

## 1. Project Data

<b>Summary project data</b>			
<b>GEF project ID</b>		4083	
<b>GEF Agency project ID</b>		609285	
<b>GEF Replenishment Phase</b>		GEF 4	
<b>Lead GEF Agency (include all for joint projects)</b>		FAO	
<b>Project name</b>		CBSP- Integrated management of mangrove and associated wetlands and coastal forests ecosystems of the Republic of Congo	
<b>Country/Countries</b>		Republic of Congo	
<b>Region</b>		Africa	
<b>Focal area</b>		Biodiversity	
<b>Operational Program or Strategic Priorities/Objectives</b>		SP-4: Strengthening the policy and regulatory framework for mainstreaming biodiversity	
<b>Executing agencies involved</b>		Direction générale de l'environnement (DGE)	
<b>NGOs/CBOs involvement</b>		Congo Nature Conservation (CNC), University of Pointe Noire and the Oceanic Laboratorium, and Association Nature et Développement (ND)	
<b>Private sector involvement</b>		None	
<b>CEO Endorsement (FSP) /Approval date (MSP)</b>		December 1, 2011	
<b>Effectiveness date / project start</b>		July 2013	
<b>Expected date of project completion (at start)</b>		December 31, 2014	
<b>Actual date of project completion</b>		December 2017	
<b>Project Financing</b>			
		<b>At Endorsement (US \$M)</b>	<b>At Completion (US \$M)</b>
<b>Project Preparation Grant</b>	GEF funding	0.06	0
	Co-financing	0.085	0
<b>GEF Project Grant</b>		0.950	0
<b>Co-financing</b>	IA own	0.375	0
	Government	0.9	0
	Other multi-laterals	1.019	0
	Private sector	0	0
	NGOs/CSOs	0.1	0
<b>Total GEF funding</b>		1.0	1.0
<b>Total Co-financing</b>		2.479	0

<b>Total project funding (GEF grant(s) + co-financing)</b>	3.489	1.0
<b>Terminal evaluation/review information</b>		
<b>TE completion date</b>	October 2018	
<b>Author of TE</b>	FAO Office of Evaluation	
<b>TER completion date</b>	Spandana Battula	
<b>TER prepared by</b>	February 2019	
<b>TER peer review by (if GEF IEO review)</b>	Cody Parker	

## 2. Summary of Project Ratings

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

## 3. Project Objectives

### 3.1 Global Environmental Objectives of the project:

The Global Environmental Objective of the project was to “strengthen the conservation of biodiversity and reduce degradation in mangrove ecosystems” (PD pg 23).

### 3.2 Development Objectives of the project:

The Development Objective of the project was to “enhance and increase the sustainability of livelihoods in communities located in and around mangrove ecosystems” (PD pg 23). The project aimed to achieve its objective through four main components:

- Component 1: legal and institutional strengthening;
- Component 2: environmental monitoring and evaluation;
- Component 3: conservation management planning; and
- Component 4: sustainable management of mangrove resources.

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

There were no changes to the objectives or activities during project implementation.

## 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.

<b>4.1 Relevance</b>	Rating: Satisfactory
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The project was relevant to GEF's biodiversity focal area, and aligned with Strategic Priority 4 on strengthening the policy and regulatory framework for mainstreaming biodiversity. It was also relevant to GEF's land degradation objective of promoting sustainable forest management, as well as in developing an enabling environment that will place sustainable land management in the mainstream of development policy and practices.

Additionally, the project was also consistent with Congo's national priorities and plans on biodiversity conservation such as the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, National Environmental Action Plan, Congo's Forest Code, National Forestry Policy, and National Forestry Action Plan. Congo is signatory to international agreements regarding the environment and has also made commitments to other international and regional agreements such as the Yaoundé Declaration, Bangui Convention, and COMIFAC Convergence Plan. The project objectives would help Congo in achieving its plans and respecting its international undertakings. Thus, the project was highly relevant to GEF and national priorities.

<b>4.2 Effectiveness</b>	Rating: Moderately Satisfactory
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The TE did not provide an overall rating for the effectiveness of the project but provided a detailed analysis of each component. The TER gives a Moderately satisfactory rating, as two of the four main components were satisfactory whereas the other two components failed to deliver many of their outputs. Below is a detailed assessment of the components:

#### **Component 1: Legal and institutional strengthening:**

Under this component, the project aimed to strengthen the legal and institutional framework for the management of mangrove ecosystems. As per the TE the project was successful in developing a national mangrove management strategy with an action plan, including a specific plan for the city of Pointe Noire. As part of the project, a diagnostic study was conducted to identify gaps and legal loopholes in forestry law and recommend solutions. The outcomes of this study were integrated into the forestry code and "part of the draft law relating to mangroves and coastal ecosystems was inspired by the diagnostic study document" (TE pg 12). However, the TE mentioned that these developments were not disseminated amongst stakeholders and the recommendations from the study were only partly integrated.

## **Component 2: Environmental monitoring and evaluation:**

This component intended to increase capacity of relevant stakeholders to monitor biodiversity and the mangrove ecosystem. To build capacity, the project set up a National Coastal Observatory which was near completion but yet to be operational at the time of the terminal evaluation. The project provided tools for the observatory such as the ecological monitoring plan based on precise indicators, although the indicators were focused at site level instead of national level. In addition, the project “produced 15 detailed maps of the entire Congolese coastal zone in order to grasp the different themes and facilitate decision-making on the management of mangrove and coastal ecosystems” (TE pg 15). It also trained 50 NGO and government staff in environmental and social impact assessment and monitoring, and carried out eight studies from which information was collected to raise awareness and inform decision makers about the importance of ecosystems.

## **Component 3: Conservation management and planning:**

The aim of this component was to build local capacity for conservation management of mangrove ecosystems. As per the TE, the project trained 108 NGO and government conservation staff on participatory approaches; however, “the use of the knowledge acquired was limited by the non-provision of co-financing, which did not allow the implementation of Simple Management Plans (PSG) developed by the communities” (TE pg 16). The project also couldn’t formally acquire community zones to guarantee implementation of the training, and did not get formal agreements between the communities and Congolese state to secure the zones to enable implementation of the plans.

## **Component 4: sustainable management of mangrove resources:**

This component did not have satisfactory results because of the lack of co-financing for implementation of the Simple Management Plans. The project failed to develop a vision document on community management financing which could have enabled the stakeholders to reflect on realistic ways to mobilize this financing. It was also problematic as the communities “adopted an attitude which suggested that their development, wealth generation and consequently the improvement of their living conditions were exogenous actions from FAO” (TE pg 18). However, to improve livelihood, the project “provided 8 villages and neighbourhoods in the Bas-Kouilou community area with a 5 Kw electricity generator, 2 freezers, four outboard motors, four high-capacity canoes” (TE pg 18). On the output related to forest rehabilitation, the TE stated that project did not carry out reforestation although it secured 7,319 ha through community forest plans.

<b>4.3 Efficiency</b>	Rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory
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The TE stated that the project was not successful in receiving the expected co-financing amount of \$2,479,200, which affected the project outcomes. The TE also mentioned that “as the financial data were not organized by component, the evaluation team was unable to provide an opinion on the efficiency of

each particular component” (TE pg 24). The project also faced considerable delay of 1.5 years in starting because the partner NGOs were not aware of FAO procedures and had administrative issues, however, this was later rectified through support missions by FAO staff. Considering the weaknesses in financial management and time delays, the TER gives a Moderately Unsatisfactory rating to project efficiency.

4.4 Sustainability	Rating: Moderately Unlikely
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The sustainability of the project seems moderately unlikely due to lack of co-financing, and political risk from the Ministry of Forestry. Although the project created awareness on ecosystem management, the weakness in financing hindered the implementation of project activities. Considering the high risks in financial and socio-political criteria, the TER gives a Moderately Unlikely rating.

**Financial:** The financial sustainability of the project seems to be at risk because during implementation it did not secure the expected co-financing to implement some of the activities. Although the project provided electricity generators, freezers, and outboard motors to improve the communities’ livelihood, but it seemed that the communities had adopted an attitude to improve their living conditions from FAO. The project failed to generate livelihood options and receive the co-financing, and thus, the risk to financial sustainability is high.

**Socio-political:** The TE stated that the socio-political sustainability was fragile because “the national coordinator is part of the Ministry of Forest Economy in charge of mangrove management, but this ministry has not taken any concrete action to ensure the sustainability of the project” (TE pg 25). However the TE mentioned that “the project's actions have increased awareness of the importance of mangrove resources and participatory community management approach within the beneficiary communities” (TE pg 26).

**Institutional and governance framework:** The institutional sustainability seemed positive as the project influenced the legislative framework of mangrove ecosystems and influenced environmental and forestry codes.

**Environmental:** The TE did not note any negative risks to the environmental benefits of the project.

## 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 did not receive the expected co-financing amount of \$2,479,200, and as per the TE, some of the activities could not be implemented because of lack of co-financing. The TE did not mention the reason why the co-financing did not get materialized.

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 experienced extreme delay in starting because of administrative issues and lack of understanding of FAO procedures by partner NGOs.

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 did not describe project ownership in detail but mentioned that communities did not take ownership of income generation approach.

## **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.

<b>6.1 M&amp;E Design at entry</b>	Rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory
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The TE did not provide an assessment of M&E design at entry. As per the project document there was provision for a logical framework with indicators, collection of baseline data, development of monitoring reports and evaluation report, and the M&E plan was budgeted for \$97,638. The TE noted that the indicators were focused on site level failed to link to national level progress for broader monitoring of progress, and it also critiqued that the indicators also did not consider gender issues as part of the project outputs. Therefore, the TER gives a Moderately Unsatisfactory rating to M&E design at entry

<b>6.2 M&amp;E Implementation</b>	Rating: Moderately Satisfactory
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The TE gave a Satisfactory rating to M&E implementation and stated that the "M&E system was appropriate and implemented as originally planned. Missions to monitor the national coordination project based in Brazzaville were conducted regularly" (TE pg 26). The operational monitoring and field visits were effective and documented in reports. The project produced annual reports for review by the Steering Committee, and conducted a mid-term review providing recommendations. The TE mentioned that although the project reported on "progress in the implementation of activities and outputs, [it] did not assess incremental changes induced in communities" (TE pg 22). M&E implementation also failed to monitor

risks and assumptions, and furthermore, did not systematically document lessons learnt and good practices. Given the weaknesses in M&E implementation, the TER downgrades the rating to Moderately Satisfactory.

## **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: Moderately Satisfactory
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FAO was the implementing agency, and the TE gave a Moderately Satisfactory rating while describing the quality of implementation as “the project did not adapt to the difficulties encountered during implementation. The team gave the impression that it lacked a real strategic vision to document problems and find more or less adequate solutions” (TE pg 26). The project had a delayed start due to lack of understanding of FAO procedure by NGOs, however this was corrected after several support missions by the FAO finance officer in Brazzaville. For implementation of specialized and field activities, FAO concluded subcontracting agreements and the technical quality of the sub-contractor’s work was monitored and considered as satisfactory. FAO ensured M&E was carried out, and the FAO office managed the financial monitoring by producing annual financial reports.

<b>7.2 Quality of Project Execution</b>	Rating: Satisfactory
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The project was executed by the Directorate General for the Environment (DGE), and as per the TE, the agency performed its role in strategic steering, direction and coordination of the project adequately. While DGE was the operational focal point, the Directorate General for Forest Economy (DGEF) was involved in the Steering Committee functioning. The executing team developed annual work plans, annual reports, and conducted regular sessions of the steering committee. Both the agencies provided “technical support for strategic activities such as the development and validation of the national strategy, action plans, ecological monitoring plan and simple community area management plans” (TE pg 22). Thus, the TER gives a Satisfactory rating to project 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 does not mention any environmental impacts from the project.

8.2 Socioeconomic change. Describe any changes in human well-being (income, education, health, community relationships, etc.) that occurred by the end of the project. Include both quantitative and qualitative changes documented, sources of information for these changes, and how project activities contributed to or hindered these changes. Also include how contextual factors have contributed to or hindered these changes.

The TE does not mention changes to socioeconomic conditions through the project.

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 trained NGO and government staff on participatory approaches and ecosystem management. The project also laid the foundation for the creation of the observatory and development of tools for the M&E plan. Due to the project, “the evaluation found an improvement in the knowledge of all stakeholders on mangrove issues” (TE pg 20).

b) Governance: The project influenced the legal framework on ecosystems through the production of a national strategy and action plan for the integrated management of mangrove ecosystems and the integration of mangroves into the forestry code under revision.

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.

The TE does not mention any unintended impacts from the project.

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 project had plans and resources in place for income generating activities but there were adopted at scale.

## **9. Lessons and recommendations**

9.1 Briefly describe the key lessons, good practices, or approaches mentioned in the terminal evaluation report that could have application for other GEF projects.

The key lessons from the project were:

- a) the design of the project had thorough diagnosis and engaged all key actors working on mangrove management in Congo;
- b) the project had a positive influence on the legal framework of coastal ecosystem management, and ecosystem management issues were being taken into account in revised environmental and forestry codes;
- c) although NGO and government staff have necessary skills to support participatory management of ecosystems, the lack of co-financing hindered the implementation Simple Management Plans developed by the communities;
- d) the project was very ambitious and changes had to be made at legal and institutional level; and
- e) gender mainstreaming in the project was insufficient and gender issues were not considered during the design stage.

9.2 Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation.

The TE provided the following main recommendations:

- a) the project should have a sustainability phase aimed at strengthening and consolidating the achievements. The FAO should lobby for the specificities of mangroves and associated ecosystems to be taken into account in the forestry code currently being revised and in the implementing legislation;
- b) FAO should plan an initial "Inception Phase" to train implementing partners at the beginning of this project in FAO project procedures and management, in order to avoid time delays and misunderstandings;
- c) A baseline study should be conducted to provide the project with realistic indicators and a M&E plan;
- d) The Congolese government should make the observatory operational, and develop the revised forestry code not only on aspects related to mangroves and associated ecosystems, but also on community-based management of resources in areas allocated to communities; and

- e) The government should strengthen the technical operational, organizational and financial capacities of local communities, especially women (prior to a gender situation analysis), for their effective engagement in sustainable mangrove management.

## 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 report contains adequate assessment of the outcomes and impacts and provides appropriate ratings.	<b>S</b>
To what extent is the report internally consistent, the evidence presented complete and convincing, and ratings well substantiated?	The report is internally consistent and has convincing evidence	<b>S</b>
To what extent does the report properly assess project sustainability and/or project exit strategy?	The TE well assessed the sustainability as per the criteria and provided ratings accordingly.	<b>S</b>
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.	<b>S</b>
Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used?	The TE did not provide co-financing data and costs per components	<b>MU</b>
Assess the quality of the report's evaluation of project M&E systems:	The project did not evaluate M&E design at entry but provided a sufficient assessment of M&E implementation	<b>MS</b>
<b>Overall TE Rating</b>		<b>MS</b>

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

The TER did not use any additional sources.