

GEF EO Terminal Evaluation Review Form

1. PROJECT DATA				
GEF Project ID:		411	Review date:	
			<u>at endorsement</u> (Million US\$)	<u>at completion</u> (Million US\$)
IA/EA Project ID:	230	GEF financing:	5.30	NA
Project Name:	Conservation Management of Eritrean Coastal, Marine and Island Biodiversity Project	IA/EA own:		
Country:	Eritrea	Government:	0.84	NA
		Other*:		
		Total Cofinancing	0.84	NA
Operational Program:	OP2	Total Project Cost:	6.24	NA
IA	UNDP	<u>Dates</u>		
Partners involved:	Ministry of Marine Resources	Effectiveness/ Prodoc Signature (i.e. date project began)		December 1998
		Closing Date	Proposed: December 2003	Actual: NA
Prepared by:	Reviewed by:	Duration between effectiveness date and original closing (in months): 60 months	Duration between effectiveness date and actual closing (in months): NA	Difference between original and actual closing (in months): NA
Neeraj Negi				
Author of TE:		TE completion date:	TE submission date to GEF EO:	Difference between TE completion and submission date (in months): 8 Months
Philip Tortell		August 2007	April 2008	

* 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 AND KEY FINDINGS

Please refer to document GEF Office of Evaluation Guidelines for terminal evaluation reviews for further definitions of the ratings.

Performance Dimension	Last PIR	IA Terminal Evaluation	IA Evaluation Office evaluations or reviews	GEF EO
2.1a Project outcomes	S	S	NA	MU
2.1b Sustainability of Outcomes	N/A	NA	NA	ML
2.1c Monitoring and evaluation		NA	NA	MS
2.1d Quality of implementation and Execution	NA	NA	NA	MU
2.1e Quality of the evaluation report	N/A	N/A	S	MS

2.2 Should the terminal evaluation report for this project be considered a good practice? Why?

Overall, the terminal evaluation may not be considered a good practice. It does not comprehensively cover the total period that the project was under implementation – it just focuses on the period after completion of the mid term review of the project. It has provided ratings on only the project outcomes. Performance on other criteria such as monitoring and evaluation has not been rated. Another weakness of the terminal evaluation is that it was conducted six months before the expected closure of the project. As a result for many aspects of the project information provided in the report is not complete and on many instances the assessment presented assumes that the activities under implementation will

be completed by project closure.

2.3 Are there any evaluation findings that require follow-up, such as corruption, reallocation of GEF funds, mismanagement, etc.?

No such issues have been noted in the terminal evaluation report.

3. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

3.1 Project Objectives

a. What were the Global Environmental Objectives of the project? Were there any changes during implementation?

According to the project appraisal document the global environmental objective of the project was to “ensure the conservation management of Eritrea’s coastal, marine and island biodiversity”. According to the terminal evaluation this objective remained unchanged during project implementation.

b. What were the Development Objectives of the project? Were there any changes during implementation?

According to the project appraisal document, the project had following development objectives (listed in the document as the immediate objectives):

1. Develop a comprehensive, integrated and participatory management framework for the conservation management and sustainable development of Eritrea’s coastal, marine and island biodiversity
2. Develop and implement a participatory management program for critical conservation management areas, and for habitats and species of special concern outside conservation management areas.
3. Establish a system for ensuring that up-to-date biodiversity information is used in all coastal, marine and island planning and management activities.
4. Increase at all levels (Baitos, community groups, managers, administrators, policy makers, and private sector) awareness of the need for, the benefits of, and how to, sustainably use and manage Eritrea’s coastal, marine and island biodiversity resources.

According to the terminal evaluation report due to slow progress during the initial years of implementation, the project was restructured (in 2004). The revised development objectives were to ensure that:

1. Up-to-date biodiversity information is used in coastal, marine and island planning and management activities.
2. Awareness increased at all levels (community groups, managers, administrators, and private sector) of the need for, the benefits of, and mechanisms to sustainably use and manage Eritrea’s coastal, marine and island biodiversity resources
3. Policies for integrated coastal management programs developed and integrated coastal management approaches implemented in priority areas.
4. A core of a national Marine Protected Area network and species conservation program established, and management of exotic species improved.

As a result of restructuring, some of the important development objectives of the project were scaled down. For example, the objective of development and implementation of a participatory management program for critical conservation management areas was downscaled to development and implementation of such programs in priority areas. Similarly, the objective of development of a comprehensive, integrated and participatory management framework for the conservation management and sustainable development of Eritrea’s coastal, marine and island biodiversity was downscaled to establishment of a core of national marine protected area network and of a species conservation program. Other objectives were streamlined.

4. GEF EVALUATION OFFICE ASSESSMENT OF OUTCOMES AND SUSTAINABILITY

4.1.1 Outcomes (Relevance can receive either a satisfactory rating or a unsatisfactory rating. For effectiveness and cost efficiency a six point scale 6= HS to 1 = HU will be used)

a. Relevance

Rating: S

The project is relevant to the GEF Operational Program 2, which addresses coastal, marine and freshwater ecosystems. It geographically covers the biodiversity rich areas of red sea.

b. Effectiveness

Rating: MU

According to the terminal evaluation the performance of project in achieving the expected outcomes was satisfactory. It informs that:

- The project fully achieved its development objective of developing policies for integrated coastal management and implementation of such approaches in priority areas.
- It partially achieved its development objectives of ensuring that up-to-date biodiversity information is used in

coastal, marine and island planning and management activities, and of establishing a core of a national marine protected area network and species conservation program and improving management of exotic species.

- It is difficult to assess whether the development objective of increasing awareness on issues related to biodiversity management in the project area increased at all levels.

The terminal evaluation has, however, focused only on achievement of project development objectives after restructuring. As discussed in section 3.1b, after restructuring some of the project components were significantly downscaled and others redesigned. For example, baseline surveys on biodiversity, establishment of systems to monitor biodiversity and ensuring availability of biodiversity management information, was to be done at the national level. After restructuring the scope of these activities was limited to priority areas selected by the project for demonstration. Similarly, coordination and participatory involvement mechanisms for coastal, marine and island biodiversity planning that were proposed at the national level were later downscaled to select priority areas after restructuring.

Based on the information provided in the terminal evaluation it could be inferred that during the first five years of project implementation, despite the project having spent 20% of its budget, there had been little progress in achievement of expected results. The information presented in the terminal evaluation shows that of the four major development objectives only one was fully achieved, whereas two were partially achieved and assessment of performance on the remainder was not possible. Even if the post restructuring commitments are taken into account the rating given by the terminal evaluation seems to be higher than what the presented evidence suggests. For example:

- Although gathering of information in priority areas had been completed, at the time terminal evaluation was done it had not been made available and as a result was not under use. Similarly, although a geographical information system had been created it was not operational.
- According to the terminal evaluation improved management and control of alien species in the coastal, marine and island environment may not have been achieved (and is unlikely to be achieved) through meetings and lectures.

Thus, even for the period after restructuring the performance of the project is more mixed than the overall outcome rating given in the terminal evaluation would suggest. Taking into account both the original development objectives of the project and the subsequent restructuring, the overall effectiveness of the project in achieving its expected outcomes is significantly lower.

The case for considering the original development objectives of the project in assessment of performance of project in this case is strong. There was little change in the operational environment of the project that would require readjustment of the projects orientation. Restructuring undertaken entailed downscaling of activities rather than a fundamental reorientation of priorities. Therefore, changes made during restructuring were more for cutting losses than for adjusting for the unexpected changes in the external environment.

c. Efficiency (cost-effectiveness)

Rating: MU

Based on the information presented in the project document it could be inferred that the project was highly inefficient during the first five years of implementation. During this period it spent about 20% of the project budget with little accomplishment. The restructuring after five years of implementation did help the project in cutting the losses. The project was expected to close after a four year delay, implying a significant sum being diverted from the programmatic activities to administrative costs.

4.1.2 Impacts

Although the terminal evaluation report does include sections where expected environmental impacts of the project at both global and national levels are discussed, it does not present evidence that would support that the expected environmental impacts have materialized or are materializing.

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. Use a four point scale (4= Likely (no or negligible risk); 3= Moderately Likely (low risk); 2= Moderately Unlikely (substantial risks) to 1= Unlikely (High risk)). The ratings should be given taking into account both the probability of a risk materializing and the anticipated magnitude of its effect on the continuance of project benefits.

a. Financial resources

Rating: ML

As per the information provided in the terminal evaluation, it was not clear whether and to what extent financial resources will be provided by the government to support continuation of the activities and programs initiated under the project. On the flip side the terminal evaluation report suggests that some of the promoted integrated coastal area management activities could be self funded. Further, it also suggests that it may be possible for the government to support continuation of the project activities by reallocation of resources. The government is also trying to secure resources through resource allocation framework (RAF) of GEF. Overall, there are moderate risks to sustainability of project outcomes.

b. Socio political

Rating: ML

According to the terminal evaluation report the project enjoys political support. Political risks to sustainability of project outcomes are not anticipated.	
c. Institutional framework and governance	Rating: ML
It is mentioned in several sections of the terminal evaluation that Eritrea that although project has build national capacities, the management capacity base of the country is weak. On the positive side, the government agencies have demonstrated high level of ownership and commitment to the project. It deputed capable personnel from the ministry to key project positions. The ministry of fisheries has also prepared policies, legislative measures and procedures for endorsement, which is expected by the end of project closure. These developments mitigate the institutional and governance related risks emanating from management capacity constraints.	
d. Environmental	Rating: L
No such risks are anticipated.	
e. Technological	Rating: L
No such risks are anticipated.	

4.3 Catalytic role

a.. Production of a public good
The project has led to development of national capacities of Eritrea to manage its coastal biodiversity resources. Since the project area – the red sea coast – is a biodiversity rich area that has global significance the project has led to production of an important public good. It has also led to increased awareness and sensitivity about the values and vulnerabilities of Eritrea’s red sea coastal resources.
b.. Demonstration
The original project aimed at covering all the coastal areas of Eritrea. However, after restructuring the project focused on implementing integrated coastal area management in priority protected sites that serve as demonstration sites to the other coastal areas of Eritrea.
c.. Replication
d.. Scaling up

4.4 Assessment of processes and factors affecting attainment of project outcomes and sustainability.

a. Co-financing. To what extent was the reported cofinancing (or proposed cofinancing) essential to 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 it did, then in what ways and through what causal linkages?
The actual cofinancing has not been reported in the terminal evaluation. However, the PIRs submitted by the implementing agency show that the expected cofinancing had materialized by the time terminal evaluation was completed – there was no difference between promised cofinancing and materialized cofinancing. Analysis of incremental cost matrix included in the project appraisal document shows that the cofinancing included in calculations is consistent with the GEF guidance on cofinancing.
The terminal evaluation does not provide information on how cofinancing has affected achievement of expected outcomes.
b. 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 it did, then in what ways and through what causal linkages?
The project was expected to be completed with a completion delay of four years. The implementation agency did not adequately take into account the risks due to capacity constraints. As a result little progress made during the initial stages of implementation – after five years of implementation and after spending more than a fifth of its budget, the project had made little progress in accomplishing the planned activities. Consequently, it was no more possible for the project to deliver on its overly optimistic objectives. The project had to be restructured and many key activities had to be downscaled. Thus, overall the delay led to inefficient utilization of GEF resources.
c. 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 terminal evaluation reports high level of commitment from the government agency towards continuation of the policies and activities promoted by the project. The government commitment is also under scored by it deputing its skilled staff for project implementation. Although the terminal evaluation does not discuss how this has affected the project in terms of achievement of the expected results, it does inform us that government ownership has lowered the risk to continuation of accrual of the global environmental benefits from the project.

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

a. M&E design at Entry	Rating (six point scale): MS
The M&E design at entry provisions for annual tripartite review meetings, independent mid term review, and annual reports such as PIRs (project implementation reviews). The logical framework of the project lists project objectives, outcomes, indicators and means of verification. Some of the project objectives and outcomes are vague and most of the included indicators do not have a specified target that the project would aim to achieve. The project made specific allocation for M&E activities in the project budget.	
b. M&E plan Implementation	Rating (six point scale): MS
M&E activities such as preparation of the project implementation reviews, a mid term review, a technical review and tracking of progress against the expected results were carried out. PIR reports submitted by the implementing agency to GEF were fairly candid in reporting the problems being faced in implementation of the project. Even though the project was facing severe problems, the mid term review was conducted after five years due to which opportunities of getting in depth timely information on problems faced by the project and potential corrective measures was lost. The feedback provided by the mid term review led to restructuring of the project helping it to cut its losses. Even so the M&E system of the restructured project does not provide specific targets on many of the indicators included to assess progress.	
b.1 Was sufficient funding provided for M&E in the budget included in the project document? Of the total budget of the project, at least one million dollars was allocated to activities that were related to project and environmental impact monitoring. This includes allocations for supervision (US \$ 85,000); coastal, marine, and island monitoring (US \$ 300,000) and equipments for monitoring.	
b.2a Was sufficient and timely funding provided for M&E during project implementation? Unable to assess.	
b.2b To what extent did the project monitoring system provided real time feed back? Was the information that was provided used effectively? What factors affected the use of information provided by the project monitoring system? The project's monitoring and evaluation system entailed preparation of an inception report and annual reports for annual tripartite review meetings and GEF Secretariat. However, despite access to this information the implementing agency took a long time to take corrective measures. The corrective measured did lead to project cutting its losses.	
b.3 Can the project M&E system (or an aspect of the project M&E system) be considered a good practice? If so, explain why.	

4.6 Assessment of Quality of Implementation and Execution

a. Overall Quality of Implementation and Execution (on a six point scale):
b. Overall Quality of Implementation – for IA (on a six point scale): MU
Briefly describe and assess performance on issues such as quality of the project design, focus on results, adequacy of supervision inputs and processes, quality of risk management, candor and realism in supervision reporting, and suitability of the chosen executing agencies for project execution. Despite the project appraisal document specifically assures that capacity constraints had been addressed by the proposed project design, it was this issue that led to significant delays in implementation of the project. Further, during the startup phase when the implementing agency had information that little progress was being made in project implementation, it did not undertake in depth assessment of the underlying causes and the potential corrective measures early on during implementation. For example, the mid term evaluation, which could have helped in taking timely corrective measures, was undertaken five years after the start of the project. This led to resources being spent on administrative expenditure without commensurate progress. The reporting by the implementing agency to the GEF has been fairly candid as it outlined all the major problems that the project was facing. Given the nature of the project and the local context, the implementing agency's choice of ministry of fisheries as a partner agency for execution was appropriate.
c. Quality of Execution – for Executing Agencies¹ (rating on a 6 point scale) UA
Briefly describe and assess performance on issues such as focus on results, adequacy of management inputs and processes, quality of risk management, and candor and realism in reporting by the executive agency. Although sufficient information has not been provided in the terminal evaluation to assess performance of the executing agency, several observations are noted in the terminal evaluations that may be indicative of the performance of the executing agency. The terminal evaluation notes a lack of cohesion among the project team members. It also observes that there was weak interaction among the team members.

¹ Executing Agencies for this section would mean those agencies that are executing the project in the field. For any given project this will exclude Executing Agencies that are implementing the project under expanded opportunities – for projects approved under the expanded opportunities procedure the respective executing agency will be treated as an implementing agency.

5. LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Assess the project lessons and recommendations as described in the TE

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

Following key lessons are listed in the terminal evaluation report:

- i. A participatory approach overcomes the cynicism and suspicion against the project leadership. Participatory approach also leads to ownership arising out of the various collective decision making.
- ii. Managerial, leadership and management capacity is harder to assess, but may be more important for project success.
- iii. A good, collaborative relationship between the project manager and the chief technical advisor of a project is probably the most important single element of project management – it can make or break a project.
- iv. Execution of projects must be preceded by a capacity needs assessment and the identified needs must be addressed before project team could be expected to function successfully.
- v. Adequate time and resources for development and design, and similar pre-operational phase activities of a project are crucial, particularly where capacity is known to be weak.

Elsewhere in the report, it has been suggested that initiatives that aim at capacity building through supporting students that pursue highly specialized long term programs may not work for many developing countries because such students may not take up the promoted vocation after completion of the training.

b. Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation

Although the terminal evaluation report does not include a specific section on recommendations, it does provide some spread across the report:

- For future projects with a significant budget and time period a project steering committee is established to improve coordination and integration.
- A follow up project with US \$ 1.00 million is supported to build on project's momentum.

6. QUALITY OF THE TERMINAL EVALUATION REPORT

6.1 Comments on the summary of project ratings and terminal evaluation findings based on other information sources such as GEF EO field visits, other evaluations, etc.

None

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 document GEF Office of Evaluation Guidelines for terminal evaluations review for further definitions of the ratings. Please briefly explain each rating.

6.2 Quality of the terminal evaluation report	Ratings
a. To what extent does the report contain an assessment of relevant outcomes and impacts of the project and the achievement of the objectives? A major weakness of the terminal evaluation report is that it does not assess performance of the project during the period before restructuring. The implications of GEF resources being spent on administrative expenses without commensurate progress have not been assessed.	MU
b. To what extent the report is internally consistent, the evidence is complete/convincing and the IA ratings have been substantiated? Are there any major evidence gaps?	MS
c. To what extent does the report properly assess project sustainability and /or a project exit strategy?	MS
d. To what extent are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive?	MS
e. Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used? The terminal evaluation does not provide actual project costs and cofinancing mobilized by the project.	MU
f. Assess the quality of the reports evaluation of project M&E systems?	S

7. SOURCES OF INFORMATION FOR THE PRERATATION OF THE TERMINAL EVALUATION REVIEW REPORT EXCLUDING PIRs, TERMINAL EVALUATIONS, PAD.

None

