

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		495	
GEF Agency project ID		P059754	
GEF Replenishment Phase		GEF-2	
Lead GEF Agency (include all for joint projects)		World Bank	
Project name		Kopacki Rit Wetlands Management Project	
Country/Countries		Croatia	
Region		ECA	
Focal area		Biodiversity	
Operational Program or Strategic Priorities/Objectives		OP 2: Coastal, Marine and Freshwater Ecosystems	
Executing agencies involved		Kopacki Rit Wetlands Management Authority, under Croatian Ministry of Environment and Culture	
NGOs/CBOs involvement		Through consultation	
Private sector involvement		Not involved	
CEO Endorsement (FSP) /Approval date (MSP)		November 1998	
Effectiveness date / project start		June 1999	
Expected date of project completion (at start)		September 2003	
Actual date of project completion		September 2003	
Project Financing			
		At Endorsement (US \$M)	At Completion (US \$M)
Project Preparation Grant	GEF funding		
	Co-financing		
GEF Project Grant		0.75	0.75
Co-financing	IA/EA own		
	Government		
	Other*		
Total GEF funding		0.75	0.75
Total Co-financing		1.10	1.61
Total project funding (GEF grant(s) + co-financing)		1.85	2.36
Terminal evaluation/review information			
TE completion date		April 2004	
TE submission date			
Author of TE			
Original GEF IEO TER (2004) preparer		Siham Mohamedahmed	
Original GEF IEO TER (2004) reviewer		Aaron Zazueta	
Revised TER (2014) completion date		July 2014	
Revised TER (2014) prepared by		Joshua Schneck	
TER GEF IEO peer review (2014)		Neeraj Negi	

*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	HS	N/R	MS
Sustainability of Outcomes	N/R	N/R	N/R	L
M&E Design	N/R	N/R	N/R	U
M&E Implementation	HS	N/R	N/R	MS
Quality of Implementation	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R
Quality of Execution	S	N/R	N/R	MS
Quality of the Terminal Evaluation Report	-	-	N/R	U

3. Project Objectives

3.1 Global Environmental Objectives of the project:

The Global Environmental Objectives of the project, as stated in the Project Brief (PB), are to “conserve and sustainably use the globally significant biodiversity of the Kopacki Rit Wetlands, a highly threatened regional and global ecosystem” (PB, pg 3). Covering an area of about 17,700 hectares, the Kopacki Rit Wetlands were declared a Ramsar site on June 26, 1996, in recognition of the area’s globally significant biodiversity. In addition to globally significant bird species, the reserve provides habitat for rare mammals, fish and reptiles. While the wetlands have historically been protected by virtue of their inaccessibility, they currently face threats from conversion to agricultural lands and inadequate protection and management.

3.2 Development Objectives of the project:

As stated in the PB, the development objectives of the project are as follows:

- Management Authority (of the reserve) and the Reserve fully operational;
- Mechanism for financing the operating and capital costs of the Authority developed;
- Management plan for the Reserve prepared and implementation initiated;
- Ecotourism increased;
- Involvement of local communities and NGOs in the management and protection of Kopacki Rit National Park (KRNP) increased;
- Buffer-zone established;
- Ecological and Socio-Economic monitoring system to guide policy decisions operational.

To achieve the project objectives, the following activities will be implemented:

1. *Planning* (\$380,000; 21%) – preparing and implementing a management plan for the reserve.
2. *Capacity building* (\$110,000; 6%) – training for key staff and specialists responsible for the management of the reserve.
3. *Rehabilitation of Infrastructure and Provision of Equipment* (\$1.13 million; 61%) – including visitor centers, trails, fishponds, blinds, boundary marking, boats and vehicles needed for the protection and management of the reserve.

4. *Ecological and Socio-Economic Monitoring* (\$150,000; 8%) – surveys on wildlife populations, vegetation and water quality; and impacts of the project on the local population and of the local population on biodiversity in the reserve
5. *Outreach* (\$80,000; 4%) – capacity building of community groups and Friends of Kopacki Rit, a local NGO, in protected area operations and management. In addition, a communication strategy will be developed and implemented for disseminating information locally and regionally.

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

No changes to the GEOs or DOs or activities are noted in the TE.

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
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The project is relevant to both Croatia and the GEF. For Croatia, conservation of the Kopacki Rit Wetlands was identified in the draft Croatian National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan as being of the “highest priority” (PB, pg 1). In addition, PB states that the project is an integral part of the Government of Croatia’s program for the reconstruction of Eastern Slavonia, Baranja, and Western Srijem – an area that includes the Kopacki Rit Wetlands. For the GEF, the project is well aligned with Operational Program 2, which focuses on conservation of globally significant coastal, marine and freshwater ecosystems. The importance of the Wetlands to global biodiversity is seen in its designation as a Ramsar site, and the site currently faces a number of threats, principally conversion to agricultural lands (PB, pg 3).

4.2 Effectiveness	Rating: Moderately Satisfactory
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While the TE states that the grant objectives have been fully met, this review finds moderate shortcomings in effectiveness, in particular with the failure to establish a buffer zone protecting the park as called for in the PB. In addition, the TE provides little to no detail regarding the quality of other

activities that are said to have been successfully undertaken, including strengthening the capacity of community groups and training of the park staff in natural resource management. Effectiveness is rated as moderately satisfactory, with output achievements detailed further below:

- *Rehabilitation of Infrastructure and Provision of Equipment* – improvements and acquisitions include the construction of a visitors’ center, rehabilitation of the Tikves Castle bio-ecological station and information center, and the purchase of a 50-passenger tour boat.
- *Management of Park* – TE states that management office of the park is now fully operational, and that a strategy/mechanism for financing the capital and operating costs of the Park has been established (TE, pg 4).

TE provides no details on the development and implementation of the park management plan other than it was completed and has contributed to the establishment of a “proper business environment” (TE, pg 5), nor does the TE provide any detail on whether or not capacity building and outreach activities took place as expected in the PB.

In so far as short-term impacts from the project, the TE states that the population of some threatened species increased over the span of the project, although it is not clear whether this is linked to project activities or whether these changes are simply normal population variances over time (surveys are only 3 or 4 point surveys over a four year span). More confidence can be ascribed to project impacts on visits to the park due to improvements in accessibility and facilities financed by the project. Here TE notes large increases in the number of visitors to the park – from 100 in 1999 to over 7,500 in 2003 (some increase is obviously linked to cessation of hostilities). TE states that due to increased revenue from park visitation, additional jobs have been created at both the park itself, and in the surrounding communities with the creation of new guesthouses (TE, pg 5). Finally, TE notes that the project has helped to attract additional international support, with a number of similar projects currently under implementation in the area.

4.3 Efficiency	Rating: Moderately Satisfactory
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The TE and PIRs provide limited information with which to assess project efficiency. TE states that two project phases can be distinguished: phase one, covering the period from 1999-2000, where project preparation activities were moving very slowly, as there we no effective Project Implementing Unit (PIU), and less that 15% of the grant proceeds had been committed. During the second phase of the project, from 2001-2003, progress was much improved, as the Management Office Director was replaced with a more effective Director who accelerated project implementation, and there was better cooperation between the PIU and the Ministry of Environment.

The TE does not include any breakdown of how co-funding for the project was allocated. TE states that the portion of the GEF grant that was originally allocated to provision of consultant services and training (\$400,000) was entirely reallocated to the provision of equipment. At the same time, the TE does not provide any detail on trainings that were intended to be financed under the project, or on the quality of

the management plan, except to say that it has contributed to a positive business environment at the park, whose management office is now fully functional.

Efficiency is rated as moderately satisfactory with the above shortcomings noted.

4.4 Sustainability	Rating: Likely
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TE states that sustainability of project outcomes is likely given that revenue from visitors to the park is expected to cover around 65% of park expenditures going forward, and that the government has committed to funding the remaining costs (no elaboration provided in the TE on the extent of this commitment). In addition, TE states that there is increased interest from international donors in funding additional projects at the park and in developing the economy of the surrounding communities, and that 4 projects in the area are currently underway.

TE provides insufficient information to assess sub-ratings on the four dimensions of project sustainability.

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?

TE provides no discussion of how co-financing was used in the project, or why realized co-financing (\$1.61 million) is higher than expected co-financing (\$1.1 million). Additional realized co-financing came from the Government of Croatia.

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?

TE notes that project experienced delays in implementation during first two years of the project, but that project implementation picked up speed afterwards following a change in the project director. Delays are not reported to have affected ultimate project outcomes or sustainability, and project was completed without extension.

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:

Project appears to have benefitted from strong country ownership, with committed funding from the Government of Croatia to fund a portion of park management expenditures, and reportedly good cooperation during the second half of the project between the Ministry of Environment and park management. The project also appears to have support from the surrounding communities, which are benefiting economically from increased visitation to the park. Such continued support will be key for the sustainability of project outcomes – as assessed in the PB.

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: Unsatisfactory
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While this medium-sized project did not require an elaborate M&E system, the M&E guidelines provided in the PB do not provide for the establishment of an effective M&E system. PB simply states that monitoring of the project will be undertaken by the Project Management authority, and the monitoring will be incorporated into the management plan for the park. It appears that several project components that could have benefitted from a clear M&E plan with SMART indicators, including efforts to establish a buffer around the park, and capacity building activities (which are not discussed in the TE), were either not done, or were not assessed in the TE for lack of information. PB does provide some indicators upfront that are linked to project outcomes, but there is no implementation plan for M&E, nor discussion of how M&E should feed into adaptive management. Several of the indicators included in the PB do not provide targets that would indicate successful completion of this project activity. For example, “Consultation and outreach programs developed” says nothing about the size of this program (how many communities are targeted) and what would constitute successful implementation of this outreach program, and the same can be said for “Data bases for Ecological and Socio-Economic monitoring developed.” Finally, one of the two key indicators of project success provided in the TE, “Numbers of breeding and hunted species stabilized or increasing,” is not a viable indicator of project success over the course of this project, given the absence of baseline data, the short duration of the project, and the numerous exogenous factors that can be expected to influence population densities in the Kopacki Rit Wetlands.

6.2 M&E Implementation	Rating: Moderately Satisfactory
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Implementation of project M&E appears to have been done along the lines suggested in the TE (see above). Little to no information is provided on efforts to establish a buffer zone, capacity building efforts, and community outreach programs – all of which were expected to be monitored. TE is unsatisfactory on several regards (see below) and PIRs fail to provide sufficient detail on project implementation– providing little more than ratings with very little narrative description of implementation issues that affected project early on. Weaknesses in M&E indicators were not improved upon during implementation. At the same time, development of project works (buildings and equipment procurement), as well as impacts of park on tourism and local economy were monitored, along with surveys of biodiversity (although biological survey information is of little use as indicator of project success – see above).

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: Unable to Assess
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TE does not discuss supervision by Bank and there is insufficient information in the PIRs to allow for a rating on quality of project implementation.

7.2 Quality of Project Execution	Rating: Moderately Satisfactory
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TE states that two project phases can be distinguished: phase one, covering the period from 1999-2000, where project preparation activities were moving very slowly, as there we no effective Project Implementing Unit (PIU), and less that 15% of the grant proceeds had been committed. During the second phase of the project, from 2001-2003, as a result of replacement of the Management Office Director with a more effective Director project implementation accelerated, and there was better cooperation between the PIU and the Ministry of Environment. Based on the evidence provided in the TE, project execution was satisfactory in so far as development of park infrastructure and procurement of associated goods. The management plan component of the project also appears to have been executed well. Little to no information is provided on efforts to establish a buffer zone around the park,

or community outreach programs, or staff training activities. The project was completed on time and the majority of expected outputs were successfully executed. Project execution is therefore rated as moderately satisfactory overall.

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.

TE states that the project has been instrumental in improving the management of the park and in doing so, the protection of biodiversity therein (TE, pg 2). No quantitative assessment of any change in environmental stress or status is provided. TE does note that a few point surveys of populations of some “indicator” species show stability in these species’ populations. However, the short project period, lack of adequate baseline data pre-1999, and numerous exogenous factors limit the extent to which this assessment is an accurate reflection of any impacts from the project.

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

TE states that community members in surrounding communities are benefiting from increased tourism revenue linked to improvements in accessibility and park infrastructure financed under this project. TE states that during 2003 and 2004, Park employed additional full time employees, and that eleven new guesthouses were opened up in the area (TE, pg 5).

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 – project made investments in equipment that will be used to monitor the state of plant and animal populations as well as water quality in the park (TE, pg 8). In addition, project was expected to finance trainings for park staff in protected areas management, although the extent to which this was undertaken is not reported in the TE.

b) Governance – Project financed the development of a management plan for the Park, which is reported to have improved the functioning of the park management office, as well as helped in developing a strategy for providing sufficient funding for the park going forward.

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.

No unintended impacts are reported to have occurred as a result of the project.

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

No adoption of GEF initiatives at scale are reported to have occurred as a result of this project. Project was a MSP targeted principally at improving the infrastructure and management capacity of a single park in Croatia.

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.

TE provides the following lessons:

- Motivation and interest from the project at all levels, from the PIU to the Government, has been critical to project success.
- Cooperation between different project stakeholders made for an on-time project completion.
- The experience gained and knowledge gathered during project implementation will have a positive impact on the implementation of future national and international projects.

9.2 Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation.

No recommendations are provided in the TE.

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?	TE does not report on extent to which some of the project objectives have been met, including establishment of buffer zone, outreach campaign, and capacity building efforts. For other project goals, outcomes and impacts are assessed.	MU
To what extent is the report internally consistent, the evidence presented complete and convincing, and ratings well substantiated?	TE provides no evidence supporting its claims that management of the park has improved, and that capacity building efforts have been successful. Rather, TE simply states that these outcomes have been achieved. Ratings are missing for quality of implementation and execution, and there is little discussion of what underlay problems experienced early on in implementation, and that led to the replacing of the Management Office director.	U
To what extent does the report properly assess project sustainability and/or project exit strategy?	The discussion on project sustainability focuses primarily on prospects for financing of park expenditures going forward. It lacks a discussion of community support for the project and park, except in providing a blanket statement that community support for the park is strong. Nothing is said about trade-offs that must be made vis a vis the park and agricultural expansion, or whether hunting will continue to be at a sustainable level.	MS
To what extent are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive?	Lessons are not comprehensive or insightful, and offer little value to subsequent projects. Example, <i>"The experience gained and knowledge gathered during project implementation will have a positive impact on the implementation of future national and international projects,"</i> says nothing about what experiences, or how and why they might make an impact on future projects.	HU
Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used?	TE provides actual co-financing and expenditures of the GEF grant, but does not detail at all how co-financing was used, or why realized co-financing is higher than expected. As GEF funds were entirely reallocated to procurement of goods, the absence of information on co-financing expenditures means that there is no assessment of how much, if any, funds were spent on other project activities including capacity building and public outreach campaign.	U
Assess the quality of the report's evaluation of project M&E systems:	TE does not rate or discuss M&E, except to state that biological surveying, along with assessment of tourism benefits from increased visitation, took place.	U
Overall TE Rating		U

Overall TE rating: $(0.3 * (3+2)) + (0.1 * (4+1+2+2)) = 1.5 + .9 = 2.4 = U$

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