

### GEF EO Terminal Evaluation Review Form

1. PROJECT DATA				
GEF Project ID: 400		Review date: 20 <sup>th</sup> October 2006		
IA/EA Project ID: 258		<b>GEF financing:</b>	8.12	NA
Project Name: Conservation and Sustainable use of dry land Agro-Biodiversity of the fertile Crescent		IA/EA own:	1.58	NA
Country: Regional		Government:	7.86	NA
		Other*:	20.16	NA
		<b>Total Cofinancing</b>	29.60	NA
Operational Program: 1		<b>Total Project Cost:</b>	37.72	NA
IA: UNDP		<b>Dates</b>		
Partners involved: The International Center for Agri. Research in the Dry Areas (Government)		Work Program date		11/01/1997
		CEO Endorsement		10/08/1998
		Effectiveness/ Prodoc Signature (i.e. date project began)		03/23/1999
		Closing Date	Proposed: December 2003	Actual: June 2005
Prepared by: Neeraj Negi	Reviewed by: DRAFT	Duration between effectiveness date and original closing: 58 months	Duration between effectiveness date and actual closing: 76 months	Difference between original and actual closing: 18 months
Author of TE:	Joan Freeman Sawson Mehdi Mahmud Duwayri	TE completion date: December 2005	TE submission date to GEF OME: May 2006	Difference between TE completion and submission date: 6 months

\* Other is referred to contributions mobilized for the project from other multilateral agencies, bilateral development cooperation agencies, NGOs, the private sector and beneficiaries.

### 2. SUMMARY OF PROJECT RATINGS

GEF EO Ratings for project impacts (if applicable), outcomes, project monitoring and evaluation, and quality of the terminal evaluation: Highly Satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Moderately Satisfactory (MS), Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), Highly Unsatisfactory (HU), not applicable (N/A) and unable to assess (U/A). GEF EO Ratings for the project sustainability: Highly likely (HL), likely (L), moderately likely (ML), moderately unlikely (MU), unlikely (U), highly unlikely (HU), not applicable (N/A), and unable to assess (U/A). Please refer to document "Ratings for the achievement of objectives, sustainability of outcomes and impacts, quality of terminal evaluation reports and project M&E systems" for further definitions of the ratings.

	Last PIR	IA Terminal Evaluation	Other IA evaluations if applicable (e.g. IEG)	GEF EO
2.1 Project outcomes	S	MS-S	NA	MS
2.2 Project sustainability	N/A	NA	NA	MU
2.3 Monitoring and evaluation	N/A	NA	NA	MU
2.4 Quality of the evaluation report	N/A	N/A	NA	MS

Should this terminal evaluation report be considered a good practice? Why?

While the report covers most of the required issues, it is too long: the main body of the report has 63 pages excluding the annexes. Further, the report is difficult to follow.

Is there a follow up issue mentioned in the TE such as corruption, reallocation of GEF funds, etc.?

No such issues have been mentioned in the TE.

### 3. PROJECT OBJECTIVES, EXPECTED AND ACTUAL OUTCOMES

#### 3.1 Project Objectives

- **What are the Global Environmental Objectives? Any changes during implementation?**

According to the TE, the project's global environmental objective listed in project appraisal document was *"promotion and sustainable conservation and utilization of agrobiodiversity in the near east through farmer based in-situ conservation of significant endemic wild relatives and land races."*

The TE informs that although it was modified later in 2001 when project's LFA was developed, the modifications were minor in nature.

The project document (for Work Program) lists following as global environmental objective: *"The continuous availability of agro-biodiversity in the Fertile Crescent that is essential to the sustainable development of agriculture in that region, as well as to global food security and production."* This is significantly different from the one that TE claims was specified in the project documents. It could be the case that the TE has listed the global environmental objectives specified in the project document for CEO Endorsement. Since the project proposal submitted at the point of CEO Endorsement is not available in the PMIS database, it is not possible to verify whether the global environmental objective listed by the TE is actually the one that was specified in the project proposal submitted for CEO Endorsement.

- **What are the Development Objectives? Any changes during implementation?**

According to the TE the development objective, as listed in the logframe of the project documents, was to ensure that *"globally significant agrobiodiversity is conserved in situ in Syria/Lebanon/Jordan or the Palestinian Authority."*

The TE does not inform on whether there have been any changes in this development objectives during the course of project implementation.

The project appraisal document submitted for CEO Endorsement is not accessible. The project document (for Work Program) lists following as project's development objectives:

- *"An information base on the genetic diversity of ten target crops in the Fertile Crescent, and the social, economic, land use and agricultural policies and practices which affect them."*
- *A replicable, transferable, integrated approach for the conservation and sustainable use of agro-biodiversity within agriculturally productive ecosystems, adopted by participating countries/authority and driven by local communities, in selected target areas of representative agro-ecosystems."*
- *National environmental, land use, social and economic policy measures (involving incentives, compensation, and alternative income) to support and ensure the sustainability of the agro-biodiversity conservation activities."*
- *Strengthened national capacity for the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity (including technical and management capability), through training, regional collaboration, networking and exchange in experience."*

Thus, the project's development objectives listed in the project proposal document (for Work Program) are significantly different from the one which the TE claims to have been specified in the project appraisal document. It could be the case that the TE has listed the development objectives specified in the project document for CEO Endorsement. Since the project proposal submitted at the point of CEO Endorsement is not available in the PMIS database, it was not possible to verify whether the project development objective listed by the TE is actually the one that was specified in the project proposal submitted for CEO Endorsement.

### 3.2 Outcomes and Impacts

- **What were the major project outcomes and impacts described in the TE?**

According to the TE, almost all of the project objectives and outputs as defined in the approved LFA have been achieved or over achieved. However, the TE also informs that most of the desired results described in the LFA were merely outputs. Therefore, the TE evaluators looked for outcomes that had not been described in the project proposal documents or the LFA but were relevant and could be attributed to the project. Based on this assessment the TE evaluators found that the project was successful in:

- Raising awareness at national and regional level and in involving a variety of stakeholders in agrobiodiversity conservation.
- Building individual and institutional capacities among students and professionals to understand and in some cases to solve agrobiodiversity problems.
- Creating knowledge through numerous studies, reports and databases that have been produced as part of the project.
- Fostering commitment among the senior decision makers of host countries to continue policy work required to enact agrobiodiversity policies and legislation. For example, International Center for Agriculture Research in the Dry Areas (ICRDA) has integrated agrobiodiversity into one of its six program areas and is considering publication of regional project reports.

The TE report informs that since the project was geared to facilitate learning, the research and demonstration work undertaken has not produced adequate solutions for wild races and overgrazing, even though these should have been at the core of the project.

## 4. GEF OFFICE OF M&E ASSESSMENT

### 4.1 Outcomes

#### A Relevance

Rating: MS

- **In retrospect, were the project's outcomes consistent with the focal areas/operational program strategies? Explain**

According to the TE report, no expected results were originally specified for the project. The LFA that was developed in 2001 did not specify outcomes and results either; it focused on products and activities instead.

The TE report informs that the evaluators when reviewing project's performance looked specifically for what could be considered as "outcomes." TE report explains that such observed outcomes pertain to the capacity building and awareness at national and regional level. In opinion of the reviewer, even though these outcomes had not been clearly specified (expected) these are consistent with the focal area/operational program strategies.

The TE report also informs that the research and demonstration work of the project was not focused on finding solutions to problems related wild races and overgrazing, even though this should have been the primary focus. This suggests some level of disconnect in terms of the activities taken up and the intentions of the project.

#### B Effectiveness

Rating: MS

- **Are the project outcomes as described in the TE commensurable with the expected outcomes (as described in the project document) and the problems the project was intended to address (i.e. original or modified project objectives)?**

The TE informs that in the original project document, as well as the LFA prepared later on, the expected project outcomes were not clearly specified. Nonetheless, the TE describes, the project was effective in realizing some outcomes that were consistent with the focal area and operational program strategy. However, the outcomes that could be expected from many activities that were taken up towards the end of the project have not yet fully manifested.

**C Efficiency (cost-effectiveness) Rating: NA**

- **Include an assessment of outcomes and impacts in relation to inputs, costs, and implementation times based on the following questions: Was the project cost – effective? How does the cost-time Vs. outcomes compare to other similar projects? Was the project implementation delayed due to any bureaucratic, administrative or political problems and did that affect cost-effectiveness?**

This issue has not been covered in the project document. There were some delays in implementation of the project. But this information by itself is not enough to conclude whether the project was cost effective.

**Impacts**

- **Has the project achieved impacts or is it likely that outcomes will lead to the expected impacts?**

According to the TE so far the project has not led to noticeable changes in terms of program impact that could be directly observed in the host countries. However, the TE clarifies, that some local changes in the target areas have been observed through use of tracking tools. The TE does not discuss the extent to which the outcomes will lead to the intended project impacts.

**4.2 Likelihood of sustainability.** Using the following sustainability criteria, include an assessment of **risks** to sustainability of project outcomes and impacts based on the information presented in the TE.

**A Financial resources Rating: MU**

Some of the issues flagged in the TE indicate moderate risk to the financial sustainability of the project. The issues that have been listed are:

- Financial commitment from the national governments to integrate and strengthen agro-biodiversity within agriculture ministries is yet to be secured.
- Funding is still not in place to make the make the technical solutions, developed by the project for rangeland management and conservation of wild races, work.
- While some alternative approaches will work and spread on their own, others will fail if additional resources are not mobilized.
- Due to lack of funds some host countries are unlikely to retain project staff posing threat to sustainability of the project outcomes.

Based on this, it could be inferred that there is moderate risk to financial sustainability of the project.

**B Socio political Rating: ML**

The TE suggests that there will be a favorable environment and senior level interest in “implementing policy and legislation changes in Jordan, Palestine and possibly Syria.” On a six point scale the TE rates the likelihood of changes favorable to mainstreaming agrobiodiversity in agriculture being made to policies and legislation to be 4.5. However, elsewhere, TE informs that the necessary financial commitment from the national governments to make this possible is yet to be secured.

**C Institutional framework and governance Rating: L**

The TE informs that the project has developed both individual and institutional capacities of the personnel and institutions that will be developing and implementing agrobiodiversity policy interventions. The established or proposed agrobiodiversity units are to be staffed by the personnel trained under the project. It further informs that as a result of this project many informal agrobiodiversity networks and collaborative arrangements have been formed within countries between research institutes, ministry of agriculture, NGOs and universities, and that many of these networks will continue to function. These development seem to suggest a low risk to institutional and governance sustainability.

**D Environmental Rating: UA**

This issue has not been addressed by the TE

Provide only ratings for the sustainability of outcomes based on the information in the TE:

<b>A</b>	<b>Financial resources</b>	<b>Rating: U</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>Socio political</b>	<b>Rating: ML</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>Institutional framework and governance</b>	<b>Rating: L</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>Environmental</b>	<b>Rating: UA</b>

#### 4.3 Catalytic role

<b>1. Production of a public good</b> According to the TE the project has created new knowledge through studies, reports and databases have been produced as part of the project.
<b>2. Demonstration</b> The TE informs that budget for national components were reallocated in 2003 to include local incentives for demonstration activities. These allocations, TE informs, allowed demonstration activities to be taken up.
<b>3. Replication</b>
<b>4. Scaling up</b>

#### 4.4 Assessment of the project's monitoring and evaluation system based on the information in the TE

<b>A. In retrospect, was the M&amp;E plan at entry practicable and sufficient? (Sufficient and practical indicators were identified, timely baseline, targets were created, effective use of data collection, analysis systems including studies and reports, and practical organization and logistics in terms of what, who, when for the M&amp;E activities)</b> <b>Rating: U</b>
According to TE, at the point of project entry (CEO Endorsement) the project documents did not include a log frame that would summarize project design. TE informs that LFA was developed later on after project implementation had already begun. Even so, the LFA did not specify the expected project results or outcomes with clarity.
<b>B. Did the project M&amp;E system operate throughout the project? How was M&amp;E information used during the project? Did it allow for tracking of progress towards projects objectives? Did the project provide proper training for parties responsible for M&amp;E activities to ensure data will continue to be collected and used after project closure?</b> <b>Rating: MU</b>
Based on the information provided by the TE it could be said that the M&E system did operate during the project: in the initial stages it was ad hoc in nature but acquired a more concrete shape during the later stages of the project. According to TE, thematic meetings and project manager consultation meetings were introduced in the early stages of project implementation and were found to be effective. The TE informs that the information on project progress was analyzed using the tracking tool relevant to the biodiversity focal area. According to the TE, the indicators specified in logframe focused only on outputs and activities. Consequently, the expected outcomes of the project were not appropriately measured.
<b>C. Was M&amp;E sufficiently budgeted and was it properly funded during implementation?</b> <b>Rating: MU</b>
The TE suggests that original allocation for mid term and terminal evaluation was unrealistically low and the allocations were subsequently increased during project implementation.
<b>Can the project M&amp;E system be considered a good practice?</b> No. Based on the information provided in the TE it could be inferred the M&E system was poorly planned and was implemented in an ad hoc manner for a significant period of time. The TE suggests that the mid term and terminal evaluation were also inadequately funded.

#### 4.5 Lessons

Project lessons as described in the TE

<b>What lessons mentioned in the TE that can be considered a good practice or approaches to avoid and could have application for other GEF projects?</b>
According to TE following lessons could be taken from the project:

- Eliciting involvement of scientists as strategic entry-point such project (aiming at agribiodiversity conservation) could be an effective strategy in this project area because scientists are highly respected, linked to policy and decision making power structure at both local and national levels, and are in a position to galvanize the agriculture management and education committees.
- There is a need to consider broad based stakeholder needs and perspectives. For example this project's concept did not include analysis of stakeholder or beneficiary needs and consequently it lacked adequate emphasis on project sustainability.
- To address causes of land degradation and poor land management, there is a need to link development programs focused on addressing livelihood issues with agrobiodiversity projects.
- From the outset projects should be informed about experiences of similar projects in the project area or in the similar contexts.
- Demonstrations should work at a pace and with tools and skills that are expected of those that are responsible for implementing it.

**4.6 Quality of the evaluation report:** Provide a number rating 1-6 to each criteria based on: Highly Satisfactory = 6, Satisfactory = 5, Moderately Satisfactory = 4, Moderately Unsatisfactory = 3, Unsatisfactory = 2, and Highly Unsatisfactory = 1. Please refer to the "Criteria for the assessment of the quality of terminal evaluation reports" in the document "Ratings for the achievement of objectives, sustainability of outcomes and impacts, quality of terminal evaluation reports and project M&E systems" for further definitions of the ratings.

<b>4.6.1 Comments on the summary of project ratings and terminal evaluation findings</b>
In some cases the GEF Evaluation Office may have independent information collected for example, through a field visit or independent evaluators working for the Office. If additional relevant independent information has been collected that affect the ratings of this project, included in this section. This can include information that may affect the assessment and ratings of sustainability, outcomes, project M&E systems, etc.
No such additional source of information was accessible to the reviewer.

<b>4.6.2 Quality of terminal evaluation report</b>	<b>Ratings</b>
<b>A. Does the report contain an assessment of relevant outcomes and impacts of the project and the achievement of the objectives?</b>	S
<b>B. Is the report internally consistent, is the evidence complete/convincing and are the IA ratings substantiated?</b> The report is not concise. There are some minor inconsistencies. Also, often the actual rating scale used is 11 point scale rather than the recommended 6 point scale (the evaluators have rated performance on some dimensions to be MS-S etc, which modifies the scale).	MS
<b>C. Does the report properly assess project sustainability and /or a project exit strategy?</b>	S
<b>D. Are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive?</b>	MS
<b>E. Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used?</b> No Project costs have been included in the TE.	U
<b>F. Does the report present an assessment of project M&amp;E systems?</b>	S

<b>4.7 Is a technical assessment of the project impacts described in the TE recommended?</b> Please place an "X" in the appropriate box and explain below.	<b>Yes: X</b>	<b>No:</b>
Explain: It could be an interesting idea to assess the impacts of the project after some time lag.		

**4.8 Sources of information for the preparation of the TE review in addition to the TE (if any)**

