

GEF EO Terminal Evaluation Review Form

1. PROJECT DATA				
			Review date:	10/25/06
GEF Project ID:	408		<u>at endorsement</u> (Million US\$)	<u>at completion</u> (Million US\$)
IA/EA Project ID:		GEF financing:	6.76	6.76
Project Name:	National parks Conservation and Management	IA/EA own:		
Country:	Benin	Government:	3.54	
		Other*:		
		Total Cofinancing	19.131	
Operational Program:	1	Total Project Cost:	25.891	24.24
IA	World Bank	<u>Dates</u>		
Partners involved:	CENAGREF European Union, Germany through GTZ and KfW, the Netherlands and France.	Work Program date		1-Jan-98
		CEO Endorsement		12/22/1998
		Effectiveness/ Prodoc Signature (i.e. date project began)		07/06/2000
		Closing Date	Proposed: 12/31/2005	Actual: 12/31/2005
Prepared by: Divya Nair	Reviewed by: Antonio del Monaco	Duration between effectiveness date and original closing: 5 years and 5 months	Duration between effectiveness date and actual closing: 5 years and 5 months	Difference between original and actual closing: 0
Author of TE: Remi Kini		TE completion date: 6/30/2006	TE submission date to GEF OME: 7/27/2006	Difference between TE completion and submission date: 1 month

* 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	MS
2.2 Project	N/A	UL	UL	MU

sustainability				
2.3 Monitoring and evaluation				MU
2.4 Quality of the evaluation report	N/A	N/A		S

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

Yes, despite a weak M&E system associated with this project, the TE is clear, the outcomes it reports on are tied to data from the project. For the purposes of the GEF, it marks-out GEF's specific financial contribution within the project, and refers to global environmental objectives and GEF review criteria. The TE is also circumspect about over-attributing outcomes and impact to the project intervention, and provides disclaimers in this regard.

Is there a follow up issue mentioned in the TE such as corruption, reallocation of GEF funds, etc.? No.

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, as in the PAD, the global environmental objective was: to ensure the long-term conservation of Benin's globally important biodiversity resources in the face of competing economic pressures.

Specific areas of concern included: (i) increasing the ecological security of regionally important species, including a number of endemics, through improved management of protected areas and associated zones; (ii) providing sustainable management of habitats and ecosystems which are of regional and global importance, and which are increasingly threatened by a range of anthropic factors; (iii) promoting in situ preservation, of genetic diversity, which includes species of ecological, cultural and economic importance, in their natural habitat and within their natural range; (iv) supporting the involvement of local communities in the management of natural resources and the conservation of biodiversity; (v) supporting a coordinated response to the management of the tri-national transboundary ecosystem; and (vi) encouraging the sustainable management of fragile semi-arid savanna ecosystems. (TE, pp2)

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

According to the TE, as in the PAD, the operational objectives for which GEF support was requested were:

- (i) Provide institutional support and capacity building to national institutions responsible for biodiversity conservation;
- (ii) Support training of staff working for partner agencies and to support improved communications;
- (iii) Support the studies and field trips necessary to improve scientific understanding of the ecosystems and identify and describe habitats, ecosystems and species of global importance;
- (iv) Design a financial mechanism capable of providing sustainable financial support to the conservation of biodiversity in Benin;
- (v) Support transboundary cooperation for the conservation of biodiversity in the region;
- (vi) Support the review and updating of legislation relating, to National Park and Reserve Management, village and commercial hunting, the development of local institutions for the management of natural resources.

One **major change** was that before the start of implementation, the French Development Agency cancelled a significant amount of the funding allocated to eco-tourism. As a result of this reduction in funding some of the key investments that aimed to upgrade the tourism infrastructure in order to increase its quality and

the attractiveness of the two parks to visitors were not undertaken. (TE pp16)

3.2 Outcomes and Impacts

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

According to the TE, the National Parks Conservation and Management Program (NPCMP) implemented activities that “allowed rapid recovery of the wildlife population. The Program established a strong institutional and operational framework for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in and around the two national parks, as is rated as satisfactory by the TE.” From 2000 to 2005, major National Parks Conservation and Management Program achievements summarized by the TE (pp8) are:

- **establishment of CENAGREF as the major player in** terms of park management and as an example to be replicated in the sub-region; support of establishing Wildlife Reserves Management Center (CENAGREF) in developing business plans not only for the central office but also for field offices; these business plans include strategies to reduce costs and increase revenues, marketing strategies and plans to develop and improve touristic products
- **building of infrastructures included in management plans**; more than 1,300 km of paths (target in the PAD was 700 km), 9 watchtowers, 15 surveillance posts and 10 ponds were built for water supply to wildlife;
- **effective involvement of local populations in the management** of national parks through co-management activities and partnerships by empowering village associations (AVIGREFs) and giving them the possibility to play a central role in park management activities; 100 AVIGREFs are active in the field;
- **increase of revenues from national parks**, thus increasing populations’ incomes; tourism and cynegetic activities generated about US\$889,000 between 2001 to 2005, from both parks and 30 percent of this amount, representing US\$226,000 was retroceded to populations living around the parks;
- **increase in national awareness on conservation issues** and benefits through communication campaigns, talk shows and documentaries; and provision of rural populations with alternative employment opportunities by hiring them as supplemental workforce to conduct park management activities; 60 park rangers headed households of 5 to 8 people were hired for both parks, and about 1000 people were hired for punctual tasks.

4. GEF OFFICE OF M&E ASSESSMENT

4.1 Outcomes

A Relevance

Rating: S

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

Benin ratified the Global Convention on Biodiversity June 30, 1994. The program represented an important step in the implementation Benin of GEF's Operational Program 1, focused on biodiversity conservation in arid and semi-arid ecosystems. (PAD, pp14)

As per the TE, “the program’s global objectives were appropriate and in line with GEF’s priorities under the operational program on biodiversity, which included (i) the in situ conservation and sustainable use of critical ecosystems and threatened endemic species, (ii) support for active involvement of local communities as managers and beneficiaries of improved natural resource and biodiversity management, (iii) the promotion of conservation and sustainable use through capacity building, economic incentives and alternative livelihood opportunities, and (iv) the sustainable management of fragile semi-arid savanna ecosystems.” (TE, pp 6)

B Effectiveness

Rating: MS

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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)?
<p>The project was successful in achieving a number of its objectives, related in particular to increased capacity and involvement of the management and local populations in protected area and wildlife management, as described in section 3.2.</p> <p>A strong partnership was established between the populations and the CENAGREF, which was perceived by the populations as a reliable interlocutor, supporting local populations' effort to establish village associations (AVIGREFs) for the management of wildlife reserves. As a result, 100 AVIGREFs were created and played a catalytic role in (i) the disappearance of the previous antagonistic relations between the populations and the CENAGREF, (ii) the management and control of protected areas, (iii) the co-management of tourism and hunting zones, (iv) the decrease in poaching, (v) a reliable supply workforce for park management activities such as control and surveillance, and (vi) the building of social infrastructures using 30 percent of total revenues generated by hunting activities and retroceded by CENAGREF (TE, pp7)</p> <p>Some shortcomings of the project include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The conservation trust fund that was to ensure sustainability of outcomes was not established, and as per the TE this "remains a serious threat to the sustainability of the Program's achievements"(TE, pp18) - Also, the IEG TE-review notes that despite the TE referring to establishment of establishing Wildlife Reserves Management Center (CENAGREF) as one of the project's main achievements (TE, pp6), "it does not appear that CENAGREF was assisted in a manner that enabled it to move towards financial or institutional stability". The TE itself indicates failure of the Government to allocate sufficient resources to finance the operating costs of CENAGREF, and that there was 'persistent political interference in the management' (TE pp 16). - The M&E system was weak, no formal monitoring and evaluation activities were carried out during project implementation
<p>C Efficiency (cost-effectiveness) Rating: MS</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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? <p>According to the TE, the program was not extended from its original five-year period. The GEF funding was almost fully disbursed (95%) after reallocation among the project components. (TE, pp17)</p> <p>However, according to the TE, the mid-term review of the NPCMP was delayed by a year (late 2003 instead of 2002) because the Program did not fully start in 2002 as scheduled. While the GEF grant became effective in the second half of 2000 (August 2000), the W component did not start until early 2001, and the Dutch financing was not put to use until early 2002.</p> <p>The appropriateness of using GEF funds to pay salaries and other operational costs during 5 years is brought up by the TE (pp 27). The fact that this course of action was taken without the adoption of an exit strategy may have hurt the sustainability of the Program's achievements after closing of the GEF grant because of the lack of resources to finance the recurrent costs.</p>

<p>Impacts</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the project achieved impacts or is it likely that outcomes will lead to the expected

impacts?

The TE indicates that there was an increase in fauna and flora populations within protected areas; data generated by the ecological monitoring system show an increase of more than 20 percent in a 5 year-period; and some mammal populations such as elephants more than doubled with the latest census numbers showing that the size of the population of roan antelopes, cob de buffoon and warthogs increased over 40% between 2000 and 2005.

Given the success in establishing Wildlife Reserves Management Center (CENAGREF), the project is likely to lead to more environmental impact, particularly if financial sustainability of outcomes is ensured by a combination of government and donor support.

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****- The TE raises serious concern over the sustainability of financial resources.**

The conservation trust fund that was supposed to be established within two years of the program implementation in order to help finance the operations of CENAGREF is yet to be created. The lack of the trust fund or any other financial means to carry on the activities of the Program remain a threat to the sustainability of the Program's achievements, this is despite CENAGREF's efforts at attempting to get donor interest in a second phase. As per the TE, donor involvement will require a show of financial and political commitment to sustaining the achievements of the first Program. In particular, this would need Government to allocate sufficient budgetary resources to support the operating costs of CENAGREF in the interim period. (TE, pp 18)

One positive indication of Government interest is that allocation to CENAGREF in 2006 increased six-fold from the 2005 allocation (50 million CFAF as opposed to 300 million CFAF). However, due to liquidity constraints at the treasury, no transfer from the to CENAGREF has taken place. (TE, pp 18)

However, while the revenue generated by tourism and hunting activities are slightly above the range set at the appraisal of the program; the amount received by local populations, on the other hand is slightly below the range predicted. This was because the share of revenue accruing to local populations was lower than the one which the appraisal estimates were based on (30% instead of 45-53%), and the expected increase in the number of visitors did not materialize. These shortfalls may undermine the sustainability of the projects. (TE,pp14)

B Socio political**Rating: ML**

As per the TE (pp10), in all three components there are examples of success in addressing social capital, and thus reducing socio-political risk. Involvement of villagers in anti-poaching teams reinforced mutual trust, ownership, provided independent observers at no additional cost, fostered professionalism and the respect of rules, and limited and prevented corruption cases. (pp12)

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

CENAGREF is now a key policy advice provider to the Government in the area of protected area management and biodiversity conservation. Yet, the TE notes the failure of the Government to allocate sufficient resources to finance the operating costs of CENAGREF despite strong recommendation of the mid-term review mission to increase in order to do so to sustain the program achievements following the closing of the GEF grant. (pp16)

The TE notes that the government did not hold the managers accountable for the quality of the service provided to tourists. (TE, pp16) The revenue generated by the facilities located within the park did not contribute to the financing of the park management because this revenue is collected by the Ministry of Tourism that does not make any attempt to improve the living conditions in the lodging facilities. The MTR recommended that the Government take the necessary steps to remedy this lack of alignment and consistency in its ecotourism promotion policies. The cabinet reshuffles and the changes at the head of

CENAGREF that followed occurred in 2004-2005 did not allow any progress in this area of policy realignment (TE pp16), indicating governance risks to future outcomes.
D Environmental Rating: ML
Given the improvements in management and technical capacity, the TE describes the low capacity where at least 50% of the 2,390 members of the AVIGREF are well trained and have the skills needed to carry out most park management activities (e.g., surveillance and control of poaching), and infrastructure maintenance and basic conservation activities (protection and sustainable use of resources) (TE, pp9) However, the information on environmental risk is not available.

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

A Financial resources	Rating: U
B Socio political	Rating: L
C Institutional framework and governance	Rating: ML
D Environmental	Rating: L

4.3 Catalytic role

1. Production of a public good
2. Demonstration : According to the TE, the CENAGREF since its establishment in 1996, has played a crucial role in the sustainable management of national parks in Benin, using a co-management approach involving village associations (AVIGREFs) for the management of wildlife reserves. As a result, Benin now has a strong institution in the conservation field, which is regarded in the sub-region as exemplary. (TE, pp7)
3. Replication: according to the TE, village associations (AVIGREFs) for the management of wildlife reserves have inspired several countries including Burkina Faso, Senegal, Mali, and Ivory-Coast, interested in replicating this approach. (TE, pp7)
4. Scaling up

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

A. In retrospect, was the M&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&E activities) Rating: U
More elaboration on the M&E tools, methods, integrated (multi-donor) framework, and implementation arrangements was required in the PAD (TE, pp20) As per the TE, "marginal attention was paid to the monitoring of the project. A comprehensive and rigorous monitoring and evaluation system was not set up during project preparation. In addition, the indicators identified at that stage were not appropriate, and were consequently changed during the Mid Term Review." (TE, pp6)
B. Did the project M&E system operate throughout the project? How was M&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&E activities to ensure data will continue to be collected and used after project closure? Rating: MU
The monitoring and evaluation system was one of the weakest aspects of the Program. In fact, no formal monitoring and evaluation activities were carried out during project implementation. The CENAGREF explained that situation by the fact that donors' logical frameworks were incompatible. While the limited flexibility of these logical frameworks could have played a role, it was the view of the ICR mission that the

lack of leadership and adequate competencies also hampered the establishment of an effective and integrated M&E system. This being said, each national park had relatively good M&E plan that allowed the tracking of the implementation results, and the undertaking of remedial actions when needed. (TE ,pp27)

However, indicators were monitored with a sustainable ecological monitoring system that produced quarterly dashboards and whose parameters and baseline data were established in 2003. (TE, pp10) A GIS-based ecological monitoring system was developed and enables tracking of parameters related to fauna and flora conservation.

C. Was M&E sufficiently budgeted and was it properly funded during implementation?

Rating: U/A

Can the project M&E system be considered a good practice? No.

4.5 Lessons

Project lessons as described in the TE

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?

- **Co-management:** The achievements of the NPCMP confirms the critical importance of involving local communities in the development of effective biodiversity conservation systems. The involvement of villagers in anti-poaching teams reinforced mutual trust, ownership, provided independent observers at no additional cost, fostered professionalism and the respect of rules, and limited and prevented corruption cases. The performance of anti-poaching teams was stimulated through the establishment of an adaptive incentive-based system linking the payment of salaries to the achievement of specific targets. (TE, pp11)
- **Integrated conservation and development:** The effective integration of conservation and development has always posed great challenges to the conservation community. The NPCMP seemed to have achieved a level of integration by combining a set of activities that had a clear and positive impact on the living conditions of the local populations via (i) a transparent mechanism for sharing revenues derived from hunting and tourism, (ii) direct employment of local populations in park management activities, (iii) controlled access to and use of natural resources following an agreed upon sustainable use plan, and (iv) financing of targeted community development initiatives.
For example, in the Pendjari component, from the 30 percent of total earnings from hunting activities, 27 percent is used to support the functioning of AVIGREFs , including the preparation of meetings, and the control of hunting, and 73 percent is distributed among villages. The resources intended for villages were divided into resources allocated to communes (20 percent) to finance local development, participation of members in conservation law and control activities (25 percent), and social activities such as the restoration of pumps and the payment of school teachers' salaries. In addition, 37 training sessions and workshops were organized to improve the managerial capacities of villagers. About 1,005 people, including 741 women, were trained. Twenty one park rangers were recruited within neighboring villages. (TE, pp10)
- **Effective coordination mechanisms** are key requirements for multi-donor interventions: The NPCMP had five donors each with its grant agreement, its own financial management and reporting requirements, and logical framework. Yet, the Project Appraisal Document (PAD) did not include any specific coordination mechanism. This lack of a clear coordination mechanism agreed upon at the appraisal weakened the leverage of CENAGREF to effectively coordinate donors' interventions. Although there is no evidence this lack of strong control by CEANGREF hurt the results on the ground, it did undermine the national ownership of the Program. (TE, pp23)

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.

4.6.1 Comments on the summary of project ratings and terminal evaluation findings
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.
N/A

4.6.2 Quality of terminal evaluation report : the TE is clear, well-argued and consistent. However, while the PIR 2004 points to “continued non-compliance and Unsatisfactory performance of Safeguards” , related in particular to overall safeguard compliance and environmental assessment; with a Moderately Satisfactory rating for safeguard compliance for natural habitats; the ICR does not investigate this.	Ratings
A. Does the report contain an assessment of relevant outcomes and impacts of the project and the achievement of the objectives?	S
B. Is the report internally consistent, is the evidence complete/convincing and are the IA ratings substantiated?	S
C. Does the report properly assess project sustainability and /or a project exit strategy?	S
D. Are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive?	S
E. Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used?	S
F. Does the report present an assessment of project M&E systems?	S

4.7 Is a technical assessment of the project impacts described in the TE recommended? Please place an "X" in the appropriate box and explain below.

Yes: X

No:

Explain: it would be interesting to see how the project outcomes would produce impacts in the future. Given the relative success of the project but UL sustainability it would be useful to see if/how it overcomes sustainability concerns.

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

PAD, 2000; PIR 2005