<p>b. To what extent the report is internally consistent, the evidence is complete/convincing and the IA ratings have been substantiated? Are there any major evidence gaps? The evidence presented in the document fully substantiates the ratings and assessments included in the evaluation.</p>	HS
<p>c. To what extent does the report properly assess project sustainability and /or a project exit strategy? The evaluation gives a critical and proper analysis of project sustainability, and provides recommendations to move forward after project closure.</p>	HS
<p>d. To what extent are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive? The evaluation presents a comprehensive set of lessons learned, fully supported with the evidence included in the document.</p>	S
<p>e. Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used? The document includes project expenditures per source of funding and activities. It also presents a complete report of the co-financing used.</p>	HS
<p>f. Assess the quality of the reports evaluation of project M&E systems?</p>	HS

The report included an assessment of the quality of the M&E plan at entry, the implementation of the plan, and the use of information in adaptive management.	
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7. SOURCES OF INFORMATION FOR THE PRERATATION OF THE TERMINAL EVALUATION REVIEW REPORT EXCLUDING PIRs, TERMINAL EVALUATIONS, PAD.
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http://www.dlist-benguela.org
