

## Terminal Evaluation Validation form, GEF Independent Evaluation Office

### 1. Project Data

Summary project data			
GEF project ID		4577	
GEF Agency project ID		GCP/BOL/046/GFF	
GEF Replenishment Phase		GEF-5	
Lead GEF Agency (include all for joint projects)		FAO	
Project name		Conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity to improve human nutrition in five macroregions	
Country/Countries		Bolivia	
Region		Latin America & Caribbean	
Focal area		Biodiversity	
Operational Program or Strategic Priorities/Objectives		BD2	
Stand alone or under a programmatic framework		Standalone	
If applicable, parent program name and GEF ID		Not applicable	
Executing agencies involved		Ministry of Environment and Water, and FAO.	
NGOs/CBOs involvement		Centre for Peasant Agricultural Promotion; Kolping Foundation; Centre for Research and Promotion of Smallholder Farmers; Institute for Humanity; Agriculture and Ecology; Institute for Rural Development of South America; Loyola Cultural Action Foundation; and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. These were partnerships to conduct joint investments and technical activities on the macro-regions of the Amazon and Chaco.	
Private sector involvement (including micro, small and medium enterprises) <sup>1</sup>		Producer associations	
CEO Endorsement (FSP) / Approval (MSP) date		4/16/2014	
Effectiveness date / project start date		1/14/2016	
Expected date of project completion (at start)		12/31/2020	
Actual date of project completion		6/30/2022	
Project Financing			
		At Endorsement (US \$M)	At Completion (US \$M)
Project Preparation Grant	GEF funding		
	Co-financing		
GEF Project Grant		2.60	2.39
Co-financing	IA own	1.38	3.78
	Government	12.30	4.61
	Other multi- /bi-laterals		
	Private sector		0.14
	NGOs/CBOs		0.10
	Other	0.44	0.34
Total GEF funding		2.60	2.39
Total Co-financing		14.12	8.97

<sup>1</sup> 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](#))

<b>Total project funding (GEF grant(s) + co-financing)</b>	16.72	11.35
<b>Terminal evaluation validation information</b>		
<b>TE completion date</b>	1/31/2023	
<b>Author of TE</b>	Daniela Rojas Chaves, Teresita Romero Torres and Mario Vargas Condori	
<b>TER completion date</b>	7/12/2023	
<b>TER prepared by</b>	Mariana Calderon	
<b>TER peer review by (if GEF IEO review)</b>	Jeneen R. Garcia	

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		ML	ML	ML
M&E Design		S	S	MS
M&E Implementation		MS	MS	MS
Quality of Implementation		MS	MS	MS
Quality of Execution		MS	MS	MS
Quality of the Terminal Evaluation Report			NA	HS

## 3. Project Objectives and theory of change

### 3.1 Global Environmental Objectives of the project:

The overall environmental objective of the project was “to conserve agro-biodiversity *in situ* in five macro-regions and improve the livelihoods of local people by mainstreaming the conservation and sustainable use of agro-biodiversity in national policies, regulatory frameworks, and programmes (health, education, rural development and food security). The project would provide market incentives, and a process of awareness-raising and training in the use of agrobiodiversity in sustainable management of natural resources” (ProDoc p. 2).

### 3.2 Development Objectives of the project:

The proposed development objective was “to manage and use agro-biodiversity sustainably to improve food and nutrition security with increased access to a nutritious and diversified diet for indigenous populations and local communities” (ProDoc p.2).

### 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)?

Some of the goals and the geographic coverage of the project were overly ambitious and led to the modification of the results framework in response to a recommendation from the MTR (TE p.40). According to the 2022 PIR, the logical framework was adjusted to reduce the targets to keep with the updated project context. The adjustments were approved by the GEF focal point in the first semester of 2021. After this, the strategy for each macro-region was adjusted in keeping with each region’s particular situation in order to achieve the targets. Monitoring of the field activities directly linked to the achievement of the new project targets was consolidated, considering that the project would continue until June 2022 (PIR 2022 p.43).

### 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 project strategy was structured into four components (TE p.11):

- Component 1: Focused on increasing agrobiodiversity knowledge in the five macro-regions and systematizing it in the National Information System on Native Agrobiodiversity, Nutritional Value and Adaptability to Climate Change.
- Component 2: Based on the selected ecotypes, this component focused on developing management plans for their *in situ* conservation, considering the recovery and promotion of traditional practices and the characterization of the ecotypes.
- Component 3: Focused on promoting the incorporation of agrobiodiversity conservation in relevant policies and regulatory frameworks, especially in relation to nutrition, food security and resilience to climate change.
- Component 4: This component was transversal to the other three components and focused on providing communications to raise awareness and develop capacities for each component according to their requirements.

The project would start by generating and systematizing the available information on the nutritional properties and resilience to climate change of the native species present in the five macro-regions. The knowledge produced and systematized in a national information system would form the basis for actions to raise awareness and develop the capacities of authorities, public officers and community social actors related to the benefits of these crops, as well as the appropriate management practices for their production (TE p. 12).

Relevant institutional stakeholders would create a multisectoral platform to incorporate the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity in agriculture, education, nutrition, health and food security programs and policies. Community social actors would begin to implement good practices to produce native species, management plans, and participatory monitoring systems for *in situ* conservation and the use and commercialization of agrobiodiversity products. The commercialization of agrobiodiversity products would generate greater income for producers and these actions would be replicated in other communities, thus expanding the coverage and effects of the project (TE p. 12).

The expected short-term changes during the project execution were: a) promoting the cultivation and consumption of native plants by community social actors in the five macro-regions as a result of the project actions and their replication in other areas; b) strengthening the regulatory and programmatic framework for the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity; and c) sharing information on agrobiodiversity, its nutritional properties and resilience to climate change with specialized actors and the general public. These actions would contribute to *in situ* conservation and sustainable use of native species and increase the income of the participating social actors (TE p. 12).

In the medium term, it was expected that the local communities of the five macro-regions would have a nutritious and diversified diet, which included the consumption of native plants. In the long term, these results were expected to contribute to food security and an improved quality of life in the local communities (TE p. 12-13).

The main assumptions underlying these changes were that: i) community producers and consumers incorporated sustainable native products with high nutritional value into their diets; ii) there was

political will to strengthen the regulatory and programmatic framework; and iii) the issue of agrobiodiversity remained a priority on the public agenda, even when there were governmental changes. The main drivers were the recovery and valuation of the customs and knowledge of indigenous and local communities, and the active participation of women (TE p. 12).

#### 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	S
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The TE assesses project relevance as *Highly satisfactory* (TE p.71). This validation considers it *Satisfactory*. Project outcomes were aligned with GEF focal areas and objectives, country priorities, needs of the beneficiaries, and FAO’s strategies and priorities. However, some of the goals and the geographic coverage of the project were overly ambitious.

The project was aligned with Objective 2 of the GEF-5 biodiversity focal area, which promotes the integration of conservation with the sustainable use of biodiversity (TE p.18). Also, it was aligned with FAO’s strategies and priorities at the country, regional and global levels which focused on food diversification, promotion, and access to healthy eating and improved nutrition. These include the 2013–2017 Country Programming Framework of FAO Bolivia; the regional priorities *Transforming food systems to promote healthy eating for all* and *Sustainable agrifood systems*; and FAO’s Strategic Objective 1 of the revised FAO Strategic Framework 2010–2019, which aimed to eradicate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition (TE p. 17-18).

The project was consistent with the government’s priorities and strategies on issues of food sovereignty and the protection and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity; for instance, with the Political Constitution of the State regarding the sustainable use of biodiversity, and with the pillars on productive food and environmental sovereignty of the Patriotic Agenda of the Bicentennial 2025. It was also part of the strategic guidelines proposed in Axis 3 and Axis 8 of the Economic and Social Development Plan 2021–2025. The project was implemented within the legal framework related to natural resources, family farming, and food security and sovereignty (Plurinational Legislative Assembly, 2006; 2010; 2012; 2013). In addition, the sectoral plans of the Ministry of Environment and Water and the Ministry of Rural Development and Land constituted the specific programming framework for the project. The project was also aligned with territorial plans for integral development at the departmental level, as well as with policies at the municipal level (TE p. 15-16).

Regarding beneficiaries, the TE notes that the project responded to the demands and needs of producer associations. However, some needs remained unmet because of budgetary restrictions, and time

constraints that resulted from changes in project’s management and from the COVID-19 pandemic (TE p. 17).

According to the TE, project objectives were relevant considering the problems they sought to address. However, some of the goals and the geographic coverage of the project were overly ambitious and led to the modification of the results framework in response to a recommendation from the MTR (TE p. 40).

4.2 Coherence	MU
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The TE does not provide a rating for overall coherence. Alternatively, it provides a *Moderately satisfactory* rating for complementarity with existing interventions, as well as a *Moderately unsatisfactory* rating for project design and readiness (TE p.40). Considering that the project showed weaknesses in both internal and external coherence, this validation rates this criterion as *Moderately unsatisfactory*.

The project design used a vertical logic. Its activities were consistent with its goals and contributed to the achievement of outputs and outcomes that aligned with the overall project objectives (TE p.40).

The DEX modality limited a more active involvement of the General Directorate of Biodiversity and Protected Areas, and it also reduced coordination with other projects of the Ministry of Environment and Water (TE p. 29) For instance, a project known as Biocultura was going to be linked to this project but this integration was not achieved and, therefore, this project did not disburse the committed co-financing (TE p.46)

The TE assessed that the Ministry of Rural Development and Land should have played a more important role in the project, and that it should have been considered a co-financer. The limited participation of this Ministry resulted in lost synergies as well as in a lack of coordination between *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation. (TE p.40). The project missed the opportunity to advance towards an integral approach in the implementation of environmental and production policies, which could have benefited both sectors (TE p.41). The lack of strategic interinstitutional coordination to address agrobiodiversity at the national level was reflected in the lack of socialization between the project outcomes and the other existing programs , as well as with those being developed in the country. For example, when the TE was conducted, the proposal for the National Agrobiodiversity Programme had not yet been shared with the Ministry of Rural Development and Land and other relevant institutions, such as the Ministry of Productive Development and Plural Economy. Also, the Ministry of Rural Development and Land did not share its 2019 programs for Amazonian fruits and cocoa with the Ministry of Environment and Water. At evaluation, the Ecological Agriculture Programme and the National Family Agriculture Strategy were also being prepared without considering relevant inputs or lessons from this project (TE p.32).

In contrast, synergies between this project and other FAO projects and initiatives, as well as the coordination between executing teams to carry out joint actions, helped to increase FAO co-financing significantly and reduce the impact of budgetary challenges (TE p.58). Some examples are the “Forest and farm facility phase II: Climate-resilient landscapes and better livelihoods” project, as well as the use of professionals from other projects (TE p.46).

4.3 Effectiveness	MS
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The TE provides a *Satisfactory* rating to the project's effectiveness (TE p.71), whereas this validation considers it *Moderately satisfactory*. Although many of the output targets were surpassed, some of them remained unmet.

The project contributed significantly to *in situ* conservation and the sustainable use of agrobiodiversity through its impact on public policies, mainly local laws in the health sector; the generation of knowledge and the systematization of existing information; the promotion of good practices for the management and use of agrobiodiversity; raising awareness; and the development of capacities in government and social actors (TE p. 18-19):

- Component 1: National Information System on Native Agrobiodiversity, Nutritional Value and Adaptability to Climate Change. The project increased information on agrobiodiversity species through the generation of new knowledge and the systematization of existing information. Part of this information was the technical foundation that helped to meet the project's objective. Nonetheless, the agrobiodiversity information system still needs to be made available to the public and some areas for improvement were found in the determination of the nutritional value of the species (TE p.19).
- Component 2: Ensure support for in situ conservation of agrobiodiversity by linking selected ecotypes to markets. The project generated and strengthened in situ conservation processes of the selected agrobiodiversity species through the development of management and production plans. Production transformation was also promoted to increase the value of agrobiodiversity products and facilitate their commercialization. In some macro-regions, such as the Amazon, the advances were very significant. However, in other macro-regions, such as the Tropico macro-region, progress was more limited. (TE p.20)
- Component 3: Mainstreaming the conservation of agrobiodiversity in policies and regulatory frameworks, especially in relation to food security and nutrition. The project achieved the mainstreaming of agrobiodiversity, mainly at the municipal level, through the generation of local laws (TE p.23). But progress has not been made in the verification and monitoring of compliance with these laws, as indicated in the tracking tool and the ProDoc. Therefore, no changes generated by the new laws were identified during the evaluation mission (TE p.24).
- Component 4: Communications and capacity building. The project implemented communications strategies using different digital and traditional media, thereby achieving national coverage. The use of local television and radio stations, as well as participation in thematic fairs related to agrobiodiversity, allowed the project to reach distant populations and, in some cases, with targeted content. However, the effectiveness of the communications strategy, as measured through the level of awareness reached on the importance of agrobiodiversity, was not determined (TE p.25).

The TE also notes that the results framework was complex, which resulted in an equally complex monitoring system. As such, it was difficult for the Evaluation Team to analyze the project’s level of achievement (TE p.59).

<b>4.4 Efficiency</b>	MS
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The TE rates the project’s efficiency as *Moderately satisfactory* (TE p.73). This validation concurs.

The project had two implementation modalities: (i) Operational Partners Implementation Modality (OPIM), which spanned from the start of the project until May 2018; and (ii) direct execution modality (DEX), implemented by FAO since June 2018 until the technical closure of the project. The project was designed before FAO issued Section 701 of its operational manual, which sets out the framework, rules and accountability for OPIM. For this reason, *ad hoc* procedures were followed during formulation for the selection of the operating partner, which meant that there was a lack of clarity on the important requirements that an operating partner would have to meet. This was reflected in complex administrative processes implemented by the operating partner (EMAGUA), which were causing implementation delays. As such, the project changed to DEX modality (TE p. 28).

The change of execution modality contributed to enhance the project’s efficiency. This change in modality, the COVID-19 pandemic and sociopolitical problems represented important challenges that were overcome as FAO implemented highly effective adaptive measures. The project had to be extended for two and a half years where it then achieved most of the expected products. The interinstitutional coordination with the Ministry of Rural Development and Land occurred in a timely manner to generate important benefits in the field. However, it is considered that the benefits would have been greater if the Ministry had been actively involved in the project (TE p.73).

The project’s budget was insufficient to cover the work plan as it was originally envisioned. This was due to the inclusion of some ambitious goals and the broad geographical coverage of the project, which were later modified in response to a recommendation by the MTR. The additional co-financing obtained by the project, through cooperation with other institutions, as well as the use of existing infrastructure and synergies with other FAO projects and the savings achieved by the project (for example, by reducing travel expenses), ensured that the budget limitations did not have a significant impact on achieving the goals (TE p.46).

<b>4.5 Outcome</b>	MS
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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.

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.

The TE provided a *Satisfactory* rating to the overall progress towards achieving objectives/outcomes (TE p.72). This validation provides a *Moderately satisfactory* rating to project outcome. The project was relevant and achieved most of its targets. And although quantifiable data on expected results in the medium and long-term was not available at evaluation, available evidence suggests that progress is going in the right direction. FAO's team implemented adaptive measures to address major efficiency challenges; however, the project was not adequately coherent.

Global environmental benefits were generated, such as *in situ* conservation of selected local ecotypes that are important for nutrition and food security. Measures for the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity in policies, programs and regulatory frameworks on agriculture, nutrition, health and food security were incorporated as well. Income generation in the participating communities, derived from the production, processing and sale of agrobiodiversity products with high nutritional value and labelling, was established as another expected global environmental benefit of the project (TE p. 27). However, there was no documentation available at the time of the evaluation to determine the increase in the income of the beneficiary families. During interviews, some associations reported an increase in their income, while others informed that the increase had been temporary or only a token amount (TE p. 22-23).

Progress towards the expected impact is going in the right direction. The project has contributed to reactivating and, in some cases, strengthening the offer of traditional or native fruits and vegetables and processed food products with high nutritional value. This, in turn, contributes to the fulfilment of Sustainable Development Goal 2 of the United Nations in terms of its contribution to food security and improved nutrition. Results of the nutritional survey are expected to inform if the nutritional status of the families involved in the projects, and thus the quality of life of local communities, has improved. However, this data was not yet available at the time of the evaluation (TE p. 28).

The project made an important contribution to knowledge management by including a specific component for this objective. This was complemented by consultations with Indigenous Peoples for the recovery and documentation of ancestral knowledge, as well as the exchange of experiences between beneficiaries of the five macro-regions (TE p.49). Also, the project implemented a communications strategy based on the use of different media with national coverage (TE p.50).

The project included a gender approach in its design and implementation that contributed to closing priority gender gaps. Although this advance is important, it will require greater efforts to consolidate in the future (TE p.50). The indigenous communities actively participated in the project and were consulted in an appropriate manner. Their customs, traditions and norms were always respected (TE p.52).

The project was formulated before the Environmental Impact Assessment was implemented, so it was not rated based on its level of environmental and social risk. Safeguards monitoring was provided through the PIRs, although these reports lacked formality (TE p. 53).

Given the type of actions implemented by the project, the TE did not identify adverse collateral environmental or social effects and corroborated this in interviews and through direct observation during the evaluation mission. However, the TE suggests that it is necessary to strengthen some management plans prepared by the project to prevent environmental risk in the use of forests. The reason behind this is that there is some indication in the management plans to promote increasing the number of forest species with commercial value without including thresholds that allow the conservation of ecosystem functionality (TE p.53).

The project also generated important co-benefits, such as the proposal for the National Programme for the Sustainable Management of Agrobiodiversity 2022–2027, whose preparation was not included in the ProDoc (TE p. 23). It also promoted the adaptation of a reference standard for laboratory tests and work on specific standards for moriche palm and majo pulp. In addition, the project contributed to the control and management of exotic species, such as pine and eucalyptus, through the update of the management plan in the El Palmar ecological reserve (TE p. xiii).

<b>4.6 Sustainability</b>	ML
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This validation concurs with the TE and rates sustainability as *Moderately likely* (TE p. 73).

Institutional framework and governance

The Ministry of Environment and Water approved the proposal for the National Programme for Sustainable Management of Agrobiodiversity 2022–2027. This program is expected to give continuity to all actions carried out within the project framework. It should also ensure the sustainability of achievements since it will work with the same associations and productive organizations, in addition to others, and cover a greater geographical area (TE p. 33). The program proposal still needs to be strengthened to avoid the risk of the lack of interinstitutional coordination, which was mentioned during interviews with the productive associations of the Amazon (TE p.34).

Fifteen municipal laws related to agrobiodiversity and healthy eating have been approved, which reflects municipal ownership. The risk of non-compliance with municipal laws and initiatives achieved by the project due to the lack of training or technical advice was identified as low (TE p. 34,35).

On the negative side, the effective shared governance between FAO and the Ministry of Environment and Water was not prioritized with the change to DEX modality, and the participation of the Ministry was reduced. This, in turn, limited its capacities to execute projects on a similar scale (TE p. 43-44). Also, as mentioned in previous sections, there was lack of strategic interinstitutional coordination to address agrobiodiversity at the national level (TE p.32).The limited participation of the Ministry of Rural Development and Land resulted in lost opportunities for synergies between the two ministries and to advance towards an integral approach in the implementation of environmental and production policies (TE p.40, 41).

### Sociopolitical

Although associations, organizations and communities that participated in the project showed a high degree of ownership of its outcomes, their representatives expressed during interviews important needs which, if not met, could risk the progress achieved or divert it towards unsustainable or unhealthy practices (TE p.35). Some of the needs mentioned were the following: having a physical place for their venture, more specific training on accounting and administration, and support to improve quality of their products to obtain the food safety and ecological certification (TE p.36).

Capacities were generated at the individual and organizational levels in the groups participating in the project. A favorable environment was created for the application of those capacities (TE p.37). In addition, the FAO “Forest and farm facility phase II: Climate-resilient landscapes and better livelihoods” project is providing support to the Agricultural Association of Amazon Producers of Majo and Açaí in Buen Retiro. It is expected that support will also be provided to other groups participating in the project, which may contribute to the sustainability of their enterprises. There are other initiatives that could benefit local associations (TE 38).

### Financial resources

Different funding sources could contribute to sustain actions initiated by the project. The European Union was expected to finance the National Programme for the Sustainable Management of Agrobiodiversity 2022–2027. This funding commitment was expected to be formalized in 2022. Through the Forest Mechanisms Programme, FAO is supporting some of the groups that participated in the project to strengthen actions initiated during its implementation (TE p.38). Municipal officers mentioned that they have scarce resources, so they require national and international collaboration to implement the laws, mainly in terms of resources for training and technical advice. The TE considered that those needs could be covered through ongoing FAO projects and initiatives (TE p.35)

### Environmental

The project raised environmental awareness in associations and productive organizations about native crops and caring for forests with wild species important for agrobiodiversity (TE p. 38). In some regions affected by the project, the conservation and sustainable use of wild resources was formalized through management plans. Four of these plans have been formally approved and four are still in the approval process. However, there is an opportunity to strengthen them and mitigate the environmental risk that could cause the increase of wild species with commercial value (TE p.39).

## **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?

As of 24 June 2022, 63.5 percent of the co-financing had materialized. The reported amount could increase because some initiatives of the Ministry of Environment and Water had not been considered when the TE was conducted. The low level of co-financing is explained by the fact that the Ministry of Environment and Water, which was the main co-financer of the project (60 percent of the total committed co-financing), provided only 9 percent of the amount committed. However, the lack of full materialization of the co-financing did not affect the project results due to the additional co-financing achieved. The project received additional co-financing from new partnerships generated and a greater contribution from FAO. The co-financing provided by FAO almost tripled the amount initially committed for the project. The additional co-financing obtained through multiple partnerships with universities, municipal governments, and NGOs, also contributed to achieving the goals. (TE p.46-47).

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?

As the operating partner, EMAGUA, was implementing complex administrative processes that were hindering the achievement of the project's goals, the project's implementation modality changed from OPIM to DEX, and FAO took over the execution of the project (TE p. 11). The technical and administrative execution improved substantially under the DEX modality as FAO implemented various adaptive measures to improve the project's level of achievement. According to the third PIR (from July 2018 to 30 June 2019), the project began to improve its technical and administrative performance. However, the sociopolitical conflict that occurred in the country at the end of 2019 caused the project to stop in October and November of that year. The COVID-19 pandemic also temporarily halted activities on the ground in 2020. As a result, the project faced additional delays in its execution that led to its extension by two years and five months. Thus, the technical closure of the project was extended until 30 June 2022. This extension allowed the project to meet most of its goals (TE p. 30-31).

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.

The Ministry of Rural Development and Land was given important tasks in the project and was a member of the steering committee; however, it was not assigned a specific position nor a strategic role at design (for instance, executing partner or co-financier) (TE p.57 and 74). Although it was a member of the steering committee, it decided not to participate in it since the start of execution. According to interviews, this was because some of the project activities were directly linked to its own attributions, resulting in the overlapping of some responsibilities (TE p.31). Similarly, the Ministry did not supervise project activities for which it was co-responsible. All this in conjunction prevented the expected synergies with the Ministry of Environment and Water from being generated (TE p. 57-58). The limited

participation of the Ministry of Rural Development and Land resulted in lack of coordination between *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation, as well as in missed opportunities to advance towards an integral approach in the implementation of environmental and production policies, which could have benefited both sectors (TE p. 41). Although interinstitutional coordination occurred in some areas of intervention in a timely manner, it was not strategic at the national level. As a result, benefits generated were lower than the ones anticipated in the ProDoc (TE p.31). This was also reflected in the lack of socialization and identification of synergies between the project outcomes and the existing programs, as well as with those currently being developed (TE p.32). For example, the Ministry of Rural Development and Land did not participate in the formulation of the National Agrobiodiversity Programme, which suggests there was no commitment on their part to intervene in additional communities (TE p.22).

The DEX modality limited a more active involvement of the General Directorate of Biodiversity and Protected Areas. Potential synergies with other projects of the Ministry of Environment and Water were also reduced (TE p. 29). However, the level of ownership over the project outcomes by the Ministry of Environment and Water was high. It internally approved the proposal for the National Programme for Sustainable Management of Agrobiodiversity 2022–2027, which is expected to continue the achievements of the project and expand its scope (TE p. 33)

At the municipal level, 15 laws related to agrobiodiversity and healthy eating were approved (TE p. 34). Interviews revealed that political will existed to include agrobiodiversity as a strategy to boost development and nutrition at the departmental level (Pando, Oruro and Chuquisaca), and that municipal authorities valued the use of local products and recognized agrobiodiversity as an economic driver of their territories (TE p. 16). The openness and willingness of local governments to promote agrobiodiversity and healthy eating, and the recognition of agrobiodiversity as an economic engine, were some of the factors that contributed to the success of Component 3. Overall, the project worked with 39 municipal governments and most of them actively participated in the project actions. Some municipalities, due to the change in government management and technical personnel, showed a low level of participation (for example, the municipalities of Porongo and Puerto Rico), although they had expressed their intention to consider agrobiodiversity in their comprehensive territorial development plan (TE p.47).

According to the TE, the participation and involvement mechanisms of academia, civil society organizations, the private sector and local government were highly successful. This contributed to the achievement of outcomes and to obtaining additional co-financing (TE p.74).

In contrast, the steering and technical committees did not meet in some years during the DEX implementation phase. During this time, the Project Coordination Unit was located in FAO facilities, where both day-to-day and strategic project decisions were made. This was indicative of limited shared governance between the Ministry of Environment and Water and FAO, and hindered interaction and coordination among stakeholders (TE p.30, 59 and 74).

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.

The TE notes that some outcomes and outputs included a considerable number of targets and subtargets, which resulted in a cumbersome monitoring system that complicated the analysis of the project’s effectiveness (TE p.59).

## 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.

<b>6.1 M&amp;E Design at entry</b>	MS
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The TE rates M&E design at entry as *Satisfactory* (TE p.75), whereas this validation rates it as *Moderately satisfactory*.

The M&E plan met the requirements outlined in the GEF Monitoring Policy. The results framework showed a vertical logic and its structure complied with the concepts of a logical framework matrix. However, its design had some areas for improvement, which were not noted during the MTR (TE p.41-42). The design of the results framework was complex. It lacked a description of indicators and included a considerable number of targets and subtargets for some outcomes and outputs. This resulted in an equally complex monitoring system and created difficulties for the Evaluation Team to analyze the project’s level of achievement (TE p.59).

<b>6.2 M&amp;E Implementation</b>	MS
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In line with the TE assessment (TE p.75), this validation rates M&E implementation as *Moderately satisfactory*.

The M&E plan was not totally on schedule due to the change in modality and the COVID-19 pandemic, which limited field supervision visits (TE p. 41). There is no evidence that a monitoring system existed under the OPIM modality. This may explain why the information generated by the project at that stage was scarce or unavailable. Under the DEX modality, and starting in the first half of 2020, a monitoring system for outcomes and outputs was developed using an Excel spreadsheet with a traffic light-type color system to indicate the level of compliance. The system was structured in a more detailed way in response to an MTR recommendation and was updated monthly based on the reports provided by the regional coordinators (TE p. 42)

Since the results framework did not describe the indicators, these were inferred in the monitoring system based on goals. Additional indicators were also incorporated. Each output of the adjusted results framework could have between 2 and 7 indicators, and, in most cases, indicators were averaged to estimate the level of compliance. Although this system served to establish results-based management

and evaluate the progress of the project in a timely manner, there was an opportunity to take a more strategic approach. Among the multiple indicators for each outcome or output, some were strategically more relevant, but their importance was blurred when calculating averages. In addition, keeping the indicators updated required significant amount of work, considering there were 93 indicators (TE p.42)

The annual PIRs were completed. They objectively reported the progress of the project. However, the report on environmental and social safeguards lacked formality. The main technical supervision was carried out by the lead technical officers (LTOs) and, according to the first LTO, a field visit took place under their technical supervision. After that, no more field visits were made due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The GEF tracking tools have also provided feedback (TE p. 43).

The MTR was carried out in 2020, four years after the official project launch and two years after the modality change. This represents a significant delay. As a result of the MTR, nine recommendations were issued, of which six were met (TE p.43).

## 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.

<b>7.1 Quality of Project Implementation</b>	MS
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This TER rates quality of project implementation as *Moderately satisfactory*, in line with the TE rating (TE p.74). Project identification, supervision and technical assistance provided by FAO was carried out for the most part effectively, with minor weak areas (TE 44-45).

FAO provided technical assistance and supervision on a timely manner. Since the first PIR, it highlighted the areas for improvement in project execution and indicated the need to change the implementation modality. There were two LTO replacements. Each LTO provided adequate technical supervision. Nonetheless, personnel changes were made without an adequate transfer of relevant project information. In particular, the last two LTOs were unsure if an environmental risk assessment had been conducted during the project design. This lack of information was reflected in the filling out of the environmental and social safeguards section of the PIR, which had confusing information. The third LTO did not have access to the management plans generated by the project. Finally, only one technical supervision field visit is known to have taken place due to the mobility restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic (TE p. 44 -45).

<b>7.2 Quality of Project Execution</b>	MS
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This validation concurs with the TE's rating of *Moderately satisfactory* for quality of project execution (TE p.74). Under the OPIM modality, execution was ineffective. In contrast, the DEX modality was characterized by strategic coordination, results-based management, adaptive capacity and a high-level professional team (TE p.44).

Under the OPIM modality, EMAGUA was the executing partner in charge of resource management and administration, while the General Directorate of Biodiversity and Protected Areas was responsible of technical execution. Their performance was mainly affected by the complexity and duration of the regulatory processes for the acquisition of goods and services, as well as the lack of management experience with this type of projects. FAO executed the project under the DEX modality since the second half of 2018. The project coordination team adopted a strategic vision focused on results-based management and comprehensive monitoring of the project, which allowed the implementation of adaptive measures. This significantly increased the level of achievement of the project, as well as the number of partners. However, the effective shared governance between FAO and the Ministry of Environment and Water was not prioritized during project implementation, and the participation of the government partner was reduced. This, in turn, limited its capacities to execute projects on a similar scale. The change in implementation modality and the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic created a discontinuity, which led to staff turnover (TE p. 43-44).

## **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.

### Lessons learned

**Project management:** Steering and technical committees are useful for project governance, both under the DEX modality and through an operating partner. However, in both modalities, the project underestimated their importance. In fact, these committees could be considered even more important under the DEX modality since they constitute the main spaces for coordination and interaction with government counterparts through which learning can be generated and their capacities strengthened. Also, the change of two LTOs during the design and execution of the project without an adequate transfer of relevant project information between them generated confusion in the reporting of environmental and social safeguards in the PIRs. (TE p.59).

**Project design, evaluation and planning:** The design of the results framework was complex. It lacked a description of indicators and included considerable number of targets and subtargets for some outcomes and outputs. This resulted in an equally complex monitoring system and created difficulties for the Evaluation Team to analyze the project's level of achievement. It is important that the project results framework complies with the concepts and structure of a logical framework to ensure its

horizontal logic and the inclusion of specific, measurable, achievable and relevant indicators for the project's duration. In addition, it is important to note the scale by which some of the project goals were exceeded (TE p.59).

Co-financing: The project's executing team and co-financing partners should review together estimated co-financing amounts to ensure correct estimates (TE p.59).

#### Good practices

Co-financing: The coordination that took place between academia, the private sector, NGOs and the government to support associations and organizations contributed significantly to achieving the objectives of the project and obtaining additional co-financing. Likewise, the identification of synergies between this project and other FAO projects and initiatives, as well as the coordination between executing teams to carry out joint actions, helped to increase FAO co-financing significantly and reduce the impact of budgetary challenges (TE p.58).

Gender equality: The project achieved the effective participation of women, including indigenous women, in productive enterprises. A next step to advance gender equality is to promote the diversification of the roles of women (TE p.58-59).

8.2 Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation.

#### For the Ministry of Development Planning and FAO

Recommendation 1: The government should develop and reactivate mechanisms to coordinate initiatives and projects on agrobiodiversity by different government institutions. FAO can play a mediating role (TE p.57).

#### For the Ministry of Environment and Water and FAO

Recommendation 2: The National Agrobiodiversity Programme proposal should be strengthened by indicating which actions require the participation of other ministries and their technical areas, and the coordination and collaboration mechanisms to be used. It should also consider a consumer awareness raising campaign (TE p. 57).

Recommendation 3: Management plans should be reviewed and strengthened through a landscape approach. This would balance economically viable species in the ecosystem with other native species that are of no commercial interest but are important for the proper functioning of the ecosystem (TE p. 57).

Recommendation 4: A strategic role should be given to ministries that have important competencies related to the project results so that they take greater responsibility for the success of the project and benefit equally from its results (TE p. 57-58).

Recommendation 5: Since the evaluation mission identified that some projects and actions of the Ministry of Environment and Water may not have been accounted for in the co-financing reported by

the project, a meeting between the Ministry of Environment and Water and FAO should be arranged to review the projects and actions that the Ministry is carrying out and that also contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity (TE p. 58).

Recommendation 6: To contribute to the sustainability of the achieved results, future initiatives or those in progress should: i) ensure that all food products generated within the project framework have food safety and ecological certifications, and that the producer associations have formal legal status. An awareness raising campaign for the consumption of healthy food products should be designed and implemented in local communities; and (ii) continue with the INLASA training process. Complement the analysis of the nutritional composition of foods carried out within the framework of the project to advance the fulfilment of the INFOODS requirements (TE p. 58).

Recommendation 7: Continue providing associations and organizations with courses on gender equality and promote innovation in ventures where women can diversify their participation. These efforts contribute to advance a gender inclusive approach in existing productive enterprises, as well as those generated through the National Agrobiodiversity Programme and other initiatives. Also, it avoids perpetuating the traditional role of women (TE p. 58).

## 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?	The project closed in June 2022. The evaluation mission that took place from May 3 to 26, 2022. The TE was submitted in January 2023 and uploaded in the GEF Portal in June 2023.	HS
2. General information: Provides general information on the project and evaluation as per the requirement?	The TE provides complete general information: evaluators names, executing agencies, key project milestones and GEF environmental objectives.	HS
3. Stakeholder involvement: the report was prepared in consultation with – and with feedback from - key stakeholders?	The TE identified key stakeholders and reached them through interviews and surveys. However, it is not clear how their feedback was incorporated on the draft or final report. The TE does not	MS

	mention if the OFP feedback was sought or incorporated in the report.	
4. Theory of change: provides solid account of the project's theory of change?	The TE discusses causal links/mechanisms to achieve the intended impact. It presents the key assumptions of the theory of change but does not discuss if those assumptions remained valid.	S
5. Methodology: Provides an informative and transparent account of the methodology?	The report discusses information sources for the evaluation; provides information on who was interviewed and on project sites/activities covered for verification; describes tools and methods used; and identifies limitations of the evaluation.	HS
6. Outcome: Provides a clear and candid account of the achievement of project outcomes?	The TE provides a clear account of the achievement of the project's outcomes. A more thorough analysis on efficiency, where achievements are weighted against costs, would be useful.	S
7. Sustainability: Presents realistic assessment of sustainability?	The report identifies risks that may affect the project's sustainability. It indicates their likelihood and their likely effects if they materialize. It also provides a rating for the overall sustainability criteria.	HS
8. M&E: Presents sound assessment of the quality of the M&E system?	The TE analyzes quality of M&E design at entry and implementation. It also discusses the use of information from the M&E system for project management.	HS
9. Finance: Reports on utilization of GEF funding and materialization of co-financing?	The TE provides a sound report on utilization of GEF funding and materialization of co-financing.	HS
10. Implementation: Presents a candid account of project implementation and Agency performance?	The report assesses the GEF agency and executing agency performance. It discusses factors that affected implementation and execution, and mentions how the related challenges were addressed.	HS
11. Safeguards: Provides information on application of environmental and social safeguards, and conduct and use of gender analysis?	The TE reports on implementation of social and environmental safeguards and discusses the gender approach considered in the project.	HS
12. Lessons and recommendations are supported by the project	The report presents lessons based on project experience. It also presents clear	HS

experience and are relevant to future programming?	recommendations and specifies the action taker in each case.	
13. Ratings: Ratings are well-substantiated by evidence, realistic and convincing?	Ratings are supported with credible evidence.	HS
14. Report presentation: The report was well-written, logically organized, and consistent?	The TE is written in English, easy to read, well-organized and makes good use of tools to make information accessible. In some cases, ratings mentioned in the main document are not consistent with the rating provided in tables: "Executive Summary Table 1. GEF evaluation criteria rating" or "Appendix 2. GEF evaluation criteria rating".	S
<b>Overall quality of the report</b>		HS

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