

1. Project Data

Summary project data			
GEF project ID		3984	
GEF Agency project ID		604284	
GEF Replenishment Phase		GEF 4	
Lead GEF Agency (include all for joint projects)		FAO	
Project name		SPWA - Development of a trans-frontier conservation area linking forest reserves and protected areas in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire	
Country/Countries		Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire	
Region		Africa	
Focal area		Biodiversity	
Operational Program or Strategic Priorities/Objectives		SP-3: strengthening terrestrial protected area networks SP-5: Fostering markets for biodiversity goods and services	
Executing agencies involved		Conservation Alliance; Forestry Commission (Ghana); and Société de Développement des Forêts - SODEFOR (Côte d'Ivoire)	
NGOs/CBOs involvement		None	
Private sector involvement		None	
CEO Endorsement (FSP) /Approval date (MSP)		May 1, 2012	
Effectiveness date / project start		November 2013	
Expected date of project completion (at start)		June 30, 2015	
Actual date of project completion		April 2018	
Project Financing			
		At Endorsement (US \$M)	At Completion (US \$M)
Project Preparation Grant	GEF funding	0.05	0
	Co-financing	0.05	0
GEF Project Grant		0.86	0.86
Co-financing	IA own	0.78	0.48
	Government	0.62	0.81
	Other multi- /bi-laterals	-	-
	Private sector	-	-
	NGOs/CSOs	0.2	0.07
Total GEF funding		0.91	0.86

Total Co-financing	1.65	1.36
Total project funding (GEF grant(s) + co-financing)	2.56	2.22
Terminal evaluation/review information		
TE completion date	October 2018	
Author of TE	Inza Koné, and Raquel Cabello	
TER completion date	February 2019	
TER prepared by	Spandana Battula	
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	-	MS	-	MS
Sustainability of Outcomes		ML	-	ML
M&E Design		MS	-	MS
M&E Implementation		MS	-	MS
Quality of Implementation		S	-	MS
Quality of Execution		MS	-	S
Quality of the Terminal Evaluation Report		-	-	MU

3. Project Objectives

3.1 Global Environmental Objectives of the project:

The project's Global Environment Objective was to "establish a viable and sustainable trans-frontier conservation area (TFCA), linking forest reserves and protected areas in and around Bia in Ghana and Diambarakro in Côte d'Ivoire" (TE pg 14).

3.2 Development Objectives of the project:

The Development Objective of the project was to "enhance the sustainable livelihoods of local communities living in and around the Bia-Diambarakro trans-frontier conservation area (TFCA) through sound agricultural and sustainable land use practices" (TE pg 14). The project intended to achieve its objective via three main components:

Component 1: improved capacity for biodiversity conservation;

Component 2: ecosystem restoration and protection; and

Component 3: strengthened conservation in the production landscape.

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

The project did not make changes to its objectives or activities.

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
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The TE gave a Satisfactory rating to project's relevance, and the TER concurs with the rating. The project was aligned to GEF's biodiversity focal area and its strategic objectives (SO) and strategic programmes (SP). The project components were consistent with SO-1 to catalyze sustainability of protected area systems, SO-2 to mainstream biodiversity in production landscapes, seascapes and sectors, SP-3 to strengthen terrestrial protected area networks, and SP-5 to foster markets for biodiversity goods and services. Moreover, the project was also relevant to Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire development and environmental priorities. Both the countries had ratified the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity in 1994 and were party to many other international instruments having links with biodiversity and the environment, as well as other regional environmental agreements. It was particularly consistent with the National Biodiversity Strategy of Ghana, and Côte d'Ivoire's National Environmental Action Plan and its Nature Protection Strategy.

4.2 Effectiveness	Rating: Moderately satisfactory
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The TE gave a Moderately Satisfactory rating because the project did not achieve all the outcomes. Many of the outputs were only partly delivered, and the project achieved few intermediate outcomes. The TER concurs with the rating as it also finds that some of the outcomes were only partly successful. Below is a detailed assessment of the effectiveness per component:

Component 1: Improved capacity for biodiversity conservation:

Under this component, the project intended to strengthen capacity of stakeholders by training staff on biodiversity management and monitoring protocol. As per the TE, the project trained government staff and communities on conservation techniques. The government staff in both countries received training on elephant monitoring and animal census, while some of the farmers received trainings on elephant monitoring and animal census. The project also facilitated exchange visits between stakeholders which helped in sharing lessons learnt, for example, "Ivorian stakeholders were impressed by the CREMA (Community Resource Management Area⁸) concept and the accompanying organizational scheme in Ghana. They also felt inspired by alternative livelihoods activities. In turn, Ghanaian stakeholders appreciated the existence of village-owned sacred or cemetery forests in Côte d'Ivoire, as well as the commitment of communities to protect them of their own accord" (TE pg 25). The TE stated the project designed a monitoring and impact protocol for transborder area, but the protocol was not implemented.

Component 2: ecosystem restoration and protection:

This component intended to enhance ecosystem restoration by increasing agroforestry area, establishing community forest groups, and training local people in ecosystem restoration. The TE stated that through the project, around 200,00 trees were planted. “Over 103,000 native tree seedlings (six different species) were planted in more than 257 ha of degraded areas in Krokusua Hills Forest Reserve, mainly through enrichment and boundary and watershed planting” (TE pg 24). Some of the women made tree nurseries their alternative businesses, and in general, tree ownership was high as it was regarded as a source of future revenue. The project also established two new Community Resource Management Area (CREMA), however these CREMAs had little experience and insufficient training to sustain after project closure.

Component 3: strengthened conservation in the production landscape:

Under this component, the project intended to reduce human-wildlife conflict, increase cocoa productivity, and improve biodiversity agricultural landscapes. To achieve this, the project carried out initial biodiversity assessments and studies on the feasibility and necessary conditions for a possible elephant corridor. “The studies enabled a better understanding of the state of ecosystems in each country and informed stakeholders of actions needed for the corridor to be viable” (TE pg 23). The project trained government staff in elephant monitoring and animal census, and it was more comprehensive in Ghana which has resulted in elephant census for end of 2018. For cocoa productivity, “farmers planted over 31,000 native tree seedlings on 816 ha of their farms, mostly cocoa farms. In Côte d’Ivoire, over 34,000 native tree seedlings were planted in 87 ha of degraded areas in Beki and Bossématié classified forests. Moreover, 69 farmers including 56 males and 13 females were supplied with over 32,000 native tree seedlings, which they shared with other farmers and planted in around 900 ha of cocoa farms” (TE pg 23). The TE stated that the project failed to restore degraded parts outside of forest area.

4.3 Efficiency	Rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory
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The TE noted that the project was more efficient in Ghana than in Côte d’Ivoire as it put more effort in partnership strategy including identifying and involving key stakeholders in Ghana compared to Côte d’Ivoire. This also resulted in efficient transfer of capacity in Ghana than in Côte d’Ivoire. The TE stated “project success was jeopardized by inefficient institutional arrangements until relevant adjustments were made, especially on the Ivorian side. The executing partner should have the same presence and influence in both countries of the project for equal efficiency and effectiveness” (TE pg 39). The project was also affected in Côte d’Ivoire because of lack of documents translated into French which caused delay in starting. “The lack of time and budget dedicated to translate project documents and resources for francophone stakeholders became a major impediment to implementation, starting from project launch” (TE pg 5). Due to these shortcomings, the TER gives a Moderately Unsatisfactory rating project’s efficiency.

4.4 Sustainability	Rating: Moderately Likely
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The TE gave an overall Moderately Likely rating to sustainability criteria, and the TER concurs with the rating. Below is a detailed assessment of financial, socio-political, institutional and environmental criteria for sustainability.

Financial: the TE does not mention availability of financing beyond the project, but mentioned that the project provided alternative livelihood activities where in Ghana honey production proved to be important sources of income for several farmers. However, in some cases communities were not well-equipped to sustain activities.

Socio-political: the project had participation from communities through exchange visits which resulted in “mutual inspiration and collaborative work, which will be systematized and expanded upon if the elaborated trans-border management plan is implemented” (TE pg 36). However, the presidential elections in 2020 in Côte d’Ivoire could cause socio-political troubles.

Institutional and governance framework: The TE mentioned that there was absence of institutional engagement in Côte d’Ivoire for wildlife management which could weaken institutional governance.

Environmental: The TE does not mention any negative environmental risks.

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 project’s materialized co-financing amount of \$1,359,000 was close to the expected amount of \$1,647,000.

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 had delays due to absence of partnership and lack of translated documents from English to French in Cote d’Ivoire. The TE noted “The lack of time and budget dedicated to translate project documents and resources for francophone stakeholders became a major impediment to implementation, starting from project launch” (TE pg 5).

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 does not provide information on country ownership.

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
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The TE gave a Moderately Satisfactory rating to M&E design and stated that “even though there wasn’t a clear M&E system, some efforts related to the M&E design took into account the implementation of activities and also the conservation and development impacts of the project” (TE pg 45). The M&E design also did not include gender approach and did not provide a budget allocation to monitor a gender sensitive approach. However the project document had provision for M&E plan that included results framework with indicators, collection of baseline data, mid-term review, and terminal evaluation. Given the design flaws in the M&E plan, the TER gives a Moderately Satisfactory rating.

6.2 M&E Implementation	Rating: Moderately Satisfactory
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The TE assigned a Moderately Satisfactory rating to M&E implementation, and stated that, although the project activities were evaluated, there was no biomonitoring system implemented. FAO provided monitoring support, and it submitted annual project implementation reports, and conducted field missions at least once a year. It also facilitated the mid-term review mission, while the Conservation Alliance provided quarterly and annual reports. The TE noted that there were several inconsistencies with the indicators, and it was “challenging for the evaluation team to know precisely the amount of money spent by each country because of a lack of data” (TE pg 34).

7. Assessment of project implementation and execution

Quality of Implementation includes the quality of project design, as well as the quality of supervision and assistance provided by implementing agency(s) to execution agencies throughout project implementation. Quality of Execution covers the effectiveness of the executing agency(s) in performing its roles and responsibilities. In both instances, the focus is upon factors that are largely within the control of the respective implementing and executing agency(s). A six point rating scale is used (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory), or Unable to Assess.

Please justify ratings in the space below each box.

7.1 Quality of Project Implementation	Rating: Moderately satisfactory
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The TE gave a Satisfactory rating to FAO's quality of implementation. FAO provided project oversight and technical support through its Regional Office in Accra, with a dedicated Regional Officer. It also supervised and supported the evaluation process of the project. FAO had initially submitted the concept note for the project, and although there were design flaws, the project was approved. The TE noted that there were issues in the timely transfer of funds from FAO to project activities which resulted in delays in the field. Given the flaws in quality of implementation, the TER downgrades the rating to Moderately Satisfactory.

7.2 Quality of Project Execution	Rating: Satisfactory
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Conservational Alliance was the main executing agency of the project, and it executed the field activities related to capacity building, organization and facilitation with communities. The agency provided "support to project management, including assistance for the coordination of project activities and monitoring of project progress, working closely with the Ghana Forestry Commission (GFC) and Société de Développement des Forêts National Project Coordinators (NPCs)" (TE Pg 32). In Ghana, the agency was able to mobilize with different partners because of its previous engagement in the country. It also liaised with project beneficiaries from other institutions in the area to compensate for project shortcomings, and the TE mentioned "one example of this is the alternative livelihood component, where CA leveraged existing partnerships to maximize available resources" (TE pg 32). However, due to lack of presence of the agency in Côte d'Ivoire, the project had to engage with another focal point which led to inefficient arrangement and resulted in delays. Considering the many initiatives it took in executing the project, the TER gives a satisfactory rating to quality of execution.

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 TE stated that "over 200,000 native tree seedlings (six different species) were planted in the two countries but the oldest trees are just three years old and do not yet have significant environmental impact" (TE pg 39).

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 mentioned “impact is limited, the total number of beneficiaries remains low and the project did not have resources to support activities such as alternative livelihoods. To see results, project activities should continue and intensified” (TE pg 40).

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 helped in generating awareness and building capacity of communities and governmental institutions for conservation development actions.

b) Governance: The TE does not mention changes to governance.

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 mentioned by the TE.

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

The GEF initiatives were not adopted at scale during the implementation.

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 key lessons from the TE were:

- a) the key to project success is adequacy of project goals and resources;
- b) for community engagement, it is necessary raise awareness on the issue, build capacity and have targeted incentives;
- c) to improve efficiency, capacity building of government institutions should be carefully planned;

- d) the project should promote trans-frontier collaboration including at the highest level in each country; and
- e) future projects should make an effort to identify the appropriate partners in each context during project design.

9.2 Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation.

The TE provided the following recommendations:

- a) The countries should take actions to continue key project activities such as surveillance, tree planting, community organization and awareness raising in order to maintain project outcomes, while searching for new sources of funding to scale up and reach long term goals of the project;
- b) The project should scale up in the same region rather than replicating the project elsewhere, which runs the risk of encountering similar challenges of limited resources in the face of ambitious goals;
- c) The design of the project should be based on a thorough analysis of the environmental, institutional and socio-economic context;
- d) There is a need for land and tree ownership, and it would be helpful for FAO to provide the policy support necessary to codify relevant land and tree ownership security measures for communities; and
- e) It is necessary to mainstream gender equity to adequately face development challenges.

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 TE did not provide clear evaluation of project outcomes and did not show the progress in the results framework	U
To what extent is the report internally consistent, the evidence presented complete and convincing, and ratings well substantiated?	The ratings are consistent with evidence presented, but the structure of the TE was conducive to easily gather information	MU
To what extent does the report properly assess project sustainability and/or project exit strategy?	The TE assessed sustainability but did not provide information as per the sustainability criteria	MU
To what extent are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive?	The lessons learned and recommendations are well presented in the report	S
Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used?	The TE provides co-financing information but does not provide project costs per component	MS
Assess the quality of the report's evaluation of project M&E systems:	The TE provided sufficient information on M&E design and implementation	S
Overall TE Rating		MU

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

The TE did not use any additional sources.