

Terminal Evaluation Review form, GEF Independent Evaluation Office, APR 2016

1. Project Data

Summary project data			
GEF project ID		2709	
GEF Agency project ID			
GEF Replenishment Phase		GEF-4	
Lead GEF Agency (include all for joint projects)		IFAD	
Project name		Support to Sustainable Land Management in the Siliana Governorate	
Country/Countries		Tunisia	
Region		Africa	
Focal area		Multi Focal Area	
Operational Program or Strategic Priorities/Objectives		LD-SP1, BD-SP3	
Executing agencies involved		Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources	
NGOs/CBOs involvement		Through consultation and involvement in implementation: Groupement de Développement Agricole and the Imadat Development Committees	
Private sector involvement			
CEO Endorsement (FSP) /Approval date (MSP)		September 30, 2008	
Effectiveness date / project start		September 2010	
Expected date of project completion (at start)		September 2015	
Actual date of project completion		December 31, 2015	
Project Financing			
		At Endorsement (US \$M)	At Completion (US \$M)
Project Preparation Grant	GEF funding	0.35	0.35
	Co-financing	0.32	0.32
GEF Project Grant		5	2.48
Co-financing	IA own	10.998	NA
	Government	6.066	NA
	Other multi- /bi-laterals	4.555	NA
	Private sector	NA	NA
	NGOs/CSOs		
Total GEF funding		5.35	2.83
Total Co-financing		27.68	NA
Total project funding (GEF grant(s) + co-financing)		33.03	NA
Terminal evaluation/review information			
TE completion date		2016	
Author of TE		Benamara Ali Sghaier / O. Berkat	
TER completion date		2/9/2017	
TER prepared by		Mathias Einberger	
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	MU	MU	NR	MS
Sustainability of Outcomes		ML	NR	ML
M&E Design		NR	NR	S
M&E Implementation		NR	NR	MU
Quality of Implementation		NR	NR	S
Quality of Execution		NR	NR	MS
Quality of the Terminal Evaluation Report		-	-	MS

3. Project Objectives

3.1 Global Environmental Objectives of the project:

The project's goal was to address land degradation and biodiversity loss in Tunisia's northern ecosystems by achieving the following objectives: (i) adopting integrated land use planning and improved water management, (ii) up-scaling SLM investments in productive areas, while improving the living conditions of low- and average-income households, and (iii) enhancing the protection of examples of the mountainous sylvo-pastoral ecosystems as part of the national protected area system. (PRO-Doc p. 24, CEO-End pp. 11-12)

3.2 Development Objectives of the project:

The project aimed to achieve its goal through the following four project components and corresponding expected project outcomes:

Component 1: Strengthening the Policy and Planning Frameworks for Sustainable Land Management (SLM) Mainstreaming

- Reasonable influence to improve country legal framework is exerted
- A national multi-stakeholder environmental and SLM information and knowledge management system is being set in place, including environmental M&E
- Country's strategy to implement a pluralistic advisory system is strengthened
- Land users actual participation to planning and assessing value of ecosystems and sustainable development is evident
- Alignment with foreseen MENARID outcomes

Component 2: Mainstreaming SLM in Agricultural Activities

- Impact-oriented and locally adapted SLM incentives are promoted in rain-fed crop areas to reduce pressure on land resources
- Land resources' value added by linking SLM in land regrouping activities and by consolidating Soil and Water Conservation works
- Local land users' livelihoods improved
- Alignment with foreseen MENARID outcomes

Component 3: Mainstreaming SLM in Sylvo-Pastoral Activities

- Sustainable sylvo-pastoral management systems and organizational forms are identified
- Impact-oriented and locally adapted SLM investments are promoted in rangelands
- Degradation and unsustainable use of common-rights land is reduced
- Local land users' livelihoods improved
- Micro-enterprises of natural and environmentally friendly activities developed to reduce pressure on rangelands
- Alignment with foreseen MENARID outcomes

Component 4: Conserving Biodiversity in Jebel Esserj

- A National Park created and its biotope management plan developed with regulations that include possibilities for eco-tourism enjoyment
- Capacity for PA management and sustainable NRM developed and information disseminated
- Endangered bio-diversity conserved and asset management ensured in a sustainable manner

(CEO-End pp. 1-1)

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

The TE does not note any significant changes in the project's global environmental or development objectives, however several activities/targets were changed after mid-term, with the TE referring to the revised framework in its project output assessment, which is listed below:

Activities/targets under component 1

At inception

- i) 1-2 proposals for SLM barriers amendment developed and acknowledged at policy level
- ii) A knowledge management system designed and most of its components are operational (2 databases and 1 web architecture developed, national environmental M&E system upgraded and nation-wide awareness campaign undertaken)
- iii) 50 staff from the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources, Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, Commissariat Régional du Développement Agricole, 3-5 NGOs and 10-15 CBOs trained to mainstream SLM and ecosystem management in their work
- iv) 15 Local development Plans developed, 5 participatory annual reviews done, and 4-6 studies performed

At completion

- i) A study assessing major barriers in current legal framework with proposals of amendments to existing legislation
- ii) The implementation of a study for a Knowledge Management system and the development of a KM data base
- iii) The development of a plan for strengthening capacities
- iv) The development of 15 Participatory Development Plans
- v) The development of an M&E system located at La Direction Générale de l'Environnement et de la Qualité de la Vie (DGEQV)

Activities/targets under component 2

At inception

- i) Sustainable Land Management (SLM) practices (conservation agriculture, organic farming, evapotranspiration reduction, ...) tested on more than 6,000 ha, and 6,000 farming households targeted
- ii) 1,500 ha re-grouped, 1,600 ha with consolidated Soil and Water Conservation (SWC) works
- iii) 5-6 best farmer awarding annual events on SLM practices celebrated

At completion

- i) The certification of 1,000 ha for organic agriculture, planting of local fruit tree species and varieties on 200 ha, and 200 ha of olive trees planted as wind breaks
- ii) 1,500 ha re-grouped and 1,600 ha with consolidated SWC works
- iii) The activity related to 'Best practices Awards to Land users' was cancelled
- iv) Another activity concerning 'integrated pest management' was cancelled
- v) A soil lab in Siliana was equipped and provided with chemicals and supplies

Activities/targets under component 3

At inception

- i) 1 participatory sylvo-pastoral management plan developed
- ii) Range improvement SLM practices adopted over 1,200 ha in family-managed pastureland, and 50 water harvesting and spring rehabilitation systems put in place
- iii) Range improvement SLM practices undertaken over 500 ha of common-rights land
- iv) Production capacity of 4 sylvo-pastoral nurseries enhanced
- v) At least 5 group microenterprises developed
- vi) 7,500 livestock herders targeted and trained on range SLM

At completion

- i) The activities related to development of a sylvo-pastoral management system and support to CBO registration were cancelled
- ii) Rangeland improvement through planting 650 ha with spineless cactus
- iii) Vegetation improvements on 1000 ha
- iv) Reseeding of 400 ha with annual medics
- v) The activity concerning the micro enterprise development was not implemented
- vi) 77 cisterns built to harvest water for the benefit of individual farmers

Activities/targets under component 4

At inception

- i) 1 specific park (Jebel Esserj) legal act negotiated and approved and 1 management plan developed
- ii) 1,500 families involved
- iii) 5 Park staff trained and the park M&E and information dissemination system in place, including impact and process indicators monitoring, production of leaflets and publishing of park documentation

- iv) Minimum park infrastructure developed including: tourist welcoming facilities; ecomuseum; water systems; solar power system; user itinerary signs; bird watching posts; and animal management systems

At completion

- i) Development of a priority action plan for the Jebel Serj national park as recommended by the mid-term review
- ii) Awareness activities for 4 schools near the park
- iii) Capacity building through an exchange visit to Morocco for 8 persons including DGEQV, the staff of the park, and others
- iv) Minimum park infrastructure developed including: tourist welcoming facilities; eco-museum; water systems; solar power system; user itinerary signs; bird watching posts; and animal management systems
- v) Technical study of the access road to the park, including environmental impact assessment and mitigation plan and construction of the road to the park
- vi) The Implementation of income generating activities for the population living close to the park, proposed to IFAD only in 2015
- vii) An activity aiming at protecting the villages close to the park from fires

(CEO-End pp. 1-2; TE pp. 30-32)

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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By focusing on the Siliana with its dry sub-humid agro-ecological zones, the project was highly relevant for the Land Degradation Focal area, for which these are considered high priority zones under GEF-4. The project addressed Land Degradation Strategic Program 1 and Strategic Objectives 1 & 2. While remaining mostly a Sustainable Land Management (SLM) initiative, it also addressed Biodiversity in a specific biotope through the creation of the Jebel Esserj Park under component 4, thereby contributing to Biodiversity Strategic Program 3 and Strategic Objective 1.

The project was also conceived in line with Tunisia’s national priorities and strategies, such as its National Action Plan to Combat Desertification, its National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan, its Economic and Social Development plan, for which the sustainable use of natural resources forms the

basis, and general government strategies and policies for the protection and sustainable utilization of biological, forestry, rangeland, agricultural land, and livestock resources. (CEO-End pp. 11-12)

The TE rates the project as relevant, because (in addition to the above) it:

- i) seeks to adopt integrated land use planning and improved water management and scale up SLM investments in productive areas, while improving the living conditions of low- and average-income households
- ii) seeks to enhance the protection of examples of the mountainous sylvo-pastoral ecosystems as part of the national protected area system
- iii) proposed relevant SLM practices adapted to the environmental and socioeconomic contexts
- iv) proposed, among other innovations, an SLM Knowledge Management system, Organic farming, and linkages between conserving biodiversity and income generating activities
- v) completes and strengthens the existing phase 2 Project on Integrated Agricultural Development in the Siliana Governorate (PDAI-II)
- vi) has the potential for up scaling in other areas of Tunisia and in countries within the MENA Region.

(TE pp. 22-23)

In light of the above, the TER rates project relevance as Satisfactory.

4.2 Effectiveness	Rating: Moderately Satisfactory
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The TE rates effectiveness of the project as Moderately Unsatisfactory. It provides separate ratings for the project objective, as well as for the project components, and rates the individual components as MU, MS, MS, and MU respectively. While major barrier to SLM in current legal frameworks have been assessed and proposals for amendments were to be presented to the National Assembly, no new legislation had been produced by project completion. Furthermore, although activities such as SWC, rangeland improvements, tree and cactus planting, SLM investments, and the establishment of the Jebel Serj national park were generally well received by the population and by and large met the revised quantitative performance targets established at mid-term, important concerns remain, including assessment and mitigation of the environmental impact of the park access road and establishment of income generating activities and sound monitoring procedures. (TE p. 33)

In light of factors contributing to the project's lower than expected outcome attainment that were not all within its sphere of influence, this TER revises the project's rating to Moderately Satisfactory. The TE notes that initial delays in project implementation stemming from a delay in recruiting the coordination unit on the one hand, but also the difficult post-2011 socio-political conditions on the other hand, resulted in the reduction or cancellation of a number of project activities. The collapse of the political regime in January 2011 and the resulting socio-economic instability, as well as political tensions between the government and the opposition materializing in the form of regional demonstrations, caused significant delays in the execution of investments. (TE p. 25)

A summary of project achievements under each project component is provided below.

Component 1: Strengthening the Policy and Planning Frameworks for SLM Mainstreaming (see 3.2)

A study on legal barriers, including proposals to adjust the legal framework, was completed, but no new legislation has been produced by project end. A SLM information and KM system, as well as an M&E system, were established only by project end. A study on biodiversity monitoring within the Jebel Serj national park was developed but monitoring systems are not yet in place. Of the participants in the PDPs, 68% feel their needs are taken into consideration. Harmonization and alignment with other MENARID activities occurred through participation in workshops. (TE pp. 33-34)

Component 2: Mainstreaming SLM in Agricultural Activities (see 3.2)

Activities related to providing local SLM incentives were cancelled. Land re-grouping was being implemented, but access infrastructure was yet to be completed and titles yet to be provided to owners. Green consolidation of SWC was being implemented and there was an estimated number of farmer beneficiaries of 3,000 from SWC, 50 from organic agriculture, 300 from conservation agriculture, 300 from agro-biodiversity, 250 from wind breaks and 50 from training. Of the surveyed population, 78.8% reported their livelihoods having been improved through access roads, SWC, and better agricultural production. (TE p. 34)

Component 3: Mainstreaming SLM in Sylvo-Pastoral Activities (see 3.2)

The planned study on sustainable sylvo-pastoral management systems was cancelled. SLM investments were promoted on rangelands through the planting of cactuses and the reseeded of annual legumes, but no quantitative measure on the reduction of degradation and the unsustainable use of common lands was available to the TE. Yet, field observations have shown good stands of newly planted and regeneration of existing species. There were 600 beneficiaries from rangeland improvements and 77 from water harvesting, who expressed satisfaction with the related activities. Contrary to the initial plan, no micro-enterprises were developed because not enough time was left. (TE pp. 34-35)

Component 4: Conserving Biodiversity in Jebel Esserj (see 3.2)

Coverage of under-represented forest mountainous ecosystems in the national protected area system has been improved through the establishment of the Jebel Serj national park, including infrastructure, staffing, and capacity building for park staff. The TE notes that the park represents an adequate framework for the conservation of endangered existing plant and animal species in the park and that the government seeks to reintroduce a gazelle species that had disappeared from the park. Information material about Jebel Serj has been produced and disseminated, while local community organizations were actively involved in the park's development. However, an environmental impact assessment and mitigation plan for the park access road has yet to be produced and carried out, while further work is needed to develop income generating activities from ecotourism, in order to ensure positive socioeconomic impacts for and sustainable ownership from the local population. (TE p. 35)

4.3 Efficiency	Rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory
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The TE rates efficiency as Moderately Unsatisfactory. It assesses project management and components 1 and 4 as largely efficient, components 2 and 3 as partially efficient. The TE arrives at this assessment through a breakdown of planned and actual unit costs of several concrete activities within the five project components (including project management). When taken together, the actual total cost of those activities was about 109% of their planned total cost. The TE however also gives considerable weight to project implementation delays in its efficiency rating, since they reduced the effectiveness of the project in achieving its objectives and outcomes. (TE pp. 28-30)

The TER further takes into account that GEF resources were substantially underutilized (at 49.8% of the original US\$5 million grant) over the +5 year of the project’s duration. This was mainly due to a sharp depreciation of the Tunisian dinar against the dollar, which could have been a positive opportunity for enhanced cost-effectiveness, but instead penalized the project as remaining time due to delays and a lack of human resources and management capacity constrained the implementation of further planned activities. The TE’s efficiency rating therefore seems appropriate and the TER also rates efficiency as Moderately Unsatisfactory. (TE pp. 26-27)

4.4 Sustainability	Rating: Moderately Likely
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The TE assesses project sustainability along the four dimensions of financial, socio-political, institutional framework and governance, and environmental risks to sustainability. It rates sustainability in each dimension as Moderately Likely. Overall, the TER follows the TE’s assessment and rates sustainability as Moderately Likely.

The TE notes a number of factors to potentially mitigate **financial** risks to sustainability, such as a possible phase three Project on Integrated Agricultural Development in the Siliana Governorate, partnership and co-financing dynamics around the Jebel Serj national park, commitment from La Direction Générale du Financement to pursue afforestation within the National Action Plan and to scale up sylvo-pastoral SLM activities through a WB/IFAD co-financed project, and the commitment of the Office de l’Elevage et des Pâturages to rangeland improvements through reseeding and cactus planting.

In terms of **socio-political** sustainability, the TE takes note of the empowerment of local communities and the improvement of the livelihoods and resilience of local households through the implemented project activities, such as the participatory development plans, enhanced water availability and agricultural production, and rangeland improvement. It especially sees the PDPs, the Jebel Serj national park, and overall better institutional awareness and ownership of and in SLM, as potentially translating into policy dialogue and policy formulation to address poverty and land degradation in Siliana.

The TE also notes political and legal commitment from the government towards Siliana’s issues within the **institutional framework and governance** context of sustainability. Specifically, the government expressed commitment to review legislation in order to overcome barriers for SLM integration. The

Direction Générale du Financement and the Direction Générale de l'Environnement et de la Qualité de la Vie expressed commitment to mitigate impacts from Jebel Serj's access road. Furthermore, the project contributed to institutional capacity building by training 50 staff and extension agents from the Coordination Unit and the Regional Directorate of Agriculture and Jebel Serj national park.

For **environmental** sustainability finally, the TE cites the potential of proposed legal amendments for overcoming SLM barriers, the adoption of SLM practices, agro-biodiversity conservation through the promotion of local fruit trees, Jebel Serj's potential in conserving biodiversity, and project innovations such as organic agriculture and SLM knowledge management. However, actual impacts in terms of reduced land degradation are yet to be assessed through a biophysical monitoring system. (TE p. 37)

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?

According to the mid-term report, co-financing materialized at 81% of the initial amount, or US\$22.21 million. (MTR pp. 22-23) However, neither the TE nor the last PIR provide any final numbers on co-financing. It is therefore difficult to assess the exact impact of co-financing on the achievement of GEF objective. Yet the MTR seems to indicate that co-financing has largely materialized and positively contributed to achievement of the project's goals. The TE also indicates that the low-utilization of the GEF grant, while leading to reductions and cancellations of several project activities, may have at least partially been mitigated by a fallback to the government budget for other activities. (TE pp. 25-26)

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 delayed for two main reasons: 1) recruitment of the project coordinator was delayed from September 2009 to 2012 and 2) the investment climate of the post-2011 socio-political environment. The latter has caused changing investment priorities for the project, stemming from the population's demand for "hard" infrastructure investments rather than "soft" activities, such as capacity building, M&E, KM, and income generating activities, which were delayed as a result. The former arguably should have led to a project extension of more than the 3 months that eventually materialized, but it is an open question whether the project should be commended for its substantial catch-up vis-à-vis such a great initial delay. Overall, both the project's outcome, especially regarding the planned "soft" activities, and its sustainability, especially in terms of the M&E system not having been implemented until the last minute, seem to have substantially suffered from the delays. (TE pp. 9, 11, 25)

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 highlighted that the Tunisian government had made political and legal commitments to the Siliana Governorate and its social, economic and environmental issues through the design of a third phase for the Project on Integrated Agricultural Development in the Siliana Governorate, its expressed commitment to review laws for overcoming barriers to SLM integration in different sectors, and the expressed commitment from the Direction Générale du Financement and the Direction Générale de l'Environnement et de la Qualité de la Vie to mitigate the impacts of Jebel Serj's access road. (TE p. 37)

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: Satisfactory
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The TE provides no rating for project M&E and no designated section discussing either M&E design at entry or M&E implementation. This TER views M&E design at entry as Satisfactory.

The M&E design established by the Request for CEO Endorsement and the Project Document included an inception workshop and report, bi-annual supervisory missions and project reports, annual PIRs, and a project completion report. The M&E plan also included an independent mid-term and final evaluation and an estimated M&E budget. (CEO-End pp. 1-2, 4-6, 19-24; PRO-Doc pp. 47-49, 74-75)

The list indicators specified in the project results framework was comprehensive and for the most part adhered to SMART principles. However, many indicators were revised at mid-term and it is difficult to assess whether this was due to evolving needs and necessities, partially stemming from developments out of the project's reach (e.g. the socio-political climate), or due to inadequacies in the original plan.

6.2 M&E Implementation	Rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory
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The TE provides no rating for project M&E and no designated section discussing either M&E design at entry or M&E implementation. Overall, the TER rates M&E implementation as Moderately Unsatisfactory.

The TE does note that no effective M&E system was present throughout the life of the project, which in addition to a lack of biophysical and socio-economic monitoring during project implementation, was a serious limitation to the analysis of project impacts. (TE p. 21)

While the coordination unit, with the assistance of a recruited expert, produced quarterly and bi-annual reports, PIRs and Annual Work Plans and Budgets, the M&E system located at the Direction Générale de l'Environnement et de la Qualité de la Vie was not installed in a formalized way until late in the life of the project and therefore not used by the PMU. (TE pp. 30, 32)

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: Satisfactory
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The project's implementing agency is IFAD. While the TE discusses the performance of the IFAD and the Tunisian government, it provides no rating for either project implementation or execution. The TER rates quality of implementation as Satisfactory.

As the implementing agency, IFAD conducted three backstopping and supervision missions, a mid-term review, and a terminal evaluation for the project. It provided backstopping for M&E, knowledge management, project management, impact indicators, mapping of the implementation sites, and review of relevant documents for the project. The TE notes that while IFAD missions made recommendations for improving project performance, accelerating operationalization of M&E and KM systems, and mitigating negative project impacts (the park road and the necessity to adhere to the slope criteria when selecting land for SWC), several of the backstopping/supervision missions were not adequately addressed. According to the TE it appears that the project team was more concerned with achieving physical results overall project rationale and SLM added-value addressed by the missions. Lastly, the TE notes that although IFAD tried to minimize delays in project implementation, it could not mitigate the impact of the falling exchange rate on the utilization of the GEF grant. (TE p. 38)

7.2 Quality of Project Execution	Rating: Moderately Satisfactory
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The project's executing agency is the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources. While the TE discusses the performance of the IFAD and the Tunisian government, it provides no rating for either project implementation or execution. The TER rates quality of project execution as Moderately Satisfactory.

The TE notes that the government put in place different structures (national, technical, regional and GEF SLM project coordinator, national and regional coordination committee, local planning and coordination unit) for project implementation in place, which generally worked according to the responsibilities

outlined in the project design. The national coordination committee played an important role in approving the annual budget and work plans and in resolving constraints encountered by the project. While the coordination unit was small in size, it carried out coordination activities among numerous partners within a large project area. However, the GEF SLM project coordinator was recruited with great delay and the local planning and coordination unit was not elevated to the Arrondissement administrative level. Furthermore, the project encountered other substantial constraints, such as a lack of human resources dedicated specifically to the project activities and a lack of adequate technical assistance, weak coordination between the project operators, and weak M&E and monitoring of project impacts. The TE also acknowledged however, that these weaknesses need to be put in the context of the post-2011 sociopolitical events and the deteriorating exchange rate, when assessing their effect on the project. (TE pp. 38-39)

Finally, the TE notes that while project management experienced serious constraints, such as the almost 2-year recruitment delay of the coordination unit and the M&E system not being implemented until the end of the project (although the necessary information was made available to the mission in the form of reports, Excel sheets, and discussions), the coordination unit was able to partially compensate for these. It managed to achieve relatively good performances regarding the quantitative MTR targets by engaging in active coordination among different partners (including government entities and local beneficiaries) and through the support from the government, IFAD and the GEF. (TE p. 35)

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 takes note of positive environmental impacts from the project through improved vegetation cover and regeneration of a number of plant species on rangelands and in forests and the potential for conservation of endangered plant and animal species in Jebel Serj national park.

The TE further positively notes the participative approach of local development planning, opening opportunities for improved solutions to land degradation processes by adopting integrated land use planning and SLM practices, and the potential for reducing land degradation through SWC consolidation, rangeland improvements, conservation agriculture, and planted forests. (TE p. 36)

In terms of the Jebel Serj national park access road, an environmental impact assessment and mitigation study and plan was yet to be produced at project completion, as previously mentioned.

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.

According to the TE, socio-economic impacts from the project included human capital impacts, although capacity building benefited only 50 farmers and 100 staff members, due to the delay in project implementation. There was also a significant impact on the material well-being of the local population, through work opportunities during project implementation for an estimated 4,000 beneficiaries, greater rangeland productivity for 600 beneficiaries, added value to land planted with fruit trees and potential economic returns from greater productivity and protection for 3,000 beneficiaries from SWC consolidation, 250 from wind breaks, 300 from agrobiodiversity, and 300 from conservation agriculture. Better access to water through water harvesting, saving time and effort to fetch water, benefitted 77, especially women, while potential economic opportunities were provided to 50 beneficiaries from organic farming. (TE p. 36)

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 project provided training and capacity building to local farmers and staff from Jebel Serj national park and the Coordination Unit and the Regional Directorate of Agriculture, although the corresponding activities were substantially downsized. (TE p. 32)

b) Governance

Although no new legislation was produced as a direct result of the project, it contributed to an improved regulatory and enabling environment, e.g. through the production of a study identifying current regulatory barriers or the implementation of local participatory development plans. (TE p. 30)

8.4 Unintended impacts. Describe any impacts not targeted by the project, whether positive or negative, affecting either ecological or social aspects. Indicate the factors that contributed to these unintended impacts occurring.

The TE does not take note of any unintended impacts and no other relevant 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 TE identified several activities implemented under the project as innovations with the potential for broader adoption, to varying degrees and under certain caveats/conditions:

- The identification of regulatory barriers to SLM and the attempt to harmonize legislation: the proposed legislation still needs to be adopted and operationalized in order to improve the legal framework for the upscaling of SLM practices
- Land regrouping: its future success in terms of upscaling depends on the development of the necessary infrastructure for demonstrating the full range of benefits of this approach
- The introduction of organic agriculture: it could aid in the upscaling of SLM by adding value to local agricultural products, but still needs support through capacity building, the strengthening of farmer organizations, and marketing
- SWC activities: they were well adopted by the population, yet ownership would be strengthened by a monitoring system showing the environmental and economic benefits, potentially serving as a solid base to scale them up
- Mapping of the implementation sites: represents an innovation in terms of the project information system and, when completed, will be useful in maintaining information and using it for future planning and monitoring purposes
- Participatory planning involving local communities and partners: represents an innovation of both this project and the phase 2 Project on Integrated Agricultural Development in the Siliana Governorate and was assessed favorably by the population

(TE p. 38)

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 participatory approach of the local development plans was useful for identifying activities and implementation sites while minimizing potential conflict situations. According to the impacts survey, a majority of the surveyed population was satisfied with this approach and thinks that their proposals were taken into consideration. However, the survey noted low participation of the youth (13.7%) and women (25%), which requires further analysis.
- Ownership by beneficiaries was high for activities that combined economic with environmental benefits, which is why the various SWC activities (tree planting, wind breaks) and improvements

of rangeland were well adopted by the population. This kind of ownership, if strengthened by a monitoring system that shows the environmental and economic impacts, could serve as a foundation for upscaling the benefits for men and women in Siliana and beyond.

- The beneficiaries appreciated the cisterns for rain water harvesting, as water shortage is a major constraint in some sites of the project area. This activity could therefore be scaled up as part of an integrated concept, including SLM and natural resource management.
- The introduction of organic agriculture is an innovation that could aid the upscaling of SLM by adding value to local agricultural products, but still needs support in the form of capacity building, strengthening of farmer organizations, and marketing.
- The project suffered from delays in implementation due to a number of causes. These delays and the demand of the population for infrastructure rather than for “soft” activities within the post-2011 context contributed to a shift in project implementation priorities, delaying most of the “soft” activities (capacity building, income generating activities). Therefore, the lesson for future project designs should be the need to address delays in appointing project coordination units (CU) as a risk that should be considered as conditionality in the grant agreement.
- The impacts of separate planning and implementation across two different agencies such as the Ministry of Environment (ME) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources on project management should be anticipated in the design of future projects. For example, the KM system and the M&E have been developed at the ME level and are located at the ME but not at the project CU.
- The development of partnerships was beneficial for project implementation and the attainment of project results (partnerships with the Office de l’Elevage et des Pâturages on rangeland improvements, with the Sidi Hmada Agricultural Development Group on organic agriculture, and with beneficiaries of fruit tree planting). Such partnerships would be useful for scaling project activities.
- The organic agriculture innovation has been adopted, although initially reluctantly so. This illustrates the importance of targeted training and the building of partnerships with the beneficiaries’ organizations.

(TE pp. 39-40)

9.2 Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation.

- In order to avoid future delays in appointing the project team, the procedure to set up the project coordination unit should be addressed during project design and designated as a conditionality in the grant agreement.
- Since no monitoring has been conducted during the project, it is recommended to find ways to conduct socio-economic and biophysical monitoring after project completion, in order to better understand the project impacts.
- The issue of impact mitigation of the access road to Jebel Serj national park is still pending and should be addressed urgently before the fall 2016 rainfalls.

- In order to translate the dynamic potential of the Jebel Serj national park into real economic benefits, funding must be found for the future development the income generating activities that were cancelled during project implementation.
- Operationalize a biodiversity monitoring protocol for the Jebel Serj national park.
- A more sustainable source of water should be implemented for Jebel Serj national park.
- Finalize the mapping of the implementation sites to be used within the Coordination Unit and the Regional Directorate of Agriculture information system.
- Find the necessary resources to conduct activities that received little attention during project implementation, such as training and the development of income generating activities around Jebel Serj national park.
- In order to promote land regrouping in the future, finalize the land regrouping package by building access roads.

(TE p. 41)

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 report contains a fairly comprehensive assessment of the relevant outcomes and impacts of the project, as well as the achievement of its objectives.	S
To what extent is the report internally consistent, the evidence presented complete and convincing, and ratings well substantiated?	The report is for the most part internally consistent, the evidence presented is usually convincing, and ratings are largely, though not always, well substantiated.	MS
To what extent does the report properly assess project sustainability and/or project exit strategy?	The report assess project sustainability along its four dimensions, providing individual ratings for each. It does not explicitly discuss project exit strategy but provides relevant information.	S
To what extent are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive?	The lessons learned appear largely supported by the evidence, but could be formulated in a more clear fashion.	MS
Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used?	The report only includes the materialization of the GEF grant, but no information on any co-financing sources.	U
Assess the quality of the report's evaluation of project M&E systems:	The report does not contain a designated section to evaluate project M&E systems, provides no corresponding rating, and makes only scattered reference to M&E without a clear distinction between project M&E and M&E as part of the project activities.	U
Overall TE Rating		MS

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