Terminal Evaluation Review form, GEF Independent Evaluation Office, APR 2018

1. Project Data

Summary project data			
GEF project ID		3821	
GEF Agency project ID		609772	
GEF Replenishment Phase		GEF-4	
Lead GEF Agency (include all for joint projects)		Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)	
Project name		Sustainable Community-Based Management and Conservation of Mangrove Ecosystems in Cameroon	
Country/Countries		Cameroon	
Region		AFR	
Focal area		Biodiversity (BD)	
Operational Program or Strategic Priorities/Objectives		BD SO-1, SO2, SP-4, Strengthening the policy and regulatory framework for mainstreaming biodiversity GEF .	
Executing agencies involved		Ministry of Environmental and Nature Protection (MINEP), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)	
NGOs/CBOs involvement		OPED, Cam-Eco, CWCS, ACP-FLEGT	
Private sector involvement		None	
CEO Endorsement (FSP) /Approval date (MSP)		March 10, 2011	
Effectiveness date / project start		August 1, 2012	
Expected date of project completion (at start)		July 31, 2017	
Actual date of project completion		December 31, 2017	
Project Financing			
		At Endorsement (Million US$)	**At Completion (Millions US$)**
Project Preparation Grant	GEF funding	0.09	0.09
	Co-financing	N/A	N/A
GEF Project Grant		1.7	1.7
Co-financing	IA own	.73	.75
	Government	1.5	1.5
	Other multi- /bi-laterals	N/A	N/A
	Private sector	N/A	N/A
	NGOs/CSOs	2.4	2.4
Total GEF funding			
Total Co-financing		4.7	4.7
Total project funding (GEF grant(s) + co-financing)		6.4	6.4
Terminal evaluation/review information			
TE completion date		September 2018	
Author of TE		Ananie Cyrille Ekoumou Abanda (Team Leader), expert in natural resource management and climate change, and Christiane Tobith, expert in project evaluation and management.	
TER completion date		12/09/2018	
TER prepared by		Yuliya Gosnell	
TER peer review by (if GEF IEO review)		Molly Sohn	

2. Summary of Project Ratings

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

3. Project Objectives

3.1 Global Environmental Objectives of the project:

The project's global environmental objective is "to strengthen biodiversity conservation and reduce degradation in mangrove ecosystems." (Project Document p.29)3.2 Development Objectives of the project:

> The project's development objective is "to ensure long-term sustainable livelihoods of local communities living in and around mangrove areas." (Project Document p.29)).
>
> The project planned to achieve this objective by working towards the following outcomes:
>
> 1) Policy and Institutional Strengthening
>
> 2) Mainstreaming mangrove conservation in local development
>
> 3) Creation of mangrove protected areas
>
> 4) Sustainable management of mangrove resources

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

The project implementation phase witnessed no major changes to objectives, but a number of implementation activities had to deviate from the original plan. Specifically, the Steering Committee changed some indicators, for example decreasing the original number of community forests to be created from ten to two (TE, p. 14). Additionally, some of the project activities were transferred from one executing partner to another, based on their capacity, and some of the activities were cancelled(PIR, 2017, p. 32).

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 project is relevant to both national priorities and to GEF strategies and strategic programs.

With regards to the national priorities, the project intended to assist the government of Cameroon to fulfill its biodiversity conservation, and sustainable land and forest management obligations under international environmental agreements it had signed[1]. The government had already begun conservation efforts through the establishment of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBASP), and the project was to augment it with a chapter on mangrove ecosystems, missing prior to the implementation of the project. In addition, the project's objectives align with the Cameroon's Forest Environment Sector Program, a joint initiative of Ministry of Environmental and Nature Protection (MINEP) and Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife (MINFOF). The project was designed to strengthen the national conservation efforts and increase the national capacity in assessment and monitoring of environmental impacts (CEO Endorsement, Part II, B).

The project is relevant to the GEF biodiversity strategies and strategic programs as it addressed two of GEF's strategic objectives in the Biodiversity focal area: BD SO-1, *improvement of sustainability of protected areas*, and BD SO-2 *preservation of biodiversity in heavily harvested endangered zones*.

Under the first objective, the project follows the approaches recommended under GEF Biodiversity Strategic Program 3 (BD SP-3). Specifically, it was to expand the protected area of Douala Edea through the addition of the adjacent mangrove ecosystem, and to create a new national park with mangrove areas of Rio del Rey. Thus, the protected area network of the country was to add mangrove areas largely not protected before. The project was also to address financing of the management of the newly added protected areas as noted under BD SP-3 through activities strengthening the capacity of the national government to manage the areas and encouraging public and private investment in conservation.

[1] Convention on Biodiversity (1994) and Ramsar (2006).

Under the second objective, the project follows the approaches recommended under GEF Biodiversity Strategic Program 4 (BD SP-4). The project was to strengthen the framework for the preservation of biodiversity through i) support of the formulation and implementation of policies for integrated and inter-sectoral management of mangrove ecosystems, ii) raising awareness on the value of the ecosystems, their current condition and threats to it, so that biodiversity conservation becomes included in land-use planning, iii) building capacity for sustainable management of mangrove ecosystems, which includes monitoring and enforcement of government regulations.

Importantly, the project is also relevant to other GEF strategic objectives, as it intended to address land degradation in mangrove areas caused by operations of fisheries, harvesting of wood and construction. These objectives were to be accomplished through implementation of lessons learned of local communities in establishing sustainable management practices, which include harvesting limits and definition of conservation zones (CEO Endorsement, Part II, C).

4.2 **Effectiveness**	Rating: Satisfactory

The TE rated effectiveness as Satisfactory. According to its design, the project contained four components with a total of 14 activities to be carried out and 19 outputs to be achieved under all the components (an additional fifth component referred to project management and monitoring discussed in further sections). The TE report states that most of the planned activities took place but estimates the project completion rate (including activities in progress at the time of the TE) at around 70 percent (TE, p. 15). The rate of effectiveness of activities varied and largely depended on the involved actors, but overall, was satisfactory. The project's achievements under its four components are explained below:

The project's first component focused on: Policy and institutional strengthening. In the course of the project implementation, the national government included mangrove conservation into national strategic documents: the *National strategy on sustainable management of mangrove and coastal ecosystems* and the *Master plan for the research and monitoring of mangrove and coastal ecosystems*. While the creation of the documents contributes to policy and institutional strengthening, the implementation of the two documents remains a challenge as the national government is not able to identify a source of financing for their implementation. In addition to policy development, the project strengthened institutional capacity by creating three communication platforms for information exchange and collaboration. The TE stated, however, that other mangrove consultation frameworks already existed (for instance the Cameroun Mangrove Network) and the project could have strengthened those networks instead of creating new forums (TE, p. 15). Similarly to the situation with policy implementation noted above, the usability and sustainability of the created by the project platforms faces challenges of not having sufficient funding.

The project's second component focused on *Mainstreaming mangrove conservation in local development.*

As the area around mangroves continues being developed for commercial purposes, including conservation efforts into development plans becomes vital. To address this, the project implementors initiated distribution of a *Report on the State of Cameroon's Mangroves,* and the publication of an *Atlas* available to stakeholders in commercial development. Additionally, the project developed a tool for determining changes in the ecological status of these complex ecosystems – permanent parcel technique, recognized as a robust approach in collecting environmental data. However, the project did not put in place a strategy to use the results of the permanent plot monitoring system after its closure, although it has trained government officials and NGO staff on the usage of data and assessment of environmental and social impact of existing conservation programs. Furthermore, the project established mechanisms for the inclusion of mangrove conservation consideration into local development plans, especially development of the oil sector. (TE, p.18-19).

The third component focused on . *Creation of mangrove protected areas.*

By the time of its completion, the project did not succeed in the establishment of a protected area as it was not able to secure a final approval from the national government. The project has, however, made significant efforts in establishing the basis for the creation of a protected area. It conducted socio-economic feasibility studies, carried out classification of specified areas as national parks (or protected areas and communal forests bearing fewer restrictions on harvesting as requested by communities), and completed the filing of technical documents with the national government], but the final acts of approval for the classification of these protected areas (either the Douala-Edea National Park or the Ramsar sites) did not solely depend on the project but rather on the national government, specifically the Prime Minister's Office or Ramsar technical secretariat. Furthermore, the evaluation of protected area management effectiveness, which is a requirement of this project and of GEF projects in general, has not been carried out (TE, p.20).

The fourth component focused on *Sustainable management of mangrove resources.*

The project facilitated training of fishermen at local fishing camps on sustainable fish and wood harvesting techniques, and organization of settlements into legal associations. The number of organizing themselves communities and the impact of training are, however, difficult to estimate. A specific issue pointed out in the TE is that when having received training, fishermen did not develop new harvesting habits, as their needs to sustain themselves were more urgent than conservation considerations (TE, p.22).

Furthermore, due to conflicts of interests between the conservationists and local comminutes, development of management plans for a set area of mangroves (creating Community Forests) was successful only for approximately a quarter of a targeted area (2,700 ha out of 10,000 ha). Still, to facilitate further creation of Community Forests, the project developed a guide with a set of rules for management of such forests, which was included in the MINFOF's Ministry Manual of Procedures for the Attribution and norms for the Management of Community Forests as Annex 13 (TE, p. 22-23).

Additionally, the project carried out activities to encourage rehabilitation of native to mangroves species. These activities included engaging local communities in reforestation efforts, including creation of nurseries, raising awareness on mangrove degradation, and development of guides to mangrove regeneration based on locally learned lessons. The reforested during the project implementation land constitutes only a fraction of the land in need of reforestation, and the cost of reforestation is considerable (TE, p. 23-24).

And finally, the project facilitated training of residents of fishermen communities in income-generating activities, such as construction of improved smoking ovens, writing business plans, mobilizing savings, access to micro-finance products. The rate of implementation of new approaches, however, was low, and fishermen did not report an increase in income post-training (TE, p.24).

4.3 **Efficiency**	Rating: Satisfactory

The terminal evaluation rated efficiency as Satisfactory. The project preparation stage was quite long. The Project Identification Form (PIF) was approved in June 2009, and the project document in December 2011. Subsequently, the project implementation phase began in August 2012 (TE, p.9). The preparation phase of the project, however, was on budget and without cost overruns.

The duration of the implementation phase was five years and five months, against the originally planned five years. The extension took place to allow completion of project activities as the project incurred delays during the first and second years of implementation. The extension did not incur additional costs and the project remained on budget of US $6.4 million (PIR, 2016, p. 28).

4.4 **Sustainability**	Rating: Moderately Unlikely

The TE does not provide an overall rating for sustainability. This TER rates sustainability as moderately unlikely. A number of institutional, financial, socio-economic, and environmental risks can affect the sustainability of this project.

Institutional risks, low: The national government supports mangrove protection and is working towards adding mangrove conservation efforts to environmental strategic plans, although a supporting regulatory framework remains underdeveloped. In this weak regulatory environment, the capacity of the government and NGOs to manage project activities and sustain them after the project completion becomes especially noticeable. The tools developed by this project, however, such as the Protocol for Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA), knowledge exchange platforms, data collection and publication tools, will remain at the service of the government after the project completion. Driven by the pressure of delivering on international environmental agreements Cameroon has signed, the national government is likely to continue its work on mangrove conservation efforts, utilize the tools and possibly develop new ones with help of international community.

Financial risks, substantial: At project completion, the government did not mobilize specific public or private resources to continue mangrove management work. Among other stakeholders in the conservation efforts, such as civil society organizations, only Cameroon Wildlife Conservation Society (CWCS) had a source of potential funding for continued activities. The private sector, and hence, its resources, did not get involved in the project, and therefore private financing cannot be expected in mangrove conservation efforts, especially given the underdeveloped regulatory environment.

Socio-economic risks, substantial: As the project did not achieve considerable results in promoting sustainable income generating activities among fishermen communities, the local population – the main user and beneficiary of mangroves – is unlikely to implement sustainable harvesting practices as their costs outweigh the benefits. Fishermen settlements, often migrant and unorganized in nature, operate at

the sustenance level, and the implied cost of conservation efforts (reduced catch, harvest, additional work) without additional monetary benefit is largely beyond their means.

Environmental, substantial: The environment, is likely to continue deteriorating with accelerating off-shore oil exploration, construction and tourism in the surrounding mangroves areas, and increasing fishing and wood harvesting of the growing local population, thus continued conservation efforts with meaningful results will become more challenging. If environmental challenges are not proactively addressed at the present moment (through utilization of developed by the project tools, sustainable harvesting methods, knowledge exchange platforms, etc.), increasing environmental deterioration will create further challenges in sustaining the project's accomplishments and will require a new level of interventions.

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?

Co-financing played an important role in achieving the objectives of this project. While project documents present no evidence on the amount of co-financing at the project preparation stage, at the project implementation stage, co-financing amounted to approximately 73 percent of total project implementation costs (US $4.7 million out of US $6.4 million). The national government provided 32 percent of co-financing, and NGOs provided the remaining 68 percent. No private sector co-financing was mobilized.

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 preparation stage took one and a half years. The Project Identification Form (PIF) was approved in June 2009, and the project document was approved in December of 2011, after a resubmission. Project documents, however, including the TE and PIRs, do not list a specific reason for the delay, and despite the delay, the project preparation stage was completed on budget.

The implementation phase was completed five years and five months after its start date in August of 2012, which was five months behind the anticipated schedule. Implementation delays occurred in the first and second years due to the national government, through MINEP, not participating in project activities. A conversation at a high level took place between FAO and MINEP to resolve the situation. Activities resumed after the conversation and the project was completed, despite the delay, without cost overruns (PIR, 2016, p. 25).

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:

While the national government supports mangrove protection and works on adding mangrove conservation efforts to environmental strategic plans, it has not developed a supporting regulatory

framework to guide economic activities in the areas surrounding mangroves, nor has it allocated funds to continue mangrove conservation work after project completion. The government's non-cooperation with FAO in the first two years of the project implementation supports the lack of ownership conclusion, despite FAO's attempt to resolve it.

6. Assessment of project's Monitoring and Evaluation system

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

Please justify ratings in the space below each box.

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

The TE rated M&E Design at entry as moderately satisfactory. The project's results framework included sixteen indicators to evaluate progress towards the project outcomes. The indicators were only loosely tied to outputs and some were designed to evaluate two outcomes simultaneously. Some outputs had no specific indicators to evaluate them, such as Output 1.5 *One-hundred NGO and government conservation staff trained in protected area management (including financial management) and in implementation of the new laws and regulations* All indicators had a baseline for assessment, often set zero for quantitative indicators and a lack of a developed mechanism or system for qualitative indicators. The framework included measurable end of the project targets, although at times, it did not clearly define targets as in the case of an Output 4 indicator *Sustainability of local livelihood activities (especially their impact on biodiversity).* While the indicator sets to accomplish a 50% inhabitant's rate of usage of certain sustainable techniques, it does not define the area of a local habitat, the number of settlements, the number of potential inhabitants or migrant fishermen, nor it defines the techniques to be used and their number.

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

The TE rated M&E implementation as moderately satisfactory. Project implementation partners tasked with collecting data on indicators via suggested by the M&E design template did not always collect the data in a timely or adequate manner, which made tracking of the project progress toward set targets challenging. Quality of data collection and reporting, however, gradually improved, particularly for the activities carried out by civil society organizations. The improvement was brought about by increasing insistence of FAO and the Steering Committee (TE, p. 36). Monitoring reports were prepared mostly on time (some in line with scheduled delays) and on budget.

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: Satisfactory

The TE rated quality of project implementation as moderately satisfactory. The assessment of implementation of the project by FAO was satisfactory. FAO, as the project implementation agency, set procedures, which executing partners – government bodies and civil society organizations – were to follow during the implementation of the project. At the start of the project, the partners followed the procedures loosely and indicated that that Letters of Agreement setting the procedures did not do so clearly. Consequently, in the second and subsequent years of the project implementation, FAO revised the Letters of Agreement between itself and the executing partners to add clarity to the procedures, which improved compliance (TE, p. 32).

FAO consistently participated in coordination meetings and in the Steering Committee meetings, which directed and coordinated project activities. Involvement of FAO was particularly effective in the first year of the project implementation, when it met with representatives of MINEP – the executing agency – at the high level to resolve non-participation of the agency in project activities. FAO coordination was also vital in resolving challenging with collection and reporting of M&E data from execution partners. Some of the challenges, however, remained unresolved, and executing partners, civil society organizations in particular, often implemented activities in an uncoordinated and disharmonized manner. Such operations at times led to targets not being fully accomplished and activities being transferred between partners and not being completed (TE, p. 31).

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

The TE rated quality of project execution as moderately satisfactory. While MINEP, the execution agency, did not participate in planned activities in the first year of the project implementation, the conversation of FAO with MINEP at a high level resolved the challenge. MINEP reconsidered its participation in the project and proceeded with activities as originally planned. The main contribution of the government body was inclusion of mangrove conservation efforts into national strategic plans, and effectively, allowing the project activities to take place. The government capacity to manage the project and to achieve the project's outcomes, however, remained limited. One of the main outcomes development of a regulatory framework supporting mangrove conservation efforts was not achieved, which put further conservation progress and sustainability of achieved by the project results at risk.

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.

As a result of the project implementation activities, 7 ha of mangroves were reforested (out of 300 ha in need of being reforested); 20,000 ha of mangroves (Ramsar site) became a communal forest (with some restrictions on harvesting, not as rigorous as those of a national park – the originally intended classification of the area, changed at a request by the community); 36,000 ha of mangroves (the Douala-Edea) may become a national park in the near future, pending an approval of the Prime Minister's Office currently reviewing the technical documents prepared by the project implementors (TE, pp. 20-21). Despite this, "the [actual] reduction in mangrove degradation is not noticeable at the moment." (TE, p. 28). Despite the project accomplishing several positive to the country's state of the environment results, such as (in addition to the ones stated in the above paragraph) raising stakeholder awareness on the issue of mangroves degradation and on the importance of the ecosystem, disseminating information on sustainable harvesting practices, integrating mangroves preservation into national strategic development plans, and establishing environmental monitoring, data collection and sharing mechanisms, the project has not improved the environmental status of mangroves and has not reduced their stress in a measurable way (TE, p. 28).

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 does not identify a lasting socio-economic change brought about by the outcomes of the project. However, the project did take steps in the direction of creating such change.

Education and Awareness:

Residents of 15 villages in the Mouanko area received training on the management of mangrove resources. In the Kribi area, about 600 people were sensitized to the importance of mangrove conservation (PIR, 2016, pp. 7-13). In Bolondo, Yoyo and Mbiako, 157 inhabitants were trained on reforestation as a part of rehabilitation of mangrove species activities. The training led to the establishment of a nursery in Bolondo and subsequent reforestation of 2 ha of mangroves (TE, p. 24). In another area, Mpolongwe, south of the country, awareness raising followed by reforestation activities resulted in 3.12 ha being replanted with 6,494 seedlings, 88 percent of which successfully survived (TE, p.24).

Additionally, the project conducted the number of studies to collect information and data on the condition of mangroves, such as a study to analyze the transboundary flow of mangrove wood between Cameroon and neighboring countries, and the level of cooperation between states to limit illegal cross-border trade of wood (TE, p. 24). Other studies recorded information on baseline mangrove biodiversity and socio-economic data of the surrounding areas. The collected information was to be used to develop management plans for the sites identified as potential communal forests or national parks (PIR, 2016, pp. 7-13). Following the studies, community members received training on multi-resource data collection in the proposed community forests to ensure continuity of data collection for the monitoring of the condition of the selected mangroves (PIR, 2016, pp. 7-13). Yet another type of studies examined the fishing and fish marketing sectors in Mouanko in order to develop an information sharing network for all involved stakeholders including the local regulatory bodies (PIR, 2016, pp. 7-13).

Income:

The design of the project included activities to train local residents in sustainable income-generating activities. Such activities were implemented in the Mpolongwe area, where 20 women received information on improving the fish smoking process and assistance in the construction of new smoking ovens (TE, p. 25). Another 9 improved ovens were constructed in Mouanko (PIR, 2016, pp. 7-13). Women in these communities received further training on sustainable processing of shrimp, fish and oysters, and supplementary training on making bread and doughnuts. Follow up studies concluded that bread making was not adopted as an income generating activity by the community, but some of the processing activities were, on a small scale, by 3 out of 42 trained women (TE, p. 25). The new smoking ovens themselves were not utilized extensively for two reasons: 1) in Mpolongwe, the south of the country, fish is uncommon, and thus, this area was not the best location for the construction of the ovens; 2) smoking fish and oysters is common in Mouanko, but the new ovens had low capacity and were a) slowing down production and b) did not decrease wood usage because they had to be used for more smaller loads of fish and oysters than the ovens already utilized (TE, p. 26).

Another income-generating training conducted by the project recruited additional 20 women and informed them on ways to establish and maintain shrimp aquaculture and construction of breeding cages (TE, p. 26). The activity, however, was not widely adopted and remained isolated with the women participating in the pilot. The activity was tedious according to the participants and generated little income (TE, 27).

Income-generating training included dissemination of information on microfinance. Fourteen groups of women from the local communities received the information and training on writing business plans necessary to secure microcredit for their businesses. At the time of the TE mission visit, two business plans were readily available. The groups discussed a possibility of establishing two micro-finance institutions, which would operate with savings of the groups. At project completion, such institutions were not yet established as members of the groups were still discussing the terms of their operations: amounts of contributions, frequency, etc. (TE, p 26).

The TE makes the conclusion that “populations surveyed during the missions did not confirm an increase in income following their training in new income-generating activities” (TE, p. 27).

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

The project created several information exchange platforms, which enabled the flow of data on the condition of mangroves, socio-economic development of the surrounding areas, fishing, fish marketing, and wood markets among involved stakeholders, including regulatory bodies. An example is the Steering Committee for the Conservation and Development of Mangroves and Fishery Resources of Mouanko (COPCVAM). COPCVAM brought together local communities, vigilance committees, civil society organizations, the local councils, the Ministry of the Forestry and Wildlife (MINFOF), and the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Animal Industries (MINEPIA). In addition to sharing information, COPCVAM coordinates activities of stakeholders to achieve synergies and resolves challenges (TE, p. 22). COPCVAM is one of the three multi-actor (local administrations, municipalities, private enterprises, civil society organizations and research institutions) knowledge exchange platforms the project created. As the platforms became active, the project implementors developed training modules on their utilization for forthcoming capacity building sessions.

During the implementation phase of the project, the national government developed several strategic capacity-building documents, including:

- The National Strategy on sustainable management of mangrove and coastal ecosystems and its action plan to be reviewed in five years;
- The Master Plan for the research and monitoring of mangrove and coastal ecosystems in Cameroon, together with an action plan;
- A specific Protocol for Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIA) (TE, p. 15) A total 75 persons received training on ESIA protocol in Tiko and Kribi (PIR, 2016, pp. 7-13).

In addition to the above documents for use predominately by government entities, the project developed data collection and dissemination tools for use by mangrove communities: factsheets, posters, video documentaries (PIR, 2016, pp. 7-13). Communities also received a plan and an agreement for management of community mangrove forests *titled Manual of Procedures for the Attribution and Norms for the Management of Community Forests* (TE, p. 2), and a published guide on the development of simple management plans (SMP) for community forests in mangrove ecosystems (TIR, 2016, pp. 7-13).

b) Governance

The project created several mechanisms, which allowed local communities improve self-governance. Among the mechanisms are vigilance committees tasked with conservation of community forests and sensation of illegal activities (as defined by community forests management agreements and procedures) in them. Five such committees were created in Mouanko with the number of members ranging from 8 to 16, all trained on their roles and responsibilities (TE, p. 26).

In the Londjie area, a community committee was taken to a new level with the creation of a community development organization: Londjie Development Cooperative (COODEL) designed to bring together all socio-professional groups receiving benefits from, while using and depleting mangrove resources. COODEL consists of 42 members, 11 of which are women, tasked with sustainable development of their own community (TE, p. 22).

Furthermore, the project supported organization of fishing camps into economic interest groups and associations to stabilize settlements, prevent conflicts, and build community capacities in sustainable management of resources. At roject completion, eight groups organized themselves with a complete set of internal regulations, by-laws, and an elected General Assembly.

1.4 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 Terminal Evaluation report does not describe unintended impacts, either positive or negative.

1.5 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.

Adoption of the project initiatives did not occur 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.

Lesson 1: The project could have improved its performance by adding a lobbying and a political advocacy component, in order to mobilize high-level pollical actors to facilitate the project and improve its results and outcomes.

The achievement of the project results did not depend solely on the implementing partners, but also on the decision-making of high-level political actors both in Cameroon (the Prime Minister's Office, the Presidency of the Republic, the National Assembly) and

internationally (the Ramsar Technical Secretariat). Lack of cooperation of these parties delayed the project and made accomplishment of certain outcomes impossible.

Lesson 2: Specific activities undertaken by the project to accomplish its development objective "to ensure long-term sustainability of the livelihoods of local communities living in and around mangrove areas" were limited in scope and pre-designed without consultation with community members. As a result, the rate of adoption of demonstrated activities and tools by communities was low.

> Designing flexibility and adaptability of activities based on feedback of comminutes, for whom the activities are created, which includes a potential increase in scope, change of location of demonstration, and selection of different activities and tools will increase the rate of adoption, improve project outcomes and increase the probability of accomplishing the development objective.

Lesson 3: Long-term monitoring of mangrove ecosystems, such as through a permanent plot system established by the project, should be placed with a body with a mandate for research.

> In this case, the mandated agency is the Ministry of Scientific Research. Placing monitoring activities with the agency is likely to increase sustainability of the system utilization, credibility of results and the rate of their dissemination.

Lesson 4: Lack of private sector participation in the project did not allow the project to address a major source of mangrove pollution.

> The private sector, as extractor of oil in the coastal areas adjacent to mangroves, and tourism and construction developer, is a major polluter of mangroves. Without its participation, all channels of mangrove pollution cannot be addressed.

Lesson 5: Multiple activities undertaken by the project and their outputs were often disconnected, and, thus, a consolidation phase allowing to see impact of the activities may be beneficial.

> Consolidation may take place at all levels where the activities took place, such as community or institutional levels, which would then be consolidated further. (TE, pp. 3-4)

9.2 Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation.

To FAO:

Recommendation 1: The project invested heavily in community capacity building at the local level, but these efforts will need to continue to have a real impact. FAO should seek mechanisms to facilitate the continuation of activities at community level, through local actors or the mobilization of additional resources. Particular attention should be given to women for their effective engagement in sustainable mangrove management.

Recommendation 2: The project contributed to raising awareness among stakeholders and populations about the specificity of mangrove ecosystems. FAO should continue to raise awareness among institutional actors to ensure that these ecosystems are taken into account in the preparation of development plans and other integrated planning documents.

Recommendation 3: FAO should advocate with financial partners and/or Regional and Local Authorities (RLAs), so that these actors continue to support platforms for sustainable mangrove management. It should also establish a link between these platforms and the mangrove network. These platforms could constitute forums for political dialogue between stakeholders, in order to put in place a dynamic force of proposals to continue improving the political, legal and institutional framework for mangrove management in Cameroon.

> ***Suggestion*:** The operation of such platforms can build upon that of existing platforms, in particular, the Community and Forest Platform, in charge of issues concerning the Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) and the REDD+ platform. The Cameroonian Government will thus be able to create synergies among the existing different platforms, the three mangrove local platforms supported by the project and the Cameroon Mangrove Network to improve Sustainable Forest Management in all its fullness.

Recommendation 4: FAO should continue to accompany MINFOF in advocating for the successful classification of protected areas and Ramsar sites supported by the project.

Recommendation 5: In the future, FAO should invest more, at the beginning of projects, in training implementing partners on its project management procedures. It should also conduct baseline studies and provide documents to be used during project implementation.

To the Government of Cameroon:

Recommendation 6: MINFOF should transfer the permanent plot system to the Ministry of Scientific Research and Technological Innovation. In addition, synergy should be created between the network of permanent plots (managed by Cameroon Wildlife Conservation Society) and strategic documents, in particular the *Master plan for research and monitoring of mangrove and coastal ecosystems of Cameroon*.

Lessons should be based on the project's actual experience. Action may or may not lead to a specific action. They may also come up with a recommendation that is not very useful.

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 assessment of relevant outcomes was thorough. The structure of the report followed M&E indicators, and because the indicators did not fully cover all project outcomes, neither did the report. Thus, discussion of government staff training on protected area management did not take place. The section of the report discussing project impacts is very short; it does not include project impacts to be discussed in this section.	**MS**
To what extent is the report internally consistent, the evidence	The report is fairly consistent, although it begins with an optimistic overview of project outcomes, which were later	**MS**

presented complete and convincing, and ratings well substantiated?	not included in further, rather pessimistic assessment. Evidence presented was not always consistent. For example, page 28, paragraph 96 of the report states that "about 7 ha out of 300 ha to be reforested" were reforested, and page 24 of the report, paragraphs 73, 74 and 75, contain information that 2+3.12+9.14 ha of mangroves were reforested. Ratings in section 5 (pp. 34-36) were misleading with "efficiency" rated twice for each project component, often receiving different ratings.	
To what extent does the report properly assess project sustainability and/or project exit strategy?	The report properly describes risks to sustainability in the body of the report, however, when assigning a rating to risks, the authors of the report combine socio-political and institutional risks while describing institutional risks only.	**S**
To what extent are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive?	Lessons learned are titled "Conclusions" and are presented as such. Lessons learned can, however, be discerned in the conclusions, along with background information on the lessons.	**S**
Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used?	The project includes actual total project costs and states that per activity cost information was not available. The report does not include co-financing amounts for the project preparation stage.	**S**
Assess the quality of the report's evaluation of project M&E systems:	The report's evaluation of project M&E is rather brief and would benefit from additional details.	**S**
Overall TE Rating		**S**

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.