

Terminal Evaluation Validation form, GEF Independent Evaluation Office

1. Project Data

Summary project data			
GEF project ID		4356	
GEF Agency project ID		GCP/CPR/043/GFF	
GEF Replenishment Phase		GEF-5	
Lead GEF Agency (include all for joint projects)		FAO	
Project name		Securing Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use in China's Dongting Lake Protected Areas"	
Country/Countries		China	
Region		Asia, Middle East & Pacific	
Focal area		Biodiversity	
Operational Program or Strategic Priorities/Objectives		BD 1.1. BD 2.2.	
Stand alone or under a programmatic framework		Standalone	
If applicable, parent program name and GEF ID			
Executing agencies involved		Forestry Department of Hunan Province (FDHP)	
NGOs/CBOs involvement			
Private sector involvement (including micro, small and medium enterprises) ¹		As contractors, as beneficiaries	
CEO Endorsement (FSP) /Approval (MSP) date		6/6/2014	
Effectiveness date / project start date		12/18/2014	
Expected date of project completion (at start)		12/31/2019	
Actual date of project completion		3/31/2022	
Project Financing			
		At Endorsement (US \$M)	At Completion (US \$M)
Project Preparation Grant	GEF funding	0.05	0.05
	Co-financing	0.29	0.29
GEF Project Grant		2.95	2.95
Co-financing	IA own	2	2
	Government	5.6	5.6
	Other multi- /bi-laterals		
	Private sector		
	NGOs/CBOs		
	Other		
Total GEF funding		3	3
Total Co-financing		7.89	7.89
Total project funding (GEF grant(s) + co-financing)		10.89	10.89
Terminal evaluation validation information			
TE completion date		11/30/2021	
Author of TE		Sagendra Tiwari, Fan Longqing	

¹ Defined as all micro, small, and medium-scale profit-oriented entities, including individuals and informal entities, that earn income through the sale of goods and services rather than a salary. ([GEF IEO 2022](#))

TER completion date	11/14/2022
TER prepared by	Ines Freier
TER peer review by (if GEF IEO review)	Ritu Kanotra

Access the form to summarize key project features here: <https://www.research.net/r/APR2023>.

2. Summary of Project Ratings

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

3. Project Objectives and theory of change

3.1 Global Environmental Objectives of the project:

The goal of the proposed project is to secure the conservation of biodiversity of global importance in the Dongting Lake through strengthening existing management efforts and the promotion of the Wetland's long-term sustainable development. Specifically, the project objectives are to: (i) strengthen the existing institutional and policy framework; (ii) promote an integrated, ecosystem-wide planning and management approach; (iii) strengthen the existing network of wetland nature reserves; (iv) demonstrate sustainable co- management models of DWE and biodiversity friendly production practices to reduce human activity pressure on the Wetlands; and (v) increase institutional capacity and public awareness and support for wetlands conservation. (PIR 2021)

3.2 Development Objectives of the project:

Recover fish stocks and promote sustainable fish farming and rice production supporting livelihoods and income generation for local fisheries and farming communities (PIR 2021)

3.3 Were there any **changes** in the Global Environmental Objectives, Development Objectives, or project activities during implementation? What are the reasons given for the change(s)?

no

3.4 Briefly summarize project's theory of change – describe the inputs and causal relationships through which the project will achieve its long-term impacts, key links, and key assumptions.

The MTR did not develop a ToC, only the TE. The ToC was presented as a graphic without assumptions and clear pathways from the numerous outputs to the desired outcomes and the envisaged environmental benefits and the economic and social co-benefits. (TE p 11)

This is why a brief ToC is developed.

Assumptions are that the Chinese Government at different levels (state and local level) has sufficient resources and capacity to implement the project.

Impact pathway 1)

The outputs of the project like a working secretariat with budget and staff, existing ecological baselines, management information system and an updated management plan lead to the strengthening of the (planned) Dongting Lake Conservation Committee / (now) Lake Chief System (intermediate outcome) which is able to better implement the Dongting Lake Conservation Plan (outcome) leading to elimination of two environmentally unsustainable practices (unsustainable fishing, poplar planting, sand mining) which improves the ecological functions of the wetland like being the habit of protected bird species (environmental impact GBE)

Impact Pathway 2

The outputs of the project like training of staff in enforcement or rules in nature reserves, setting up observation stations or removal of poplar in nature reserves and the support for decrees to declaring nature reserves lead to the establishment of four nature reserves which improves the ecological functions of the wetland like being the habit of protected bird and turtle species (environmental impact GBE). Local communities are trained in alternatives to environmentally harmful income practices like unsustainable fishing and in bird-friendly agricultural practices which lead to the envisaged developmental outcome of increase in the incomes of the local population, which is the desired economic co-benefit to sustain the environmental outcomes. Local communities co-manage the nature reserves by getting compensated for losses due to wildlife and income by nature tourism. Unintended social costs could be losses of income from poplar plantations and fishing which need to be recorded.

Impact pathway 3

The outputs of the project support the inclusion of biodiversity considerations into other sectoral policies and regulations like forestry (Outcome) which leads to reduced pressure on biodiversity in the project areas (reduce drivers of biodiversity loss) and increases possible global environmental benefits.

Impact pathway 4

Awareness raising campaigns about the biodiversity value, use and wetlands protection regulations for the local population lead to (output) a higher awareness of the local population and better compliance with biodiversity protection (outcomes) which reduces pressure on the environment, increasing protection of habitats for birds and turtles (environmental impact).

Impact pathway 5

Upscaling of knowledge from the project occurs which means that outputs from the project are used in other areas to implement similar measures (outcomes) which lead to protection of biodiversity.

4. GEF IEO assessment of Outcomes and Sustainability

Please refer to the GEF Terminal Evaluation Review Guidelines for detail on the criteria for ratings.

The outcome ratings (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and overall outcome rating) are on a six-point scale: Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory. The sustainability rating is on a four-point scale: Likely to Unlikely.

Please justify the ratings in the space below each box.

4.1 Relevance and Coherence	S
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The relevance and coherence of the project is rated as satisfactory because it is highly in line with global and national priorities and in line with FAO mandate in China. However, it has limited relevance for local beneficiaries (developmental objective). The coherence with other GEF-interventions in the country is limited.

This project was designed in 2011 but has become increasingly relevant to the current subnational (Hunan province), national (one of 35 priority regions in National Biodiversity Action Plan and National Five Year Plan), and international contexts (Convention on Biological Diversity). The Forestry Department of Hunan Province initiated the Dongting National Park Plan Project to integrate four Dongting Nature Reserves into one Dongting Lake National Park. (MTR p 1)

The project fully embraces the objective 1 outcome 1.1 of the GEF 5 Biodiversity Results Framework which aims at ‘improving the management effectiveness of existing and new Protected Areas’. Most of the project outcomes contribute to achieving this GEF objective. The project also contributes to achieving the GEF 5 objective 2 outcome 2.1 ‘Measures to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity incorporated in policy and regulatory frameworks’ through (i) the strengthening of inter-sectoral coordination mechanisms and (ii) mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation in interconnected sectors through capacity strengthening, knowledge and awareness raising and changes to policies and regulations. (TE p. 12)

The project is in line with FAO Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and People’s Republic of China FAO Country Programming Framework 2016– 2020 that include inputs and contributions to biodiversity-friendly policy and resilience, and agroforestry and environmental resilience, i.e., protected areas for clean water etc. (MTR p. 1)

It was highly relevant and closely aligned with national policies and global priorities. However, the relevance for beneficiary needs was found to have some limitations. (TE p.39). it did not sufficiently take into account the impact of the revised policies on people’s lives and livelihoods (TE p. 15).

The project complemented on-going interventions by the national government on conserving biodiversity, as well as other GEF projects in the country. (TE p. 39)

4.2 Effectiveness	MS
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The project is rated as moderately effective because the level of outcomes achieved was generally close to the targets. Most targets were met (3 out of 5), but targets for socio-economic benefit delivery and knowledge management were not met fully (TE p. 39)

Outcome 1: The set-up of the Lake Chief System and the Integrated Information Management System contributed effectively to the strengthening of institutional capacities. Despite initial shortcomings, the project succeeded in strengthening the institutional and policy framework to protect the Dongting Lake (DL) area. Even though the support provided was based on evidence generated through relevant studies and

assessments, it did not sufficiently take into account the impact of the revised policies on people's lives and livelihoods. (TE p. vi)

Outcome 2: The targeted households for the co-management models were not met. The project was able to identify and pilot key biodiversity-friendly production practices. However, only a limited number of households were targeted as a proportion of total households that were affected by the policy changes and regulations. Further, only 21 percent of the households initially targeted by the project were involved in the project activities, and no evidence was found of plans for future scaling-up of such practices. (TE p. vi)

Outcome 3: Cross-sector collaboration was found to be an important strength of the project. However, participation of some sectors could have been improved. The project strengthened the network of Nature Reserves by promoting an integrated multi- sectoral ecosystem-wide planning and management approach, and by enhancing the technical capacities of its staff and promoting information sharing across the Nature Reserves. (TE p. vi)

Outcome 4: Targets for awareness raising have been mostly met. Through the project's awareness raising activities a substantial number of stakeholders were reached out to, however, the TE could not verify if the targets have been met due to lack of data (TE p. vi)

Outcome 5 Knowledge management could have been better as well as generating information of intended and unintended effects of changing policies on the local population and gender issues. (TE p. 39)

4.3 Efficiency	MS
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Even though the executing and implementing agencies learned their lessons and managed to maintain a relatively satisfactory working relationship in the course of project implementation, there was overall room for improvement with a few inefficiencies being noted (TE p. xi) This is why efficiency is rated as moderately satisfactory.

The project faced severe delays in meeting deadlines, mostly for the following reasons: High staff turnover, impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and administrative delays in fund disbursements throughout the project implementation were some of the key issues affecting project efficiency (TE p.vii)

4.4 Outcome	MS
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Given the satisfactory relevance of the project, its moderately successful achievement of targets and its likely sustainability, the overall outcomes is assessed as 'moderately satisfactory'.

Summarize key outcomes related to environment, human well-being, and enabling conditions (Policy, Legal & Institutional Development; Individual & Institutional Capacity-Building; Knowledge Exchange & Learning; Multistakeholder Interactions), as applicable. Include any unintended outcomes (not originally targeted by the project), whether positive or negative, affecting either ecological or social aspects.

Environmental outcome: Overall, the evaluation team has noted strong improvements in the populations of the endangered finless porpoises and other species in the Dongting Wetland Ecosystem being monitored by the project. These are important achievements and the strong conservation foundation provided by the project has contributed to such achievements. At the same time, it is important to note the policy shifts and interests of the national government that have bolstered conservation efforts. (TE p. 23)

Environmental outcome: GEF tracking tool score on biodiversity conservation integration in policies and regulation which was at 17 in 2013 reached 31 in 2018, and as of July 2021 (last year of the project) reached at 35 as per the assessment (TE p. 16).

Institutional change: The lake chief systems were led by the provincial governor with wider coverage and a stronger coordination ability. These were closely aligned with the 19th National Congress that promoted the construction of an ecological civilization. Through the Lake Chief System, three municipal and one county governments resolved the boundary issues of their respective Nature Reserves and drafted, finalized and enacted the Administrative Measures for Nature Reserves (AMNR) decrees for effective management of the Nature Reserves in their respective jurisdictions. (TE p. 16)

The project simultaneously also worked on strengthening relevant legislation for the protection of the Dongting Wetland Ecosystem (DWE) and on their enactment. For example, the Wetland Protection Regulation of Hunan Province (WPRHP) was reviewed, amended, updated, and finalized to eliminate overlapping use rights and conflicting jurisdictions of relevant sectors over Dongting Wetland Ecosystem. It ensured that the relevant sectors and beneficiaries of DWE resources abide by the rules set for its sustainable use and be accountable for the conservation of biodiversity therein. However, based on the imminent introduction of the broader Wetlands Protection Law of the People's Republic of China at the national level, the WPRHP was not progressed. (TE p. 16)

Further, the enactment of respective Protection Regulation, 2021, along with the refinement of relevant policies and regulations on management and use of wetland resources, helped in eliminating the overlapping use rights and conflicting jurisdiction of sectors. All sectors having stake on DWE resources were made legally responsible and accountable for DWE protection and biodiversity conservation. (TE p. 16)

Where applicable, note how both intended and unintended outcomes have positively and/or negatively affected marginalized populations (e.g., women, indigenous groups, youth, persons with disabilities), and where some stakeholder groups have benefited more/ less than others.

Despite the project efforts to a gender sensitized approach to implementing project activities, overall, a limited focus on gender and equity dimensions was found. The project design and implementation overlooked the documentation and reporting of the social impact of cleaning operations of poplar plantations and remediation actions undertaken. The project was exempt from an Environmental Assessment and the rating here is focused on social safeguards (TE p-39)

The impact on the lives and livelihoods of people through these policies like ban of fishing was not monitored (TE p. 17).

4.5 Sustainability	L
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Note any progress made to sustain or expand environmental benefits beyond project closure, using stakeholder (rather than project) resources, e.g. through replication, mainstreaming or scaling-up of GEF-supported initiatives. Examples would be farmers adopting practices using own funds, follow-on replication projects, development of plans for scaling, inclusion in local or national legislation, and allocation of government budgets or private sector investments for institutional adoption.

The project, through its work on supporting institutions and policies related to the conservation of the biodiversity in DWE, laid a strong foundation for future work. It piloted co-management models and reinforced coordination conservation networks; however, the achievement of long-term impact would largely depend on how far these co-management models are adopted and scaled up. (TE p vii)

Enhanced knowledge and awareness among local population, strengthened staff capacities of Forest Department of Hunan Province, Nature Reserve Management Bureaus (NRMBs), relevant local governments and sector departments, together with an enabling political environment with conservation-friendly production practices and income opportunities, are likely to support the sustainability of project results. However, a few risks to sustainability remain, linked to the need for a more cohesive management of protected areas, and to awareness levels and community engagement. (TE viii)

The sustainability of project results will also depend on the maintenance of institutionalized project results and continued strengthening of institutional and technical capacities. The project's achieved results have been founded on the policy and institutional strengthening further supported through the political commitment to making a move towards achieving ecological civilization. However, the project has only partially engaged with the people living in and around the Dongting Wetlands Ecosystem area through the piloting of Nature Reserve co-management models. This poses some socio-political risk to sustainability in case the socio-economic wellbeing of the area is threatened in pursuit of sustaining the project's achieved results. Presently, a sustainable financing mechanism has been put in place, however, with the establishment of a National Park, a new financing model needs to be determined which imposes a financial risk on project results. (TE p. xi)

5. Processes and factors affecting attainment of project outcomes

Before describing the factors, you may choose to summarize reported outcomes and sustainability here: <https://www.research.net/r/APR2023>.

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, 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?

Overall, the project mobilized co-financing significantly beyond the initial commitment, with all partners disbursing most of the amounts initially committed. (TE p. viii) The TE does not contain the co-financing table in the annex proving the TE finding of co-financing.

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?

A key issue related to project efficiency was the delay in the project start date and in implementing project activities. The project was officially started in December 2014 and was scheduled to be completed in December 2019. It was delayed in its initial years, during the inception phase (between April 2015 and November 2016). The time was spent in establishing the organizational setup, clarifying the execution modality, and waiting for the GEF funds to begin the project activities on the ground. According to the project inception report, the registered actual start date of project was May 2016 - the date of the first GEF fund allocation. PPRs and PIRs revealed that most of the project outputs were delivered well after their deadlines due to various reasons. The revised end date of the project was November 2021, which has been recently extended to March 2022. Hence, this five-year project could be said to have completed in more than seven years from its official start date. Even though the recent delays were found to be understandable given the COVID-19 situation and the flooding in the Dongting Lake Wetlands, the initial delays and ones associated with the disbursement of GEF funds were less clear. The initial delays and a fast-changing national policy landscape did affect the relevance of the initially designed project, and it required significant readjustment of project activities and realignment to provincial objectives. (TE p. 25)

5.3 Stakeholder ownership. Assess the extent to which stakeholder ownership has affected project outcomes and sustainability. Describe the ways in which it affected outcomes and sustainability, highlighting the causal links.

A key factor that contributed to the achievement of results was the enabling policy environment in the country. Even though the project had been designed before the shift in the government's policy towards the ecological civilization approach, it was able to make good use of the enabling policy environment by adapting the project's activities to the changing political environment. (TE p. vii)

The use of Operational Partners' Implementation Modality allowed for strong project ownership and buy in of key stakeholders. (TE p. vi)

5.4 Other factors: In case the terminal evaluation discusses other key factors that affected project outcomes, discuss those factors and outline how they affected outcomes, whether positively or negatively. Include factors that may have led to unintended outcomes.

6. Assessment of project's Monitoring and Evaluation system

Ratings are assessed on a six point scale: Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory.

Please justify ratings in the space below each box.

6.1 M&E Design at entry	MS
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The M & E design at entry is rated a moderately satisfactory because it met minimum requirements. The designed monitoring system met formal requirements of GEF at the beginning of the project like preparing a budgeted M&E plan which includes delivery of reports to FAO & GEF. It also had a provisional work plan by outputs and related activities. The project was not design for use under the Operational Partners' implementation Modality which had to be adjusted during the project. (TE p vi) The number of expected outputs and the respective indicators was high and not always consistent.

The project design overlooked the documentation and reporting of the social impact of cleaning operations and remediation actions undertaken in Dongting Lake Wetlands and the measures taken to mitigate and manage those impacts. (TE p. 22)

6.2 M&E Implementation	S
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Monitoring and Evaluation is rated as satisfactory. The project fulfilled its M&E commitments focusing on project outputs and outcomes. There was room for further improvement in reporting and overall monitoring along the project implementation like fulfilling GEF requirements for reporting. Regular project monitoring helped to overcome issues of high staff turnover. While the project fostered learning and improved implementation of project activities, the use of M&E for knowledge development was found to be slow. (TE, p vi)

The detailed and budgeted M&E plan provided in the project document was implemented by the project management office. The project management office team was involved in supervising the activities and keeping track of the periodic progress. Monthly and quarterly meetings of the staff of executing and co-executing partners, sector agencies and the service providing individuals/institutions were organized by the Project Management Office to review the progress and challenges. The biannual and annual reports including the financial statements were regularly submitted. The project management office also organized monthly and quarterly progress review meetings of all relevant service providers to discuss the divergence and shortfalls in activities implementation based on regular supervision and monitoring outcomes. It is evident that the information obtained from regular monitoring and supervision was useful in making timely decisions. (TE p 22)

The project also includes activities that monitor the effect of regulations and activities promoted by the project. For example, the Hunan Provincial Forestry Academy was entrusted to monitor the ecological restoration effect after poplar removal. Similarly, another study was supported by the project on the effect of preventing sand mining on the population of the finless porpoise. (TE p. 22)

7. Assessment of project implementation and execution

Quality of Implementation rating is based on the assessment of the performance of GEF Agency(s). Quality of Execution rating is based on performance of the executing agency(s). In both instances, the focus is upon factors that are largely within the control of the respective implementing and executing agency(s). A six-point rating scale is used (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory), or Unable to Assess.

Please justify ratings in the space below each box.

7.1 Quality of Project Implementation	MS
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The GEF implementing agency, FAO fulfilled its role effectively through periodic supervision missions, providing technical inputs, and participating in the Project Steering Committee (PSC) meetings and progress review workshops. In addition to monitoring and supervision, FAO also provide training to strengthen the capacity of the project management office such as project and financial management, audit and spot checks, communication to overcome initial difficulties in financial management and procurement. Key events have been supported by FAO to increase the visibility and impact of the project. The Lead Technical Officer (LTO) frequently visited the project area to give advice. FAO did not request to monitor social impacts of supported policies and measures. This is why the overall rating of project implementation is moderately satisfactory.

7.2 Quality of Project Execution	MS
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Quality of project execution is rated as moderately satisfactory because it met overall expectations. The executing of project activities was generally timely, only a few activities were not implemented.

The Forest Department of Hunan Province was the lead government counterpart and the executing agency with overall responsibility for the project, coordination and collaboration with other provincial and local governments bureaus and local communities. Given that the nature of the project activities was linked to the strengthening of the institutional frameworks and mainstreaming biodiversity into key sectors, it required drafting and/or refinement of policies and regulations which fall in the government agency's domain. The execution modality with the Forest Department of Hunan Province as the executing agency was found very relevant for such project activities. (TE p. 14)

As there was not enough staff deployed for project management (only two half-time staff seconded from the Forest Department of Hunan Province), there has been a high staff turnover in the Project Management Unit, especially at the project director and Chief Technical Advisor level, which affected project implementation at crucial stages. (TE p.27)

8. Lessons and recommendations

8.1 Briefly describe the key lessons, good practices, or approaches mentioned in the terminal evaluation report, including how they could have application for other GEF projects. Lessons must be based on project experience.

Lesson 1: Project design appraisal and planning - Revisiting the project design and adjusting as per the recipient country's policy development trend and ground realities of the project area prior to launching of GEF project is likely to add value in case there is long gap between approval and actual implementation of the project (Finding 3).

Lesson 2: Local community participation - Assessment and analysis of likely adverse impacts of conservation measures and planning and execution of corrective measures to mitigate such adverse impacts is key to success for the sustainability of the achieved conservation outcomes (Finding 23).

Lesson 3: Innovation/ science/ research and development - The biodiversity friendly innovative resource use practices and green income incentives creation is as crucial as policy, legal and institutional innovations for the success of projects aiming at biodiversity conservation and ecosystem restoration (Finding 8).

Lesson 4: Political/ institutional challenges - The external political environment is extremely important and can help in enhancing project results and reinforcing common objectives. At the same time, in the development of project, it is important to note project outcomes/outputs beyond the control of the OP, particularly those related to high level legal/legislative process (Finding 1).

Lesson 5: Communications and outreach - It is a good practice to promote the exchange and visit among PMOs at FAO GEF portfolio level. PMO of GEF043 visited the project sites of GEF052 Poyang project and of GEF048 Jilin project and exchanged ideas on project management, wetland conservation, co-management, raising public awareness (TE p. 38).

8.2 Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation.

Recommendation 1. FAO and Forest Department Hunan Province: The sustainability plan being developed should be finalized addressing potential risks and accomplishing outstanding tasks to consolidate the achieved results for long-term impact. These include (i) establishment of the National Park integrating the four Nature Reserves and clarifying its linkage with the Lake Chief System, (ii) ensuring the institutionalization of Integrated Information Management System (TE p. 36)

Recommendation 2. FAO and Forest Department Hunan Province: The social impact of biodiversity conservation efforts should be fully considered and systematically recorded. (TE p. ix)

Recommendation 3. FAO: Design of future projects should be updated with the operational partner to reflect any recent changes in the context prior to implementation. Further, adequate emphasis should be put on aspects of gender and knowledge management based on FAO and GEF guidelines, as well as any required needs assessments. Further, the project's results framework should be simplified to the extent possible and the project outcomes sufficiently defined. (TE p. ix)

Recommendation 4. FAO: Provisions for safeguarding the roles and responsibilities of the GEF agency should be developed, and adequate mechanisms should exist to reinforce them. (TE p. x)

9. Quality of the Terminal Evaluation Report

Before rating the quality of the terminal evaluation, click here to summarize your observations on the sub-criteria: <https://www.research.net/r/APR2023>.

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/indicators of terminal evaluation quality	GEF IEO COMMENTS	Rating
1. Timeliness: terminal evaluation report was carried out and submitted on time?	YES	S
2. General information: Provides general information on the project and evaluation as per the requirement?	YES	S
3. Stakeholder involvement: the report was prepared in consultation with – and with feedback from - key stakeholders?	No information in the report	UA
4. Theory of change: provides solid account of the project's theory of change?	Only graphics of theory of change without text and assumptions	MU
5. Methodology: Provides an informative and transparent account of the methodology?	Methodology and methods are clearly explained	S
6. Outcome: Provides a clear and candid account of the achievement of project outcomes?	Provides clear account on project outcomes	S
7. Sustainability: Presents realistic assessment of sustainability?	The assessment is realistic and based upon the analysis of the project results and all risks	S
8. M&E: Presents sound assessment of the quality of the M&E system?	Provides solid assessment of the quality of the ME system and its role in project execution	S
9. Finance: Reports on utilization of GEF funding and materialization of co-financing?	Does not provide full table on co-financing in the annex	MU

10. Implementation: Presents a candid account of project implementation and Agency performance?	YES	S
11. Safeguards: Provides information on application of environmental and social safeguards, and conduct and use of gender analysis?	Raised issues of social safeguards which MTE and project planning and executing overlooked	HS
12. Lessons and recommendations are supported by the project experience and are relevant to future programming?	Lessons and Recommendations are well elaborated, based on the findings and relevant for future programming	S
13. Ratings: Ratings are well-substantiated by evidence, realistic and convincing?	YES	S
14. Report presentation: The report was well-written, logically organized, and consistent?	Easy to read, followed structure of FAO, consistent messages	HS
Overall quality of the report	Satisfactory	S

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

ANNEX 1. GEF IEO THEORY OF CHANGE FRAMEWORK

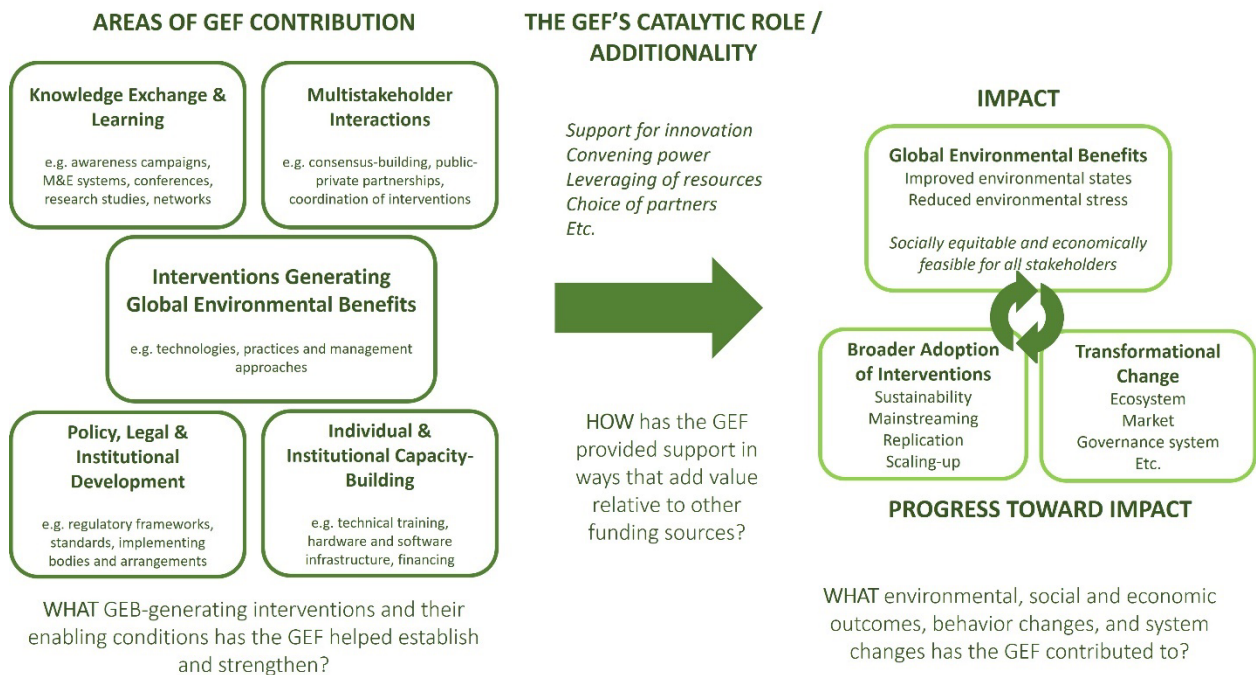


Figure 1. The GEF IEO's updated Theory of Change Framework on how the GEF achieves impact

The general framework for the GEF's theory of change (figure 1) draws on the large amount of evaluative evidence on outcomes and impact gathered over the years by the GEF Independent Evaluation Office. The framework diagram has been updated to reflect the IEO's learning since OPSS5 (GEF IEO 2014, p. 47-50) about how the GEF achieves impact, as well as the evolution of the GEF's programming toward more integrated systems-focused and scaled-up initiatives.

The framework outlines the three main areas that the IEO assesses in its evaluations: a) the GEF's contributions in establishing and strengthening both the interventions that directly generate global environmental benefits, and the enabling conditions that allow these interventions to be implemented and adopted by stakeholders, b) the GEF's catalytic role or additionality in the way that the GEF provides support within the context of other funding sources and partners, and c) the environmental, social and economic outcomes that the GEF has contributed to, and the behavior and system changes that generate these outcomes during and beyond the period of GEF support.

The circular arrow between impact and progress toward impact, as before, indicates how bringing about positive environmental change is an iterative process that involves behavior change (in the form of a broader group of stakeholders adopting interventions) and/or systems change (which is a key characteristic of transformational change). These three areas of change can take place in any sequence or simultaneously in a positively reinforcing cycle, and are therefore assessed by the GEF IEO as indicators of impact.

Assessing the GEF's progress toward achieving impact allows the IEO to determine the extent to which GEF support contributes to a trajectory of large-scale, systemic change, especially in areas where changes in the environment can only be measured over longer time horizons. The updated diagram in particular expands the assessment of progress towards impact to include transformational change, which specifically takes place at the system level, and not necessarily over a long time period.

The updated diagram also more explicitly identifies the link between the GEF's mandate of generating global environmental benefits, and the GEF's safeguards to ensure that positive environmental outcomes also enhance or at the very least do not take away from the social and economic well-being of the people who depend on the environment. Thus the IEO assesses impact not only in terms of environmental outcomes, but also in terms of the synergies and trade-offs with the social and economic contexts in which these outcomes are achieved.

ANNEX 2. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Intervention	Any programmatic approach, full-sized project, medium-sized project, or enabling activity financed from any GEF-managed trust fund, as well as regional and national outreach activities. In the context of post-completion evaluation, an intervention may consist of a single project, or multiple projects (i.e. phased or parallel) with explicitly linked objectives contributing to the same specific impacts within the same specific geographical area and sector. https://www.gefio.org/evaluations/gef-evaluation-policy-2019
Activity (of an intervention)	An action undertaken over the duration of an intervention that contributes to the achievement of the intervention's objectives, i.e. an intervention is implemented through a set of activities. E.g. training, (support to) policy development, (implementation of) management approach.
Outcome	An intended or achieved short- or medium-term effect of a project or program's outputs. https://www.gefio.org/evaluations/gef-evaluation-policy-2019
Impact	The positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a project or program, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. https://www.gefio.org/evaluations/gef-evaluation-policy-2019
Environmental outcomes	Changes in environmental indicators that could take the following forms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stress reduction: reduction or prevention of threats to the environment, especially those caused by human behavior (local communities, societies, economies) • Environmental state: biological, physical changes in the state of the environment http://www.gefio.org/sites/default/files/ieo/evaluations/ops5-final-report-eng.pdf
Social and economic outcomes	Changes in indicators affecting human well-being at the individual or higher scales, e.g. income or access to capital, food security, health, safety, education, cooperation/ conflict resolution, and equity in distribution/ access to benefits, especially among marginalized groups.
Synergies	Multiple benefits achieved in more than one focal area as a result of a <i>single intervention</i> , or benefits achieved from the interaction of outcomes from at least two separate interventions in addition to those achieved, had the interventions been done independently.

	http://www.gefio.org/evaluations/evaluation-multiple-benefits-gef-support-through-its-multifocal-area-portfolio-map-2016
Trade-offs	A reduction in one benefit in the process of maximizing or increasing another benefit. http://www.gefio.org/evaluations/evaluation-multiple-benefits-gef-support-through-its-multifocal-area-portfolio-map-2016
Broader adoption	The adoption of GEF-supported interventions by governments and other stakeholders beyond the original scope and funding of a GEF-supported intervention. This may take place through sustaining, replication, mainstreaming, and scaling-up of an intervention and/or its enabling conditions (see definitions below). http://www.gefio.org/sites/default/files/ieo/evaluations/ops5-final-report-eng.pdf
Sustainability	The continuation/ likely continuation of positive effects from the intervention after it has come to an end, and its potential for scale-up and/or replication; interventions need to be environmentally as well as institutionally, financially, politically, culturally and socially sustainable. https://www.gefio.org/evaluations/gef-evaluation-policy-2019
Replication	When a GEF intervention is reproduced at a comparable administrative or ecological scale, often in different geographical areas or regions. http://www.gefio.org/sites/default/files/ieo/evaluations/ops5-final-report-eng.pdf
Mainstreaming	When information, lessons, or specific aspects of a GEF initiative are incorporated into a broader stakeholder initiative. This may occur not only through governments but also in development organizations and other sectors. http://www.gefio.org/sites/default/files/ieo/evaluations/ops5-final-report-eng.pdf
Scaling-up	Increasing the magnitude of global environment benefits (GEBs), and/or expanding the geographical and sectoral areas where they are generated to cover a defined ecological, economic, or governance unit. May occur through replication, mainstreaming, and linking. http://www.gefio.org/evaluations/evaluation-gef-support-scaling-impact-2019
Transformational change	Deep, systemic, and sustainable change with large-scale impact in an area of major environmental concern. Defined by four criteria: relevance, depth of change, scale of change, and sustainability. http://www.gefio.org/evaluations/evaluation-gef-support-transformational-change-2017
Additionality	a) Changes in the attainment of direct project outcomes at project completion that can be attributed to GEF's interventions; these can be reflected in an acceleration of the adoption of reforms, the enhancement of outcomes, or the reduction of risks and greater viability of project interventions. b) Spill-over effects beyond project outcomes that may result from systemic reforms, capacity development, and socio-economic changes. c) Clearly articulated pathways to achieve broadening of the impact beyond project completion that can be associated with GEF interventions. https://www.gefio.org/sites/default/files/ieo/council-documents/files/c-55-me-inf-01.pdf