Terminal Evaluation Review form, GEF Independent Evaluation Office, APR 2015

1. Project Data

Summary project data			
GEF project ID		3129	
GEF Agency project ID		3647	
GEF Replenishment Phase		GEF-4	
Lead GEF Agency (include all for joint projects)		UNDP	
Project name		Sustaining Agricultural Biodiversity in the Face of Climate Change in Tajikistan	
Country/Countries		Tajikistan	
Region		Eastern and Central Asia	
Focal area		Biodiversity and Climate Change	
Operational Program or Strategic Priorities/Objectives		BD SO-2; and Strategic Priority on Adaptation (SPA)	
Executing agencies involved		National Biodiversity and Biosafety Centre	
NGOs/CBOs involvement		Tajik Academy of Sciences; Tajik Academy of Agricultural Sciences; Boghparvar; Zan va Zamin	
Private sector involvement		Pamir Travel Ltd; micro-finance institutions	
CEO Endorsement (FSP) /Approval date (MSP)		May 29, 2009	
Effectiveness date / project start		September 2009	
Expected date of project completion (at start)		June 21, 2014	
Actual date of project completion		August 31, 2015	
Project Financing			
		At Endorsement (US $M)	**At Completion (US $M)**
Project Preparation Grant	GEF funding	0.13	0.13
	Co-financing	0.1	UA
GEF Project Grant		1.9	1.74
Co-financing	IA own[1]	1.53	1.48
	Government	0.57	0.67
	Other multi- /bi-laterals		0.9
	Private sector		
	NGOs/CSOs		
Total GEF funding		2.03	1.87
Total Co-financing		2.2	3.05
Total project funding (GEF grant(s) + co-financing)		4.23	4.92
Terminal evaluation/review information			
TE completion date		July 31, 2015	
Author of TE		German Kust and Alisher Nazirov	
TER completion date		February 22, 2016	
TER prepared by		Laura Nissley	
TER peer review by (if GEF IEO review)		Molly Watts	

[1] The TE presents different co-financing figures for the implementing agency on page i and page 16. This TER references the figures from page 16, as they appear to be more complete.

2. Summary of Project Ratings

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

3. Project Objectives

3.1 Global Environmental Objectives of the project:

The Global Environmental Objective of the project is not stated as such in the project documents. However, the goal of the project is to "conserve the agro-biodiversity of Tajikistan in the face of climate change" (PD pg. 60). The diverse climatic, geological, and natural environmental conditions have led to rich biodiversity in Tajikistan, including 9,800 plant species. Tajikistan's biodiversity is currently threatened by tree-cutting for fuel and construction materials; forest clearing to create agricultural land and pastures; over-harvesting of non-timber forest products and meadow species; overgrazing by livestock; conversion of pastures to agricultural land; disease and pests; and alien invasive species. Additionally, biodiversity in Tajikistan is increasingly threatened by the impacts of climate change, including rising temperatures and increasing climatic variability (PD pgs. 7-8).

3.2 Development Objectives of the project:

The Development Objective of the project was "Globally significant agro-biodiversity conservation and adaptation to climate change are embedded in agricultural and rural development policies and practices at national and local levels in Tajikistan" (PD pg. 37).

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

The project's objectives and outcomes remained unchanged during implementation. During the inception phase, the project team altered some indicators and targets. Additionally, following the Midterm Review in 2012, some outputs were revised, in addition to indicators and targets (TE pg. 6).

4. GEF IEO assessment of Outcomes and Sustainability

Please refer to the GEF Terminal Evaluation Review Guidelines for detail on the criteria for ratings.

Relevance can receive either a Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory rating. For Effectiveness and Cost efficiency, a six point rating scale is used (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory), or Unable to Assess. Sustainability ratings are assessed on a four-point scale: Likely=no or negligible risk; Moderately Likely=low risk; Moderately Unlikely=substantial risks; Unlikely=high risk. In assessing a Sustainability rating please note if, and to what degree, sustainability of project outcomes is threatened by financial, sociopolitical, institutional/governance, or environmental factors.

Please justify ratings in the space below each box.

4.1 **Relevance**	Rating: **Satisfactory**

The TE provides a rating of "relevant" for this aspect of project outcomes, which this TER adjusts to **Satisfactory**. The project focused on conserving threatened local plant genetic resources and addressing barriers to the recovery and sustainable use of endemic plant agro-biodiversity, with is consistent with GEF-4 Biodiversity Strategic Objective 2, *Mainstreaming biodiversity in production landscapes/seascapes and sectors*. In addition, the project was designed to ensure that measures were taken to manage climate change risks in biodiversity conservation efforts, which is consistent with the Operational Guidelines for the Strategic Priority on Adaptation (SPA) (PD pg. 34).

The project was also consistent with Tajikistan's policies and plans relating to biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation. In particular, project outcomes are consistent with the *Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper for 2007-2009* and the *National Development Strategy,* which target environmentally sustainable development, including the conservation and management of biodiversity and ecosystems, as well as climate change adaptation measures (PD pg. 47).

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

The TE provides a rating of **Highly Satisfactory** for project effectiveness, which this TER revises to **Satisfactory**. Overall, the project achieved its development objective and associated outcomes, including improved policy and regulatory frameworks, improved capacity for sustaining agro-biodiversity, and an improved enabling environment for agro-biodiversity based enterprise. The project fell short of achieving its targets in some areas (i.e. national extension services system), however this did not impact the overall achievement of the development objective.

A summary of the project's achievements, by outcomes, is provided below:

- **Outcome 1: Agro-biodiversity conservation and adaptation to climate change through supportive policy, regulatory and institutional frameworks**
  Expected results under this outcome included: (1) agro-biodiversity friendly and climate resilient policies and practices embedded into national policy and local development plans, (2) a strengthened national extension service providing farmers with the technology to promote farmer varieties and climate resilience, and (3) an extension package for promoting climate resilient farmer varieties developed and integrated into the national extension service. At the time of the TE, numerous national policies had been prepared, including a National Strategy on Agro-Biodiversity Conservation, which was awaiting endorsement by the government. At the local level, five-year operational work plans were developed in 42 Jamoats.[2] Additionally, 329 local authorities were trained in agro-biodiversity conservation planning (TE pgs. LXXI-LXXIV).

  Although the project strengthened elements of extension services, a national system was not fully developed at the time of the evaluation. The project strengthened 10 existing Jamoat Resources Centres (JRCs) through the training of 850 extension workers in agro-biodiversity conservation, and the project also established two new JRCs in remote areas. An extension package to promote use of locally adapted cultivars (i.e. apple, pear, apricot, pomegranate, etc.) was also developed for the JRCs. The TE does note that some local specialists required additional training in the extension package in order to be effective (TE pg. LXIII).

- **Outcome 2: Improved capacity for sustaining agro-biodiversity in the face of climate change**
  Expected results under this outcome included: (1) *ex situ*[3] (gene bank) conservation of globally significant agro-biodiversity established to protect wild relatives of important crops, (2) *in situ*[4] conservation of wild relatives of globally significant ago-biodiversity in four pilot areas, and (3) homologue approach[5] implemented in four pilot areas to enable farmers to adapt their current production practices to climate change risks and variability. At the time of the TE, 50 globally significant recalcitrant landraces and crop wild relatives (23 cereals and 27 fruits) were conserved *ex situ* in gene banks and as living collections in botanic gardens, nurseries, and farms. Additionally, 10 priority fruit and nut species (and their 71 varietals), and six varieties of cereals and leguminous plants were conserved *in situ* on farms (TE pgs. 19-20). 84 climatic homologue models were created for 42 project sites, representing the present and future climatic conditions. 45 farmers in four pilot areas participated in the implementation of the

[2] A Jamoat is a village administration, or executive body (PD pg. 3).
[3] *Ex-situ* conservation for this project refers to crop wild relatives which were taken from the wild and introduced to farms/home gardens/botanic gardens, etc. where they are maintained (Midterm Review pg. 6).
[4] In-situ conservation for this project refers to crop wild relatives which were protected and conserved in the wild with little or no management intervention so that they continue to adapt to changing environmental conditions (Midterm Review pg. 6).
[5] The homologue approach uses an environmental agro-climatic model to pair sites in mountainous regions with their "homologue," or sites in lower altitudes that represent the climates that will be encountered in the year 2050 in the mountainous regions. Moreover, the homologue approach is used to determine the climatic conditions the sites in the mountainous regions will face in 50 years time due to climate change (TE pg.4; PD pg. 9).

homologue approach and initialized germplasm exchanges to cope with future climate change impacts (TE pgs. LXXVI-LXXIX). Overall, the results under this outcome were fully achieved.

- **Outcome 3: Market conditions favor sustainable agro-biodiversity production**
  Expected results under this outcome included: (1) enabling environment for agro-biodiversity based enterprise development established, (2) demand for four agro-biodiversity friendly and climate resilient products increased, (3) agro-biodiversity friendly and climate resilient products available and branded in local and international markets, (4) business and financial capacity to produce agro-biodiversity friendly and climate resilient products at four pilot sites, and (5) increased income from products grown in four pilot sites. At the time of the evaluation, a number of agro-biodiversity enterprises had been established, including two medium manufacturers (mulberry bars and canning), four small factories producing solar dryers, and two plant nurseries. These enterprises have generated sustainable income, increasing 25% (canning line), 150% (nurseries), and 1000% (mulberry processing). In addition, 40 small grants were issued to establish food-processing agro-enterprises. The project also provided 20 seminars and training on developing business plans, and 864 farmers received financial assistance through micro-loan funds (TE pgs. 21-22).

  The project did experience some challenges improving the market environment for agro-biodiversity friendly and climate resilient products, largely due to a lack of trust between actors and institutional elements on the value chain. Although some certified and non-certified products were marketed locally, only one product (mulberry) demonstrated improved marketing (i.e. added value, strengthened supply chain, branding and certification.) (TE pgs. LXXX-LXXXII).

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

The TE provides a rating of **Highly Satisfactory** for project efficiency, which this TER revises it to **Satisfactory**. Overall, the TE found the project to be cost-effective, in part due to the small size of the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) and the efficient management of resources. Additionally, the TE notes that the financial resources of the project were disbursed on time and in a transparent manner (pg. 25). The project did experience some delays at project start-up, as staff in the executing agency lacked experience in operational procedures (negotiating agreements, setting up back accounts, etc.) (2010 PIR, UNDP CO, line 19). Additionally, the timeline proposed in the project design was ambitious, particularly in regard to the policy and market development outcomes. Two no cost-extensions were therefore granted so that the project could achieve all of its outcomes, shifting the project's completion date from June 2014 to February 2015, and finally, to August 2014 (TE pg. 3; 25). On the other hand, the TE notes that the management team did attempt to minimize disruptions by seeking and securing additional funding from other sources to support activities (TE pg. 25).

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

The TE provides a rating of **Moderately Likely** for project sustainability, and this TER concurs.

Financial Resources

This TER assesses the sustainability of financial resources to be **Moderately Likely**. The TE notes that the project did not develop a strategy for financial sustainability at the beginning of the project. However, the project did broker relationships between farmers and micro-financing institutions, which increases the likelihood that some financial resources will be available in the future to sustain the established agro-enterprises (TE pg. 28). Additionally, it was anticipated that additional funding for project outcomes would result from the endorsement of the National Strategy for Agro-Biodiversity Conservation, however this was not guaranteed (TE pg. 29).

Sociopolitical

This TER assesses sociopolitical sustainability to be **Likely**. The TE notes that overall, the project had sufficient national and local ownership to ensure the sustainability of project results (TE pg. 27). The project invested in an extensive awareness raising campaign, reaching over 5,000 people through seminars, workshops, and trainings. The project also utilized community-based participatory methods for developing and implementing *ex situ* conservation initiatives, which will likely contribute toward sustainability (TE pg. 20).

Institutional Frameworks and Governance

This TER assesses the sustainability of institutional frameworks and governance to be **Likely**. The project supported the development of numerous national and local policies and plans for agro-biodiversity conservation that will support the sustainability of project outcomes. If endorsed, the National Strategy for Agro-Biodiversity Conservation would provide the framework and resources for climate change forecasts and monitoring; conserving genetic resources; and climate change adaptation measures such as the exchange of germoplasm at the national and global levels (TE pg. 27). The project also supported several scientific institutes, such as the Tajik Academy of Sciences and the Tajik Academy of Agricultural Sciences, which at the time of the evaluation were implementing programs independently from the project (TE pg. 28). Lastly, although the national extension services system was not fully developed at the time of the evaluation, a new department within the Ministry of Agriculture was tasked with further developing the system (TE pg. 27).

Environmental

This TER assesses environmental sustainability to be **Moderately Likely**. The project implemented activities that directly contributed toward the conservation of globally significant recalcitrant landraces and crop wild relatives. The TE does note however, that the sustainability of the agro-biodiversity

conservation activities will depend on sustainable land management, which was outside the scope of this project (TE pg. 29).

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?

Actual co-financing exceeded expected co-financing by approximately $0.85 million. The TE notes that UNDP made an effort to coordinate project activities with other projects under implementation in the region, which attracted additional co-financing (TE pg. 11). The farmers in the small grants program also contributed co-financing through "farm associations" and government co-financing was also slightly higher than anticipated (TE pg. LX). The TE notes that the additional co-financing facilitated the achievement of project outcomes, however it does not provide specific examples (TE pg. iii).

5.2 Project extensions and/or delays. If there were delays in project implementation and completion, then what were the reasons for it? Did the delay affect the project's outcomes and/or sustainability? If so, in what ways and through what causal linkages?

The project experienced delays at project start-up due to administrative inefficiencies. The UNDP Country Office noted in the 2010 PIR that the executing agency initially lacked the capacity to set-up operational procedures. Additionally, the TE notes that the project experienced delays during implementation due to an ambitious timeline, particularly relating to the policy and market development outcomes. As a result, the project received two no-cost extensions in order to complete project activities, extending the completion date from June 2014 to February 2015, and again, to August 2014. However, these delays did not affect the achievement of project outcomes.

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:

Country ownership over the project was high, particularly over outcomes related to policy development. The project worked closely with government officials to develop relevant national and local strategies, development plans, and legal codes. In addition, government and civil society representatives actively participated on the Project Board throughout the life of the project (TE pg. 23). The government also contributed slightly higher levels of co-financing than anticipated, which indicates a commitment to the project.

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 Unsatisfactory**

The TE provides a rating of **Moderately Satisfactory** for M&E design at entry, which this TER revises to **Moderately Unsatisfactory**. As both the Midterm Review and the TE note, the project's results framework contained a number of weaknesses which limited its usefulness as a monitoring tool. In particular, the indicators were not SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely), and in many cases the links between the indicator, baseline, and targets were not clear. For example, indicator 2.1, *improved capacity for ex-situ conservation measures of globally significant and climate resilient agrobiodiversity*, has a baseline which reads, *local communities are not aware of implications of climate change and are not working toward the development of adaptive strategies and capacities*. The target for indicators 2.1 is *ex-situ conservation of globally significant agro-biodiversity in gene banks and as living collections in collaboration with local institutions*. It is unclear how the baseline, which is measuring "awareness," corresponds to the target, which is measuring "conservation" (TE pgs. LXVII-LXVIII).

The project document does outline a general M&E plan, which indicates various M&E activities (inception workshop, data collection, reporting, lessons learned gathering, and a midterm and final evaluation), along with the responsible parties, associated budget and timeframe. A budget of $184,000 was dedicate to support M&E activities. Overall, however, the presented M&E approach has significant shortcomings, which justify the rating of moderately unsatisfactory.

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

The TE provides a rating of **Highly Satisfactory** for M&E implementation, which this TER revises to **Moderately Satisfactory**. The TE notes that the M&E plan outlined at project design was closely followed, and that the M&E system was operational throughout the life of the project. The project team made a concerted effort to revise indicators and targets during the inception phase of the project and again following the Midterm Review in 2012, however there were still weaknesses in terms of their specificity and measurability. The flaws in the indicators are evident in the quarterly and annual reports, which provide detailed descriptions of project activities but are largely inconsistent with the indicators and targets. As the TE notes, this made it difficult to track progress toward achieving the development objective and outcomes (pg. 8). On the other hand, there is evidence that the project used the findings and recommendations of the Midterm Review to adapt their strategy in key areas, such as developing a comprehensive communications strategy (TE pg. 13). Therefore, although there were moderate shortcomings, M&E implementation was adequate for this project.

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 TE provides a rating of **Highly Satisfactory** for quality of project implementation, which this TER revises to **Moderately Satisfactory**. As noted in other sections, there were weaknesses in the project's design, including an inappropriate M&E design which prevented the project from satisfactorily tracking progress toward achieving its objectives. Additionally, the project's initial timeline was overly ambitious, particularly regarding the policy and market development components. As a consequence, the project's completion date had to be extended. However, UNDP provided satisfactory technical assistance to the executing agency and supervision over the project. UNDP's Regional Centre and Country Office provided advisory services in different project areas, as well as operational support for administrative procedures and financial management (TE pg. 16). UNDP also actively created synergies between the project and other UNDP initiatives in different areas, which ultimately attracted additional co-financing for the project (TE pg. 11).

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

The TE provides a rating of **Highly Satisfactory** for quality of project execution, which this TER revises to **Satisfactory**. The executing agency for this project was the National Biodiversity and Biosafety Centre (NBBC). The project was managed by a Project Implementation Unit (PIU) under the NBBC. The TE notes that overall, the project was well-executed and the project team was responsive to opportunities which arose and adjusted their strategy accordingly. The TE cites the small grants program and mulberry processing and marketing as key project adaptations. The project did experience some delays at start-up due to challenges setting up operational procedures, which likely contributed to the need for a project extension. However, these delays did not ultimately affect the achievement of project outcomes. A Project Board consisting of key national governmental and non-governmental agencies was also established and met regularly throughout the life of the project and provided consistent guidance to the project team (TE pgs. 12-13).

8. Assessment of Project Impacts

Note - In instances where information on any impact related topic is not provided in the terminal evaluations, the reviewer should indicate in the relevant sections below that this is indeed the case and identify the information gaps. When providing information on topics related to impact, please cite the page number of the terminal evaluation from where the information is sourced.

8.1 Environmental Change. Describe the changes in environmental stress and environmental status that occurred by the end of the project. Include both quantitative and qualitative changes documented, sources of information for these changes, and how project activities contributed to or hindered these changes. Also include how contextual factors have contributed to or hindered these changes.

> At the time of the evaluation, 330.17 hectares were cultivated using local germplasm (234.10 hectares of fruit and nuts and 96.07 hectares of cereals and legumes) (TE pg. 18). Additionally, 50 globally significant recalcitrant landraces and crop wild relatives (23 cereals and 27 fruits) were conserved *ex situ* in gene banks and as living collections in botanic gardens, nurseries, and farms. 10 priority fruit and nut species (and their 71 varietals), and six varieties of cereals and leguminous plants were also conserved *in situ* on farms (TE pgs. 19-20).

8.2 Socioeconomic change. Describe any changes in human well-being (income, education, health, community relationships, etc.) that occurred by the end of the project. Include both quantitative and qualitative changes documented, sources of information for these changes, and how project activities contributed to or hindered these changes. Also include how contextual factors have contributed to or hindered these changes.

> The TE notes that the agro-biodiversity enterprises established under this project had increased their income by 25% (canning line), 150% (nurseries), and 1000% (mulberry processing) (TE pg. 22).

8.3 Capacity and governance changes. Describe notable changes in capacities and governance that can lead to large-scale action (both mass and legislative) bringing about positive environmental change. “Capacities” include awareness, knowledge, skills, infrastructure, and environmental monitoring systems, among others. “Governance” refers to decision-making processes, structures and systems, including access to and use of information, and thus would include laws, administrative bodies, trust-building and conflict resolution processes, information-sharing systems, etc. Indicate how project activities contributed to/ hindered these changes, as well as how contextual factors have influenced these changes.

> a) Capacities
>
> At the time of the evaluation, 45 farmers had been trained in the implementation of the homologue approach and had initialized germplasm exchanges to cope with future climate change impacts (TE pgs. LXXVI-LXXIX). Additionally, 329 local authorities were trained in agro-

biodiversity conservation planning (TE pgs. LXXI-LXXIV). The project also strengthened the capacity of 10 Jamoat Resources Centres (JRCs) through the training of 850 extension workers in agro-biodiversity conservation (LXXIII). Additionally, the project supported two scientific institutes, the Tajik Academy of Sciences and the Tajik Academy of Agricultural Sciences in furthering their capacity in agro-biodiversity conservation and gene bank management (TE pg. vi).

b) Governance

At the time of the evaluation, the project had contributed to the preparation of numerous policies and plans at the national and local levels. At the national level, the project contributed to: the National Strategy on Conservation of Agro-Biodiversity; Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources; Law of the Republic of Tajikistan on "collection, storage and rational use of the genetic resources of crop plants"; Law of the Republic of Tajikistan on "pastures"; Strategy and Action Plan on Raising Public Awareness on Sustaining Agrobiodiversity; 5th National Communication on Biodiversity Conservation; and the Manual on the Elaboration and Implementation of the Social and Economic Development Programs of Districts and Towns in the Republic of Tajikistan (of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade). At the local level, the project contributed to: Five-year Operational Work Plans of 42 Jamoats in nine districts; and the District Development Plans of Nurobod, Tojikobod, Rasht, Baljuvon, Shurobod, Panjakent and Aini (TE pg. 18).

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

The TE does not cite any unintended impacts.

8.5 Adoption of GEF initiatives at scale. Identify any initiatives (e.g. technologies, approaches, financing instruments, implementing bodies, legal frameworks, information systems) that have been mainstreamed, replicated and/or scaled up by government and other stakeholders by project end. Include the extent to which this broader adoption has taken place, e.g. if plans and resources have been established but no actual adoption has taken place, or if market change and large-scale environmental benefits have begun to occur. Indicate how project activities and other contextual factors contributed to these taking place. If broader adoption has not taken place as expected, indicate which factors (both project-related and contextual) have hindered this from happening.

The TE does not cite any concrete examples of GEF initiatives that had been adopted at scale.

9. Lessons and recommendations

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

The TE states the following lessons learned ("best and worst practices") (TE pgs. 37-38)[6]:

Best Practices

- Project is driven by scientifically grounded knowledge provided by relevant institutions involved.
- Successful use of the UNDP advantage: collaboration with institutions previously developed and established within UNDP projects, such as the Jamoat Resources Centres (JRCs), microloan funds; complementarities with UNDP/GEF SGP (Small Grants Program).
- Development and effective testing of SGP arrangements and practical tools before launch of the "big" UNDP/GEF SGP.
- Micro-Loan Fund (MLF): sustainable financing mechanism (revolving fund) that enabled synergies generated from combination of scientific and traditional knowledge, good economic background and professional business plans.
- Pilot testing of: (i) extension services; (ii) marketing ABD products and value chains improvement; (iii) micro-finance sector; and (iv) payments for ecosystem services.

Worst Practices

- Proper M&E framework and progress tracking should be in place from the beginning. For this, Project probably had to hire more responsible and qualified M&E specialist.

9.2 Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation.

The TE states the following recommendations (pgs. 34-36):

Recommendations for the Project design

- To pay specific attention to the Project "Theory of Change," its strategy and "causal outcomes-impacts pathways," coordination and synergy of intermediate results, removing barriers, risks and assumptions

[6] These "best and worst practices" have been revised to include lessons learned only.

- Developing SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely) indicators to the outputs, not only objective and outcomes, and associated targets to them could guide the Project team in proper planning of activities across the years. The targets of outputs (outcomes as well) could be divided into annual milestones. This modeling also needs detailed information on soils and genetic coefficients, which is not exist, as well as it needs the development for perennial crops and horticultural plants in particular (keeping their relative flexibility), which would make easy the reporting process as well as providing an idea of which activities to focus on in subsequent years.

- This would help to avoid excessive ambitions and elaborate more adequate and measurable, not duplicative indicators for targets and outputs. For example, explanation of the key measurable Project targets (such as hectares of the Project affected area, number of species/varieties conserved, number of farmers involved, etc.) should be more clear in terms of activities undertaken in each particular case.

- Nevertheless, evaluators fully understand and even can recommend that projects like these *should set ambitious goals (but not extreme)* in order to have flexibility in planning and prioritizing within the Project development.

- The ways to check and approve any scientific hypothesis like Homologue approach and relative modeling tools should be clearly scientifically and practically identified at the Project development phase in order to realize its feasibility and generate practical steps for this purpose.

- Any investments in agriculture, especially in environmentally fragile mountainous regions cannot avoid assessment of land degradation/desertification issues and comprehensive analysis of its cross-links with biodiversity conservation, climate change vulnerability, and other environmental and socio-economic issues. For GEF projects an assessment of possible integrated impact (positive or adverse) related to all focal areas should be obligatory at all scales of implementation.

- The application of the ecosystem services approach and payments for them is seen as an opportunity in many of environmental projects, including those of GEF-funding. So, payment for ecosystem services (PES) application is likely to be evaluated in all the projects like this even there are no evident capacities in the country to realize it from the start. Building national capacities could be one of the Project's aims in this connection.

<u>Recommendations for the Implementation of the Project</u>

- More attention should be given to establishing cooperation with other donors working on the similar issues in rural and agricultural development, climate change resilience, forest management, sustainable land management, water use, etc.

- Projects aimed at success in agriculture must be certain of agronomy assistance at the grassroots level. Absence of extension and monitoring services in remote areas, for example, in Shurobod, was crucial for the vital maintenance of the garden established; in contrast even on-field consultations of skilled farmer in Jamoat Yol added great value to the success of the practical applications.

- Remote Project sites are less valid for further demonstration purposes than those located closer to populated areas and roads. In future, it is recommended to find opportunities to duplicate demonstration sites in more accessible areas.

- The Project website development is a crucial point. Without good website the Project is lacking in most of the Project means: constraining communication, ready access to Project's information resources, business opportunities, knowledge products, data bases, forum, etc.

Recommendations for Project Monitoring and Evaluation

- The Project needed more clearly measurable indicators than was given in the LFM.

- To strengthen the M&E system following overall project logic the project team needed a separate project specific M&E training seminar on the regular basis. Such guidelines had to explain the Project intervention logic to show the place of each performance and/or impact indicator in the evaluation of the overall Project goals.

- Indicators to control key environmental matters of the Project (biodiversity, climate change adaptation) should be more developed in terms of not only hectares but a number of conserved species and varieties, ABD and natural habitats inventory, etc. Otherwise it is not clear enough *what* biodiversity *was anticipated* to be conserved and *was* conserved *to what extent*, *what and who was adapted* to climate change, and why those are considering to be adapted, and to the change of *what climate parameters*.

- The control on the overall Project logic and strategies, review of outcomes-to-impacts and its "theory of change", should be more managed from the very beginning to avoid disorder between Project outcomes and make Project impact and exit strategy more sustainable.

10. Quality of the Terminal Evaluation Report

A six point rating scale is used for each sub-criteria and overall rating of the terminal evaluation report (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory)

Criteria	GEF IEO comments	Rating
To what extent does the report contain an assessment of relevant outcomes and impacts of the project and the achievement of the objectives?	The report contains a satisfactory assessment of the outcomes and impacts of the project. The analysis is also presented in a clear, systematic way.	**S**
To what extent is the report internally consistent, the evidence presented complete and convincing, and ratings well substantiated?	The report is at times inconsistent. For example, in one section it notes that the M&E system allowed for the "timely tracking of results," and in another section the report notes that it was "difficult to trace the achievement of the objective and outcomes." The evidence presented is complete, however it is not always in line with the ratings, which are generally inflated.	**MS**
To what extent does the report properly assess project sustainability and/or project exit strategy?	The report provides a satisfactory assessment of project sustainability and the exit strategy.	**S**
To what extent are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive?	The lessons learned are comprehensive and supported by the evidence presented.	**S**
Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used?	The report includes actual project costs and co-financing. However, the report cites conflicting figures for the implementing agency co-financing.	**MU**
Assess the quality of the report's evaluation of project M&E systems:	The report provides a detailed assessment of the M&E design, including an analysis of each indicator, baseline, and target. More detail could have been provided on M&E implementation. The evidence presented is also not consistent with a Highly Satisfactory rating for implementation.	**MS**
Overall TE Rating		**MS**

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

Midterm Review (2012).