

Terminal Evaluation Review form, GEF Evaluation Office, APR 2013

1. Project Data

Summary project data			
GEF project ID		3212	
GEF Agency project ID		GCP/INT/062/GFF	
GEF Replenishment Phase		GEF-4	
Lead GEF Agency (include all for joint projects)		FAO	
Project name		Capacity Building on Obsolete and POPs Pesticides in Eastern European Caucasus and Central Asian (EECCA) countries	
Country/Countries		Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Mongolia, Republic of Moldova, Romania, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	
Region		ECA	
Focal area		PP	
Operational Program or Strategic Priorities/Objectives		SP-1 Strengthening Capacities for NIP development and Implementation	
Executing agencies involved		Green Cross (Switzerland and Belarus), International Hexachlorocyclohexane and Pesticides Association (IHPA), Milieukontakt International (MKI)	
NGOs/CBOs involvement		Lead executing agency	
Private sector involvement		Consultation	
CEO Endorsement (FSP) /Approval date (MSP)		4 August 2008	
Effectiveness date / project start		1 April 2009	
Expected date of project completion (at start)		31 December 2012	
Actual date of project completion		9/30/2011	
Project Financing			
		At Endorsement (US \$M)	At Completion (US \$M)
Project Preparation Grant	GEF funding		
	Co-financing		
GEF Project Grant		1.00	1.00
Co-financing	IA/EA own	0.07	0.07
	Government		
	Other*	1.33	1.88
Total GEF funding		1.00	
Total Co-financing		1.40	1.95
Total project funding (GEF grant(s) + co-financing)		2.40	2.81
Terminal evaluation/review information			
TE completion date		Dec-2013	

TE submission date	1/5/2014
Author of TE	Eloise Touni, Bernd Bultemeier
TER completion date	16-Feb-2014
TER prepared by	Pallavi Nuka
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	S	HS	Not rated	HS
Sustainability of Outcomes	ML	L	Not rated	ML
M&E Design	NA	NA	Not rated	HS
M&E Implementation	NA	MS	Not rated	UA
Quality of Implementation	S	HS	Not rated	MS
Quality of Execution	NA	S	Not rated	S
Quality of the Terminal Evaluation Report			Not rated	MS

3. Project Objectives

3.1 Global Environmental Objectives of the project:

As outlined in the Project Document the global environmental objective of the project was the “the reduction of pesticide releases into the environment and elimination of the human health and environmental threats they pose in Eastern European Caucasus and Central Asian (EECCA) countries.” Mismanagement and accumulation of obsolete pesticide stockpiles pose a threat to human health and the environment, locally, regionally, and globally through contamination of soil and ground water.

3.2 Development Objectives of the project:

As noted in the Project Document, the development objective was to incorporate “viable and environmentally sound measures for the identification, handling and disposal of pesticides stockpiles and wastes” into national policies with “a strong emphasis on regional and sub-regional approaches.” Many of the participating countries lack the financial or technical capacity to address their obsolete pesticide stockpiles, which are among the largest in the world. The project was designed to provide both policy and solutions through increasing awareness, enhancing technical capacity, increasing stakeholder involvement, and improving access to information about obsolete & POPs pesticides prevention and disposal.

The project had four Components corresponding to four Expected Outcomes:

1. Greater awareness raised in the participating countries and in the EECCA region concerning obsolete pesticides and POPs pesticides wastes;
2. Increased capacity for environmentally sound management (ESM) of obsolete pesticides including their elimination and prevention;
3. Improved communication among participating countries in the EECCA region regarding management of obsolete pesticide and POPs stockpiles and management of pesticides in use;

4. More systematic engagement of a wider range of stakeholders in obsolete pesticide and POPs stockpiles management and pesticide management.

Key expected outputs of the project were:

1. Development of obsolete pesticides management and disposal plans in participating countries.
2. A regional and sub-regional framework for cooperation.

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

No changes to the GEO or DOs were noted in the TE report.

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
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The project supports the Eastern European Caucasus and Central Asian (EECCA) countries in fulfilling obligations under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the Basel Convention on trans-boundary movement of hazardous waste. Most of the EECCA are signatories to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, the Basel Convention on transboundary movement of hazardous waste, and the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent process for trade in certain hazardous chemicals. The project supported implementation of these conventions through development and finalization of National Implementation Plans (NIPs). The project was also designed to build national and regional capacities to manage pesticides more effectively. The project primarily contributes to the achievement of MDG7 on environment through the removal of serious contaminants from the environment and improving the management of pesticides in order to reduce adverse environmental impacts.

At the national level, the project's aims and objectives were consistent with national priorities to reduce pesticide-related pollution of fisheries, waters and soils and minimize human health risks. Some of the participating countries had already taken steps to address pesticide stockpiles, but according to the Project Document these were inadequate. FAO developed this project based on input and direct requests for technical assistance from the participating countries. The project adopted a regional approach in order to promote sharing of knowledge and experience between the more and less technically capable countries in the EECCA.

The project objectives are consistent with GEF-4 POPs Focal Area strategy and the Operational Program on POPs (OP#14). Project outcomes and activities support SP1: Strengthening Capacities for NIP Development and Implementation, SP2: Partnering in Investments for NIP Implementation, and SP3: Generating and Disseminating Knowledge to Address Future Challenges in Implementing the Stockholm Convention.

4.2 Effectiveness	Rating: Highly Satisfactory
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The TER rates Effectiveness as Highly Satisfactory, in-line with the TE's rating. The TE notes that the project achieved "more than its original objectives" especially in terms of awareness raising and capacity building. The project also implemented additional pilot activities, or "micro-support projects", in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Macedonia, and Romania, which were not in the original project design.

Outcome 1: Based on information in the TE report, the project's outreach and education activities were successful in raising awareness of issue and the approach to managing and disposing of obsolete pesticides. 'Micro-support' activities in garnered significant attention through TV shows, public meetings, and improved public access to information on stockpiles. The TE report notes that there was an "impressive level of knowledge and willingness of populations to discuss about OP stockpiles and sites (pg. 16)." However there is no solid evidence (pre- post-surveys, or polls) to confirm the impacts on public perceptions and knowledge. Outreach had more observable influence on government commitments to deal with stockpiles. After the 2nd IHPA Forum, Azerbaijan declared its commitment to becoming a regional leader in management of obsolete pesticides, and developed a national plan.

In Romania, workshops at local administration level helped local governments tap into EU funding for POPs and pesticide management.

Outcome 2: The planned technical trainings and pilot projects, for government agents, NGOs, and members of the academic community, were successfully completed, and according the TE report were effective in enhancing technical capacities in the participating government agencies. The TE report notes “high levels of satisfaction and enthusiasm of participants (pg. 16).” Two pilot repackaging projects (Belarus and Azerbaijan) and one on repacking in Georgia were implemented. Pesticide inventories were conducted in Armenia, Georgia and Macedonia. The project thus exceeded the target of 4 pilot activities. As a result of the capacity building activities, Azerbaijan and Belarus developed national plans and Romania is accessing EU funds to properly manage pesticide stocks.

Outcome 3: Outputs under information exchange fell slightly short of expectations. On the one hand, the project did increase the level of information exchange between the participant countries; this was mainly through direct contact at trainings, meetings, and workshops. The TE reports that participants “shared information for specific needs, e.g. development of national plan 2012-14 in Azerbaijan, and of micro-support proposals (pg. 16).” But on the other hand, development of a more systematic framework (website, wiki, MIS system) was delayed and, based on information in the TE report and final PIR, was not in operation by project closure. The TE report points to legal issues with FAO (FAO did not want to be seen as endorsing content) as the main obstacle to getting the information exchange platform running.

Outcome 4: According to the TE report, the project successfully increased stakeholder involvement, largely through getting the European Union involved and garnering €8.5m in EU support for 10 countries in the region, as well as a WHO recommendation. The project was widely promoted (European Parliament, UN Environment for Europe conference, Stockholm 5th Conference of Parties, and World Health Assembly). Micro-support projects were used to engage national stakeholders, leverage in-kind government support through provision of technical staff and provision, and create links between stakeholders at all levels.

4.3 Efficiency	Rating: Satisfactory
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The TE report rates cost-effectiveness as HS, noting that execution through NGOs served to contain costs. This review rates Efficiency as Satisfactory given the 12 month delay in implementation. The project was extended by 12 months to December 2012 to allow for completion of activities and delivery of associated outputs. Reasons for the delay are described below, but the delay did not affect project costs.

According to the TE report, given the limited resources available, the project was an example of a cost-effective approach. The project management was smooth, with well-prepared work plans, transparent and efficient financial management, and timely implementation of activities. There were some changes in final allocations between the different components compared to what was expected. The main change was with respect to pilot projects (micro-projects) activity under Component 2. The amount allocated to this activity rose from US\$ 0.530 M (50% of GEF grant) at endorsement to US\$ 0.651 M (65% of GEF grant) in actual expenditure.

4.4 Sustainability	Rating: Moderately Likely
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Sustainability is rated as Moderately likely as there are moderate risks to sustainability of outcomes along the environmental dimension (see below).

Financial (L): Continued funding to sustain project activities is guaranteed through a EU grant of 8.5 million euros for 10 countries in the region, including the countries in the project. Several of the participant countries have also developed national plans with budget allocations to manage and dispose of pesticide stockpiles.

Socio-political (L): In some countries, the government has demonstrated high-level support (and budget allocations) to deal with obsolete pesticides, although adoption of the standards in national institutions and

standard operating procedures is slow. Given the project's success in outreach and public awareness raising, there is likely to be continued public and civil society demand to deal with the problem of obsolete pesticides.

Institutional (L): The project has initiated or reinforced some government initiatives that ensure longer-term effects (e.g. Romania container management system, Armenia – entities legally required to report to authorities on stocks annually, Belarus – 100% to use FAO standards in guidelines for OP management). The EU funding is also likely to lead to greater development of policy and regulatory frameworks for pesticide management.

Environmental (ML): According to the TE report, the repackaging of pesticides at high-risk sites was done with minimal risk to workers, communities and environment. However, in many cases the stocks are in temporary containers (bags, drums). For example in the Georgia repackaging project, five big bags were filled from the two sites, and the bags are currently located on pallets in a warehouse. These stocks will eventually be a risk again, unless they are destroyed.

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?

There is no information in the TE report on the materialization of co-financing. Total expected co-financing was US\$ 1.396 M (0.65 M in cash) at project endorsement. Based on information in the final PIR, as of mid-2011, the anticipated in-kind co-financing of US\$ 1.27 M total from the 8 participating governments, FAO, and the 4 NGO partners had materialized. Cash co-financing from USAID of US\$ 0.20 M had also fully materialized and US\$ 0.31 M (out of 0.45 M total expected) from Green Cross (Swiss) had materialized.

50% of co-financing was supposed to support Component 2 activities focused on Capacity building for POPs and obsolete pesticide prevention and disposal, the other 50% was divided among the components. There is not enough detail in the Project Document, PIR, or TE report to determine the differential allocations of cash vs. in-kind financing. The TE report only presents a cost breakdown of GEF grant and doesn't describe total costs or how co-financing was spent.

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?

According to the final PIR, the project was granted a 12 month extension from December 2011 to December 2012 to "allow for completion of activities and delivery of associated outputs," "to allow countries to use their new skills for inventory, etc.," and "to align the achievements so that seamlessly integrate into the follow-on EC/FAO project." There is no discussion in the TE report of the reasons for the delay in project implementation and the granting of the extension. However, the TE report does suggest that various factors may have slowed or impeded implementation including:

- "delayed responses to requests for nominating national experts to workshops; unsuitable experts being nominated; difficult assessment of a country's in-kind contribution, etc."
- "FAO did not have much of a presence in many countries [in the region], building contacts might have slowed down progress"
- Frequent turnover of the FAO Project Coordinator (3 different people over 40 months)

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:

According to the TE report, the varying level of government commitment varied among the participating countries. The TE report points to a lack of outreach to higher levels of government in some countries noting that the project generally operated more effectively at the “operational level of a country’s administration” where it “often found enthusiastic response (pg. 8-9).” The TE report also notes that the lack of higher-level government involvement led to “difficulty in identifying appropriate and willing ‘experts’ in under-resourced government departments to participate in trainings which often included physical work in hazardous and uncomfortable conditions - some refused to work in Zone 1 during field exercises (pg. 9).” In other countries, however, such as Belarus and Azerbaijan, the TE report finds that the micro-projects activities stimulated greater country ownership and led to government budget allocations and increased political support.

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: Highly Satisfactory
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The Project Document included a detailed plan for project M&E, clear delineation of M&E responsibilities and an indicative budget. The M&E plan also provided for an inception report, regular reporting on progress, a terminal report, an independent terminal evaluation, and financial reporting.

The Project Document also included a logical framework with SMART indicators (and targets) for objectives and outcomes and consideration of assumptions and risks. The logical framework also identified verification sources for each indicator. The TE report mentions, “indicators, assumptions and risks identified in the project document were valid.”

Overall, the M&E plan at entry was comprehensive and designed to facilitate adaptive management throughout the project implementation period, and represents a model M&E system at entry.

6.2 M&E Implementation	Rating: Unable to Assess
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The TE report does not contain an assessment of the implementation of project M&E and does not provide enough information on project M&E to support a rating. However the TE report does rate M&E as Moderately Satisfactory noting that there was “good awareness of progress among project participants; less transparent for relative outsiders (e.g. initially little information on FAO’s information system” and that the project “established a functioning internal review process.” There is no evidence or discussion in the TE report or in the final PIR to support this rating.

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
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FAO was implementing agency for the project. Project coordination was provided by FAO, while a project secretariat hosted by Green Cross Belarus (through Letter of Agreement) was established for day-to-day execution of project activities. According to the TE report, the “institutional arrangements for the project were unusual but largely appropriate for a small-scale project; project delivery was more cost-effective and flexible, but lacked outreach to higher government levels in some countries. FAO’s coordination and oversight was relatively remote.”

According to the TE report the project design was sound. Given that the project was essentially intended as a demonstration activity, the budget and allocated resources were appropriate.

However according to the TE report, the project could have benefited from closer supervision and oversight by FAO. The TE report notes that “an effective oversight body for the project did not exist; even the Steering Committee seemed to follow rather loose definitions. ...FAO Technical Officers (including the Project Coordinator¹) participated in all project Steering Committee meetings, but mostly did not take an active management role. FAO has a limited presence in the region: only two Assistant FAO Representatives - Georgia and Azerbaijan, of which only Georgia was at all involved in project implementation (assistance with tax and customs issues).” Greater FAO involvement could have increase awareness and support for the project at higher levels of government more quickly, perhaps reducing delays getting the project off the ground.

FAO did provide technical training and assisted in preparing for the pilot projects. However an important issue raised in the TE report is insurance for field operations. The TE report notes that this was dealt with in an “ad-hoc” manner from country-to-country. The repackaging pilot projects, and the repackaging work conducted in Georgia under the micro-project, were not systematically insured. Furthermore, there is no evidence of zoning or emergency measures taken during repacking or transport of the obsolete pesticides. A minor fire incident did occur during the Belarus repackaging in 2011. During the micro-support project in Georgia, the Georgian team in two high-risk sites in Sachkhere did emergency repackaging. An FAO consultant advised the Georgian team on the methods during a workshop, but given that the individuals involved were unsupervised and repackaging for the first time, a field visit and more direct supervision would have been warranted.

Another issue raised in the TE report is that FAO legal concerns about endorsing content on information exchange website, however, has delayed achievement of this output.

There is no information in the TE report about FAO’s administrative and financial management of the project.

7.2 Quality of Project Execution	Rating: Satisfactory
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A project secretariat hosted by Green Cross was established for day-to-day execution of project activities through the provision of services such as communication, procurement, hosting the website, organizing meetings, arranging travel and other administrative functions. A Project Manager from International Hexachlorocyclohexane and Pesticides Association (IHPA) served as trainer and advocate, and Milieukontakt International (MKI) provided goods and services.

According to the TE report, the project management team prepared detailed work plans, executed most activities in an efficient and timely manner, and also established a functioning internal review processes. The team used an adaptive management approach and established a routine that “after each major event issues were identified which 1) could be ongoing challenges during the lifetime of the Project or which 2) could result in a need to modify the Project.” The TE report notes, “financial resources of the project were efficiently and very transparently managed.” Financial and expenditure reporting by GC Switzerland was detailed and comprehensive.

¹ The officer changed in the course of project implementation.

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.

1. Closer FAO/NGO collaboration can yield good results, especially in situations where FAO has little presence. However, reliance on NGO networks can also lead to a situation where government recognition of the initiative is less automatic, and especially government may be reluctant to follow up in terms of drafting regulatory frameworks, establishing norms etc. if they do not see the association with FAO.
2. Legal and insurance issues associated with the absence of a formal project agreement with governments also need to be addressed.

8.2 Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation.

1. Future projects should include: a. building capacity for rapid assessment of pesticides in the field; b. container management technologies²; c. developing appropriate skills at the local level to formulate projects and successfully obtain funding, including from national and district level governments.
2. Promote flexibility in applying international standards: a. recognizing existing government actions to deal with OP in their own programmes, provide tailored support on request aiming to gradually bring national regulations, planning and material provisions for better practices in line with international standards – this may take many years and require a long term presence of FAO in the country; b. further deploy micro-support and NGO partnership approaches to provide flexible support with high levels of leverage, while recognizing the administrative burden of micro project management (selection, contracts, logframe).
3. New projects should plan to remove pesticides as far as possible³ - this is the main demand by countries – and FAO, together with NGO partners in the field, should lobby donors on the need for larger-scale funding needed for full disposal programmes regionally.
4. The information exchange platform obsoletepesticides.net should get online before the end of the project, and a solution should be sought to keep it running. This requires also a clarification of the roles of how FAO and its partners can share editorial control while respecting FAO guidelines, and it should involve a commitment to ensure that all data of the project (including individuals and institutions involved at local levels) is not lost.
5. In future projects, involve health ministries, based on the WHO Recommendation on OP; e.g. seek to raise their awareness of obsolete pesticide stores or burial sites and encourage them to monitor/ study possible impacts on health of communities; clearly identify roles for them in disposal/ prevention/ awareness raising activities (e.g. posters at health centres, poisoning info, etc.)

² Prevention – which could have a significant impact on the avoidance of stockpiles – was mentioned almost accidentally in the project document. Consequently, there was little prevention activity in the project.

³ FAO could consider avoidance of multi-phase projects (where inventory/safeguarding is phase 1, leaving disposal to a future phase 2 project – which may take a long time to materialize), preferring instead a country project, but with full disposal.

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 TE report contains a brief but comprehensive assessment of outcomes and impacts relative to expectations.	S
To what extent is the report internally consistent, the evidence presented complete and convincing, and ratings well substantiated?	No inconsistencies were noted in the TE report, and but the evidence presented largely substantiates the ratings.	S
To what extent does the report properly assess project sustainability and/or project exit strategy?	The report contains a very brief assessment of sustainability, which seems to show some confusion about the issue. Greater discussion of the risks to maintaining project outcomes would have been helpful.	MU
To what extent are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive?	Lessons learned are too few. There is no discussion of lessons learned from the implementation of pilot projects, risk management, and safeguards. Some of the recommendations should be presented as lessons learned.	MS
Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used?	The project does not include actual project costs. Only the breakdown of the GEF grant is presented. There is no information on co-financing.	U
Assess the quality of the report's evaluation of project M&E systems:	The TE report does not include an assessment of project M&E (design or implementation).	U
Overall TE Rating		MS

Quality of TE report = $(.3*(5+5)) + (.1*(3+4+1+1)) = 3.9 = MS$

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

No other sources consulted.