

GEF IEO Terminal Evaluation Review form (retrofitting of APR2004 cohort)

This form is for retrofitting of the TERs prepared for APR2004. While several topics covered in this form had already been covered in the earlier form, this revised form adds several other performance and impact related concerns.

1. Project Data

| Summary project data | | | |
|--|--------------|--|------------------------|
| GEF project ID | | 462 | |
| GEF Agency project ID | | 639 | |
| GEF Replenishment Phase | | GEF-1 | |
| Lead GEF Agency (include all for joint projects) | | UNDP | |
| Project name | | Preparation of A Strategic Action Programme (SAP) and Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) for the Tumen River Area, Its Coastal Regions and Related Northeast Asian Environs | |
| Country/Countries | | China, Korea DPR, Republic Of Korea, Mongolia, Russian Federation | |
| Region | | Regional | |
| Focal area | | International Waters | |
| Operational Program or Strategic Priorities/Objectives | | OP2- Coastal, Marine and Freshwater Ecosystems OP9- Integrated land and water multiple focal area operational program | |
| Executing agencies involved | | United Nations Office for Project Services | |
| NGOs/CBOs involvement | | through consultation | |
| Private sector involvement | | No involvement | |
| CEO Endorsement (FSP) /Approval date (MSP) | | 4/13/1999 | |
| Effectiveness date / project start | | 6/14/1999 | |
| Expected date of project completion (at start) | | 7/1/2001 | |
| Actual date of project completion | | 7/1/2001 | |
| Project Financing | | | |
| | | At Endorsement (US \$M) | At Completion (US \$M) |
| Project Preparation Grant | GEF funding | 0.24 | |
| | Co-financing | | |
| GEF Project Grant | | 4.96 | 4.64 |
| Co-financing | IA/EA own | 0.25 | 0.25 |
| | Government | 1.90 | 1.65 |
| | Other* | | |
| Total GEF funding | | 5.20 | 4.64 |
| Total Co-financing | | 2.15 | 1.90 |
| Total project funding (GEF grant(s) + co-financing) | | 7.35 | 6.54 |
| Terminal evaluation/review information | | | |
| TE completion date | | 5/1/2002 | |
| TE submission date | | Apr-2002 | |
| Author of TE | | Nicholas Hodgson and Roy Hagen | |
| Original GEF IEO TER (2004) preparer | | Antonio del Monaco | |
| Original GEF IEO TER (2004) reviewer | | Aaron Zazueta | |
| Revised TER (2014) completion date | | 05/24/2014 | |
| Revised TER (2014) prepared by | | Nelly Bourlion | |
| TER GEF IEO peer review (2014) | | Joshua Schneck | |

*Includes contributions mobilized for the project from other multilateral agencies, bilateral development, cooperation agencies, NGOs, the private sector, and beneficiaries.

2. Summary of Project Ratings

| Criteria | Final PIR | IA Terminal Evaluation | IA Evaluation Office Review | GEF EO Review |
|---|-----------|------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Project Outcomes | S | N/A | N/R | MU |
| Sustainability of Outcomes | L | N/A | N/R | MU |
| M&E Design | N/A | N/A | N/R | MS |
| M&E Implementation | N/A | N/A | N/R | MU |
| Quality of Implementation | N/A | N/A | N/R | MU |
| Quality of Execution | N/A | N/A | N/R | S |
| Quality of the Terminal Evaluation Report | - | - | - | MS |

3. Project Objectives

3.1 Global Environmental Objectives of the project:

As stated in the Project Document, the Global Environmental objective is to promote environmentally sustainable development in the Tumen Region and provide regional environmental benefits by protecting international waters and biodiversity. The project involves China, Russia, the Republic of Korea, Mongolia, and to a limited extent the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea.

3.2 Development Objectives of the project:

According to the PD, the project has four immediate objectives:

- (1) Strengthen national capacities to prepare a regional Strategic Action Program (SAP) for the protection of international waters and biodiversity
- (2) Counterparts, local communities and other stakeholders are aware of regional environmental protection issues
- (3) Preparation of a Regional Strategic Action Programme (SAP)
- (4) Strengthen national and regional capacities to jointly implement the Strategic Action Programme (SAP)

The key outputs of the project are the TDA and the SAP, but the design does not define what the content of these outputs should be.

In the title of the project, the goal is to prepare a SAP (Strategic Action Program) and a TDA (Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis) for the Tumen River Area, its coastal regions and related Northeast Asian Environs. A TDA has to be completed to be able to develop a SAP (TE. pg.2). The TDA identifies major international waters and biodiversity issues, and the SAP identifies specific direct actions to address these issues.

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

There were changes in the objectives between the project brief and the project document and then in the Inception Report. At the beginning of the project, a project inception mission to the five countries

was conducted by the project management unit from 24 July to 18 August and an inception workshop was held on 22 / 23 August. The Inception Report was realized in September 2000. The inception workshop and report were used make some changes to the project for a better fit, and to identify risks (TE.pg.8).

Therefore, following these inception phase, there were some changes made in the project objectives. The reasons for these changes are not clearly described.

A key change made to the project following the Inception Report was the restructuring of the project into five components: the TDA, the SAP, Environmental Information Systems, Awareness Raising and Small Grants Programme.

The objective in the Project Brief was to “provide global environmental benefits through the protection of the Tumen River Economic Development Area and the Northeast Asian environs, which integrate the use of sound land and water resource management strategies”. In the Project Document, the objective was to “promote environmentally sustainable development in the Tumen Region and provide regional environmental benefits by protecting international waters and biodiversity”.

The TE indicates that the project had a poor design and project preparation which caused the objectives to shift. In addition to the change in objectives between the Project Brief and the Project Document, other issues raised in the TE include:

- The project was very imprecise in the definition of the project area. Countries such as Mongolia and South Korea do not share borders with the Tumen River Watershed. Early during the project review process, the issue of including areas not hydrologically linked to the Tumen River was identified, nevertheless the project was approved without the recommended changes.
- The Inception Report shifted the project focus from IW to biodiversity conservation. The introduction of Mongolia into the project under the premise of biodiversity conservation is poorly justified according to the TE, especially given that UNDP has already a project in Mongolia (Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Livelihood Options in the Grasslands of Eastern Mongolia) that covers all of the Mongolian zones included in this IW project.
- The Inception Report does not explore the linkages between project components. For example, the awareness raising did not have a clear linkage and focus on the SAP and neither did the Environmental Information System.

4. GEF EO assessment of Outcomes and Sustainability

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

Relevance can receive either a Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory rating. For Effectiveness and Cost efficiency, a six point rating scale is used (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory), or Unable to Assess. Sustainability ratings are assessed on a four-point scale: Likely=no or negligible risk; Moderately Likely=low risk; Moderately Unlikely=substantial risks; Unlikely=high risk. In assessing a Sustainability rating please note if, and to what degree, sustainability of project outcomes is threatened by financial, sociopolitical, institutional/governance, or environmental factors.

Please justify ratings in the space below each box.

| | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 4.1 Relevance | Rating: Satisfactory |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|

As explained in the TE, the project developed from a move by the five countries in the early 1990s to promote economic development in the newly demilitarized and opened up border zones between the countries. The Tumen River Area, the geographic centre of this political rapprochement, with the easing of border restrictions, was seen as a major focus for international cooperation and economic development, a free trade zone and major urban centre. It was speculated that the area could perhaps even develop into the equivalent of a new Hong Kong. The Tumen River Area Development Programme was created to promote this. In 1995 the five countries signed three key documents, the “Agreement on the Establishment of the Consultative Commission for the Development of the Tumen River Economic Development Area and Northeast Asia”, the “Agreement on the Establishment of the Coordinating Committee for the Development of the TREDNA”, and the “Memorandum of Understanding on Environmental Principles Governing the Tumen River Economic Development Area and Northeast Asia”.

In 1997, a GEF/UNDP mission prepared a project brief primarily focused on international waters (IW), particularly the pollution affecting the Tumen River and Peter the Great Bay. There was a secondary focus on biodiversity, or rather the protection of key species, the Amur Leopard, the Siberian Tiger and the Mongolian Gazelle. The project shifted from an initial focus on international waters to a predominant focus on biodiversity. The primary interest in the two steppe zones was on biodiversity, and even in the Tumen River Zone, much of the attention evolved towards biodiversity rather than international waters.

The project is classified under GEF’s Integrated Land and Water Multiple Focal Area Operational Programme. This project focuses on integrated approaches to the use of better land and water resource management practices on an area-wide basis. However “Global benefits” are often produced in other GEF focal areas, in this case under Biodiversity.

Therefore the relevance of the project is satisfactory.

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| 4.2 Effectiveness | Rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory |
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The objectives and outputs of the project were mainly concerned with the production of documents. The two major outputs were a TDA and a SAP. The project had also three other components; Environmental Information Systems, Awareness Raising, and Small Grants Programme

Overall, the project succeeded in producing a TDA and national reports, as well as awareness and Environmental Information Systems components. However, the project failed in producing a SAP, and the TDA content is weak and do not fit the project objectives. Details for each output are given below.

The Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis

The TDA was developed through two regional workshops, in November 2000 and in August 2001. The first workshop was preceded by national training workshops to introduce the participants to the TDA and SAP concepts. Resources were then channeled to consultants from the region to support national capacity building and ensure greater national participation. Following the workshops, Zonal TDAs were prepared. Based on these, a final draft TDA was prepared by the Lead Agency. The national and sectoral reports and the diagnostic portion of the TDA are fundamentally sound documents (TE.pg.2).

The TE indicates that the TDA is a strong diagnostic document. The root causes of the key environmental issues were brought out in the sectoral reports that feed into the TDA, and the information provided a very sound basis for management decisions.

However, during the inception phase, the focus shifted from IW to biodiversity. The TDA workshop did not reflect this change in focus. Moreover, the TDA following the species focus in the PD, almost completely missed the sustainable use aspects of biodiversity conservation and did not identify open access to grassland ecosystems of the steppe zones as the root cause of biodiversity loss and rangeland degradation on the steppes. The proposed biodiversity interventions of the TDA have focused on protected areas, despite the fact that this is the one component that several other on-going and developing biodiversity projects are addressing in the same zones. Moreover, the TE mentions that data was incomplete and questioned by some scientists. The TE also indicates that the TDA did not prioritize the major environmental issues in each zone and threats, impacts and causes were still not clearly distinguished. And finally, there is almost no emphasis on specific interventions to reduce pollution, and yet this is the most important issue highlighted in the executive summary of the TDA.

The National Reports

The National Reports were completed according to schedule, and are very comprehensive (TE.pg.11). Those reports were produced after the workshops held to create the TAD. According to the TE, they clearly were a major achievement of the participating institutions. The Project has sought formal government endorsement of the National Reports, China's central government had not approved their National Report at the time of the TE.

The Strategic Action Programme

At the time of TE was submitted, the SAP and the National Action Plans were not completed. Therefore, capacity to implement the SAP was not reported. This was the most critical stage of the project since, the SAP is the only document that needs to be formally signed by the member countries, all other reports were working documents (TE.pg.3).

The Awareness and Environmental Information Systems

These two components are basically developed as tools to support the future implementation of the SAP. The “Aware” component was successful both in general public awareness campaigns, using the mass media, and in more directed campaigns using the small grants programme. It has also been effective in raising the awareness among project partners. The EIS is seen as a general project awareness tool that will be continued after the present project period.

Therefore, the overall effectiveness of the project is Moderately Unsatisfactory.

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| 4.3 Efficiency | Rating: Satisfactory |
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The efficiency of the project is Satisfactory.

After the inception report, the project was restructured into five components (the TDA, the SAP, Environmental Information Systems, Awareness Raising and Small Grants Programme) and each component was assigned to a Lead Agency in one of the participating countries to ensure full national ownership. This change in project structure (from international consultant to lead agency) did not affect the project budget or fundamentally change the project outputs (TE pg.8). Budgets for the international consultants who were no longer considered to be required, were switched to Lead Agencies. A few additional subheadings were added to the ProDoc Outputs and this became the structure for the workplan.

There were no major delays reported. According to the TE, “the National Reports were completed according to schedule”. The lead institutions wrote the sector reports, and a considerable effort was made to stick to the timetable, and all the reports were in their final form within a couple of weeks of their deadline and were available for the TDA Workshop that was subsequently held (TE, pg.12).

However, the SAP was not completed on time. The TE and the PIRs do not mention the reasons of this delay.

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| 4.4 Sustainability | Rating: Moderately Unlikely |
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Financial Sustainability: Moderately Unlikely

Financial sustainability was not discussed fully in the TE since the SAP had not been completed at the time of the TE. However, there is some mention of financial sustainability challenges. For example, at present business interest is minimal, as there is little incentive to invest in the region, or for existing factories to invest in cleaner technology. The project areas in Russia and China are far from the capitals, and investment in these areas has not been a national priority for the governments. It will be a sustainability challenge to mobilize the resources necessary to implement the SAP project recommendations.

Socio-political Sustainability: Moderately Likely

The TE indicates that there is a strong sense of ownership and a commitment to the future of the TDA and SAP among those directly involved in the project. The TDA process and workshops served to bring political decision makers into the process. The TDA and SAP training workshops included academic researchers and government representatives as well as participants with agricultural, industrial and mining interests. All five countries agreed to develop their national components of the SAP.

Principle shortcomings regarding socio-political sustainability are:(1) local support for the SAP and endorsement by the member countries should have been obtained during the life of the project as indicated in the objectives; (2) stakeholder meetings to discuss the draft zonal TDAs were informative but cannot be considered public participation according to the TE; and (3) there is no set process or guidelines on how to achieve public participation through the TDA and SAP process.

Institutional Sustainability: Moderately Unlikely

The project worked with lead agencies within the region to implement the project. The TE indicated that this approach was a successful strategy to make the most of local expertise, foster networks and increase ownership. However, at the time the TE was done, the challenge to develop an SAP that had real content still lied ahead: an SAP that identified concrete actions to address the causes of the priority problems identified in the TDA. On another issue, at the time the TE was conducted, the country web sites were not effectively serving their objectives of increasing environmental awareness, investment decision making, and environmental sustainable exploitation. The TE fears that the local incentives to maintain the systems would stop once the project ended.

5. Processes and factors affecting attainment of project outcomes

5.1 Co-financing. To what extent was the reported co-financing essential to the achievement of GEF objectives? If there was a difference in the level of expected co-financing and actual co-financing, then what were the reasons for it? Did the extent of materialization of co-financing affect project's outcomes and/or sustainability? If so, in what ways and through what causal linkages?

There is no information reported in the TE on cofinancing of the project.

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?

According to the TE, the schedule to develop the TDA and SAP in two years was very tight, and to expect to increase awareness in that period was unrealistic. The TDA was realized during the project timeframe, however the SAP was not finished when the TE was done.

5.3 Country ownership. Assess the extent to which country ownership has affected project outcomes and sustainability? Describe the ways in which it affected outcomes and sustainability, highlighting the causal links:

A key change made to the project following the Inception Report was the restructuring of the project into five components. Each component was assigned to a Lead Agency in one of the participating countries to ensure full national ownership of the TDA/SAP process

According to the TE, there was a strong emphasis on stakeholder involvement in the preparation of the TDA and the SAP, and as a result there is a real feeling of ownership of the project. However, full public participation in the planning process that was called for in the ProDoc was never really an option at this planning level or in a two year project period but has been achieved to the extent possible.

6. Assessment of project's Monitoring and Evaluation system

Ratings are assessed on a six point scale: Highly Satisfactory=no shortcomings in this M&E component; Satisfactory=minor shortcomings in this M&E component; Moderately Satisfactory=moderate shortcomings in this M&E component; Moderately Unsatisfactory=significant shortcomings in this M&E component; Unsatisfactory=major shortcomings in this M&E component; Highly Unsatisfactory=there were no project M&E systems.

Please justify ratings in the space below each box.

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| 6.1 M&E Design at entry | Rating: Moderately Satisfactory |
|-------------------------|--|

According to the TE, the PD criteria to measure the achievements are too general to provide any assessment of performance and are focused on the process. For example, the criteria for capacity building of National Teams and Environmental Working Groups is "National Teams and Environmental Working Groups trained in each country", and for the awareness on transboundary issues, the success criteria is "Understanding of awareness raising program by its beneficiaries" and "Awareness raising program is successful".

The PD contains a logframe, and describes briefly the M&E system. To monitor the effectiveness of the Programme, a mid-term review and a final review was planned.. In line with UNDP procedures, the project should have been subject to tripartite review (TPR) at least every twelve months. There was a budget allocated to the M&E.

Therefore, the M&E design at entry is Moderately Satisfactory.

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| 6.2 M&E Implementation | Rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory |
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According to the TE, a meeting report of the executing agency notes that “UNOPS... will propose to delete the mid-term review...” UNOPS also suggested merging one of the Tri-Partite Review (TPR) meeting with the next Council meeting scheduled. According to the TE, a council meeting of this size and composition is not a substitute for a technical project review. “The loss of the mid-term review and the TPR is unfortunate, as it may have highlighted the changes in project emphasis and advised accordingly” (TE, pg 23).

Several meetings were held during the project implementation, to present project achievements and challenges. These meetings were successful in raising awareness among stakeholders, according to the TE. However, over half the participants were not fully conversant with the project, and were not in a position to give guidance.

Therefore, the M&E implementation is rated as Moderately Unsatisfactory.

7. Assessment of project implementation and execution

Quality of Implementation includes the quality of project design, as well as the quality of supervision and assistance provided by implementing agency(s) to execution agencies throughout project implementation. Quality of Execution covers the effectiveness of the executing agency(s) in performing its roles and responsibilities. In both instances, the focus is upon factors that are largely within the control of the respective implementing and executing agency(s). A six point rating scale is used (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory), or Unable to Assess.

Please justify ratings in the space below each box.

| | |
|--|--|
| 7.1 Quality of Project Implementation | Rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory |
|--|--|

The implementing agency was UNDP. The role of UNDP is to ensure that the project design and execution conform to GEF criteria and guidelines. The project is supervised by the UNDP Beijing office and supported by the other UNDP country offices. The technical supervision and backstopping support came from the UNDP GEF IW and Biodiversity personnel based in New York and Kuala Lumpur, both geographically distant from the project.

According to the TE, the design of this project was poor.. The definition of the project area is unclear. The objectives and outputs are concerned mainly with the production of documents with little reference to content. Two of the major objectives and outputs are only weakly linked to the core outputs of the project. The risk analysis is unrealistically optimistic. Important recommendations from the STAP Review are largely ignored.

The focus of the project shifted during implementation from IW to biodiversity, yet the TE found no evidence of technical/strategic inputs from UNDP/GEF (TE, pg. 52). From project design through the beginning of the preparation of the SAP, the project has maintained a narrow focus on species and protected areas. It is most regrettable to have two different design documents. The reason for rewriting the document is not clear – it seems to have been an internal administrative requirement of UNDP. Such differences as the one above can substantially change the understanding of the focus and intent of the project design.

Therefore, the quality of implementation is Moderately Unsatisfactory.

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| 7.2 Quality of Project Execution | Rating: Satisfactory |
|---|----------------------|

UNOPS was subcontracted by UNDP to be the executing agency. The role of UNOPS is predominantly administrative. The ProDoc proposed a Project Steering Committee comprising the TRADP Regional Environmental Working Group extended with representatives from UNDP, UNOPS, the Tumen Secretariat, NGOs, and the CTA. The project was managed by the Project Coordination Unit (PCU), led by an internationally recruited Chief Technical Adviser (CTA), and supported by a Programme Officer and Communications Specialist, both regionally recruited. At national level the TRADP National Teams with the addition of the national GEF Focal Point would take overall responsibility for in-country activities. The ad hoc National Environmental Working Groups would provide technical support and National SAP Planning Units would be established. The project was also expected to recruit a range of short-term international consultants to give technical inputs to the national and regional working groups.

However, when the project eventually became operational, there was no effective environmental management structure, the environmental working groups existed only on paper and had no national mandate (TE. Pg 22). The project GEF Focal Points were appointed by the TRADP National Coordinators and were members of the TRADP National Teams. The key problem was that TRADP was traditionally preoccupied with investment promotion and trade and did not have a history of environmental expertise in its committees. As a result of the restructuring of the project into five components after the inception phase, the project moved away from TRADP, and decided to work with lead agencies from within the region to implement the project. For the TDA, the lead agency was the Far Eastern Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Vladivostok; for the SAP Global Environment Office, Ministry of Environment, Seoul; EIS Jilin Provincial Institute for Environmental Protection, Changchun; AWARE and SGP Mongolian Nature & Environment Consortium, Ulaanbaatar; SURVEY National Coordination Committee on Environment, Pyongyang.

The TE indicated that this approach was a successful strategy to make the most of local expertise, foster networks and increase ownership. As a result, the National Reports were completed according to schedule and were very comprehensive. But on the other hand, it led to some confusion in the participating countries over the different roles and responsibilities.

8. Assessment of Project Impacts

8.1 Environmental Change. Describe the changes in environmental stress and environmental status that occurred by the end of the project. Include both quantitative and qualitative changes documented, sources of information for these changes, and how project activities contributed to or hindered these changes. Also include how contextual factors have contributed to or hindered these changes.

No environmental impacts are discussed in the TE.

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

None mentioned.

8.3 Capacity and governance changes. Describe notable changes in capacities and governance that can lead to large-scale action (both mass and legislative) bringing about positive environmental change. "Capacities" include awareness, knowledge, skills, infrastructure, and environmental monitoring systems, among others. "Governance" refers to decision-making processes, structures and systems, including access to and use of information, and thus would include laws, administrative bodies, trust-building and conflict resolution processes, information-sharing systems, etc. Indicate how project activities contributed to/ hindered these changes, as well as how contextual factors have influenced these changes.

a) Capacities -Inthe project design, there are two components that focused on capacity development. The AWARE component has been successful both in general public awareness campaigns, using the mass media, and in more directed campaigns using the small grants programme. It has also been effective in raising the awareness among project partners.

The TOP regional workshop was held in Beijing at the end of November 2000. The TOP workshop was divided into three sections. The first was a general introduction to the TDA/SAP concepts and case study materials were presented to the participants. The second session went into the details of the proposed TDA/SAP process and presented a timeframe and outline structure for the TDA and contributory reports. The third session was a "networking" session for the partner institutions dealing with EIS, AWARE and the other project components.

National TOP training workshops were held in China, Russia, Mongolia and ROK, but not DPRK. These national workshops were training exercises to introduce the concepts of the TDA and the SAP, as well as discuss outline structures for the National Reports and Sector Reports. These national meetings were

largely restricted to academic research and government departments, but they did include participants with agricultural, industrial and mining interests as well as those already identified as participants of the SAP/TDA, Awareness and EIS components.

b) Governance

The development objectives of the project were to develop a Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) and a Strategic Action Programme (SAP). The TDA was prepared during the project timeframe, while the SAP was not finished at the time of the TE.

8.4 Unintended impacts. Describe any impacts not targeted by the project, whether positive or negative, affecting either ecological or social aspects. Indicate the factors that contributed to these unintended impacts occurring.

Non mentioned.

8.5 Adoption of GEF initiatives at scale. Identify any initiatives (e.g. technologies, approaches, financing instruments, implementing bodies, legal frameworks, information systems) that have been mainstreamed, replicated and/or scaled up by government and other stakeholders by project end. Include the extent to which this broader adoption has taken place, e.g. if plans and resources have been established but no actual adoption has taken place, or if market change and large-scale environmental benefits have begun to occur. Indicate how project activities and other contextual factors contributed to these taking place. If broader adoption has not taken place as expected, indicate which factors (both project-related and contextual) have hindered this from happening.

Other projects have started in the same region than this project; however, there is no evidence in the TE, that there has been any adoption of GEF initiatives at scale.

9. Lessons and recommendations

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

A long list of lessons is given in the TE, however, the main lesson is: Developing a strong SAP that will be signed by the governments remains a key challenge for this project and the TumenNET countries. The preparation of a SAP is a delicate balance between what is needed and what is politically acceptable or doable.

9.2 Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation.

The key recommendations of the TE regarding the project are

- (1) the project should complete its objectives, specifically the TDA and SAP.
- (2) The TDA Lead and Partner Agencies, with the support of the PCU, should review the TDA and identify the priorities that need to be addressed in the SAP.

- (3) Based on those priorities, with the guidance of the National policy agencies, the SAP must identify concrete actions to address specific pollution sources and biodiversity issues identified in the Tumen River basin.
- (4) These actions should be prioritized by regions, countries and sites, costs, and should have defined responsibilities for implementation including which will be done with local resources and which will be done with international assistance.
- (5) The SAP should determine the adequacy of the ecosystem coverage of the TDA and make the appropriate adjustments especially because most of the analysis of biodiversity threats focused more on species rather than ecosystems.
- (6) In addition, the project management with the support of the Lead SAP Agency and the national partners should review all ongoing and planned projects that cover international waters and biodiversity conservation in the project zones.
- (7) It is critical that the SAP actions do not duplicate what is already covered, but rather refer to these projects and propose actions in other priority areas. The information that needs to be shared among stakeholders to support the SAP also needs to be defined.
- (8) GEF needs to better define key IW issues to drive the contents of the TDA and the SAP including policy actions and concrete plans to address specific threats.
- (9) In addition, the GEF should distill the lessons from all IW projects on the most effective approaches to develop the TDAs and SAPs and create guidelines for project execution.

10. Quality of the Terminal Evaluation Report

A six point rating scale is used for each sub-criteria and overall rating of the terminal evaluation report (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory)

| Criteria | GEF EO comments | Rating |
|---|--|--------|
| To what extent does the report contain an assessment of relevant outcomes and impacts of the project and the achievement of the objectives? | The TE was apparently completed before the actual closing at the request of the Implementing Agency, which limited the assessment of all relevant outcomes and objectives. For example, the preparation of SAPs, an objective of the project, was just starting when the TE was done. Despite these shortcomings, the TE report provides a thorough account of project achievements, a critical assessment of the relevant shortcomings and factors affecting the project implementation. However, the TE does not provide any assessment of the project impacts. | MS |
| To what extent is the report internally consistent, the evidence presented complete and convincing, and ratings well substantiated? | In general the report is internally consistent and the evidence presented substantiates the statements. Ratings are not available for any of the indicators. And the TE does not assess the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency as required by the GEF guidelines. | MS |
| To what extent does the report properly assess project sustainability and/or project exit strategy? | The TE presents a critical assessment of the project's sustainability. The exit strategy consisted mostly of recommendations to complete the project objectives, specifically refining the TDA and completing the SAP. A more detailed strategy to ensure the implementation of the SAP may have been premature given that the SAP had not been done yet. | S |
| To what extent are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive? | Some recommendations and lessons are related to refining the TDA and completing the SAP which were the project's unaccomplished objectives, and other lessons are self evident. However most of the recommendations (such as those in section 8) and lessons learned are very adequate for the project and for the IW focal area. | S |
| Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used? | The report was completed before the project's closing so the information on actual project costs and co-financing was not presented. | U |
| Assess the quality of the report's evaluation of project M&E systems: | The M&E system was very briefly assessed. Much more details would have been useful, especially on the cancellation of the MTR, and TPR. | U |
| Overall TE Rating | The TE report indicates that the TE was conducted before the completion of project activities so that recommendations from the TE mission could be incorporated into the SAP. However, this contravenes the "GEF M&E Policies and Procedures" document, which establishes that "All GEF regular projects will carry out a terminal evaluation at project completion to assess project achievement of objectives and impacts". And it also contravenes with the dates presented in pmis, the TE being completed in April 2002, and the project being closed in July 2001. | MS |

$$0.3*(4+4) + 0.1*(5+5+2+2) = 2.4 + 1.4 = 3.8$$

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