## 1. Project Data

	Su	mmary project data			
GEF project ID 3609					
GEF Agency project ID		71841/ PIMS 4151			
GEF Replenishment Phase		GEF-4			
Lead GEF Agency (inc	lude all for joint projects)	UNDP			
		Strengthening The Financial	Sustainability and Operational		
Project name		Effectiveness of The Venezu	elan National Parks System		
Country/Countries		Venezuela			
Region		Latin America and the Caribbean			
Focal area		Biodiversity			
Operational Program or Strategic Priorities/Objectives		SP1: Sustainable Financing of F Level	SO1: To Catalyze Sustainability of Protected Area Systems SP1: Sustainable Financing of Protected Area Systems at the National Level SP3: Strengthening Terrestrial Protected Area Networks		
Executing agencies in	volved	the Ministry of Popular Power	QUES) (an autonomous Institute from for the Environment)		
NGOs/CBOs involven	nent	NA			
Private sector involvement		NA			
	SP) /Approval date (MSP)	July 2009			
Effectiveness date / p		July 2009			
Expected date of proj	ject completion (at start)	July 2014			
Actual date of project	t completion	November 2014			
	teompletion				
		Project Financing			
			At Completion (US \$M)		
Project Preparation	GEF funding	Project Financing	At Completion (US \$M) NA		
		Project Financing At Endorsement (US \$M)			
Project Preparation	GEF funding	Project Financing At Endorsement (US \$M) 0.0934	NA		
Project Preparation Grant	GEF funding	Project Financing At Endorsement (US \$M) 0.0934 0.14	NA NA		
Project Preparation Grant	GEF funding Co-financing	Project FinancingAt Endorsement (US \$M)0.09340.147.179	NA NA NA*		
Project Preparation Grant	GEF funding Co-financing IA own	Project Financing     At Endorsement (US \$M)     0.0934     0.14     7.179     0.57	NA NA NA* NA*		
Project Preparation Grant GEF Project Grant	GEF funding Co-financing IA own Government	Project Financing     At Endorsement (US \$M)     0.0934     0.14     7.179     0.57     11.23	NA     NA*     NA*     NA*     NA*		
Project Preparation Grant GEF Project Grant	GEF funding Co-financing IA own Government Other multi- /bi-laterals	Project Financing     At Endorsement (US \$M)     0.0934     0.14     7.179     0.57     11.23     1.5	NA     NA*     NA*     NA*     NA*     NA*		
Project Preparation Grant GEF Project Grant	GEF funding Co-financing IA own Government Other multi- /bi-laterals Private sector	Project Financing     At Endorsement (US \$M)     0.0934     0.14     7.179     0.57     11.23     1.5     3.442	NA     NA*     NA*     NA*     NA*     NA*     NA*     NA*     NA*		
Project Preparation Grant GEF Project Grant Co-financing	GEF funding Co-financing IA own Government Other multi- /bi-laterals Private sector	Project Financing     At Endorsement (US \$M)     0.0934     0.14     7.179     0.57     11.23     1.5     3.442     0	NA     NA*     NA*     NA*     NA*     NA*     NA*     NA*     NA*     NA*		
Project Preparation Grant GEF Project Grant Co-financing Total GEF funding	GEF funding Co-financing IA own Government Other multi- /bi-laterals Private sector NGOs/CSOs	Project Financing   At Endorsement (US \$M)   0.0934   0.14   7.179   0.57   11.23   1.5   3.442   0   7.2734   16.78   23.9534	NA     NA*		
Project Preparation Grant GEF Project Grant Co-financing Total GEF funding Total Co-financing Total project funding	GEF funding Co-financing IA own Government Other multi- /bi-laterals Private sector NGOs/CSOs	Project Financing     At Endorsement (US \$M)     0.0934     0.14     7.179     0.57     11.23     1.5     3.442     0     7.2734     16.78	NA     NA*		
Project Preparation Grant GEF Project Grant Co-financing Total GEF funding Total Co-financing Total project funding	GEF funding Co-financing IA own Government Other multi- /bi-laterals Private sector NGOs/CSOs	Project Financing   At Endorsement (US \$M)   0.0934   0.14   7.179   0.57   11.23   1.5   3.442   0   7.2734   16.78   23.9534	NA     NA*		
Project Preparation Grant GEF Project Grant Co-financing Total GEF funding Total Co-financing Total project funding (GEF grant(s) + co-fina	GEF funding Co-financing IA own Government Other multi- /bi-laterals Private sector NGOs/CSOs	Project Financing     At Endorsement (US \$M)     0.0934     0.14     7.179     0.57     11.23     1.5     3.442     0     7.2734     16.78     23.9534	NA     NA*		
Project Preparation Grant GEF Project Grant Co-financing Total GEF funding Total Co-financing Total project funding (GEF grant(s) + co-fina TE completion date	GEF funding Co-financing IA own Government Other multi- /bi-laterals Private sector NGOs/CSOs	Project Financing   At Endorsement (US \$M)   0.0934   0.14   7.179   0.57   11.23   1.5   3.442   0   7.2734   16.78   23.9534   /august 25, 2015	NA     NA*		
Project Preparation Grant GEF Project Grant Co-financing Total GEF funding Total Co-financing Total project funding (GEF grant(s) + co-financing TE completion date Author of TE	GEF funding Co-financing IA own Government Other multi- /bi-laterals Private sector NGOs/CSOs	Project Financing     At Endorsement (US \$M)     0.0934     0.14     7.179     0.57     11.23     1.5     3.442     0     7.2734     16.78     23.9534     /aluation/review information     August 25, 2015     José Galindo	NA   NA*		

\* Spending figures at project end are provided in the TE on p.8. However, they appear unreliable as they suggest that all available funding was used. However, on p.36, the TE also suggests that only 14% of the GEF donation was spent. The budget figures provided in the TE appear unreliable.

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

## 2. Summary of Project Ratings

## 3. Project Objectives

3.1 Global Environmental Objectives of the project:

This project's overall goal is to conserve globally significant biodiversity in Venezuela. The Venezuela Park System (VPS) is facing several challenges in the development and management of its Protected Areas (PAs). Among others, the level of financial resources available for PA management is very low, which means that INPARQUES, the Venezuelan National Parks Institute, "does not have access to the staff, equipment and logistical support it needs" (PD p.6).

The environmental objective for this project, as stated in the Strategic Results Framework (PD P.34), is that "by June 2014, Venezuela has implemented an efficient operational and financial framework ensuring long term sustainability of key protected areas (PAs) across the country". In order to do so, the project aims to increase the capacity of INPARQUES to operate, to increase the amount of funds available to INPARQUES, and increase INPARQUES' capacity to generate income from the protected areas (PD p.13).

3.2 Development Objectives of the project:

The planned project outcomes are the following;

1. Increased support from the Government for the Venezuela Park System

2. Increased operational effectiveness of protected areas management and cost effectiveness of resources invested

- 3. Generation of income from non-Government sources
- 4. Joint management to offset protected areas management costs

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

There were no changes in project objectives or activities during implementation.

## 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 TE rates relevance as satisfactory. This TER also rates relevance as satisfactory due to the project's good alignment with both Venezuelan and GEF priorities.

Venezuela ratified the UN Convention on Biological Diversity in 1994, and the Government "gives an important role to National Parks, Natural Monuments, Wildlife Refuges, Biosphere Reserve, Forest Reserves and other natural protected areas. Projected increases in Government support to the VPS are in line with the recognition of the importance of PAs in the Constitution and in the National Social Development Plan" (PD p.24). The project is consistent with Venezuela's Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, which promotes the development of Protected Areas and generally aims to better finance and manage institutions responsible for biodiversity protection.

As for the GEF, the project will support the Biodiversity Focus Area Strategic Objective 1, "To Catalyze Sustainability of Protected Area Systems", and specifically Strategic Priority 1, "Sustainable Financing of Protected Area Systems at the National Level". The project will enable INPARQUES to better manage PAs and will contribute to the long-term sustainability of Protected Areas by ensuring the long-term sustainability of key PA systems in Venezuela. The project will also contribute to Strategic Priority 3, "Strengthening Terrestrial Protected Area Networks" as it supports the expansion of protected areas in Venezuela (PD p.14).

4.2 Effectiveness	Rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory
4.2 Effectiveness	Rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory

The TE rates effectiveness as unsatisfactory as "few products were completed [or] developed according to the expectations of the PRODOC" (TE p.31). This TER rates effectiveness as moderately unsatisfactory due to the fact that, despite the underwhelming results of the project, some progress was made on improving the financial sustainability of Venezuela's Protected Areas.

The most important targets realizations as part of this project were (i) a reduction in the gap between income and needs of the Protected Areas and (ii) an increase in the management effectiveness of the Protected Areas. The main outcomes this project was set to achieve were the following:

- 1. Increased support from the Government for the VPS
- 2. Increased operational effectiveness of PA management and cost effectiveness of resources invested
- 3. Generation of income from non-Government sources
- 4. Joint management to offset PA management costs

Because of deficiencies in monitoring and evaluation, little information is available about the extent to which specific outcomes have been accomplished. For this reason, we will center our discussion of effectiveness on the two main project targets:

#### Target 1: Reduction in the gap between income and needs of the Protected Areas

According to the TE, the main achievement under this outcome is that "the project allowed positioning the issue of financial sustainability within INPARQUES, leading to the formation of a special unit within the institution projects" (TE p.34). The 2014 PIR reports (i) a reduction in the financial needs of PAs due to greater efficiency: "At the end of the project, annual needs have decreased by even more than the target, since the strategic policies implemented by the institution have had a positive impact on improving the use of available resources" (2014 PIR, p.4). However, government contributions to the PAs have not increased as planned, nor has the government been willing to increase the coverage of protected areas as planned for in this project. Income generation within protected areas (park fees, for example) was improved, but not as much as planned. Income from other sources was also found. "Some of these other sources include institutional partnerships funded by CAF, UNDP, the governing Federal Council, FONACIT, PDVSA La Estancia, PDVSA Gas and the Ministry of Tourism (PIR pp.6-7). Also, "during this period, INPARQUES implemented the Strategic Plan 2013-2019, promoting the creation of self-managed social enterprises (...) The idea is to develop new business models that generate revenue for the institution in the medium to long term. The strategy has not yet been consolidated." (PIR p.15)

Overall, this target has only been very partially achieved and effectiveness is rated as moderately unsatisfactory for this outcome.

#### Target 2: An increase in the management effectiveness of the Protected Areas

The extent to which the management effectiveness of PAs increased during the project remains unclear. The planned monitoring of the Capacity Scorecard and Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) did not take place, and little data is therefore available to assess management effectiveness in Venezuela's PAs. According to the TE, "the main impact of the project is the experience and capabilities generated within INPARQUES for the future management of programs and projects of international cooperation" (TE p.34). The 2014 PIR also mentions a modest improvement in execution capacity.

INPARQUES did take action to improve its management effectiveness:

"During this period INPARQUES has designed and conducted the Strategic Plan 2013-2019, which consists of a strategic projection, through the development of environmental education, research, monitoring, protection, management, and recreation of the National parks and community management aimed at the conservation of natural resources, strengthening the functional and structural integration, consolidation drive implementation of strategies, programs and actions, increasing the effectiveness, efficiency and effectiveness, the design and implementation of new financial mechanisms and diversification and strengthening of international collaboration." (PIR 2014, pp.12-13)

The impact of this Strategic Plan on effectiveness not having been measured, and there being little evidence to support a claim of increased effectiveness, this outcome is rated as unsatisfactory.

4.3 Efficiency	Rating: Unsatisfactory
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The TE rates efficiency as moderately unsatisfactory, a score this TER agrees with due to the low execution rate of the project.

Only 14% of the GEF grant had been disbursed at project end. Considering the project duration of five years, this is unacceptable. As mentioned in the TE, "while it is preferable not to spend than spend the wrong way, in practice a grant not running represents an opportunity cost for the country as they could devote those resources to other priorities, or even to other countries " (TE p.29). No additional information has been provided about the project's efficiency.

4.4 Sustainability	Rating: Moderately Likely
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The TE rates sustainability as moderately unlikely, but does not provide an adequate justification for this assessment. This TER rates sustainability as moderately likely due to the absence of major risks to Venezuela's Protected Areas.

#### Financial Sustainability – Moderately Unlikely

The main goal of this project was to increase the financial sustainability of Venezuela's Protected Areas. This goal was only partially achieved, and there remains a large gap between the funds available to the PA system and the funds needed to sustainably maintain it.

INPARQUES is now implementing the Strategic Plan 2013-2019 to increase its financial resources, which might help close the revenue gap. The Government of Venezuela is likely to maintain its yearly contribution to the PA system, but has made no commitment to improving it. Overall, financial sustainability appears to be moderately unlikely.

#### Socio-Political Sustainability – Moderately Likely

One of the project components was the "development of arrangements for full and genuine local participation in the management of PAs, for example through Local Councils for Community Participation, in order to ensure that the proposals developed receive the support of local people and are compatible with their needs and aspirations for social and economic development" (PD p.24). Some related activities have been achieved as part of the project, including the hosting of community workshops about their involvement in PAs and the involvement of community councils in PA management. This will certainly help ensure continuing community support from PAs going forward.

There appear to be some political risks to the further strengthening and development of PAs in Venezuela. At project end, PAs did not appear to be particularly high on the political agenda. Indeed, "the Government strategy was not to create new protected areas, but to consolidate and strengthen already existing PAs" (2014 PIR, p.11). An expansion of the PA network in the near future appears unlikely.

#### Institutional Sustainability – Moderately Likely

Institutional sustainability was expected to be maximized by the project activities aiming to increase the management effectiveness of INPARQUES. It remains unclear to what extent effectiveness has been improved as part of the project. Nonetheless, INPARQUES is a well-established institution that will surely continue to manage PAs and to advocate for more and better conservation in Venezuela. Their lacking effectiveness only poses minor risks.

#### **Environmental Sustainability - Likely**

There are no environmental risks to this project.

### 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?

This TER is unable to assess the impact of co-financing as final figures were not provided and the GEF grant was only 14% disbursed, meaning that the project team did not have the capacity to disburse additional co-finance funds.

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?

There were four years between the project's preparation phase and the first disbursement, and two years between the signing of the official project documents to the first disbursement. This generated a loss of political momentum for the project; the decision-makers who supported the project were no longer in post, and the external conditions that were originally propitious to implementation were no longer present. (TE P.24)

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:

Despite having benefited from strong ownership in the design stage, the project did not have much Government support during the implementation phase (TE p.22). This low support translated into the absence of increased funding from the federal Government and the lack of support to increase the area of coverage for protected areas in Venezuela.

## 6. Assessment of project's Monitoring and Evaluation system

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

Please justify ratings in the space below each box.

6.1 M&E Design at entry	Rating: Satisfactory
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The TE rates M&E design at entry as satisfactory but does not provide a rationale for the score. This TER also rates it as satisfactory as the M&E framework presented in the Project Document is adequate and encompasses all standard elements of an M&E framework.

All aspects of a standard M&E framework were planned from the start – monitoring reports, data collection, evaluation activities, responsibilities, plan for learning and knowledge sharing, budget, etc. The project collected baseline data so as to better measure project achievements in the later stage of the project. The M&E framework was also adequately funded with \$US 168,900 allocated to M&E.

The indicators selected as part of the logical framework appear to meet the SMART criteria, and clear targets have been selected. Overall, the M&E plan for the project appeared adequate and clear.

6.2 M&E Implementation	Rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory
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The TE rates M&E implementation as Moderately Unsatisfactory, a score this TER agrees with due to severe gaps in the M&E activities and the lack of adoption of M&E recommendations, but recognizing that evaluation activities have taken place as planned and that some regular monitoring was conducted.

Evaluation activities – Mid Term Evaluation and Final Evaluation – took place as planned. Similarly, Project Implementation Reports were written every year and contain detailed information on progress.

However, "there has been no implementation of an information system for monitoring and analyzing project progress indicators (...) In general terms the monitoring and evaluation system is considered partially fulfilled and particularly weak (...). At project completion, for example, the METT Sheets and those for Financial Sustainability were not updated, tools clearly identified as measures to verify the success [of the project]." (TE p.38) Evaluators report that several reports and monitoring documents were not available during their visit, including technical reports on studies done during the project and quarterly project reports (TE p.28). According to the TE, the weak M&E of the project might be due to high staff turnover and to the staff's lack of M&E experience (TE p.29).

In addition, mid-term evaluation recommendations were apparently not addressed, including important recommendations such as the need to discuss and adopt a project exit strategy and to develop a plan to implement the rest of the GEF grant (PIR 2014, p.28).

## 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
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The implementing agency for this project was the UNDP. The TE rates the performance of the implementing agency as moderately unsatisfactory, a score this TER agrees with given the weaknesses in project design that affected project implementation.

The TE does not describe the role of UNDP as the implementing agency in great details, but one of the clear points that emerge from the TE regarding project implementation is that the project design could have been better:

"Overall it is considered that the design of the project has significant shortcomings, particularly in terms of understanding the issue of financial sustainability, and implementation approach for the case of Venezuela. Virtually the complexity of changes and institutional reforms, which often involve pioneering processes and technical profiles, which are not normally found in institutions dedicated to the conservation of biodiversity, is underestimated (...). A major weakness of the project design is the lack of a clearly specified project path towards achieving global conservation objectives. There is no clear direction on how achievement of the results will allow to obtain this overall result, and the conditions that must be incurred to obtain the final desired impact." (TE pp.18-19)

Given the disappointing project outcomes, it is plausible that more could have been done in terms of risk analysis at the design phase. As mentioned in the TE "the risk analysis is generally weak and inadequate for the type of project being proposed. Indeed the PRODOC does not collect sufficient documentation and analysis about critical aspects for the success of the project, such as the political sensitivity to the use of instruments for economic valuation of biodiversity, or expected changes to the regulatory and institutional frameworks" (TE p.20).

According to the authors of the 2014 PIR, staff instability both at the UNDP and at INPARQUES also negatively affected project implementation (PIR 2014, p.30).

7.2 Quality of Project Execution	Rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory
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The TE rates the quality of project execution by INPARQUES – the Venezuelan National Parks Institute – as moderately satisfactory. This TER rates it as moderately unsatisfactory due to important personnel, administrative and managerial issues that affected the project.

The project was not very successful in achieving its outcomes, and this is partly to blame on project execution issues. First, personnel issues appear to have slowed down project execution. For instance, during the first two years of the project, four Coordinators and five Directors of Special Projects Unit have been in post. It was also unclear who was in charge of overall project coordination (TE p.25). The PIR 2014 (p.30) confirms that staff instability issues affected the project. In addition to instability, another personnel issue was that INPARQUES staff was not uniquely dedicated to this project and that "the directors were unable to devote the time and commitment needed to get their products" (TE p.6).

Second, there were issues of administrative procedures. According to the UNDP, the executing team produced products of low quality that did not meet UNDP formats and procedures, which caused bureaucratic delays. According to INPARQUES, the delays were due to "slow processes, lack of flexibility" on the part of the UNDP (TE p.25).

Third, as mentioned above in the M&E section, the project team failed to adopt several important recommendations made as a result of the Mid Term Evaluation and generally did not display adaptive management.

## 8. Assessment of Project Impacts

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

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

The project did not have any measurable environmental change. According to the TE, the main gain from the project will have been the greater importance now paid to the issues of financial sustainability within INPARQUES, and the gained "experience and capabilities generated within INPARQUES for the future management of programs and projects of international cooperation" (TE p.34). In the long term, this might help INPARQUES better support biodiversity conservation in Venezuela.

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.

No socioeconomic change was recorded as part of this project.

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

As mentioned above, as part of this project, INPARQUES gained "experience and capabilities generated within INPARQUES for the future management of programs and projects of international cooperation" (TE p.34).

b) Governance

No change regarding governance has been recorded.

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.

No unintended impacts were identified as part of this project.

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.

According to the TE, "a high potential for replication was found in the results obtained at the level of improved revenue collection of self-management by activities such as automatic ticketing, registration of tour operators, verification of concessions and antenna system. INPARQUES recognizes and values the experience gained throughout this process and mentions it has achieved committing public resources to further automate different access protected areas." (TE p.7)

## 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 offers the following key lessons for the project:

- When environmental projects are designed, the risk analysis should be more carefully and thoroughly conducted.
- The complexity of the planned activities demanded adequate and timely combination of existing talent in the institution and external support from national and international experts, in particular in areas such as economic valuation, financial planning and the design of financial mechanisms.

- It is necessary that the Project Document provide sufficient clarity about implementation arrangements, the options for running resources and the capacity needed for the implementation of project activities, especially in areas where the executing agency is not particularly strong.
- Despite difficulties in implementing, no joint exercise to review the logical framework was conducted. When doubts arise regarding the relevance of the logical framework, implementing and executing agencies should be able to discuss needed revisions.
- Given the low execution rate of this project, it might have been wise for this project to be ended early. There should be better procedures to assess the need for early closure.
- The midterm evaluation should have been performed earlier so as to give the project time to make the necessary adjustments. This is especially important for projects that suffer from implementation problems
- The midterm evaluation could be approached in a more strategic way. It is possible that beyond an assessment of project performance, it was perceived as an overall assessment of the performance of INPARQUES on behalf of the donor. Far from achieving a positive response that mobilizes the parties to generate quick solutions to rescue the project, evaluation virtually accelerated the closure of the operations.

(TE pp.37-38)

9.2 Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation.

The TE proposes the following recommendations:

- First, it is essential that the lessons learned and reflections generated in the project be disseminated. Despite the issues faced in this problem, the lessons remain relevant to other conservation activities.
- Some of the activities implemented to improve financial sustainability might not be very effective. This should be reviewed.
- It would be useful to develop a set of assessments and evaluations of GEF's experience in Venezuela as a strategic tool and as a way to build trust between the GEF, implementing agencies and executing agencies for future projects.

(TE pp.38-39)

## **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 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?	Project outcomes are not specifically discussed. Impact is briefly mentioned, but no coherent assessment is provided.	U
To what extent is the report internally consistent, the evidence presented complete and convincing, and ratings well substantiated?	There are inconsistencies in the budget figures mentioned. Little more than anecdotal evidence is provided, and several ratings are not well substantiated.	U
To what extent does the report properly assess project sustainability and/or project exit strategy?	Sustainability is mentioned but not clearly discussed or assessed.	U
To what extent are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive?	Lessons learned are very short given the several issues faced by the project. They do not appear complete and are not very clearly worded. The Spanish version of the report might be clearer.	MU
Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used?	There are inconsistencies in budget figures presented in the report. An execution rate is provided, but costs are not provided, neither are co-financing figures.	U
Assess the quality of the report's evaluation of project M&E systems:	The report's discussion and assessment of the M&E system is short but adequate.	MS
Overall TE Rating		U

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

No additional sources were used in the preparation of this TER.