

1. Project Data

Summary project data			
GEF project ID		2687	
GEF Agency project ID		GU-X1001	
GEF Replenishment Phase		GEF-4	
Lead GEF Agency (include all for joint projects)		Inter-American Development Bank	
Project name		Improvement of Management Effectiveness of the Maya Biosphere Reserve	
Country/Countries		Guatemala	
Region		LAC	
Focal area		Biodiversity	
Operational Program or Strategic Priorities/Objectives		BD SP1 - Catalyzing Sustainability of Protected Areas	
Executing agencies involved		The Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources and the National Council of Protected Areas	
NGOs/CBOs involvement		None	
Private sector involvement		None	
CEO Endorsement (FSP) /Approval date (MSP)		November 6, 2008	
Effectiveness date / project start		August 2009	
Expected date of project completion (at start)		August 10, 2014	
Actual date of project completion		December 10, 2016	
Project Financing			
		At Endorsement (US \$M)	At Completion (US \$M)
Project Preparation Grant	GEF funding	0	0
	Co-financing	0	0
GEF Project Grant		3.66	3.48
Co-financing	IA own	10.94	9.25
	Government	0	0
	Other multi- /bi-laterals	1.7	0
	Private sector	0	0
	NGOs/CSOs	0.9	0
Total GEF funding		3.66	3.48
Total Co-financing		13.54	9.25
Total project funding (GEF grant(s) + co-financing)		17.2	12.74
Terminal evaluation/review information			
TE completion date		June 24, 2017	
Author of TE		Julio Guzman	

TER completion date	February 27, 2018
TER prepared by	Spandana Battula
TER peer review by (if GEF IEO review)	Molly Watts

2. Summary of Project Ratings

Criteria	Final PIR	IA Terminal Evaluation	IA Evaluation Office Review	GEF IEO Review
Project Outcomes	MS	BLIND REVIEW	BLIND REVIEW	MU
Sustainability of Outcomes		BLIND REVIEW	BLIND REVIEW	U
M&E Design		BLIND REVIEW	BLIND REVIEW	MS
M&E Implementation		BLIND REVIEW	BLIND REVIEW	MS
Quality of Implementation		BLIND REVIEW	BLIND REVIEW	MU
Quality of Execution		BLIND REVIEW	BLIND REVIEW	U
Quality of the Terminal Evaluation Report		BLIND REVIEW	BLIND REVIEW	S

3. Project Objectives

3.1 Global Environmental Objectives of the project:

The Global Environmental Objective of the project is to “contribute to the ecological integrity and connectivity of the Selva Maya, a region highly significant for the biodiversity of Mesoamerica” (PD pg 16).

3.2 Development Objectives of the project:

The project’s Development Objective is “conservation and sustainable use of the biodiversity of the MBR, with an emphasis on areas of high biological importance, based on the strengthening of institutional capacity and effective participation of different interest groups so as to optimize Maya Biosphere Reserve (MBR) management” (PD pg 16). The project aims to achieve this objective through the following four components:

Component 1: Strengthening institutional agreements and capacities for the effective management of the MBR and its biodiversity;

Component 2: Incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the MBR;

Component 3: Design and implementation of policies, regulations, and other instruments for the management of the MBR; and

Component 4: Generation and use of information for the adaptive management of the MBR.

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

There were no changes to the objectives or activities during implementation.

4. GEF IEO 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
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The project is in accordance with GEF's biodiversity focal area Strategic Objective of catalyzing sustainability of protected areas, and Operational Program 3 on forest ecosystems. The project activities on system capacity building for long-term sustainability in terms of the development of a coherent set of sectoral policies and norms, institutional building, and innovative financing mechanisms are aligned to GEF's Strategic Objective. In addition, the project was consistent with Inter-American Bank's country strategy for Guatemala on poverty reduction for the period between 2004-2007. It also complies with National Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use Strategy, with the National Policy and the Development Plans, and the National Council on Protected Areas (CONAP) Institutional Strategic Plan (PD pgs 13-14).

4.2 Effectiveness	Rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory
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The project had four main components to meet the goal for conservation of biodiversity of the MBR. It intended to strengthen management of MBR, incentivize conservation, improve policies, and generate information for adaptive management. Although the project completed co-management agreements, implemented sustainable agricultural practices in the Multiple-Use Zones of the MBR, and hired staff for control activities, it largely failed to deliver its outputs as many of the targets were not met towards strengthening institutional capacities, diversifying local economy, and generating information for adaptive management. Hence, the TER gives a Moderately Unsatisfactory rating to the effectiveness of the project.

Component 1: Strengthening institutional agreements and capacities for the effective management of the MBR and its biodiversity:

The project intended to strengthen governance by developing institutional capabilities of the MBR, improving operational capacity of the CONAP, and creating new mechanisms for co-management in core zones and biological corridors. As per the TE, out of 11 outputs, three output targets have been met and the rest have only been partially met. The project was able to secure and update co-management agreements for core zones of the MBR, build and operate one control post for strengthening CONAP's operation capacity, and provide for San Miguel's joint operations center. It also partially developed institutional agreements to support the management of natural resources, and updated the draft master management plans for the core zones in MBR. However, the project did not meet its targets in having CONAP Community Relations Unit operational, and creating an automated process between CONAP and the M&E system. It also completely failed to achieve any partnerships with the formal education sector in the region for environmental education and skills training (TE pgs 33-35).

Component 2: Incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the MBR:

Under this component, the project aimed to promote the adoption of natural resource use practices for the purpose of diversifying the local economy and generating new income. The project acquired Meteorological stations with equipment and satellite telemetry data transmission services. Also, the producers implemented sustainable agricultural practices in the Multiple-Use Zones of the MBR. But largely the project did not reach its targets on building small innovative investments for biodiversity use. Its target was to create five micro projects based on new opportunities for sustainable use of biodiversity in multiple use zones (MUZ) and buffer zones (BZ), and it was unsuccessful in achieving this output. It also did not meet its targets to train managers of community concessions on management aspects in MUZs, and was able to get only one community group out of the target of five to participate in the tourist circuits (TE pgs 35-37). Thus, this component was ineffective in delivering its outputs.

Component 3: Design and implementation of policies, regulations, and other instruments for the management of the MBR:

To harmonize and improve implementation of public policies directed at the Petén region and in particular to the MBR, this component achieved nine of its targets. The project hired 117 resource rangers for fire prevention and surveillance activities, and hired 8 technical staff to implement forest fires prevention program and prepare control activities. It also evaluated the effect of forest management on the genetic diversity of mahogany trees and cedars, and drafted MBR operating plan. To support the resolution of land use conflicts in the MBR, five core zones in protected areas and forestry concessions were demarcated with land marks on the field, Sierra Lacandon National Park management had been strengthened, 107 land conflicts were resolved, and two law enforcement cases related to the MBR were solved. The project also completed a study on economic value of the environmental services, but it did not manage to incorporate any national parks and biological corridors in the National Land Registry (TE pgs 37-39).

Component 4: Generation and use of information for the adaptive management of the MBR:

This component was the least successful as only one out of eight output targets was met. The project executed an inter-institutional agreement for information exchange, but it failed to consolidate and

improve the exchange of information for the management of the MBR, develop a research agenda for biodiversity conservation such as projects on adaptive management.

4.3 Efficiency	Rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory
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The TE states that the project migrated from the Logical Framework to the Results Framework of the effectiveness analysis, which resulted in re-allocation of funds per component. Due to the project allocating 177% of GEF funds to component 1, the funds for the other components had to be cut drastically. “The counterpart budget was also modified, allocating more resources to Components 1 and 3 and drastically cutting the budget for Component 2, to the detriment of the innovative sustainable development projects with local communities” (TE pg 41). In terms of time delays, the project faced staff turnover with ministers, vice-ministers and technical staff changing often. As the new staff had to get familiar with the project, the activities got delayed and lost continuity (TE pg 8). Taking into account the major weaknesses in efficiency in implementation, the TER gives a Moderately Unsatisfactory rating.

4.4 Sustainability	Rating: Unlikely
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The TER finds that the sustainability of the project benefits is unlikely because the financial, socio-economic, and institutional framework risks seem high. This is due to the fact that many of the project activities were unable to deliver the expected outputs to help in continuity of the results. Below is a detailed analysis of the sustainability component:

Financial resources: The TE states that, although the project should have been cost-effective as it was designed around entities already operating in the MBR such as CONAP Monitoring and Evaluation Unit and CEMEC, “due to the absence of government policies in this field and the instability derived from abrupt changes introduced by political decision-makers and technical staff of the four administrations that took over during the Project term, public institutions are not likely to have the budget necessary to continue with the initiatives promoted by the GEF Project” (TE pg 49).

Socio-economic risks: The project helped producers implement sustainable agriculture practices in the Multiple-Use Zones of the MBR but it failed to carry out activities for diversification of forest products and implement any low-impact nature-based tourism activities for the local communities. Thus, there seem to be no sustainability of economic benefits from the project.

Institutional framework and governance: The TE mentions that the “strengthening of CONAP was only minor, for it was limited only to the PA management plans and the reviewed concession contracts” (TE pg 48). The project also did not implement a process of citizen participation and the CIDSP was not formalized. As institutional strengthening during the project was very weak, the TER finds that this factor is not sustainable.

Environmental risks: The TE does not provide detailed analysis on environmental sustainability, but mentions that the project acquired meteorological stations and an aerial photography camera which would help in generating information that will benefit biodiversity. (TE pg 49).

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?

The project received less co-financing at \$9,253,500 than the expected co-financing of \$13,540,000. Initially, associated financing from USAID and Conservation International was part of the expected co-financing, however, in the end only the implementing agency provided co-financing. The TE does not report whether the lack of funding in materialization of co-financing affected the project's outcomes.

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 TE mentions that there was high turnover in different administrations which affected the project as the new staff had to get familiar with activities, and the new authorities set new guidelines and priorities. This led to delay in implementation and the project lost continuity (TE pg 8).

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 evaluate country ownership, but mentions that the project was supported by Guatemala's Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources which helped in execution of activities, and also received technical support from CONAP.

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 Satisfactory
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The M&E design in the project had provisions for baseline and periodic monitoring of performance with indicators on ecological and socioeconomic conditions of the reserve. The M&E system was to be operated within CONAP in the newly established Monitoring and Evaluation Unit (USEC) and CEMEC as well as shared with other partners in management. The unit would facilitate the annual planning, monthly programming, and programmatic supervision of Project execution, by component and activity (including environmental, socioeconomic, technical, and financial aspects), as well as the annual, mid-term, and final evaluations to determine progress in attaining the objectives and results defined in the Project’s logical framework. The project set aside \$400,000 of the budget for M&E over a period of five years (PD pg 26). However, the TE reports that many of the indicators in the results matrix did not meet the SMART criteria as they were “not easily measurable (although targets were set), hardly achievable, but relevant because they were consistent with the development issues (and, in the vertical logic, with the components and outputs), and even if they were limited to the period of the technical cooperation (TC), they were difficult to achieve” (TE pg 10). Considering the flaws in design of the indicators, the TER gives a Moderately Satisfactory rating.

6.2 M&E Implementation	Rating: Moderately Satisfactory
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The TE notes that the project used the Annual Operational Plan to monitor the activities to be carried out, and updated the risk management matrix every six months. It also conducted half-yearly progress reports, annual supervision missions, and had a budget execution plan. The monitoring reports included data of the progress on outputs and outcomes, and the procurement plan was used for administrative monitoring of the project’s goods and services. The project also had external audits, and completed the GEF biodiversity tracking tool. These instruments helped in monitoring the activities, however the TE reports that the project did not establish a M&E system. In fact, “according to the people interviewed and the documents reviewed, there was a clear difference between the contents of the Project Document and the Results Matrix and what was actually executed” (TE pg 28).

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 Unsatisfactory
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IDB was the implementing agency of the project, and according to the TE, IDB visited and conducted technical missions where joint work with different stakeholders was carried out to track progress and provide recommendations for an efficient operation of the project. However, many of the recommendations were not implemented. Additionally, “annual meetings were held between IDB, CONAP and MARN, sometimes with the participation of ACOFOP, where the things that required financing were presented, but in all cases priority was given to the needs of CONAP notwithstanding the plans (e.g. hiring of resource rangers, forest firemen and equipment). However, specifically as regards the above mentioned examples, no activity was ever carried out with ACOFOP, and the only COC which was actually built never got properly equipped and there were no funds available to maintain it” (TE pg 29).

7.2 Quality of Project Execution	Rating: Unsatisfactory
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The Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MARN) was the primary executing agency while National Council on Protected Areas (CONAP) was the co-executing agency. The TE reports that for inter-institutional coordination, there was mistrust among institutions, and CONAP lost interest in coordinating activities because MARN was the resource administrator. Importantly, the project was affected by the high turnaround of staff in MARN and CONAP. This had a “negative impact on the historical memory of the Project and the management capacity” (TE pg 25). Additionally, “there was great bureaucracy within MARN and little interest in getting things approved fast, especially as concerns procurement, and its executing capacity was very low” (TE pg 25). Hence, the quality of project execution is Unsatisfactory.

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.

The TE notes that “the number of fires effectively decreased from 2,110 in 2008 to 1,266 the following year, but the target was actually 1,688, so there has been a 200% decrease. While said decrease is not fully attributable to the Project, at least part of it did result from the activities of forest fire prevention, protection and surveillance conducted through the hiring of 117 resource rangers (forest firemen) and eight technicians to support CONAP” (TE pg 43).

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.

No socio-economic impact is noted in the evaluation report.

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 TE does not report of any changes in capacity.

b) Governance: There have been no changes in governance.

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.

No unintended impacts are reported.

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.

GEF initiatives were not adopted at scale.

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 key lessons are (TE pgs 50-53):

- 1) Engaging the government is critical to render long-term objectives sustainable and legitimate;

- 2) If a Project is relevant for the Government, generating ownership is easier and its objectives can be achieved more effectively and efficiently;
- 3) The materialization of the risks and assumptions of the logical framework influences the achievement of the project's outputs and indicators. In addition, due to the possibility that the context in the country may change (in projects that last several years), it is necessary to include an adaptive management scheme;
- 4) Procurement processes and financial reporting for this type of projects are complex;
- 5) Implementing Agencies (IA) should be strict in terms of the performance of the agreements and commitments made, especially at times when social, political or economic conditions are adverse;
- 6) The study "Assessment of the Effect of Forestry Management on the genetic diversity of mahogany trees and cedars" points at the possibility that the forest concessions with community participation may maintain the genetic biodiversity of these two species just like the control PAs do;
- 7) Management plans are effective in promoting PA management and empowering stakeholders;
- 8) NGOs are well prepared to develop complex projects at technical and administrative level if the IA works closely with them;
- 9) A comprehensive communication process involving all key stakeholders is critical if we are to implement effective planning and increase the possibility for this type of projects to achieve significant impacts;
- 10) Creating synergies with other projects and initiatives is critical to achieve and exceed the expected objectives and goals;
- 11) The securing of co-financing (especially from private sources) or additional resources for GEF projects is a challenge that can be overcome but which requires proper handling;
- 12) Ecological sustainability depends not only on the project activities; it is important to create spaces for dialog to foster natural resource conservation; and
- 13) The strategy for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use should contemplate the participation of and effect on women and young people who are part of the relevant stakeholders.

9.2 Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation.

The recommendations given in the TE are (TE pgs 50-53):

- 1) Project implementation should be delegated to private autonomous entities, like NGOs and research institutions, among others. In addition, projects should contemplate sufficient resources to conduct a process to involve and convince the permanent authorities of the government institution(s) which are most relevant for the objectives and goals set for the project;
- 2) Political support should be sought - first from MARN and CONAP - to design policies and regulations that contribute to achieving the expected goals;

- 3) Risk analysis in connection with the fulfillment of the project objectives and components should be implemented as a planning instrument, which should be regularly updated and which helps mitigate or overcome any obstacles the Project may come across;
- 4) More training and support to the administrative officers in charge of the Project's financial processes should be included by the IA in its Operations Plan;
- 5) The IA should perform permanent monitoring and take firm decisions to ensure that the GEF resources are properly allocated notwithstanding the current conditions in the country (at political, social or economic level, among others) and are used in the most efficient manner and with a view to achieving what has been planned for in the Project Document or the Results Matrix;
- 6) Given that this study has drawn only partial conclusions - due to problems with the collection of samples - it is necessary to carry on with it and support it as necessary for it to conclude. In addition, it is essential to provide direct support to the development of community concessions due to the high level of poverty and social risks;
- 7) It is necessary to carry on developing Master Management Plans in the MBR in cooperation with the different stakeholders and with an emphasis on community participation;
- 8) Civil society organizations selected to execute relevant technical assistance projects should have proven experience and reputation and receive continuous support from the IA;
- 9) Projects require a communications strategy and financial resources - as part of their budget - in order to create synergies and promote transparency;
- 10) A strategy for creating synergies with other projects and initiatives should be developed, so it is therefore necessary to map out and design a coordination structure which ensures the continuation of the achievement of objectives;
- 11) The Project design should contemplate the allocation of time and resources to the securing of co-financing, especially from private sources;
- 12) It is of utmost importance to promote participation processes, which should be refined during the implementation of the strategy; and
- 13) It is necessary to improve communication in order to reach the women and young people in the communities more efficiently.

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 IEO 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 presents a thorough and critical analysis of relevant and effective outcomes, impacts and achievements of the objectives.	S
To what extent is the report internally consistent, the evidence presented complete and convincing, and ratings well substantiated?	The report gives detailed explanation and provides evidence on its evaluation.	S
To what extent does the report properly assess project sustainability and/or project exit strategy?	The report properly assesses the project's sustainability but does not provide for an exit strategy.	MS
To what extent are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive?	Lessons learned are supported by evidence and comprehensive.	S
Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used?	The report includes the costs and expenditures of the project and informs on actual co-financing used.	S
Assess the quality of the report's evaluation of project M&E systems:	The report provides analysis of M&E design, but does not give information on M&E implementation.	MS
Overall TE Rating		S

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

No other sources were used in preparation of the TER.