

# 1. Project Data

Summary project data			
GEF project ID		5771	
GEF Agency project ID		G0011	
GEF Replenishment Phase		GEF-5	
Lead GEF Agency (include all for joint projects)		WWF-US	
Project name		Improving Mangrove Conservation across the Eastern Tropical Pacific Seascape (ETPS) through Coordinated Regional and National Strategy Development and Implementation	
Country/Countries		Colombia; Costa Rica; Ecuador; and Panama	
Region		LAC	
Focal area		International Waters	
Operational Program or Strategic Priorities/Objectives		IW-1; IW-3	
Executing agencies involved		Conservation International; Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS); UNESCO-Quito	
NGOs/CBOs involvement		Nazca (project partner in Ecuador)	
Private sector involvement		Not available	
CEO Endorsement (FSP) /Approval date (MSP)		July 18, 2016	
Effectiveness date / project start		September 23, 2016	
Expected date of project completion (at start)		October 1, 2018	
Actual date of project completion		March 31, 2019	
Project Financing			
		At Endorsement (US \$M)	At Completion (US \$M)
Project Preparation Grant	GEF funding	.91	.91
	Co-financing	-	-
GEF Project Grant		1.9	1.9
Co-financing	IA own	1.29	1
	Government	2.48	1.44
	Other multi- /bi-laterals	-	-
	Private sector	-	-
	NGOs/CSOs	-	-
	Other	.75	.38
Total GEF funding		2.81	2.81
Total Co-financing		4.52	2.82
Total project funding (GEF grant(s) + co-financing)		7.33	5.64
Terminal evaluation/review information			
TE completion date		May 1, 2020	
Author of TE		Glen Hearn	
TER completion date		2/18/2020	
TER prepared by		Laura Nissley	
TER peer review by (if GEF IEO review)		Molly Sohn	

## 2. Summary of Project Ratings

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

## 3. Project Objectives

### 3.1 Global Environmental Objectives of the project:

The objective of the project is to “Implement a comprehensive, multi-government ratified and regionally articulated mangrove conservation strategy in the Eastern Tropical Pacific Seascape (ETPS) countries of Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia and Ecuador through on-the-ground management activities and the strengthening of national and local policies that inform ridge-to-reef development planning and practices relevant to mangrove conservation” (PD pg. 30). The Project Document also notes that “As a result of the project, trends in mangrove degradation across the ETPS coastal fringe will reduce and where possible be reversed through conservation and reforestation projects and initiatives conducive to natural regeneration” (pg. 30).

### 3.2 Development Objectives of the project:

The Project Document does not include development objectives separate from the global environmental objective. However it does indicate that as a result of the project, “The important ecosystem goods and services that mangroves provide to local, national and global communities [will] regenerate, recovering effective natural coastal defenses, reducing along-shore erosion, and improving local livelihoods through improved fisheries food security, health and alternative incomes” (PD pg. 30).

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

There were no changes to the project’s objectives during implementation. The TE notes that the mangrove demonstrate project planned for in the transboundary area between Ecuador and Colombia was cancelled due to logistical limitations (pg. v).

## 4. GEF IEO 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 <b>Relevance</b>	Rating: <b>Satisfactory</b>
----------------------	-----------------------------

The TE does not provide a rating for project relevance, although it does indicate that the project is relevant at the national, regional, and global levels, as well as consistent with the International Waters Focal Area Strategy for GEF-5. Given the project's focus on regional cooperation in the area of mangrove conservation, the project is consistent with International Waters Objective 3: *Enhancing multi-state cooperation and catalyze investments to foster sustainable fisheries, restore and protect coastal habitats, and reduce pollution of coasts and Large Marine Ecosystems* (TE pg. 16). The TE also notes that the research valuation assessments, expert working group, and learning exchanges supported by the project are consistent with International Waters Objective 1: *Catalyze sustainable management of transboundary water systems by supporting multi-state cooperation through foundational capacity building, targeted research and portfolio learning* (pg. 17).

At the global level, the project is consistent with the participating countries' (Colombia; Costa Rica; Ecuador; and Panama) obligations as signatories to the Convention on Biological Diversity. Additionally, the project is consistent with the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS) Regional Mangrove Action Plan, of which Colombia, Ecuador, and Panama are members, as well as the RAMSAR Convention, of which all four participating countries are signatories (PD pgs. 58-59). At the national level, the project is aligned with Costa Rica, Panama and Ecuador's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs), in addition to Colombia's National Mangrove Program (PD pgs. 59-60). Overall, this TER provides a rating of **Satisfactory** for project relevance.

4.2 <b>Effectiveness</b>	Rating: <b>Satisfactory</b>
--------------------------	-----------------------------

The TE does not provide a rating for project effectiveness, although it does rate "project objective and outcomes" as **Satisfactory-Highly Satisfactory**. The TE indicates that the project achieved and/or exceeded the majority of its expected results under each programmatic component, including the development of a regional strategy for mangrove conservation, as well as national action plans and policy strengthening in the Eastern Tropical Pacific Seascape (ETPS) countries. Additionally, the TE indicates that the project was successful in initiating conservation and restoration activities. By the time of the TE, the policy brief on mangrove valuation had not been delivered and the development of

outreach materials on the economic valuation of mangrove ecosystems was only 80% complete (TE pg. 17; 24). In light of the project's achievements, this TER provides a rating of **Satisfactory** for project effectiveness.

A summary of the project's achievements, by component and outcome, are provided below:

### **Component 1: Regional Mangrove Strategy Development and Implementation**

*Outcome 1.1: The four ETPS countries adopt and advance the regional strategy for the conservation of mangroves as elaborated by CPPS (Permanent Commission for the South Pacific)*

Under this outcome it was expected that a Mangrove Technical Working Group would be established and generate recommendations, including an updated regional strategy for the conservation of mangroves. Additionally, it was expected that the regional strategy would be ratified by ministerial-level authorities of each ETPS country. By the time of the TE, an Expert Working Group on Mangroves (EWG) was established with the participation of the ETPS countries, as well as Peru and Chile. The EWG met four times over the life of the project (exceeding the target of two times) and provided recommendations for updating the regional strategy, as expected. A draft strategy was forwarded for country endorsement but had not been ratified by the time of the TE (TE pg. 17).

*Outcome 1.2: Costa Rica participates in the regional strategy by Y1Q3*

Under this outcome it was expected that Costa Rica, the only non-CPPS member, would actively participate in the EWG and the development of the regional strategy. The TE indicates that Costa Rica did fully participate as expected (pg. 17).

*Outcome 1.3: Policy makers of at least three countries have the tools and capacity to strengthen the implementation of the regional mangrove strategy*

Under this outcome it was expected that at least two ETPS transboundary learning and cooperation exchanges, as well as at least one international exchange, would take place. Additionally, it was expected that communication products on mangrove conservation would be developed. The TE indicates that the project exceeded its targets for transboundary and international exchanges (pg. 18). Additionally, communication products were developed as expected, including a needs assessment, a regional valuation scoping document, and the translation of the Blue Carbon Manual and Blue Forest materials. The TE also indicates that the CPPS website was enhanced with materials developed from the project, and "forms a knowledge platform for the region on mangroves" (pgs. 17-18).

### **Component 2: National Mangrove Action Plans and Policy Strengthening**

*Outcome 2.1: At least two ETPS countries have updated national mangrove action plans in line with the regional strategy by Y2Q4*

The TE indicates that the project exceeded its target in this area, with three countries updating their national mangrove action plans (Ecuador, Costa Rica, Panama) (TE pg. 22; 2018 PIR pg. 5).

*Outcome 2.2: At least two ETPS countries have passed stronger regulations and incentives conducive to mangrove conservation.*

Under this outcome it was expected that a national mangrove policy and threat assessment would be updated for each ETPS country and that legislation would be passed to strengthen the protection of mangroves in two ETPS countries. The TE indicates that economic valuation assessments were conducted in each country, however the policy on mangrove valuation was not achieved by project end (pg. 17). The TE does indicate that the project achieved its targets regarding new and updated legislation, specifically: (1) Ecuador included new mangrove specific provisions to its Environmental Organic Code; (2) Panama updated regulations on wetlands in 2018 and was in the process of developing a new wetlands policy; (3) Colombia held stakeholder workshops to develop a new policy; and (4) the project supported Costa Rica in developing a new wetlands policy under the GEF-UNDP project (TE pg. 18).

### **Component 3: Local Conservation Plans**

*Outcome 3.1: At least two key mangrove ecosystems have updated management plans and/or new local development plans consistent with updated national and regional strategies by Y2Q4*

The TE indicates that the project exceeded its targets in this area, noting that improved planning occurred in nine communities across the ETPS countries (pg. 19).

*Outcome 3.2: Economic evaluation tools and methodologies developed through the GEF-UNEP Blue Forests tested in two ETPS countries by Y2Q3*

Under this outcome it was expected that a final report on the economic valuation of ecosystem goods and services in two project sites would be developed, as well a summary document for decisionmakers on the methodologies and toolkits for the economic valuation of mangrove ecosystems. Lastly, it was expected that the mangrove valuation, policy, and development planning outcomes would be distributed on a knowledge platform and presented at three national or regional conferences. The TE indicates that the project exceeded its target for economic valuation reports, which were generated for the Gulf of Nicoya (Costa Rica), Chiriqui Gulf (Panama); and Guayquil (Ecuador) (pg. 19). Additionally, the Blue Carbon Manual and subsequent materials were available online and distributed among project partners. The TE does note however, that only 80% of the outreach materials on mangrove ecosystem valorization were completed by the time of the TE (pg. 24).

*Outcome 3.3: Outreach and capacity building for at least 30 local policymakers and stakeholders finalized by Y2Q4.*

The TE indicates that the project exceeded its target of two workshops per country by executing 14 country-level trainings and one regional event. The TE notes that in total, the trainings reached significantly more than the anticipated 30 policymakers and stakeholders, with 15-230 participants per training (pg. 20).

*Outcome 3.4: Two demonstration projects that provide incentives and/or create business opportunities for sustainable use of mangroves by Y2Q4*

Under this outcome it was expected that local associations in at least two sites actively participate and commit to demonstration projects, and that local stakeholder participation in the demonstration

projects would increase by 20% over the baseline. Although the mangrove demonstrate project planned for in the transboundary area between Ecuador and Colombia was cancelled, the TE indicates that overall, the project exceeded its targets regarding demonstration projects. In Bazan Bocana, Colombia, two restoration projects, beach protection, and village beautification were undertaken to improve ecotourism. In El Morro, Ecuador, three fishing associations developed management plans and voluntarily monitor their catch. Additionally, the El Morro Women's association sold arts and crafts made from the byproducts from fishing. In Panama, an agreement was reached to develop a farm pilot site for land use alternatives that could reduce mangrove cutting (TE pg. 19).

4.3 <b>Efficiency</b>	Rating: <b>Satisfactory</b>
-----------------------	-----------------------------

The TE does not provide a rating for project efficiency, which this TER assesses as **Satisfactory**. The project's end date was extended for six months, from October 2018 until March 2019, in order for the project to complete its activities. Specifically, the no cost extension was granted to allow for the 3<sup>rd</sup> international exchange in November 2018 to take place and to allow time for the endorsement of the updated regional strategy, which was not achieved by the time of the TE. The TE notes that the project also experienced minor delays in implementing the communication and information activities (Outcome 1.3) because UNESCO-Quito, a partner organization, was unable to receive a direct transfer of funds from the executing agency, Conservation International. The Project Management Unit (PMU) ultimately had to assume responsibility for executing these activities (TE pg. xi; v). Overall, however, the TE indicates that there were no significant delays that affected the cost-effectiveness of the project (pg. 2).

4.4 <b>Sustainability</b>	Rating: <b>Moderately Likely</b>
---------------------------	----------------------------------

The TE provides a rating of **Moderately Likely** for the sustainability of project outcomes, and this TER concurs.

#### **Financial Resources**

The TE assesses the sustainability of financial resources to be **Moderately Likely**. The TE indicates that at the regional level, risks to financial sustainability are low, given that it is the mandate of the CPPS to advance the regional strategy. At the national level however, mangrove conservation activities are often driven by projects with external funding, although national budgets do support administrative roles (TE pg. vii). Moreover, the TE indicates that "the financial sustainability of project impacts are only moderately likely without ongoing assistance from the international community for the next 5-10 years while countries begin to receive economic and social benefits of conservation" (pg. 29).

## **Sociopolitical**

The TE assesses sociopolitical sustainability as **Likely**. The TE indicates that country ownership over the project has been high and that socio-political risks to sustainability are low (pg. vii; 11). The TE notes that local communities have expressed interest in continuing with project activities, in particular learning from the Ecuadoran experience of developing fisheries management plans (pg. vii). Additionally, in Bazan Bocana, Colombia, a community initiative to plant trees to reduce erosion was started outside of the project, strengthening sociopolitical sustainability (pg. 29).

## **Institutional Frameworks and Governance**

The TE assesses the sustainability of institutional frameworks and governance as **Likely**. Under the project, national policies were developed which promote key aspects of the project, such as spatial planning; valuing mangrove ecosystems for livelihoods and economic benefits; community planning; and building awareness around mangrove conservation. New legislation and regulations were also developed to protect mangroves in ETSP countries (pg. 29). Significant progress was made toward implementing a regional mangrove strategy, including establishing an Expert Working Group on Mangroves (EWG) for ETSP countries, as well as Peru and Chile (TE pg. 17).

## **Environmental**

The TE assesses environmental sustainability as **Likely**. The TE does indicate however, that ongoing pollution and waste from nearby urban, agricultural, and industrial areas, as well as deforestation, threaten mangrove ecosystems. Additionally, the TE notes that climate change will affect sustainability, as rising sea levels affect mangrove survivability (pg. 29). However, the TE indicates that “where restoration sites have been initiated there is a strong likelihood that they will be maintained by the local communities” (pg. vii).

## **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?

At the time of the TE, actual co-financing had only been calculated through the end of 2017, for a total of \$2.82 million. Although this was only 62% of what was expected (\$4.52 million), the TE indicates that the final co-financing was still being determined and that “the project likely reached or exceeded co-financing commitments” (pg. iv). Overall, co-financing accounted for 90% of committed funds, which the TE notes is a “very acceptable amount compared to other projects” (pg. 33). There is no indication that materialization of co-financing affected the project’s outcomes or sustainability in an adverse way.

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?

The TE indicates that the project experienced minor delays due to the inability of the executing agency, Conservation International, to directly transfer funds to the partner organization, UNESCO-Quito. As a result, communication and dissemination of information activities under Outcome 1.3 were delayed until they could be taken on by the Project Management Unit (TE pg. 12). Overall, however, the TE indicates that there were no significant delays that affected the achievement or sustainability of project outcomes (pg. 2).

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:

All ETPS countries demonstrated high country ownership of the project, which the TE indicates has been key to the project's success, particularly regarding mangrove policies and regulations at the national level, as well as the updated regional strategy for the conservation of mangroves (pg. 11). Costa Rica, which is not a member of the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS) fully participated in the project as well (TE pg. 12).

## 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: <b>Satisfactory</b>
-------------------------	-----------------------------

The TE does not provide a rating for M&E design at entry, although it does note that it was "adequate and meets GEF standards." The TE indicates that the logic of the project intervention is sound, and that the accompanying results framework is well formulated with appropriate outcomes, outputs, indicators, and targets (pgs. 5-6). However, the TE does indicate that some of the project's outputs are overly ambitious. In general, the achievement of outputs should be within the control of the project. Output 2.2.2: "Legislation passed to strengthen the protection of mangroves in at least two ETPS countries completed by Y2Q4," may not have been achievable within a two-year project (pg. 7). The TE also notes that the provided indicators are generally SMART (specific, measurable, reliable, relevant, and timely), with the exception of the indicator for Output 3.4.2: "Local stakeholders participating in demonstration



projects increased by 20% over the project start-up baseline by Y2Q4.” As the TE notes, the demonstration projects had no stakeholder participation at the beginning of the project, so increasing participation by 20% is not achievable. Also, it is unclear how participation would be measured (TE pg. 14).

The Project Document also includes a sound M&E plan which outlines M&E activities, responsible parties, and a calendar for M&E implementation (PD pg. 94-98). A dedicated budget of \$46,958 is also provided for M&E (PD pg. 99). Overall, this TER assesses M&E design at entry as **Satisfactory**.

<b>6.2 M&amp;E Implementation</b>	Rating: <b>Satisfactory</b>
-----------------------------------	-----------------------------

The TE assesses M&E implementation as **Satisfactory**, and this TER concurs. The TE indicates that the M&E activities outlined in the Project Document were carried out as expected (pg. 14). M&E data was used by the Project Steering Committee (PSC) to make adjustments to annual workplans. The decision was also made to revise the indicator for Outcome 1.1 to include “recommendations for revised regional strategy by Y2Q4,” which is more achievable than an “approved and publishable strategy” (TE pg. 7). M&E data, in particular the valuation assessments and extent of mangroves, was also fed into the larger database of the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS), which is used by decisionmakers to address mangrove conservation and marine spatial planning in the ETPS region (TE pg. viii). Overall, the TE indicates that the M&E system was well executed and the budget for M&E was “administered in a timely fashion over the course of the project” (pg. viii).

## 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.

<b>7.1 Quality of Project Implementation</b>	Rating: <b>Satisfactory</b>
--	-----------------------------

The TE assesses the quality of project implementation as **Satisfactory**, and this TER concurs. The implementing agency for the project was the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), who became involved in the project at the request of the GEF. Initially, the project was to be implemented and executed by

Conservation International, and as a result, the WWF was less involved in developing the concept of the project. The TE indicates that WWF fulfilled its role as implementing agency by providing “monitoring and project assurance in a timely and effective manner, which included a review of budgets and adapting to requests from the executing agency.” WWF also conducted two supervisory missions, including assisting with the terminal evaluation in March 2019. The TE notes that there were no communication or coordination issues between WWF and the executing agency, and that overall, there were no shortcomings in the implementation of the project (pg. 15).

7.2 Quality of Project Execution	Rating: <b>Satisfactory</b>
----------------------------------	-----------------------------

The TE assesses the quality of project execution as **Satisfactory**, and this TER concurs. The executing agency for the project was Conservation International, in partnership with the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS). CPPS was responsible for executing activities related to the regional strategy (Outcomes 1.1 and 1.2). It was envisioned in the project design that another local partner, UNESCO-Quito, would execute activities related to communication and the dissemination of information (Outcome 1.3). However, the Project Management Unit, based out of the Conservation International office in Ecuador, assumed these activities due to financial constraints at UNESCO-Quito. Although these activities were delayed as a result, the achievement of results was not affected (TE pg. 12). The TE indicates that Conservation International capitalized on working relationships in each ETPS country and used adaptive management to ensure an efficient use of funds. Overall, the TE notes that the project was executed satisfactorily and met expectations for addressing beneficiary needs (pg. 15).

## 8. Assessment of Project Impacts

***Note - In instances where information on any impact related topic is not provided in the terminal evaluations, the reviewer should indicate in the relevant sections below that this is indeed the case and identify the information gaps. When providing information on topics related to impact, please cite the page number of the terminal evaluation from where the information is sourced.***

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.

The TE does not indicate any environmental changes that occurred by project end.

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.

The TE indicates that the project “succeeded in developing multiple initiatives at the local level which have empowered local communities to conduct better planning and integrate private sector interests into conservation” (pg. 28). The TE does not specifically measure changes at the socioeconomic level, however demonstration projects which were geared toward socioeconomic changes included: (1) beach protection and village beautification for ecotourism (Bazan Bocana, Colombia); (2) fishing management plans, catch monitoring, and selling arts and crafts from fishing byproducts (El Morro, Ecuador); and (3) land use alternatives in Panama (pg. 19).

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

By the time of the TE, a regional Expert Working Group on Mangroves (EWG) was established with the participation of the ETSP countries, as well as Peru and Chile (TE pg. 17). Additionally, the project executed 14 country-level trainings and one regional event, reaching 15-230 participants per training (pg. 20). Economic valuation reports were also generated for the Gulf of Nicoya (Costa Rica), Chiriqui Gulf (Panama); and Guayquil (Ecuador) (pg. 19). Communication products were also developed, including a needs assessment, a regional valuation scoping document, and the translation of the Blue Carbon Manual and Blue Forest materials. The TE indicates that the CPPS website was enhanced with materials developed from the project, and “forms a knowledge platform for the region on mangroves” (pgs. 17-18).

#### b) Governance

By the time of the TE, a regional mangrove strategy had been finalized and submitted for endorsement by the participating countries (TE pg. 17). Additionally, Costa Rica, Ecuador, and Panama updated their national mangrove plans, and the following new regulations were in place: (1) Ecuador: new mangrove specific provisions to its Environmental Organic Code; (2) Panama: updated regulations on wetlands in 2018; and (3) Costa Rica: new wetlands policy (TE pg. 18). The TE also indicates that local development plans were in place in nine communities across the ETSP countries (TE pg. 19).

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.

The TE does not indicate any unintended impacts 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.

The TE indicates that the Afro-Colombian community in Bazan Bocana initiated a beach protection program by planting trees outside of the project (pg. vii).

## 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.

The TE provides the following Good Practices (pg. x):

1. **Conduct a social safeguard review during project development to identify any potential issues upfront.** Two safeguard reviews and screenings were undertaken during the PPG phase. The first with CI, and then re-screened with an independent expert to ensure compliance with WWF-GEF. The independent socio-assessment of the Afro-Colombian communities in the Tortuga Gulf ensured that due diligence was taken in address issues surrounding indigenous peoples. CI gender officer also provided training at the beginning of the project. Social safeguard policies are complex in nature and their application is not a simple procedure. In any future project, it would be valuable to conduct safeguard analysis during the development stage, or early in project implementation, and provide training for country level staff and other partners in terms of identifying and flagging potential safeguard issues.
2. **Partnering with politically expedient institutions.** CPPS was a key partner associated with developing a regional strategy for mangrove protection, and proved a very effective mechanism to advance a regional strategy, which included Costa Rica – a non CPPS member. CPPS was able to facilitate at the national and regional level because of its mandate and history in the region. Partnering with such an established institution can help develop policies and regulations within countries.

3. **Promoting community to community learning.** The project was very successful in bringing communities together to exchange information and knowledge through specific targeted visits, as well as a regional community focused conference. Decision makers at the community level were able to engage with each other resulting in profound impact on their learning and interest in applying new approaches to conservation.

## 9.2 Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation.

The TE provides the following recommendations (pgs. x-xi):

1. **Develop indicators that match the level of project control in their achievement.** In designing any future project care should be taken with regard to choosing indicators that are compatible with the level control that the PMU has associated with respect to outputs, outcomes and project impacts. Caution should be taken when suggesting that new legislation or regulations will be developed within the timeframe of a 2 year project. It is thus better to have new or updated legislation as a likely outcome as opposed to an output, over which the project should have a high degree of control.
2. **Conduct effort to enhance financial sustainability of outcomes in the next 0-5 years.** The governments have committed to continue implementation of their national policies at the country level; however, for the impacts of the project to be sustained continued attention will almost certainly be needed from international donors and NGOs. This is particularly likely with respect to the involvement of local communities, including the exchange of ideas and experiences between communities. The risk at the local level is that the momentum developed during the project may not be sustained until there are economic benefits associated with implementing local management plans.
3. **Test potential partnership arrangements in preparatory phase of project design.** UNESCO-Quito as a partner organization proved difficult to financially administer and resulted in delays in the delivery of project outputs for communication. Attention should be given in advance to clarifying how funds can be transferred to partner organizations to ensure there is no repetition of time lost and potential reduction in the quality of the communication or other project products. If a direct transfer cannot be accomplished from the executing agency it is recommended to explore separating out a specific component which can be administered independently of others.
4. **Promote the GEF profile in project products.** Care should be taken to ensure that GEF is profiled on all relevant products where appropriate. It is acknowledged that CI made an effort to acknowledge GEF and its support. It is understood that certain politically sensitive products, such as policies or regulations, would not necessarily contain donor logos, other less sensitive and high profile products such as videos should whenever possible. For example, the informational video from the Gulf of Nicoya, did not mention GEF.
5. **Use existing knowledge platforms to help share knowledge (in particular IW:LEARN).** The project has developed some products that could be beneficial to a wider audience. The decision

of the PSC to maintain focus on the ETPS region in the 3rd learning exchange was important to ensure core project outcomes would be met. Nevertheless, projects should place effort on sharing the experiences gained in the ETPS with other regions. While some materials are accessible IW:LEARN site, overall it could have been used more effectively, for example with the development of experience notes on applying pre-screening for safeguards for example. Opportunities for Twinning with IW- LEARN were taken advantage of.

6. **Build time for approvals of texts and products into planning.** It took longer to gain official approval from the ETPS countries than anticipated resulting in delays to several products. This should be built into future project planning working in the ETPS region.

## 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 IEO 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 provides a satisfactory assessment of the relevant outcomes and impacts of the project.	<b>S</b>
To what extent is the report internally consistent, the evidence presented complete and convincing, and ratings well substantiated?	The report is consistent, and the ratings are well substantiated with evidence.	<b>S</b>
To what extent does the report properly assess project sustainability and/or project exit strategy?	Project sustainability is adequately assessed in the report.	<b>S</b>
To what extent are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive?	The lessons learned are comprehensive and supported by evidence.	<b>S</b>
Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used?	The report includes actual project costs and actual co-financing used, but only as of 2017.	<b>MS</b>
Assess the quality of the report's evaluation of project M&E systems:	The report satisfactorily assesses M&E design and implementation.	<b>S</b>
<b>Overall TE Rating</b>		<b>S</b>

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