

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

## 1. Project Data

Summary project data			
GEF project ID		3910	
GEF Agency project ID		4248	
GEF Replenishment Phase		GEF-IV	
Lead GEF Agency (include all for joint projects)		UNDP	
Project name		Inter-jurisdictional System of Coastal-Marine Protected Areas	
Country/Countries		Argentina	
Region		Latin America and Caribbean	
Focal area		Biodiversity	
Operational Program or Strategic Priorities/Objectives		BD2: To mainstream biodiversity in production landscapes/seascapes and sectors BD1: To catalyze sustainability of protected area (PA) systems	
Executing agencies involved		Fundación Patagonia Natural (FPN)	
NGOs/CBOs involvement		NGOs through consultation	
Private sector involvement		Private sector as beneficiaries and co-financers	
CEO Endorsement (FSP) /Approval date (MSP)		August 30, 2010	
Effectiveness date / project start		September 23, 2010	
Expected date of project completion (at start)		September 30, 2014	
Actual date of project completion		December 31, 2014	
Project Financing			
		At Endorsement (US \$M)	At Completion (US \$M)
Project Preparation Grant	GEF funding	0.095	0.095
	Co-financing	0.095	0.095
GEF Project Grant		2.18	2.18
Co-financing	IA own		
	Government	7.69	8.74
	Other multi- /bi-laterals		
	Private sector	0.08	0.08
	NGOs/CSOs	1.97	2.07
Total GEF funding		2.275	2.275
Total Co-financing		9.835	10.985
Total project funding (GEF grant(s) + co-financing)		12.11	13.26
Terminal evaluation/review information			
TE completion date		November 2014	
Author of TE		Segundo Coello & Sandra Cesilini	
TER completion date		March 23, 2016	
TER prepared by		Matteo Borzoni	
TER peer review by (if GEF IEO review)		Molly Watts	

## 2. Summary of Project Ratings

Criteria	Final PIR	IA Terminal Evaluation	IA Evaluation Office Review	GEF IEO Review
Project Outcomes	N/R	Satisfactory	N/A	Moderately Unsatisfactory
Sustainability of Outcomes	N/R	Likely	N/A	Moderately unlikely
M&E Design	N/R	N/R	N/A	Satisfactory
M&E Implementation	N/R	N/R	N/A	Moderately satisfactory
Quality of Implementation	N/R	Highly satisfactory	N/A	Satisfactory
Quality of Execution	N/R	N/R	N/A	Satisfactory
Quality of the Terminal Evaluation Report	-	-	N/A	Moderately Unsatisfactory

## 3. Project Objectives

### 3.1 Global Environmental Objectives of the project:

The global environmental objective of the project was to “to conserve the biodiversity of global importance in coastal marine habitats of Argentina” (ProDoc, p. 56).

Argentina’s extraordinary marine and coastal biodiversity is threatened by habitat degradation and fragmentation and over harvesting of species, which is largely rapid coastal development and the recent increase in poorly controlled economic activities. Habitat degradation is driven by an expanding oil industry, tourism and invasive species along with over fishing and unsustainable fishing practices.

### 3.2 Development Objectives of the project:

The Development objective of the project was to “develop the framework for an effectively managed and financially sustainable Inter-jurisdictional System of Coastal-Marine Protected Areas (ISCMPA) for the conservation and sustainable use of Argentina’s coastal marine biodiversity” (ProDoc, p. 56).

This was supposed to be achieved through the following expected outcomes (ProDoc, p.57):

- Governance framework developed for an effective ISCMPA and coordinated with production sectors
- Piloting coastal marine protected areas (CMPAs) incorporates priority marine areas and provides lessons for ISCMPA management agreements.
- A financial strategy for a sustainable ISCMPA and its constituent CMPAs.

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

No

#### 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 <b>Relevance</b>	Rating: Satisfactory
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The TE rated relevance as “relevant” and this TER, which uses a different scale, rates relevance as satisfactory.

Coastal-marine protected areas (CMPAs) have played a central role in reducing the threats to biodiversity in Argentina. There are 43 CMPAs in the project area, which protect some of the main reproductive colonies of seabirds on the coast of Patagonia, and of marine mammals (Request for CEO approval, p. 8).

However, existing CMPAs areas do not cover the full range of terrestrial coastal and coastal-marine interface habitats. In general terms, protection of coastal and marine habitats is uneven and insufficient. Less than 1% of the sea is protected. Only 16 of the 43 CMPAs have a strictly marine portion, and only 6 of them have a surface area larger than 10,000 ha. Additionally, only 6 CMPAs were created with the specific purpose of protecting the marine environment (Request for CEO approval, p. 10). This uneven representation of habitats and the existence of deficient operating procedures for the conservation of marine habitats in the Large Coastal Marine Patagonian Ecosystem (LCMPE ) constitute barriers that prevent the consolidation of an effectively managed and sustainable system of CMPAs in Argentina.

Additional initiatives have also been implemented to protect marine-coastal biodiversity from existing threats. These include GEF-supported projects that have put mechanisms in place to prevent coastal and marine pollution and contribute to the reduction of navigational risks and accidental oil spills that affect marine biodiversity. The “Patagonian Coastal Zone Management Plan Project” – PCZMP- (a UNDP-GEF project, implemented by FPN) established the foundations for integrated coastal zone management of the Patagonian Coast and identified the main breeding sites for marine birds and

mammals along the coast of the southernmost four provinces of Argentina and increased awareness among provincial governments and the civil society of the need to conserve these sites (Request for CEO approval, p. 9).

This project is consistent with Argentina's General Environmental Law, which provides the legal framework for environmental protection in the country. In agreement with this Law, the project will contribute to the protection of Argentina's marine environments and will pilot compensation mechanisms for potential impacts on marine ecosystems. The project is also consistent with the 2003 National Biodiversity Strategy (NBS) that establishes the need for a system of protected areas and the creation of new areas in priority sites.

The project will address the GEF Strategic Objective 1 for Biodiversity that seeks to Catalyze Sustainability of Protected Area Systems. More specifically, the project will contribute to Strategic Program 2: Increase Representation of Effectively Managed Marine Protected Areas in Protected Area Systems. As part of the strategy, the project will also address the financial sustainability of CMPAs; therefore, it will also contribute to Strategic Program 1: Sustainable Financing of PA Systems at the National Level.

<b>4.2 Effectiveness</b>	Rating: Moderately satisfactory
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The TE rated effectiveness as "Satisfactory". This TER revises the rating to "Moderately Unsatisfactory". Although project made significant progress in some areas, there were important gaps in achievement of the first outcome and the third outcome was only partially achieved.

For the first outcome (Governance framework developed for an effective ISCMPA and coordinated with production sectors) the project was expected to legally establish inter-jurisdictional system of coastal-marine protected areas (ISCMPA s) with more than 20 coastal marine protected areas (CMPAs). A law on protected marine areas was approved by the Argentinean senate but when the TE was conducted it still had to be enacted by the government. Moreover, this law does not create an inter-jurisdictional system of coastal-marine protected areas as expected by the outcome, because the law does not apply to existing inter-jurisdictional marine parks and to marine areas under provincial jurisdiction (TE, p. 42). A preliminary list of 10 CMPAs was developed by the provincial and national governments in 2011 and was ratified by the project steering committee. The project was also supposed to set up a CMPA agency to liaise and coordinate ISCMPA initiatives. However, such an agency was not created. Finally the project was supposed to establish at least three agreements with the private sector to reduce threats to CMPA. Although the private sector was approached for support, no agreement was established.

For the second outcome (Piloting coastal marine protected areas incorporates priority marine areas and provides lessons for ISCMPA management agreements) the project was supposed to increase the level of protection for key habitat for coastal and marine mammals and seabirds. During the project life the two interjurisdictional parks were created (Makenke with an area of 717 Km<sup>2</sup> and Isla Pinguino with 1575 Km<sup>2</sup>). In addition one marine protected area was established (Namuncurà with 34,000 Km<sup>2</sup>) along

with one reserve area (Biosféra Penninsula Valdes with 8,755 km<sup>2</sup>). Also, the Magellanic Penguin Migratory Corridor was promoted but when the TE was conducted it was not formally approved. The percentage of protection of feeding areas for the animals identified in the ProDoc is unclear. The TE includes data on the percentage of protection of the feeding area for penguins (out of total area) and other protected animals. However these data sum the area of protection from the penguin corridor with the area of the inter-jurisdictional parks, although the corridor has not been formally established. The project was also supposed to develop four additional participatory management plans for pilot CMPAs. This was achieved since four plans were developed in addition to the six that were already in place when the project started.

For the third outcome (a financial strategy for a sustainable ISCMPA and its constituent CMPAs) the project was supposed to contribute to changes in annual budgeting for CMPAs for national and provincial governments. Funds from provincial and national governments to CMPAs increased substantially. The baseline value was 2.9 million USD and in 2013 funds for CMPAs increased to 5.4 million USD. This made it possible to reduce financing gap of CMPAs of about half (TE, p. 44). In addition private companies funded proposals for five CMPAs on the basis of business plans that the project contributed to develop. The project was envisaged to pilot revenue generating schemes and to draft tax proposals and allocation mechanisms to fund CMPAs. However, no financial mechanisms was actually put in place (TE, p. 45).

<b>4.3 Efficiency</b>	Rating: Satisfactory
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The TE did not rate efficiency and this TER assess efficiency as “Satisfactory”. Efficiency and cost-effectiveness considerations are completely missing in the TE and in the other accompanying documents.

The project was implemented according to the original planning. No significant delays took place. Resources were spent in line with the budget. When the evaluation was conducted 97% of resources were spent.

<b>4.4 Sustainability</b>	Rating: Moderately unlikely
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The TE rated sustainability as “Likely” while this TER downgrades that rating to “Moderately unlikely” because the institutional framework present important shortcomings. Moreover, financial sustainability is also doubtful.

The TE did not rate individual component of the sustainability criterion.

This TER considers financial sustainability as “Moderately likely”. In fact the project did not manage to put in place financial mechanisms for Coastal Marine Protected Areas (CMPAs) as planned. However, the government budget for CMPAs increased substantially. The financial gap to cover basic CMPAs management costs and investment was consequently halved, however it still amounted to more than six million USD when the TE was conducted. The TE also considers that when the law on protected marine areas is enacted by the government a budget will be set aside to coordinate the national system on protected marine areas (p. 38).

This TER is unable to assess socio-cultural sustainability since no relevant information are provided in the TE or in the other accompanying documents.

The sustainability of the institutional framework and governance is considered “Moderately unlikely” by this TER. A law on marine protected area was approved by the Senate but this law does not apply to existing inter-jurisdictional marine parks and to marine areas under provincial jurisdiction.

This TER considers environmental sustainability as “Likely” because the inter-jurisdictional parks, the marine protected area and the reserve areas constitute an increased level of protection for feeding and migration areas of mammals and birds such as Magellanic Penguins, South American Sea Lions, Imperial Cormorans, and River Dolphins.

## **5. Processes and factors affecting attainment of project outcomes**

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

The quantity of co-financing was in line with the originally planned budget. Differences with respect to expected outcomes were not due to co-financing.

Co-financing was mainly used to pay salaries and running costs of involved government agencies. The TE does not contain relevant information to assess the extent to which co-financing was important for achieving the project objectives

**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 was implemented according to the planned schedule. No significant delays took place.

5.3 Country ownership. Assess the extent to which country ownership has affected project outcomes and sustainability? Describe the ways in which it affected outcomes and sustainability, highlighting the causal links:

The TE barely touches country ownership issues. However the increase in government spending for CMPAs (see Section 4.2) suggests a good level of ownership.

The project supported the development of four management plans for pilot CMPAs. The TE mentions that in the province of Santa Cruz the plan was developed through an intensive participatory process, which involved civil society organizations, schools, teachers, and school management staff. The TE does not provide information about other management plans.

## 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 provided a unique rating for M&E Design at Entry and M&E Implementation. The rating of the TE for such a criterion was “Highly satisfactory.” This TER rates M&E Design at Entry as “Satisfactory”.

An M&E plan was developed and included project implementation reviews, quarterly review reports, ARRs and PIRs, tripartite committee reviews, steering committee meetings, a mid-term evaluation, a final evaluation. It also identified clear responsibilities and detailed a budget.

The project results framework was based on SMART indicators. It also included clear baseline values.

6.2 M&E Implementation	Rating: Moderately satisfactory.
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As mentioned in Section 6.1 M&E Design and Implementation were rated together as “Highly Satisfactory” by the TE. This TER rated M&E Implementation as “moderately satisfactory”. Although the project was properly monitored the quality of the mid-term evaluation was low.

The UNDP-GEF Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) for protected area was widely used as a monitoring tool. 43 CMPAs used such a tool.

PIRs were correctly developed and the indicators of the project results framework were properly measured. The financial sustainability scorecard was also used.

However, the mid-term review presents important shortcomings. It does not follow a logical structure, does not provide evidence for conclusions and it does not offer useful recommendations. Despite this, the author of the mid-term review was recruited again as a members of the final evaluation team.

## 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.

<b>7.1 Quality of Project Implementation</b>	Rating: Satisfactory
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The TE rated Quality of project implementation as “Highly satisfactory”. This TER revises the rating to “Satisfactory. Communication among main project actors was effective and quality of the project design is good, however UNDP did not ensure quality of the mid-term and final evaluation.

The project design is sound and it builds on lessons from two previous GEF-funded projects. For instance, the mid-term review of one previous project (GEF ID 205) suggested the establishment of a steering committee (*consorcio directivo del proyecto*), which actually implemented under this project.

Communication between UNDP, the Ministry of the Environment and of Sustainable Development, and the steering committee was positive.

The lack of actionable recommendations of the mid-term review implied that the mid-term review could not be used for adaptive management.

<b>7.2 Quality of Project Execution</b>	Rating: Satisfactory
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The TE did not rate Quality of Project Execution. This TER rates this criterion as “Satisfactory”.

The project was executed by Fundación Patagonia Natural (FPN). A good part of the staff involved in the project was already trained under previous GEF-funded projects. Consequently the project staff was aware of GEF procedures.

The project was managed from Puerto Madryn. Only one person was employed to manage activities in a very wide area, which included Tierra Del Fuego, Antártida and the islands of South Atlantic. Consequently the project had to rely on a network of collaborators and institutions that was developed during previous years. This proved to be effective since activities were implemented in a timely manner.

Activities were properly implemented. The project was executed on time and funds were correctly managed.

## 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 contributed to increasing the feeding and migration area of protected marine mammals and birds. More specifically TE estimates that about 75% of the feeding and migration areas of penguins is under protection. Protected feeding areas are 20-30% for sea lions, 25-30% for cormorans, and 3-5% for river dolphins. However these value mix protected areas under interjurisdictional parks and the penguin corridor, which is not formally approved (TE, p. 43).

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.

No significant socio-economic changes took place.

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 contributed to improvement in the capacities of civil servants, professionals and rangers in topics such as management and sustainable financing of CMPAs, biodiversity conservation, ecosystem services, political ecology, and financing mechanisms. More specifically, 50 administrators and conservation officers were trained in tools and programs for monitoring wildlife in CMPAs. 60 administrators and conservation agents participated in the courses on management effectiveness in protected areas. 260 people received training in effective management tools and METTs. 50 wardens and park administrators (Chubut and Buenos Aires provinces) received training in the use of tools for soil and vegetation conservation in CMPAs (2014 PIR).

#### b) Governance

Four new management plans for CMPAs were developed with the support of the project. (TE, p. 43).

The law on marine protected areas was approved by the Senate (it still had to be enacted by the government when the TE was conducted).

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.

Neither the TE nor other accompanying documents report unintended impacts.

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

No initiative was replicated at scale. A mechanisms for financing CMPAs was developed and is based on a trust fund. However, it still has to be implemented (TE, p. 44).

The protection corridor for penguins was designed. According to the evaluators the formal approval of the corridor was imminent when the TE was conducted (TE, p.43).

## 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.

Most significant lessons were:

- The achievement of outcomes and the delivery of products should be designed in a way that is not linked to political decisions. This is because political decisions depend on many factors that are outside the control of the project. Even though the political context of this project was favorable, some important political decisions affected outcomes.
- In order to develop the governance of protected coastal and marine areas both bottom-up and top-down strategies were adopted. Parliamentary actions were crucial to complement bottom-up interventions. For new projects both bottom-up and top-down approaches should be planned.
- Addressing constraints limiting biodiversity conservation require more time than the four or five years that typically characterize project life.
- It is important that projects focused on the protection of coastal and marine areas include mechanisms for financial sustainability. This is a complex topic, consequently projects should be based on gradual approaches. In a first phase actions should build human and social capital. In a second phase financial mechanisms should be implemented. Financial sustainability should be addressed in dedicated projects focused on this issue.

9.2 Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation.

Most important recommendations for the government and for UNDP were:

- Members of the steering committee generally take part in the meetings of COFEMA (the general council of the ministry of the environment). It is recommended that a working group be established to work on protected marine coastal areas. Such a working group should facilitate the development of protected coastal marine areas within the Federal System of Protected Areas (SiFAP).
- The implementation of the law on protected marine areas should be supported along with an interjurisdictional system. Coordination with the Federal System of Protected Areas should also be promoted.
- Training for provincial and municipal civil servants should be continued for topics related to the management of CMPAs. More specifically, capacity building should be organized for civil servants of the five coastal provinces, of the Administración de Parques Nacionales and of the Ministry of the Environmental and Sustainable Development. Training should also be organized for the civil servants that are employed after the 2015 elections.

- Financial mechanisms for the interjurisdictional system of protected coastal marine areas should be developed. At least minimal financial resources for all CMPAs should be budgeted.
- The Federal System of Protected Areas (SiFAP) is a coordination mechanism that during the last ten years was not properly developing. However this system has a great potential and it should be strengthened through a dedicated intervention.

Most important recommendations for GEF were:

- GEF should consider specific investments to develop financial instruments and contribute funds to a trust fund aimed at supporting CMPAs.
- GEF has already supported the conservation of the Large Coastal Marine Patagonian Ecosystem. An integrated ex-post evaluation should be conducted in three or four years to assess impacts at regional level.

## 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?	An analysis of the achievement of the objectives is missing. The analysis of the impacts is very weak. Outcomes were assessed however some important indicators were not analyzed.	<b>MS</b>
To what extent is the report internally consistent, the evidence presented complete and convincing, and ratings well substantiated?	The report is overly optimistic about the achievements of the project without providing evidence of delivered results. Positive ratings are not substantiated by evidence. Overall the report is not internally consistent	<b>U</b>
To what extent does the report properly assess project sustainability and/or project exit strategy?	Socio-political issues are not discussed. The analysis of governance and institutional framework is inconsistent with the information provided in the rest of the report. Considerations on the exit strategy are ignored.	<b>U</b>
To what extent are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive?	Lessons learned are presented along with a description of the key issues that generated them. Two of the five lessons are more common sense than real lessons	<b>MS</b>
Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used?	The report include actual project costs, which are distinguished by outcome. Data on co-financing are properly included	<b>S</b>
Assess the quality of the report's evaluation of project M&E systems:	The analysis of the M&E system is positive, however the report does not clearly distinguish considerations on the quality of the M&E design at entry from the quality of the M&E implementation	<b>MS</b>
<b>Overall TE Rating</b>		<b>MU</b>

Overall TE rating:  $0.3 \times (3 + 2) + 0.1 \times (2 + 4 + 5 + 4) = 3 = \text{MU}$

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