Terminal Evaluation Review form, GEF Evaluation Office, APR 2013

1. Project Data

Summary project data	
GEF project ID	3044
GEF Agency project ID	56941
GEF Replenishment Phase	GEF 4
Lead GEF Agency (include all for joint projects)	World Bank
Project name	Open Africa North South Tourism Corridor (OANSTC)
Country/Countries	Namibia, Zambia
Region	Africa
Focal area	Biodiversity
Operational Program or Strategic Priorities/Objectives	BD SO2 – Mainstreaming Biodiversity Conservation in Production Landscapes/ Seascapes and Sectors SP5 – Fostering Market for Biodiversity Goods and Services
Executing agencies involved	Open Africa (OA)
NGOs/CBOs involvement	Lead Executing Agency, Open Africa, is an NGO. SNV (a Dutch NGO) [assisted with some aspects of implementation – added after project started] Ford Foundation (provided co-financing)
Private sector involvement	Hertz, Standard Chartered Bank, Engen Namibia and Skorpion Zink [Provided co-financing]
CEO Endorsement (FSP) /Approval date (MSP)	4/25/2008
Effectiveness date / project start	5/30/2008
Expected date of project completion (at start)	5/31/2011
Actual date of project completion	5/31/2012

Project Financing		At Endorsement (US $M)	At Completion (US $M)
Project Preparation Grant	GEF funding	0.050 (allocated from GEF3)	0.050
	Co-financing	0.100	0.117
GEF Project Grant		0.540	0.508
Co-financing	IA/EA own	0.632	0.784
	Government	0.000	0.000
	Other*	0.000	0.700
Total GEF funding		0.590	0.558
Total Co-financing		0.732	1.602
Total project funding (GEF grant(s) + co-financing)		1.322	2.160

Terminal evaluation/review information	
TE completion date	September 18, 2012
TE submission date	October 27, 2012
Author of TE	Gabriele Rechbauer
TER completion date	12/17/2013
TER prepared by	Inela Weeks
TER peer review by (if GEF EO review)	Joshua Schneck

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

2. Summary of Project Ratings

Criteria	Final PIR	IA Terminal Evaluation	IA Evaluation Office Review	GEF EO Review
Project Outcomes	MS	MS	Not reviewed	MS
Sustainability of Outcomes	ML	ML to MU	Not reviewed	MU
M&E Design	Not rated	Not rated	Not reviewed	MS
M&E Implementation	MU	MU	Not reviewed	MU
Quality of Implementation	Not rated	S	Not reviewed	MS
Quality of Execution	S	S	Not reviewed	MS
Quality of the Terminal Evaluation Report	N/A	N/A	Not reviewed	S

3. Project Objectives

3.1 Global Environmental Objectives of the project:

The global environmental objective of the project was to assist in the mainstreaming of biodiversity into tourism by communities along the Open Africa North South Tourism Corridor (OANSTC) Project routes.

Nature-based tourism has significant potential to impact ecosystems and biodiversity and local and national economies. However, substantial efforts are needed to positively deliver tangible and intangible community revenues and benefits in conjunction with biodiversity conservation. In particular, Africa as a growing tourism destination is vulnerable to tourism exposure due to the sensitivity of its ecosystem-resource based economy.

3.2 Development Objectives of the project:

The development objective of the project was to strengthen the ability of community members living within OANSTC to enter the economic mainstream by leveraging their tourism opportunities.

The expected change in the tourism market was to be shaped by the project's unique, incentive-based "partnership tourism route" approach, enhanced awareness, training and capacity-building for current and future local business operators. The project was to focus on bridging the gap between local communities and business operators in the tourism market. This was to be done through supporting the institutionalization of local route development and the implementation of local biodiversity-centered tourism strategies in symbiosis with conservation plans, together with monitoring and evaluation actions based on route specific identified flagship species.

The project had the following four components: (1) Biodiversity- focused Routes; (2) Targeted Marketing and Communication for Biodiversity- focused Routes; (3) Enhanced Monitoring and Evaluation; and (4) Project Management.

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

> According to the ICM, both the development and the global environmental objective remained **unchanged,** however, **there were changes** at outcome indicator, component and activity level. These were introduced during the mid-term review (two years after project launched) and the project underwent a level 2 restructuring, approved in February 2011. The changes resulted in a revised project results framework and revisions to the budget and procurement plan. The project's closing date was extended by one year to May 31, 2012. The key revisions were:

> **(1) Revisions to Outcome Indicators:** the two original global environmental outcome indicators (outcome indicator #4 and #5) were merged into one revised outcome indicator. All three original project development outcome indicators were also revised.
> **(2) Revisions to Component 1 (Biodiversity- focused Routes):**
> - The number of routes that were to be established was reduced from the original 11 to 7 (5 new and 2 up-graded), as the initial target was judged too ambitious and unrealistic.
> - Two activities were added: (i) Conservation fund for implementation of the route flagship species conservation plan. The conservation fund was a budget line for concrete conservation activities requested by route participants; (ii) Route signage to inform and guide travelers passing through an area.
> - Four planned activities were dropped as they were judged to be either not relevant or not feasible anymore: (1) Installation of PC and Internet connection at route forum level; (2) Volunteer expert advice; (3) Route re-launch event; and (4) Flagship species information signs/plaques.
> **(3) Revisions to Component 2 (Targeted Marketing and Communication for Biodiversity-focused Routes):**
> - One activity was added: Reprinting of route brochure maps (due to their popularity)
> - Two activities were dropped: (i) Annual marketing promotion tour to Windhoek and Lusaka; (ii) Promotional route visits for journalists and other media.
> - One activity was shifted to component 1 and later dropped: Flagship species interpretation boards.
> **(4) Revisions to Component 3 (Enhanced Monitoring and Evaluation):**
> - The biodiversity networker position was replaced with three local biodiversity networkers based in Zambia at different locations using short-term contracts. In addition, a local community development expert was introduced at the office in Lusaka, which proved to be highly beneficial for providing route support.

No revisions were made to Component 4.

4. GEF EO 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**

This Project is consistent with the GEF 4 Strategy for Biodiversity supporting BD SO2, "*Mainstreaming Biodiversity Conservation in Production Landscapes/Seascapes and Sectors*," that supports country efforts to integrate biodiversity considerations into sectors that fall outside the environment sector, in this case tourism. Additionally, as it's objective is to mainstream the sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity resources into the tourism sector it also supports the SP5 " Fostering Market for Biodiversity Goods and Services". The Project responds to the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) and its different articles and guidance related to biodiversity and tourism development.

Both Zambia and Namibia have identified nature- based tourism as a key sector for economic development and have developed national strategies and interventions for responsible and sustainable tourism and participatory community-based conservation of biodiversity. Some of these policies and strategies include: National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (Namibia and Zambia); National Development Plan (Zambia); Tourism Policy of 1999 (Zambia); Tourism Development Framework of 1999 (Zambia); Draft (May 2005) National Policy on Environment (Zambia); Vision 2030, National Development Plan (NDP) II, the NDP III, and Regional Development Plans (Namibia); Tourism Satellite Account of 2006 (Namibia) and the 1994 White Paper on Tourism (Namibia). Overall, the project addressed national and local development priorities to: generate employment in remote rural areas and to foster CBNRM and private-public partnerships. The pre-selection of the project routes during preparation corresponded to recognized areas of biodiversity and tourism value and areas where nature based tourism is seen as a key industry for economic development.

Additionally, the project has relevance to the Trans-frontier Conservation Area (TFCA) initiatives such as the largest TFCA of the world, the Kavango-Zambezi TFCA (launched in March 2012) that involves Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Zambia. Some of the OANSTCP routes both in Namibia and Zambia will be included in that TFCA.

4.2 **Effectiveness**	Rating: **Moderately Satisfactory**

The ICM rated the achievement of the PDO and GEO (outcomes) as Moderately Satisfactory. This TER concurs with that rating as the project had moderate shortcomings when it came to achieving its stated

outcomes. There were four (revised) outcomes indicators (OIs), which were 74% achieved according to the ICM. Out of these four OIs, the first one was not measured, the second OI was partially measured and the results from the remaining two OIs exceeded their targets. Additionally, the ICM noted that the Intermediate Outcome Indicators were 85% achieved.

Overall, the project had positive progress in achieving its objectives through its four (revised) outcome indicators and outputs. As planned, the project succeeded in putting in place 6 new biodiversity-oriented Open Africa tourism routes (five in Zambia and one in Namibia) and it upgraded one existing route in Namibia. A number of conservation projects were developed and implemented. All routes have now adopted a flagship species and most have conservation plans and tourism strategies. A range of communication and information tools on the new routes and flagship species has been implemented including road signage, posters, maps and brochures. Route participants have gained knowledge on flagship species and conservation principles and became involved in conservation activities related to selected flagship species. Voluntary community biodiversity monitors and mentors have been trained on all routes and tourism guides were continuing flagship species monitoring. According to the ICM, tourism business along these remote routes appears generally to be improved which contributes to employment and increased revenues for remote rural communities and route participants.

However, according to the ICM, there were some difficulties in measuring accurately the achievement on the project development objectives due to deficiencies with the M&E framework and its implementation. Out of the four outcome indicators, the first two proved problematic: (1) number of visitors (not measured), and (2) number of bookings (issues with the measurement leading to overestimation). For a detailed summary of these issues please see section on M&E implementation. The remaining two OIs were achieved according to the ICM. Outcome indicator 3 (the # of additional small tourism products attributable to OA) was achieved with eight (8) products reported, exceeding the target of six (6). Outcome indicator 4 (the % of participants from each route that are implementing their portion of the route flagship conservation plan) was 53%, exceeding the target of 50%. This 53% is the average for all seven routes; the range was 10% (for Nsobe Sitatunga route) - 90% (for Kavango route).

Good progress was made on project implementation targets (average 100%) with annual work plan implementation at 99% (target was 90%) and with positive external audits submitted. Additionally, good progress was made on tourism related marketing initiatives (average 100%). This was reported as the number of annual visitors to OA website (5309 against the target of 4950).

As the ICM analysis shows, the project achieved less satisfactory progress towards expected biodiversity conservation- related intermediary results, with 85% of conservation plans developed (six out of the targeted 7) and 0% flagship species monitoring reports available. While flagship species were monitored, route forums failed to compile flagship species monitoring reports.

4.3 **Efficiency**	Rating: **Moderately Satisfactory**

According to the information provided in the ICM, the project was implemented according to the project document (and the revised results framework). By project closure: the procurement plan was 100% executed and rated satisfactory; the GEF budget was 94% executed; planned activities were 99% completed; and the financial and procurement performance was rated as satisfactory. The Quarterly, Annual and Completion Report were delivered on time and four annual audit reports were produced (2008-2012). The final audit has been submitted to the Bank on time and it didn't identify any issues (it has been approved by the Bank). Noteworthy, the project leveraged more co-financing than anticipated at project design stage (OA 124%, other co-financing secured during implementation 140%.)

At midterm review the project's closing date was extended by one year to May 31, 2012. The budget and procurement plan were also revised. The final FMR was not completed before the ICM was drafted, but the ICM notes that the final project expenditure will amount to approx. US$1.29 million. Based on the information on the actual expenditure given in Annex 2 to the ICM, Component 4 (project management) used up about 51% of the total budget, which is very high. The ICM does not provide details on why this was so.

The project's institutional arrangements were designed to be quite efficient and to focus limited resources on activities on the ground. They proved to be adequate, according to the ICM, but could have been strengthened through stronger involvement of national and/or local environmental and tourism related authorities as well as other conservation or SME tourism actors.

The project costs for route development and follow-up amounted to an average of US$ 184,000 per route (the actual expenditures per route varied substantially). The cost efficiency of the project related to savings due to provision of parallel support to several routes. As reported by ICM, economic returns are difficult to quantify, but OA estimates that approximately 500 bookings per year could be attributed to the project network. This translates to 1,500 bed-nights and with an average tourist expenditure of USD 160/day the tourism related expenditures on the route network amount to approximately US$ 240,000 per year. Based on this calculation, the project investment (US$ 1.29m) would be balanced by the generated tourism-related expenditures in 5.3 years.

The project introduced the concept of flagship-species as a proxy for biodiversity conservation. The monitoring of flagship species based on a voluntary system was challenging and needed more attention and support than planned. Further, the project was hampered and delayed due to challenges with recruiting and implementing of the biodiversity networker position (which was a new and a key position for OA). The position became vacant three times, was relocated from OA HQ in South Africa to Lusaka (Zambia) office to ensure proximity, cut costs and increase cost-efficiency. At mid-term review the decision was taken to replace the biodiversity networker position with three local biodiversity networkers based in Zambia at different locations using short-term contracts to enable the project to quickly gain lost time.

| 4.4 **Sustainability** | Rating: **Moderately Likely** |

The sustainability of the project's outcomes is rated 'Moderately Likely', in line with the ICM's overall risk rating of 'Moderate to Significant' for the project's long-term sustainability. Due to the nature of the innovative approach used in the project, the sustainability of the project outcomes will depend on whether OA can sustain these routes over the coming years. Risks related to the future of project's routes depend on route-specific factors (such as the existence of champions and the commitment of participants). Therefore, there is a risk that some routes may not grow as needed to remain in existence while others, those with committed participants, will continue, expand, and become more sustainable.

Financial resources – moderately likely - OA has been operating over the past 17 years and is experienced with fund-raising. But, ICM states that OA faces moderate risks when it comes to its ability to raise funds to sustain its organization and services to route participants, particularly in the new countries like Namibia and Zambia. Without OA, route maintenance, marketing and booking services would disappear for most participants. Nevertheless, OA secured funding for two follow-on activities that will enhance the sustainability of the project's results and contribute to the replication potential: (1) route maintenance of the 7 project routes; and (2) enhancement of its route development methodology with lessons learnt under the project. In addition, OA submitted a funding proposal (approx. USD1.29 million) to MCA Namibia for developing three new tourism routes in Namibia linked to the conservancy program. The proposal has been approved and preparation is underway.

Institutional framework and governance – moderately likely- At the end of the project OA was undertaking an internal organizational reform focusing on re-examining its role and approach towards biodiversity conservation and tourism, its own institutional and financial sustainability and the sustainability of the routes. The results of this reform will significantly impact the routes' sustainability. There are moderate risks that route fora will not continue to promote route-specific tourism development according to the ICM. Four routes have registered as tourism associations and other routes introduced membership fees, which indicates a strong institutional commitment for these routes. OA will keep providing route maintenance support to route forums and assist with the implementation of route action plans. Yet, the situation is more difficult for other routes. For instance, in Zambia's South Barotse route, the majority of the established lodges were struggling to stay in existence. The viability of this route is questionable, as a number of lodges have closed down and the route forum in not active as key members of the forum have left the country.

The recently launched (March 2012) Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area TFCA (KAZA) initiative provides new opportunities. The KAZA secretariat started discussions with OA regarding the development a new regional biodiversity transfrontier KAZA Open Africa route building on the project's achievements and lessons learnt.

Environmental – **moderately unlikely**– The ICM notes that there are significant risks that monitoring of flagship species will not continue on the 7 routes. For instance, in the Zambian Munjili route even

though the community members were trained as flagship monitors, data is not collected regularly and difficulties with the Zambia Wildlife Authority (ZAWA) have prevented data collection. Environmental monitoring may continue on routes with an environmental champion and some kind of data exchange arrangements or links with other conservation organizations (e.g., Caprivi route whose data is being included in the Namibia's Environmental Information System and its link with Carnivore research Program; Kavango route's linkages with Wetlands International). These routes are less exposed to the risk. The risk is nonetheless significant if no conservation partner provides follow-up support.

Socio-political – **moderately unlikely** - Route development for route participants equates to business development, and OA must therefore provide a service that is seen to generate business. Some project participants have seen positive impact or potential for their business. But, despite the OA's efforts it seems that it is not yet able to demonstrate a meaningful generation of (additional) business to most operators. As a consequence, the interest of operators to become active route participants tends to diminish over time in the OA network (not only for this project). OA has been aware of this for some time now and is trying to find solutions. OA will probably have to consider becoming more commercially oriented through cost recovery schemes, either from clients (e.g. via booking fees) or route participants (e.g. membership fee), and it will need to improve its level of service, according to the ICM.

5. Processes and factors affecting attainment of project outcomes

5.1 Co-financing. To what extent was the reported co-financing essential to the achievement of GEF objectives? If there was a difference in the level of expected co-financing and actual co-financing, then what were the reasons for it? Did the extent of materialization of co-financing affect project's outcomes and/or sustainability? If so, in what ways and through what causal linkages?

> The project leveraged more co-financing than anticipated at project design stage (OA 124%; other co-financing secured during implementation 140%.)

> At project start, it was anticipated that OA will contribute US$ 632,000, but instead it contributed US$ 784,698 (in-kind contribution). Four other sources of co-financing (none of which were identified at project start) include: (1) Ford Foundation which contributed US$ 300,000 (grant); (2) Hertz that contributed US$108,000 (in-kind); (3) German Bilateral Aid Agency GIZ contributed US$5,205 (grant); and (4) a Dutch civil society organization SNV contributed US$287,000 (associated funding). Overall, the total co-financing at the end of project amounted to US$ 1,484, 903 significantly higher than the planned US$632,000.

> The ICM does not provide any information on where the co-financing was used, except for information on SNV's contribution. It is therefore difficult to assess to what extent this co-financing affected the project's outcomes and /or sustainability.

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?

> At midterm review the project's closing date was extended by one year to May 31, 2012. In fact, OA requested a two-year no-cost extension in order to achieve the project objectives, but this request was not approved due to the GEF cycle. The main reasons for the one-year extension were: (a) time needed for piloting biodiversity route development approach was underestimated, (b) changes and vacancies related to biodiversity networker position caused delays, and (c) delays due to OA operating in two "new" countries with vast distances.

> These delays might have negatively affected the project's outcomes and sustainability, especially when it comes to environmental monitoring. The distances involved were too great for the networker to provide effective help in biodiversity monitoring. As such, some of the newly introduced concepts might not have been fully internalized and established, thus possibly negatively affecting sustainability.

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 ICM does not provide enough information to assess country ownership. It is stated that the OA team carried out regular consultations with the two governmental agencies in charge of the environment and tourism. But, it is also noted that institutional relations could have been strengthened through stronger involvement of national and/or local environmental and tourism related authorities as well as other conservation or SME tourism actors. Open Africa operated, to some extent, in isolation, but carried out regular consultations with key stakeholders in Namibia and Zamiba including the national GEF Focal Points.

6. Assessment of project's Monitoring and Evaluation system

Ratings are assessed on a six point scale: Highly Satisfactory=no shortcomings in this M&E component; Satisfactory=minor shortcomings in this M&E component; Moderately Satisfactory=moderate shortcomings in this M&E component; Moderately Unsatisfactory=significant shortcomings in this M&E component; Unsatisfactory=major shortcomings in this M&E component; Highly Unsatisfactory=there were no project M&E systems.

Please justify ratings in the space below each box.

6.1 **M&E Design at entry**	Rating: **Moderately Satisfactory**

The overall rating for M&E design at entry is moderately satisfactory, as the project had a very elaborate M&E plan in place. But, it could be argued that the M&E design was too complex for OA and, as such,

could not have been realistically executed, especially given the OA's low level of skills and expertise when it came to biodiversity monitoring. The originally agreed project outcome indicators had to be revised at mid-term, as many were considered to have been too ambitious, indicating that the M&E design in this respect could have been more realistic. Other deficiencies became evident later on during implementation, such as the weaknesses in using unpaid volunteers for monitoring.

According to the information in the Project Document, and its Annex A, the project had a comprehensive M&E plan, results framework and agreed indicators. The preparation phase identified the process, format and content of data collection at local and central level. Semi-annual evaluation of the on-going monitoring efforts was to result in bi-annual progress reporting by OA on implementation progress, performance and impact as well as on compliance with the fiduciary requirements to the WB. A detailed baseline assessment of each route was to have been carried out during the first year of project implementation. In addition, an up-date of the SP-2 tracking tool was to be provided by MTR reporting and EOP. The World Bank was to carry out one annual supervision mission per year. The estimated total budget related to project M&E was US$ 112,000. In the Project's arrangements for results monitoring the frequency of data collection and reporting is stipulated, as are the data collection instruments and responsible parties.

The entire Component 3 aimed to improve the M&E system at Open Africa and to assist route level tourism and biodiversity conservation monitoring efforts. It planned to support the development of a management information system for the OA network; detailed baseline studies for selected routes; development of biodiversity monitoring tools, in particular flagship species at local level; training for biodiversity monitor and biodiversity mentor at local level; development and dissemination of a replication and knowledge management plan, route forum knowledge sharing seminars, up-dating of the mandatory GEF tracking tool and registration of route members through the OA participants tracking system.

Conversely, there were issues with outcomes indicators, which subsequently had to be revised at mid-term. Some of the issues include: (1) the original number of routes was too high and had to be reduced as it was judged to be unrealistic and too ambitious for the project's timeframe; (2) local conditions for establishing new businesses were not considered; (3) indicator of additional employment was related to increased business, but usually has a one to two year's time lag and only an unknown portion can be attributed to the project (4) the definition of local community was lacking and caused confusion (many local people own and run businesses, but are not classified as community members) (5) outcome indicators four and five were too ambitious within the given timeframe and considered a route as a homogenous management entity, which is not the case (6) Impact on species is long-term outcome beyond the initial time frame of the project (3 years).

6.2 **M&E Implementation**	Rating: **Moderately Unsatisfactory**

The project implemented some of the M&E activities, but failed to satisfactorily implement others. Project encountered difficulties in measuring accurately the achievement on the project development

objectives due to, what ICM calls, "deficiencies with the M&E framework and its implementation." As a result of the shortcomings, by the end of the project two out of four outcomes indicators were either not measured at all or were using a proxy instead of the agreed indicator. The ICM rated monitoring and evaluation performance of the project as Moderately Unsatisfactory and this TER agrees with this rating.

The project updated the SP2 tracking tool and carried out baseline studies (although the ICM notes that specific budget for this was not allocated). Baseline assessment was performed during the route development process. Additionally, training of biodiversity monitor and mentor has been carried out at the local level, according to the ICM. When it comes to the actual project monitoring, it seems that these were completed satisfactorily, including various financial reports, audits, completion reports etc.

There were deficiencies in the project and Open Africa's general M&E system, which negatively impacted the quality of data, collected and evaluated. Some of the issues include: (a) the MIS (management information system) – although the MIS was installed, difficulties with route-level data collection and transfer did not allow tracking of visitors, only average number of visitors per participant was tracked; (b) the initial design for flagship species monitoring tested during preparation was based on an adapted Namibian MOMS model. The actual monitoring of flagship species was both species and route specific and monitoring booklets were developed. However, it was not supervised by OA as the initial design anticipated supervision by a route mentor on voluntary basis, which did not work. This monitoring of flagship species based on a voluntary system was challenging and needed more attention and support than planned. Additionally, while flagship species were monitored, route forums failed to compile flagship species monitoring reports aimed for dissemination under the project design. It should be noted that the indicator is dependent on other milestones, which delayed actual progress.

Despite revisions to the Outcome Indicators (OI), the final completion report and ICM showed deficiency with OI 1 - number of visitors (not measured by the time of completion) and OI 2 - number of bookings (lack of accuracy). Participants did not measure OI#1 due to lack of defined arrangements for record keeping and data return from the route operators to OA. The data collected referred only to website inquiries and was thus identical with data reported under OI #2. It did not include visitors as a result of OA brochures, maps, signage and other marketing activities. The OI #2 (the annual # of OA website booking to route participants) was not measured as designed. Instead, OA measured a number of website inquiries, which overestimated the value of the indicator. This is likely due to the confidential nature of business information and weak management capacity at route participant level. OA does not yet provide a booking service. The term 'booking' refers to website inquiries that OA transfers to the route participants. OA tries to follow-up on these inquiries with route participants through paper forms (visitor books) and follow-up phone calls however reliable data return rate is low. Data reported reflect 50 % of actual inquiries considered as "bookings".

7. Assessment of project implementation and execution
Quality of Implementation includes the quality of project design, as well as the quality of supervision and assistance provided by implementing agency(s) to execution agencies throughout project implementation. Quality of Execution covers the effectiveness of the executing agency(s) in

performing its roles and responsibilities. In both instances, the focus is upon factors that are largely within the control of the respective implementing and executing agency(s). A six point rating scale is used (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory), or Unable to Assess.

Please justify ratings in the space below each box.

7.1 **Quality of Project Implementation**	Rating: **Moderately Satisfactory**

The World Bank's performance is rated 'Moderately Satisfactory'. Based on the evidence provided in the ICM, the World Bank team provided good guidance to the project as well as good supervision. Still, there were some weaknesses in the way that the project was designed as well as shortcomings during the first two years of project implementation.

Annual supervision missions to all routes were carried out. The Bank regularly briefed governmental counterparts in Namibia and Zambia. Moreover, the World Bank carried out discussions with public and private tourism stakeholders to ensure that the Executing Agency is consulting with them adequately and to ensure that the project didn't fund any investments that led to land use or behavior that would negatively affect the environment and/or the communities.

The World Bank supported the Executing Agency, Open Africa (OA) effectively, according to the information in the ICM. The World Bank team was based in Zambia and had staff who had the required technical skills (biodiversity and tourism) to successfully implement the project of this nature. The task team leader remained unchanged throughout project. This continuity of the World Bank's task team has been assessed as effective in guiding the OA's implementation team. ICM further notes that the World Bank provided " timely and constructive" feedback to OA. Procurement and financial management specialists handled all requests in timely fashion and approvals were granted without delays. The OA's completion report assessed the Bank's performance as satisfactory to highly satisfactory.

The ICM assessed the Bank team's efforts related to project preparation and implementation phase as appropriate. Efforts were taken whenever needed to facilitate and speed-up project implementation. Even so, it is still noted in the ICM, that the project design had shortcomings, primarily as it underestimated the support needed to cover the vast distances within each of the two countries within the limited project time frame and human and financial resources. The project scope was too ambitious geographically (11 routes in two countries) and in terms of its expected conservation and business outcomes. A lesser number of routes, perhaps even less than the 7 agreed at the MTR, could have enabled OA to provide more professional support (as opposed to volunteers), measure better impact, adapt faster to implementation issues and generate better lessons.

The level 2 restructuring introduced at mid-term and approved in February 2011 helped to deliver the project outcomes, particularly through granting of a one-year extension. The mid-term changes introduced mitigation measures to refocus the project on biodiversity conservation (i.e. conservation fund, local biodiversity networkers, route signage). The Bank correctly identified, although relatively

late, OA's difficulties in implementing the project's M&E's framework. The revised results framework helped to better measure the achievement of tourism and conservation outcomes. However, the Bank team should have detected and addressed earlier the deficiencies in the two outcome indicators.

7.2 **Quality of Project Execution**	Rating: **Moderately Satisfactory**

The Executive Agency's performance is rated as 'Moderately Satisfactory', which differs from the ICM's rating of satisfactory. It must be noted that at project start and during the first 2 years of implementation, Open Africa (OA) had very limited capacity and experience in biodiversity conservation, which was acknowledged at project design. A new biodiversity networker position was supposed to address this lack of capacity, but recruiting staff for that position proved difficult. This issue with the biodiversity networker position was outside of OA's control and is not the reason for the moderately satisfactory rating. The rating primarily relates to other implementation issues, and documented shortcomings in project execution, particularly related to M&E as outlined below.

According to the ICM, the OA team implemented this project, its first World Bank/GEF project, fully committed, professionally, in a consultative manner and to a high standard in accordance to the project document and the legal agreement. OA managed the project effectively, as demonstrated in supervision reports during implementation, despite logistical challenges posed by the geographical distances between the project office based in OA's Headquarter in South Africa and the project intervention zone in Namibia and Zamiba.

The OA showed adaptive management by making the needed adjustments, such as opening a local office in Zambia, employing a community-development person and engaging SNV in project implementation, which all helped to strengthen the project's impact. The OA team leveraged more than expected co-financing and followed a cost-effective approach across all components. Additionally, OA managed to adapt itself quickly and efficiently to the specifics and challenges of the project (e.g. compliance with WB procedures, biodiversity conservation, marketing tools, operating in new countries, biodiversity networker). It further showed proactivity in searching and obtaining partnerships that enhanced project outcomes (e.g. with SMME / tourism support through SNV; KAZA) and pursued successfully fund-raising for its own and project needs.

The project's structure and implementation arrangements were designed on the basis of OA's successful innovative route development approach in South Africa focusing on generating tourism-based revenues for rural community members. The original project design acknowledged that OA had no capacity and experience with biodiversity conservation and therefore made provision for a biodiversity networker position and capacity building. The preparation phase included multiple consultations and resulted in a documented proposed approach around monitoring and conserving route flagship species. However, the project performance suffered from the modest implementation arrangements (limited and perhaps less qualified biodiversity networker staff, use of unpaid volunteers for biodiversity monitoring and mentoring) and the absence of a local OA office in Namibia and Zambia. Accordingly, mitigation

measures had to be taken at mid-term review to refocus the project on biodiversity conservation (i.e. conservation fund, local biodiversity networkers, route signage, partnership with ZAWA).

The OA effectively engaged a range of stakeholders, using its stakeholder participation plan to guide its efforts. The project addressed gender-specific needs (e.g. participation as a route member and route forum member, employment opportunities) and implementation was highly participatory including a wide range of civil society representatives, private sector, governmental officials and non- governmental groups. The OA team carried out regular consultations with the two governmental agencies in charge of the environment and tourism.

The ICM also notes that the OA had a "highly committed" project manager who remained unchanged throughout preparation, implementation until completion, which contributed positively to the project's achievements and interaction with route participants and other partners.

At project start and during the first 2 years of implementation, OA had very limited capacity and experiences in biodiversity conservation. The recruitment of the biodiversity networker helped to improve the situation, but ultimately an experienced conservation partner/actor in the field could have delivered more sustainable impact and stronger results. A partnership with a conservation actor or a small technical working group as part of the initial or later arrangements could have contributed significantly to the achievement of the project global environmental objectives and outcomes. This was done for the business development aspects. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed with SNV in 2009 and it had substantially strengthened tourism and business development on the network.

The project assisted OA in establishing a, perhaps too ambitious, Management Information System (MIS) that was meant to track results at route and project level. However, OA's capacity in using and adapting the MIS to the needs and challenges of the project during implementation appears to have been limited and had contributed to deficiencies with monitoring and reporting on project's indicators as identified at MTR and completion.

8. Lessons and recommendations

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

> When projects plan to introduce innovative elements, the risk analysis should take a more important part within overall preparation.
>
> Focus on flagship species as a way of mainstreaming biodiversity conservation into tourism can become a limiting factor especially if there is little funding to support the approach. Instead of using a "cookie-cutter" approach (identification of flagship species, flagship species monitoring, route conservation plan), a more flexible approach, based on supporting already on-going conservation initiatives, with adequate funds for meaningful support to biodiversity conservation is necessary to stimulate buy-in from stakeholders.

Awareness-raising and capacity building achieve better results if coupled with funds for implementation.

Building early partnerships with public actors could strengthen the sustainability of (biodiversity) routes and increase impact.

Route development for route participants equate to business development and OA must therefore provide a service, which is seen to demonstrably generate meaningful business to operators. If this does not happen the risk is that the interest of operators will diminish.

8.2 Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation.

No explicit recommendations were provided, although some could be deduced from the lessons learnt.

9. 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 EO 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 ICM is objective in its analysis of project performance and it provides a balanced assessment of the relevant outcomes. More emphasis could have been placed on providing additional qualitative evidence on the outcomes and impacts, which could have contributed to painting a more detailed picture of the project's achievements. This additional analysis would have enhanced the overall quality of the report.	S
To what extent is the report internally consistent, the evidence presented complete and convincing, and ratings well substantiated?	The ICM presents complete evidence and clearly outlines all of the revisions that have occurred at mid-term. A good presentation of results versus the expected targets is also presented. Ratings are fair and well substantiated. The report is internally consistent, although errors exist in its presentation of the project's costs.	S
To what extent does the report properly assess project sustainability and/or project exit strategy?	Sustainability is covered through the 'risk to development outcomes' section, as well as throughout the report in various different sections. More information could have been provided.	S
To what extent are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive?	Lessons Learnt are specified and are comprehensive, as well as supported by the evidence. The ICM does not offer any separate recommendations; although these can be gleaned from the lessons learnt.	S
Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used?	The report provides an adequate co-financing table, listing co-financing amounts and sources. In Table 1 (Cost and Financing) the report provides an overview of the project's original and actual financing; however, the total sum computed in the 'original' column is wrong. The ICM outlines the project's original budget, as approved by the Project Document. Then, it notes that the budget was amended to reflect the changes approved at mid-term, but the revised budget is not shown anywhere in the report. Even though many cost tables are provided (specifying planned and actual costs per component) these do not agree with the original budget. As the revised budget has not been provided it is difficult to get an understanding of how the project's actual expenditure compares to the planned one. The ICM provides a table of planned versus actual expenditures for each component, in South African Rand (ZAR) and US dollars. However, there are issues with the reported figures, as follows: (a) Most of the figures given in US dollars seems to be	MU

Criteria	GEF EO comments	Rating
	wrongly computed or are inaccurate (including those in Annex A). The ICM notes that an average exchange rate of 7.5 was used, and it is possible that an error was made during this conversion. Thus, most of the budget amounts for the planned expenditure do not match, i.e., the figures in US dollars do not equal the figures in ZAR when the 7.5 rate is applied. As a result, while the budget amounts in ZAR show, for Component 2, that the actual spending was higher than planned, the budget amounts in the same table shown in US dollars show the opposite, i.e., they indicate that the planned expenditure was higher than the actual one. (b) The only two tables where the planned expenditures are the same in both currencies are the table for Component 4 (including the % of disbursement) and in Annex 2 'Expenditure per Categories'. Overall, data on project costs and co-financing is provided in the report, but numerous errors and lack of clarity, when combined, make it very hard to get an accurate overview of the project costs.	
Assess the quality of the report's evaluation of project M&E systems:	The ICM does not explicitly address the M&E systems in a separate section. It does provide an overall rating, as well as information about some of the shortcomings of the system. This information is mainly provided in form of comments to the outcome ratings. Given that the project had such an elaborate M&E system at design, and given that it seems to have not been implemented effectively, more information on why this occurred would have been helpful. While some of the M&E information is in the report a more systematic description would have improved the overall quality of the report.	MS
Overall TE Rating		**S (4.5)**

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

No additional sources of information used.