

GEF EO Terminal Evaluation Review Form

1. PROJECT DATA				
GEF Project ID: 2856 MSP		Review date: <u>at endorsement</u> (Million US\$)		March 2011
IA/EA Project ID:		GEF financing:	940,000	<u>at completion</u> (Million US\$) 940,000
Project Name:	Knowledgebase for lessons learned and best practices in the management of coral reefs	IA/EA own:		
Country:	Global	Government:		
		Other*:		
		Total Cofinancing	949,000	949,000
Operational Program:	OP#2 Coastal, Marine and Freshwater Ecosystems	Total Project Cost:	1,889,000	1,889,000
IA	UNEP	<u>Dates</u>		
Partners involved:	WorldFish Center	Effectiveness/ Prodoc Signature (i.e. date project began)		February 2006
		Closing Date	Proposed: July 2008	Actual: January 2009
TER Prepared by: Oreste Maia-Andrade	TER peer reviewed by:	Duration between effectiveness date and original closing (in months): 6 months	Duration between effectiveness date and actual closing (in months): 35 months	Difference between original and actual closing (in months): 42 months
Author of TE: James T. Berdach, Lope A. Calanog		TE completion date: August 2010	TE submission date to GEF EO: August 2010	Difference between TE completion and submission date (in months): 0 month

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

2. SUMMARY OF PROJECT RATINGS 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	S	MS	MS	MS
2.1b Sustainability of Outcomes	N/A	ML	MU	ML
2.1c Monitoring and evaluation	MU	MU	MU	MU
2.1d Quality of implementation and Execution	N/A	N/A	U/A	S
2.1e Quality of the evaluation report	N/A	N/A	U/A	HS

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

Yes, this TE should be considered a very good practice.

- It is a highly analytical and extremely thorough document. All its ratings were endorsed by this TER.

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

mismanagement, etc.?

No such findings were reported in the TE.

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 PAD submitted for CEO Endorsement:

- “The overall goal of the project was to develop an enhanced capacity within country institutions to learn from previous experiences of other projects and develop and implement coral reef projects that deliver key outcomes effectively and efficiently.”

No changes were noted in the TE.

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)?)

According to the PAD submitted for CEO Endorsement, “the specific objectives were:

1. To review completed GEF coral reef related projects and selected major non-GEF projects and summarize their principal outcomes, successes, failures and lost opportunities.
2. To carry out a critical analysis of the projects in order to derive lessons learned, key factors for success, root causes of failures and identify ways to capture lost opportunities.
3. To develop good practice guidelines, toolkits and information resources for use by other projects in developing and implementing their activities.
4. To widely disseminate the above findings in print and electronic form, and through targeted learning workshops, exchanges, training programs and the establishment of a coral reefs learning and exchange peer network.
5. To compile a knowledgebase of coral reef related projects which provide easy access to the above outputs, as well as primary resource material such as reports, presentations, contacts and images.”

No changes were noted in the TE.

Overall Environmental Objectives	Project Development Objectives	Project Components	Any other (specify)		
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
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)	
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	

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: 5

Satisfactory:

- According to the TE, the Project supports the GEF Operational Program (OP) 2 on Coastal, Marine and Freshwater Ecosystems within the Biodiversity focal area, and closely links with the International Waters and Climate Change focal areas. The objective of OP2 is the conservation and sustainable use of the biological resources in coastal, marine and freshwater ecosystems, with special attention given to tropical island ecosystems. Coral reefs are a key ecosystem within this mandate of OP2, and within the marine realm generally serve as the

richest repository of biodiversity. The objectives of this project are directly in line with Strategic Priority BD-4, Generation and Dissemination of Best Practices for Addressing Current and Emerging Biodiversity Issues. The project provides the GEF with an in-depth understanding of its past projects, so that it may contribute to better designed and more effective implementation of future ones. Given the volume of GEF projects that have been processed over the last decade, it is knowledge of previous experiences that have the potential to serve as a strong foundation for improved biodiversity protection, and in communicating this knowledge to member countries.

- Considering the valuable importance of the Project in addressing the barriers to knowledge access and transfer, as well as its significance to Coastal, Marine and Freshwater Ecosystems, as well as close links with the International Waters and Climate Change focal areas, the projects outcomes' relevance is rated as satisfactory.

b. Effectiveness

Rating: 4

Moderately Satisfactory:

- According to the TE, “while the stated OVI for the project objective were met, it is still not certain whether this has resulted in achieving significant positive impacts. The project proponent admitted that measuring the social and ecological impacts of the project, particularly in implementing good practices, would require a significant additional investment of time and money. This could not be done during the 3-year life of the project. In the project reporting documents, it was suggested that a new project should be proposed for additional GEF funding, particularly in conjunction with the Coral Triangle Initiative and the Caribbean and Micronesian Challenge programs, in order to more accurately ascertain the impacts of the project. It is one of the conclusions of this TE that such an extension of the project, possibly through a second phase, should be considered, to allow more in-depth evaluation work to be conducted, and possibly, additional lessons to be derived that could be applied in other projects.”
- To the TE, “one other important observation regarding project results is that many of the Lessons Learned, Best Practices in the Management of Coral Reefs checklist and toolkit, and Recommendations are highly-generalized ‘motherhood’ statements that could have been formulated even without the benefit of conducting the project. Examples, selected randomly from the lessons learned project website (<http://gefll.reefbase.org>), include the following: a pre-feasibility or feasibility study is necessary to come up with a workable project design; implementation requires sound management and involvement of people and resources in order to complete work efficiently; it is essential to establish an effective coordination mechanism including adequate management structures and operating systems. These lessons are so broad as to be of little practical value. Also, the inclusion of so many lessons of questionable value and applicability makes the website more voluminous, but does not contribute to quality. This in turn makes it that much more difficult and time-consuming for users to navigate, search for, and extract the more important and helpful pieces of information on the site—certainly not the intention of the GEF Knowledgebase-LL project. Making the concerned agencies and institutions aware of the project’s outputs (in which the project was quite successful) is only the initial step in the knowledge diffusion and uptake process.”
- The TE also notes that “a more important consideration when evaluating effectiveness, is determining whether or not stakeholders actually applied the knowledge tools being offered them. Thus, successfully motivating the stakeholders, especially project managers, to apply and utilize the products on offer, is a critical requirement that cannot be overlooked. Measurement of the “uptake” of project lessons, toolkits, and other products is one of the difficult challenges in evaluating project effectiveness. As explained in other sections of this report, the overall indications are that the uptake and application of the project’s products was fairly limited.”
- Having remarked the shortcomings in the elaboration of lessons learned and good practices, as well as that TE considered the project design, particularly the goal and objectives, “overly ambitious”, components were satisfactorily fulfilled, effectiveness is then rated as moderately satisfactory.

c. Efficiency (cost-effectiveness)

Rating: 5

Satisfactory:

- According to the TE, “of the total project budget of US\$1,889,000, in the project document, the GEF allocation was US\$940,000, while an in-kind co-financing contribution of US\$949,000 from the World Fish Center, ICRAN, and other collaborating NGOs was indicated. The project was able to leverage additional funding from NOAA and project partners from the Philippines, and in fact, the actual reported co-financing of \$997,181, was higher than the original counterpart fund of \$949,000.00. Thus, more than half the value of the project was contributed by these other co-financing partners, representing significant leveraging of GEF funds. It is clear that the involvement and participation of these other partners was the critical driving force in the implementation of the project, and without their participation, the project would not have moved forward. Thus it could be stated that the value of the in-kind contribution, as expressed in purely monetary terms, is quite conservative. While project implementation was delayed, it was ultimately possible to make up for time

lost in the early stages, and this did not seem to have significant negative consequences for the overall cost-effectiveness of the project.”

- Considering the significant leverage of GEF funds through important co-funding sources, as well as TE’s remark that “the project built upon and utilized pre-existing structures”, most notably the ReefBase website, it is possible to conclude that important savings were realized, turning the project satisfactorily cost-efficient.

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: 3
Moderately Likely:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As explained in the TE, the online dissemination of project outputs requires minimal funding. “The reach and effectiveness of this dissemination can be enhanced through linkages with the websites of other partner agencies such as International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN), ICRI-Forum, IW: Learn, GEFWEB and FAO, where the project’s outputs are also uploaded. Thus the project design incorporates a very cost-effective mechanism to maximize the dissemination of project outputs. Also, additional financial support for coral reef protection and management is potentially available from international organizations and multilateral agencies. ICRAN, the project’s main collaborator, is spearheading fundraising efforts, in collaboration with the UN Foundation and other ICRAN partners. However, availability of funding from these sources to support the activities of the GEF Knowledgebase-LL project is not guaranteed, and will depend upon the internal priorities of those potential funding entities. These organizations have their own staff operational costs and so support of GEF Knowledgebase-LL activities may be accorded lower priority. Finally, one area of concern is the need to ensure that counterpart funds at the local/country level are made available to augment available funding support.” • As explained in the TE, “the availability of secured counterpart funding would greatly strengthen overall sustainability. However, information on how this might be achieved is lacking in the project’s design, and in the progress reports and terminal report.” Such concerns raises some doubts about the project’s financial sustainability at the local level, and its rating cannot be higher than moderately likely. 	
b. Socio political	Rating: 3
Moderately Likely:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to the TE, “while there are strong advocacies from international environmental organizations to protect and conserve coral reefs, in many of the developing nations where coral reefs are under threat, there is no assurance that sufficient political will exists at the local/country level to complement advocacy by international NGOs and similar organizations. This requirement for complementation is crucial to ensure the sustainability of applying the project’s toolkit and checklist, especially when the focus of local people’s attention is on resource utilization and extraction. There is a strong need to strengthen the efforts in making communities and local officials fully aware of coral reef management.” • Therefore, considering that the project’s outputs can play a key role in building this awareness and socio-political commitment, but remarking that project’s terminal report has limited information on the level of commitment among local communities and local governments to support the project’s outputs, sustainability of financial resources is rated as moderately likely. 	
c. Institutional framework and governance	Rating: 4
Likely:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project has built a website (http://gefll.reefbase.org) which serves as the main conduit for disseminating project outputs (management tools, publications, CDs, and other information materials). This site is integrated into an existing web-based knowledge system, on the ReefBase website, which is a great advantage in terms of information dissemination, as well as institutional sustainability, since ReefBase is a long-established site known to thousands of scientists, managers, students, teachers, divers, etc. worldwide, who use it on a regular basis. • As explained in the TE, “the websites of other partner agencies are also utilized for dissemination of GEF-Knowledgebase-LL products. These include websites of ICRAN, ICRI-Forum, IW:Learn, GEFWEB and FAO as well as the Coral-L listserv of the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) with over 5,000 active members, which facilitates online discussions among coral reef professionals. By 	

<p>linking to these existing active networks, the likelihood that dissemination of the project’s outputs will be sustainable, even after project completion, is greatly enhanced. In addition, many developing countries already have legal and policy structures and institutions in place to promote more effective conservation and protection of marine and coastal ecosystems. While many of these institutions lack capacity and financial support, with proper strengthening, they could be tapped in testing and applying the project’s outputs. Finally, through its involvement, UNEP provides further institutional support for the sustainability of the project. UNEP already has an extensive network and linkages in place for dissemination and application of the project’s outputs, i.e., toolkit and checklist on coral reef management. UNEP can easily build on its existing network, particularly its partnership with the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) and the Regional Seas Programs. UNEP also has a Coral Reef Unit that leads international efforts to save threatened coral reefs worldwide. It works actively with concerned international organizations to reverse coral reef degradation and also assists in soliciting international, national and local support for coral reef conservation and sustainable use. These institutional structures can help to sustain the project’s efforts to share its outputs on a wider scale and create a level of improved capacitation at GEF, UNEP itself, and other coral reef funding and implementing institutions, as well as among local implementers of coral reef projects.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although a “more real, people-to-people interactions and networking among practitioners, to more effectively exchange knowledge and sustain project benefits” should still be built, the website constitutes a significant achievement and provides a likely sustainability in terms of institution and support to coral reef governance. 	
d. Environmental	Rating: N/A
<p>Not Applicable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As explained by the TE, the project itself is not anticipated to produce any adverse environmental impacts, but to enhance environmental sustainability. 	

4.3 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>Counterpart financing was significant, but delayed disbursements were inadequate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to the TE, “of the total project budget of US\$1,889,000, in the project document, the GEF allocation was US\$940,000, while an in-kind co-financing contribution of US\$949,000 from the WorldFish Center, ICRAN, and other collaborating NGOs was indicated. The project was able to leverage additional funding from NOAA and project partners from the Philippines, and in fact, the actual reported co-financing of \$997,181, was higher than the original counterpart fund of \$949,000.00. Thus, more than half the value of the project was contributed by these other co-financing partners, representing significant leveraging of GEF funds.” However, the TE explains that “disbursement reports were inadequate.” 	
<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>Delays might have somehow affected the project goal, but they were temporary and eventually rectified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to the TE, “this project suffered major delays because the project leader was hired 6 months after project launch. Despite delay in the release of project fund, which resulted in the delayed implementation of he project (commenced only on February 2006), the project was able to catch up with its target outputs and used its allotted budget practically in accordance with its financial plan. Only a very insignificant revision of budget was made, which in totality, did not affect the project implementation.” 	
<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>Country ownership was moderately satisfactory:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project failed to clearly show and discuss what mechanism will be used and applied to institute country ownership of project outputs. According to the TE, “while it was claimed that the application of key lessons will contribute significantly to improving the effectiveness of instruments, networks and national plans and programs on coral reef management and related undertakings, the project’s terminal report has limited data and information to substantiate this. At the country level, ICRAN and its network were the primary avenues 	

that were relied upon in disseminating the project’s outputs at established coral reef management demonstration sites.”

- According to the TE, “it was mentioned that the project would also rely upon countries that are parties to various international environmental agreements and conventions where coral reef management and protection is a priority. Nonetheless, there are no assurances that these countries will utilize the project’s outputs. The small number of countries that utilized and pilot-tested the project’s outputs are not enough to conclusively state that the project made a significant contribution to a particular country’s efforts in sustainable management of coral reef areas. Nonetheless, the project’s outputs proved relevant to many developing countries that depend upon the continued health and functionality of coastal and marine ecosystems, especially those countries that are recipients of international support that would fund coral reef conservation efforts.”

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

a. M&E design at Entry	Rating (six point scale): 3
Moderately Unsatisfactory:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The M&E plan is considered vague. In the words of the TE, “the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) assigned for each outcome were very broad, and different from OVIs found in the project framework. Following the intent in the project proposal, the KPIs should be closely related to the OVIs and MOVs. For instance, for Outcome 1, the KPIs developed were: ‘(a) results presented in semi-annual reports to UNEP; (b) database complete; and (c) analysis report published.’ In the logical framework, the OVI was ‘an improved understanding of the successes and failures from past experiences that can be applied to present and future projects.’ While the MOVs present somewhat more quantifiable targets (e.g., number of sites in which lesson transfer has been documented, number of case studies published annually that outline improved management of coral reefs, and listing of new or modified coral reef-related policies) the correlation to the KPIs is still poor.” • Since imprecise indicators difficult critical monitoring, the KPIs should have been more specifically related to the OVIs/MOVs, stated in quantifiable terms, with a fixed timeframe assigned for easier tracking of performance and results. To the TE, “the M&E plan was much clearer in assigning the distribution of functions and responsibilities of agencies involved in monitoring.” Therefore, M&E design is rated as moderately unsatisfactory. • Regarding M&E budget, the TE remarks that “there was no specific budget allotted for the MTR and MTE, but funds were set aside for the Terminal Evaluation. Contradictory indications are found in the project files concerning budget allotments for expenses associated with various sorts of data collection activities, such as stakeholders’ surveys, field surveys, steering committee meetings to assess project progress, peer review, etc. In the 2007 and 2008 PIRs, there is no indication that budget for these functions was allocated, but in the 2009 PIR, it is noted that money was made available.” As remarked by the TE, in view of the uncertainty and potential inadequacy of the budget allocations for M&E, this factor is given a rating of moderately unsatisfactory. 	
b. M&E plan Implementation	Rating (six point scale): 4
Moderately Satisfactory:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The TE made it clear that the KPIs provided in the M&E plan were not adequately taken into account by the executing agency and other responsible agencies in undertaking the regular monitoring work specified. Also, no Mid-Term Review (MTR) or Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) was completed, and no risk mitigation plan was implemented. However, some of the relevant OVIs in the logical framework were used in tracking the progress of project activities, and it was possible to fulfill the specified reporting requirements (financial, including on co-financing and auditing, and substantive reports) as indicated in annual PIRs and semi-annual progress reports for the project. The performance in implementing the M&E plan is rated moderately satisfactory. 	

4.6 Assessment of Quality of Implementation and Execution

a. Overall Quality of Implementation and Execution (on a six point scale): 5
b. Overall Quality of Implementation – for IA (on a six point scale): 5
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.

Satisfactory:

- According to the TE, two aspects relating to project oversight and management functions bear mention.
- “Firstly, in reviewing the project file, it was noted that only three meetings of the project steering committee (SC) were convened throughout the life of the project. The three meetings of the SC provided important guidance to the project implementers in addressing several critical issues: (i) addressing the delays faced by the project during the initial year of implementation, particularly in selecting a replacement to the original project partner; (ii) fast-tracking the compilation of reports and relevant documents from on-going coral reef projects to facilitate review, analysis, and synthesis of lessons learned and best practices; (iii) reviewing the project’s logical framework, including the OVIs, and the work and financial plan; (iv) effectively mainstreaming lessons learned and best practices; and (v) disseminating, adopting, and testing of project outputs in on-going and future coral reef projects. While the SC was effective in giving important management guidance, still, given the complexity and broad-reaching objectives of this project, it might have been desirable to have scheduled more frequent meetings of the steering committee to ensure optimal performance in project implementation.”
- “Secondly, during interviews with project management personnel, it came out that GEF itself was not as engaged in the project as might have been hoped. Given the project objectives, and the possible implications for performance of the GEF portfolio within the coral reef sector, stronger engagement by GEF would have been expected and desired. The lack of engagement was reflected in low participation of GEF personnel in steering committee meetings. Also, project managers expressed their interest in having dialogue with GEF about specific ways to improve the sustainability, relevance, and utility of the project’s outputs, by embedding them as a criterion in GEF’s standard review processes for all projects related to coral reefs. For example, application of the toolkits and best practices could have been required for approval, monitoring, and evaluation of GEF-supported coral reef projects (much as the use of the tracking tools is now a requirement for GEF biodiversity projects). Although this option certainly seems worth further consideration, especially as a means to improve efficiency for future GEF projects, according to the project managers, GEF personnel did not express much interest in considering it.”
- UNEP provided an engaged supervision and an important guidance to help move the project forward, “particularly on establishing linkages with other related UNEP- and GEF-funded activities”. The UNEP Division of GEF Coordination (DGEF) on the other hand, was responsible for monitoring the progress of project activities and in clearing and transmitting financial and progress reports to the GEF. Therefore, quality of implementation is rated as satisfactory.

c. Quality of Execution – for Executing Agencies¹ (rating on a 6 point scale): 5

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.

Satisfactory:

- According to the TE, “the project implementation plan was followed. Except for the replacement of TMPL as a partner-cooperator due to problems in funding, most of the elements of the plan were carried out as prescribed. TMPL was replaced by ICRAN’s EU-funded project Long-term Management and Conservation of Marine and Coastal Resources in South Asia. The WorldFish Center served as the executing agency and was responsible for the implementation of the project in accordance with the objectives and activities outlined in the Project Document. A Steering Committee (SC) guided the overall implementation of the project. The SC’s membership was composed of representatives from the GEF, GEFSEC/Monitoring & Evaluation, GEF Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP), UNEP, IW:Learn, the GEF Coral Reef Targeted Research Project, the World Bank, Conservation International, TNC, WWF, and NOAA. The SC’s main function was to provide guidance and advice to the Project Leader regarding the progress and direction of the project, and specifically, to ensure that the Project Leader performed as required for putting in place effective mechanisms to bring about the desired (and measurable) impacts.”
- The TE explains that “three consultants were hired (one each for the Africa, Asia, and LAC regions) to review GEF and non-GEF coral reef project documents, in an effort to reverse the delays in the execution of the workplan that had occurred. The Project Leader also immediately began contacting project personnel and other coral reef managers to establish the foundation to develop a network of coral reef professionals. Work and financial plans were revised to align with the changes made in the project’s implementation strategies. It is considered that these were only minor deviations from the original plans. In 2008, the project also

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.

produced CD-based and web-based toolkits containing case studies, lessons learned and best practices on coral reef management. It also produced: (a) a project brief summarizing the lessons learned; (b) a project brief summarizing marine protected area management best practices; and (c) checklists of best practices for a range of coral reef management issues. These products were distributed at 13 conferences/workshops in 2008 and presented at another 13 workshops/symposia in 2008. The project also planned to create a network of only 100 coral reef professionals, but this has grown to over 300 members. Pilot tests of the use of the toolkit were (or are being) undertaken at various sites. All these outputs are very much within the scope of the project's implementation plan. The final phase of the project implementation focused on dissemination, networking and replication of project results. In 2009, regional workshops were held in Central America and the Caribbean and in Southeast Asia and Micronesia. Trial implementation (replication) of this project's recommendations and best practices was conducted at selected ICRAN sites and in selected GEF and non-GEF projects."

- From the assessment provided by the TE, the executing agencies have satisfactorily conducted their task. Except for the first year of implementation, when revisions of project activities were undertaken to address earlier delays, project implementation proceeded very smoothly, following the four key components and generally adhered to its schedule of activities.

5. PROGRESS TOWARDS IMPACT

a. What is the outlined outcomes-to-impact pathway?
 Briefly describe the logical sequence of means-to-end linkages underlying a project (Outcome to impact pathways are the means-ends relationships between project outcomes and the intended impacts – i.e. the logical results chain of activity, output, outcome and impact)

Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Intermediary States	Impacts
<p>To review completed GEF coral reef related projects and selected major non-GEF projects and summarize their principal outcomes, successes, failures and lost opportunities.</p> <p>To carry out a critical analysis of the projects in order to derive lessons learned, key factors for success, root causes of failures and identify ways to capture lost opportunities.</p> <p>To develop good practice guidelines, toolkits and information resources for use by other projects in developing and implementing their activities.</p> <p>To widely disseminate the above findings in print and electronic form, and through targeted learning workshops, exchanges, training programs and the establishment of a coral reefs learning and exchange peer network.</p> <p>To compile a knowledgebase of coral reef related projects which provide easy access to the above outputs, as well as primary resource material such as reports,</p>	<p>Toolkits, guidelines & manager's checklist of lessons learned and best practices on coral reef management</p> <p>CD and information materials on coral reef management</p> <p>GEF Lessons Learned project website (http://gefll.reefbase.org)</p> <p>A virtual peer network of coral reef management professionals and stakeholders</p>	<p>Critical review and analysis of coral reef and associated ecosystem projects undertaken and resulting information summarized into lessons learned and best practices on coral reef management satisfactorily undertaken</p> <p>Awareness and implementation of good practices on coral reef management increased through dissemination of toolkits, guidelines, checklists and information materials</p> <p>A network of nearly 300 coral reef professionals (and experts in related fields) established</p>	<p>Capacities of developing countries, partner institutions and concerned GEF units/officials in coral reef projects design and management are strengthened and enhanced</p> <p>Enabling mechanisms are mainstreamed into national, regional, and global policies</p> <p>Network of coral reef professionals and website are utilized effectively</p>	<p>Management of existing coral reef projects, as well as the design and implementation of similar projects in the future, are improved, thus contributing to better protection and conservation of marine biodiversity</p>

presentations, contacts and images.				
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b. What are the actual (*intended or unintended*) impacts of the project?
 Based on the assessment of outcomes [4.1.1] explain to what extent the project contributed to or detracted from the path to project impacts and to *impact drivers* (Impact drivers are the *significant factors* that, if present, are expected to contribute to the ultimate realization of project impacts and that are within the ability of the project to influence

Three impact drivers identified in the TE:

1. Easy-to-apply methodologies and practical pointers in implementing and designing coral reef projects are provided
2. Information materials are continuously disseminated through web, network, and other means
3. Intentions signified and committed by institutions and funding agencies to utilize project outputs are fulfilled

Regarding impacts, the TE provides a careful explanation for the Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROI):

- “There are still key requirements like socio-political support and local funding, enabling mechanisms, and institutional structures that need to be met. While foundations are laid out to meet these requirements, there is still no 100% assurance that these assumptions can be met because they are generally beyond the control of the project. The fulfillment of counterpart agencies’ and partner institutions’ commitments to put them in place is crucial and could spell the difference between failure or success in attaining the intended project impact. While the project outcomes were partly delivered, there is no specific mechanism provided (or mentioned in the project documents) to ensure that the results of the project will become sustainable. It must be emphasized that local funding and socio-political support are essential to ensure that the results of the project will continue to be applied after the life of the project. Building of an on-line presence through the project website can contribute to sustainability, but this needs to be backed up by other actions (e.g., activities that will contribute to name recognition and “branding” of the project) that were initiated to some degree, but which need to be carried further. Measures to establish the intermediate states and to achieve the intended impact are already set in place. There are already commitments given by partner agencies and funding institutions. However, impact drivers must still be realized and assumptions addressed, to contribute to the attainment of the project’s ultimate GEB, which is the protection and conservation of coral reefs in particular, and marine biodiversity in general.”

c. Drawing on the assessment of the likelihood of outcome sustainability [4.2], what are the apparent risks to achieved impacts being sustained and likely impacts being achieved?

Considering the assessed likelihood of outcome sustainability, it is inferable from this project that the apparent risks to impacts were:

- **Clear pathway to counterpart financing:** The availability of secured counterpart funding would greatly strengthen overall sustainability. However, information on how this might be achieved is lacking in the project’s design, and in the progress reports and terminal report. Such concerns raise some doubts about the project’s financial sustainability at the local level. The online dissemination of project outputs requires minimal funding, thus the project design incorporates a very cost-effective mechanism to maximize the dissemination of project outputs. Also, additional financial support for coral reef protection and management is potentially available from international organizations and multilateral agencies. However, availability of funding from these sources to support the activities of the GEF Knowledgebase-LL project is not guaranteed, and will depend upon the internal priorities of those potential funding entities. These organizations have their own staff operational costs and so support of GEF Knowledgebase-LL activities may be accorded lower

priority. Finally, one area of concern is the need to ensure that counterpart funds at the local/country level are made available to augment available funding support.

- **Lack of political will/social commitment in developing countries:** While there are strong advocacies from international environmental organizations to protect and conserve coral reefs, in many of the developing nations where coral reefs are under threat, there is no assurance that sufficient political will exists at the local/country level to complement advocacy by international NGOs and similar organizations. This requirement for complementation is crucial to ensure the sustainability of applying the project's toolkit and checklist, especially when the focus of local people's attention is on resource utilization and extraction. There is a strong need to strengthen the efforts in making communities and local officials fully aware of coral reef management.
- **Lack of real (in opposition to virtual) network:** A more real, people-to-people interactions and networking among practitioners, to more effectively exchange knowledge and sustain project benefits should still be built to complement institutional sustainability and support to coral reef governance.

d. Evidence of Impact			
Question	Yes	No	UA
i. Did the evaluation report on <i>stress reduction</i> ² at the <u>local level</u> (i.e. at the demonstration-pilot level, etc)?		X	
ii. If yes, describe the evidence that was provided whenever possible quoting quantitative evidence. Also discuss the scope ³ of such reductions given the range of concerns targeted by the project.			
iii. Did the evaluation report stress reduction at the broader <u>systemic level</u> ?		X	
iv. If yes, describe the evidence that was provided whenever possible quoting quantitative evidence. Also discuss the scope of such reductions given the range of concerns targeted by the project.			
v. Did the evaluation report change in the <i>environmental status</i> at the local level (i.e. at the demonstration - pilot level, etc)		X	
vi. If yes, describe the evidence that was provided whenever possible quoting quantitative evidence. Also discuss the scope of change given the range of concerns targeted by the project.			
vii. Did the evaluation report change in the environmental status at the broader systemic level?		X	
viii. If yes, describe the evidence that was provided whenever possible quoting quantitative evidence. Also discuss the scope of such change given the range of concerns targeted by the project.			
ix. Did the evaluation report change in the socioeconomic status at the local level?		X	
x. If yes, describe the evidence that was provided whenever possible quoting quantitative evidence. Also discuss the scope of change given the range of concerns targeted by the project.			
xi. Did the evaluation report change in the socio-economic status at the systemic level?		X	
xii. If yes, describe the evidence that was provided whenever possible quoting quantitative evidence. Also discuss the scope of change given the range of concerns targeted by the project.			
xiii. Did the evaluation provide evidence of any negative impacts (on drivers toward the projects intended impact, environmental status, socioeconomic status)? Describe the impacts that were documented and how severe were these impacts?			
No negative impacts were reported.			
e. Monitoring of impacts			
i. Are arrangements/institutions in place to monitor stress reduction/improvement in the environment and/or socio-economic conditions at the local level after project completion?	X		
ii. Are arrangements/institutions in place to monitor stress reduction/improvement in the environment and/or socio-economic conditions at the systemic level after project completion?	X		

6. 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

² Stress = Pressure on the environment caused by human activities; Reduction=decrease of this pressure
³ Scope refers to the broadness of results against original objectives,

could have application for other GEF projects

In designing similar projects in the future, the following lessons should be taken into consideration:

- a) **Building a sustainable project identity:** There was general consensus that the toolkits, best practices and other knowledge products developed by the project were helpful. However, in the course of discussions during the interviews, and from responses by stakeholders on the questionnaires, there was a sense that these products were more effectively disseminated through the project's workshops, training seminars, and similar activities, rather than through placement of the products on the website. While there is certainly a place for using the internet as a vehicle for information dissemination (and to help promote long-term sustainability), placing information on the internet is a passive means of information dissemination; it is clear that it must be backed up by more active means, especially in the initial stages (while recognition is being built up). These active means include a strong campaign of awareness-raising, "branding," and information dissemination through other, more personalized activities. These efforts must be continued long enough to ensure that "name recognition" of the project and its website are achieved, so that most people in the targeted field of knowledge know where to look online for important information. Continuing these support activities is also important for filling gaps, for example, reaching those who may not be able to readily access the information online.
- b) **Clear statement of goals, objectives, outcomes:** In this project, many of the outputs or outcomes were merely generic statements, to wit:
 - *Produce a critical review & analysis of coral reef & associated ecosystem projects and summarize their principal outcomes in order to derive lessons learned, key factors for success, root causes of failures and identify ways to capture lost opportunities*
 - *A network of professionals, (particularly within developing countries) actively engaged in the sharing of lessons from past and ongoing coral reef projects*
 - *Increased awareness and implementation of good practices through dissemination of good practices guidelines, toolkits and information resources for use by other projects in developing countries and implementing activities and widely disseminate this information globally*Instead, the target outcome and desired impacts should have been designed and defined to be (i) achievable within a reasonable and specified timeframe (for example, within five years of project completion); (ii) measurable; and (preferably) (iii) quantifiable. Furthermore, outcomes should specify a change of behavior for a particular target group.
- c) **Indicators:** The criteria or indicators for measuring impacts and outcomes (including OVIs, MOVs, and KPIs) should be clearly expounded in the project document. These criteria and indicators must be consistent throughout the document, and between the document itself and the project logical framework.

As one example, some of the project's OVIs were overstated, and are not readily measurable. The OVI for the project goal, for instance, is more a paraphrasing of the goal itself. It states that there will be "demonstrably enhanced capability within country institutions..." Instead, it would be more appropriate that the OVIs refer to more tangible indicators. In this case, the OVI might be restated as "...foundations or enabling mechanisms, such as awareness and training programs on coastal and coral reef management, are put in place to enhance capability within country institutions..."
- d) **Preparation:** The hiring of key project personnel, like the project leader/project manager, should have been done at an early stage, before the actual project implementation. This project suffered major delays because the project leader was hired 6 months after project launch. Similarly, MOAs with prospective partner institutions should have been forged immediately after the approval of the project to avoid delay.
- e) **Efficiency and Cost Savings:** Significant cost savings and efficiencies were achieved by having the project website embedded in the ReefBase online architecture, and linked to a number of other websites as well (e.g., ICRAN, ICRI-Forum, IW:Learn and FAO). The clearest benefit of these linkages is the much wider reach that is achieved through this expanded network. Further benefits derived through the ReefBase linkage include access to the database and GIS engine used by ReefBase. This design not only creates such efficiencies and cost savings, but also enhances sustainability and longevity of the product.

Similarly, the use of NOAA's e-mail list server, rather than creation of a new e-mail network to reach large numbers of project managers and others involved in coral reef projects, has achieved significant cost savings, greater reach and effectiveness, and more efficient use of resources.
- f) **Structure of the Product:** In the materials produced as part of the project, the case studies or the projects reviewed are presented by region, i.e., East Africa and Red Sea, Latin America and Caribbean, and Asia and Pacific; and further subdivided into GEF and non-GEF projects. To be more useful and relevant, these should have been presented according to the eight themes or issues outlined in the report. For instance, if one project manager would like to know the details about Partnership and Linkages (Issue No. 4), he/she can easily browse through the cases under this issue or theme.
- g) **Evaluating Uptake:** Key to determining the impact of the project is knowing the number of existing coral reef projects that adopted and utilized its products, and the extent to which use of the products influenced the overall direction and operations of those projects. Criteria for identifying those projects that demonstrated such "uptake"

and application of results, should have been generated at the early stage of project implementation. This would have facilitated faster verification of project results and impacts.

- h) **Diffusion and Uptake of Knowledge:** It does not necessarily follow that, once people are made aware of a particular coral reef management strategy, they will automatically utilize it in practice. The diffusion and uptake of knowledge follows a series of steps, which must take place in order for a high rate of acceptance and adoption to occur. The process of acceptance of new ideas, or innovations, includes at least five stages, and this same process may apply with regard to the adoption of the GEF LL tools. First, an individual *becomes aware* of the new idea, such as the toolkit or manager's checklist. He knows about their existence, but he lacks detailed knowledge. Second, through a process of exposure and persuasion, the individual *develops interest* to obtain more information (e.g., about the toolkit), i.e., wants to know what it is, how it works, and what its potentialities are. Third, the individual *evaluates* the idea or innovation (in this case, the toolkit). Fourth, if he thinks the idea or innovation would be beneficial for him, he *tries* it, but only on a limited scale. Fifth, if the trial produces positive results, then the individual *adopts* the idea or innovation, and incorporates it as part of standard practice.
- While there was some success in exposing prospective users to the project products, it appears the actual application of the products was more limited. Encouraging the internalization of ideas or approaches often requires reinforcement and repeated exposure over time. In contrast, this project seemed to offer its tools and lessons on a "one-shot" basis-- beneficiaries were not repeatedly targeted and encouraged to take up the various products, nor, it seems, were they checked later on to find out whether there were questions or concerns about how the tools could be best applied. It may be that the level of effort needed to adequately reinforce the adoption and application of the project's products, may have required greater resources than were available.
- i) To better validate project evaluation findings, funds should be allocated to conduct site visits and more detailed interviews during the TE. Site visits are especially useful in identifying results achieved on the ground, and could help to better inform the process of impact evaluation. Site visits and more in-depth interviews could also be more effective tools for exposing project weaknesses. This could contribute significantly to improvements in the planning and design of future projects.

b. Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation

Because this is a Terminal Evaluation, it is not intended that recommendations will be made here to improve the performance of this project, but rather, that targeted measures might be applied to strengthen the design or implementation of related projects in the future. In this light, the following recommendations are presented to the GEF and UNEP.

- (i) In order to adequately determine the impacts of the project, GEF should consider supporting an extension or sequel project. This project would in theory track trends relating to the changes or improvements in the design, implementation, and management of coral reef and related projects, and would attempt to relate how these changes might have been influenced by the outputs of the GEF-Knowledgebase LL project.
- (ii) To facilitate better appreciation of lessons learned, and to make recommendations more achievable and attainable, Worldfish and its partners should present these in a matrix where specific lessons or recommendations are matched with particular reef projects analyzed. The lessons and recommendations could be categorized by themes or issues. For instance, under the "Project Design" theme, lessons about the critical need for community-based participatory processes would be substantiated by citation of specific case studies of projects that were reviewed and found to exemplify the lesson. For each case cited, links could be provided to enable interested readers and researchers to access more detailed project information.
- (iii) Further, it would be very useful if Worldfish and partners could support the lessons learned, best practices and recommendations by providing specific guides or guidelines on how to best apply them. For instance, how will co-management strategy be applied? What are the prerequisites? What are the step by step procedures? These are important details that could have significantly improved the usefulness of this knowledge product.
- (iv) Counterpart support (whether through cash or in-kind contributions) should be made a mandatory feature for partnership agreements for projects such as this, where building the capacity of local partners is a major objective. GEF should consider requiring this type of support in future projects, since it serves to solidify commitments and participation, and could even lead, eventually, to support for coral reef management and protection being included in annual budget allocations.

7. QUALITY OF THE TERMINAL EVALUATION REPORT

7.1 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.

UNEP Evaluation Office Assessment of project ratings and performance (Commentary).

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.

7.2 Quality of the terminal evaluation report	Ratings
a. To what extent does the report contain an assessment of relevant outcomes and impacts of the project and the achievement of the objectives?	5
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?	5
c. To what extent does the report properly assess project sustainability and /or a project exit strategy?	5
d. To what extent are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive?	5
e. Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used? The report on actual cofinancing is not provided in detail.	4
f. Assess the quality of the reports evaluation of project M&E systems?	5

8. SOURCES OF INFORMATION FOR THE PRERATATION OF THE TERMINAL EVALUATION REVIEW REPORT EXCLUDING PIRs, TERMINAL EVALUATIONS, PAD.

UNEP Evaluation Office Assessment of project ratings and performance (Commentary).