

GEFM&E Terminal Evaluation Review Form

1. PROJECT DATA				
			Review date:	
GEF ID:	591		<u>at endorsement</u> (Million US\$)	<u>at completion</u> (Million US\$)
Project Name:	Priority Actions to Consolidate Biodiversity Protection in the Sabana - Camagüey Ecosystem (SCE)	GEF financing:	\$3.889	\$3.889
Country:	Cuba	Co-financing:	\$16.04	\$15.59
Operational Program:	2	Total Project Cost:	\$19.929	\$19.48
IA	UNDP	<u>Dates</u>		
Partners involved:		Work Program date		11/01/98
		CEO Endorsement		11/16/1999
		Effectiveness/ Prodoc Signature (i.e. date project began)		1999
		Closing Date	Proposed: 11/01/2003	Actual: 2004
Prepared by: Antonio del Monaco	Reviewed by: Aaron Zazueta	Duration between effectiveness date and original closing: 4 years	Duration between effectiveness date and actual closing: 5 years	Difference between original and actual closing: 1 year
Author of TE: Allen D. Putney (Team Leader), Lawrence P. Hildebrand, Hugo Navajas, Ana María Suárez Alfonso		TE completion date: Aug, 2004	TE submission date to GEF OME: 10/6/2004	Difference between TE completion and submission date: 2 months

2. SUMMARY OF PROJECT RATINGS

GEFME Ratings for project impacts (if applicable), outcomes, project monitoring and evaluation, and quality of the terminal evaluation: Highly Satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Moderately Satisfactory (MS), Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), Highly Unsatisfactory (HU), not applicable (N/A) and unable to assess (U/A). GEFME Ratings for the project sustainability: Highly likely (HL), likely (L), moderately likely (ML), moderately unlikely (MU), unlikely (U), highly unlikely (HU), not applicable (N/A), and unable to assess (U/A). Please refer to document "Ratings for the achievement of objectives, sustainability of outcomes and impacts, quality of terminal evaluation reports and project M&E systems" for further definitions of the ratings.

	Last PIR	IA Terminal Evaluation	Other IA evaluations if applicable (e.g. OED)	GEFME
2.1 Project impacts	N/A	Not available	N/A	S
2.2 Project outcomes	HS	HS	N/A	S
2.3 Project sustainability	N/A	Not available	N/A	Moderately Likely
2.4 Monitoring and evaluation	N/A	Not available	N/A	S
2.5 Quality of the evaluation report	N/A	N/A	N/A	S

Should this terminal evaluation report be considered a good practice? Why? No, there are contradictions in the written assessments and the ratings. This is explained in more detail below under the quality of the TE. However, the presentation of actual project costs is a good practice for other GEF projects. The M&E system was also a good practice with the caveat that the information collected was not optimally used as feedback into the system, which had some detrimental effects on the project.

3. PROJECT OBJECTIVES, EXPECTED AND ACTUAL OUTCOMES

3.1 Project Objectives

- **What are the Global Environmental Objectives? Any changes during implementation?** To secure the protection of biodiversity of the Sabana Camaguey Ecosystem (SCE). No changes during implementation. It is important to note that this project followed a phased approach. This project is the second of a three phase project series and is the objective of this evaluation (TE). The 1st phase (1993-1997) provided a Strategic Plan that served as the basis for the 2nd phase design. The objectives of phase 1 as described in the project brief were to provide a scientific basis for integrated sustainable development and environmental conservation” of the Sabana-Camaguey Ecosystem. Phase II, targets the root causes and principal threats to biodiversity conservation detected during the 1st phase project.

- **What are the Development Objectives? Any changes during implementation?** The development objectives of this phase according to the project brief were to: (1) establish 8 key protected areas; (2) consolidate the institutional co-ordination capacities for biodiversity conservation in the ICM context; (3) educate and inform stakeholders about biodiversity conservation; and (4) implementation of measures to reduce negative environmental impacts (to be funded by the Government of Cuba and other donors without GEF funds), which included reforestation of river margins and road shoulders in the keys, control of fishing practices harmful to habitats and biodiversity, etc.

This last objective was replaced in the TE with “(4) strengthen capacities for Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) to attain sustainable development.”

3.2 Outcomes and Impacts

- **What were the major project outcomes and impacts as described in the TE?**

The TE indicates that the level of knowledge and experience related to biodiversity conservation in the ICM context increased at all levels which contributed to the establishment and management of 4 of the 8 protected areas originally targeted. However, the other 4 areas have not been legally established yet due to conflicting interests, but some basic protection activities are being implemented there.

The project contributed to developing the National Environmental Strategy and the Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, as well as a significant number of laws, decrees, resolutions, and regulations regarding the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, especially for fisheries, tourism, and infrastructure development. The environmental education and awareness program, and the capacity building at the government level reached more than 2000 decision-makers. This contributed to the following outcomes:

- Environmental rating system in use for hotels based on indicators of sustainability.
- Official ban on set net and bottom trawling fishing practices.
- Implementation of Environmental Impact Assessments that has resulted in the use of cleaner technologies, environmentally friendly construction techniques, better maintenance of wastewater treatment plants and oxidation ponds, recycling, and irrigation with treated waters, among others.
- Volunteer program with dive tour operators to monitor reef conditions.
- Relocation of the Cayo Coco airport from an environmentally sensitive area to a more appropriate location.

And these outcomes have contributed to the following impacts:

- Since the beginning of the project, the populations of species that have been monitored have either remained constant or have increased, some spectacularly. Areas covered include all marine habitats of special concern, such as coral reefs, mangroves and sea grass beds.
- Reduction of land-based marine pollution by 10.2% from 1999 to 2002, and a reduction of organic loading of the marine ecosystem by 23.3% from 1999 to 2003.

4. GEF OFFICE OF M&E ASSESSMENT

4.1 Outcomes and impacts

Rating: S

A Relevance

- **In retrospect, were the project’s outcomes consistent with the focal areas/operational program strategies? Explain**

The TE indicates that during implementation it became clear that the project objectives and implementation

strategy were both relevant and pertinent to the threats and opportunities identified and analyzed during the 1st phase. The project outcomes are consistent with OP2, coastal, marine and fresh water ecosystems. The evidence presented in the TE supports this statement.
B Effectiveness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the project outcomes as described in the TE commensurable with the expected outcomes (as described in the project document) and the problems the project was intended to address (i.e. original or modified project objectives)?
Yes. The outcomes are commensurable with the original and modified project objectives and addressed the key problems this second phase of the project was intended to address. The outcomes are also in line with the expected outcomes as described in the summary of the project brief. The only exceptions are that only 4 of the 8 protected areas originally targeted were established.
C Efficiency (cost-effectiveness)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include an assessment of outcomes and impacts in relation to inputs, costs, and implementation times based on the following questions: Was the project cost – effective? How does the cost-time Vs. outcomes compare to other similar projects? Was the project implementation delayed due to any bureaucratic, administrative or political problems?
The project was cost effective given its outcomes, costs and time frame. The project effectively achieved most of the outcomes it proposed initially and some impacts were also measured, therefore the project can be considered cost effective when compared to similar projects that do not achieve their stated objectives.

4.2 Likelihood of sustainability. Using the following sustainability criteria, include an assessment of project sustainability based on the information presented in the TE.

A Financial resources	Rating: 3 (MU)
The TE indicates that financial sustainability is a concern. The original project design was deficient in this regard, and the lack of emphasis, strategic thinking, and resources assigned to this component in the beginning has been exacerbated by the lack of technical capacity to deal with the subject within the Project Coordination Unit. The result is that little progress has been made, most attention has been paid to the more theoretical aspects of resource economics, and no use has been made of the extensive practical experience that has been gained throughout the region by environmental and protected area funds. This lack of resources may also affect the operation of the 8 environmental monitoring stations that were set up.	
B Socio political	Rating: 4 (ML)
The TE indicates that the project promoted stakeholder participation and ownership and there were high levels of stakeholder mobilization for the implementation of activities involving their particular sectors or localities. For example, communities adjacent to the Rio Máximo protected area help control invasive species such as catfish and marabu vegetation, which they are allowed to harvest for consumption. Other community residents are helping to monitor the distribution of crocodile nesting sites, for which they receive remuneration. Fishing cooperatives have the responsibility to control trawling and illegal fishing in conservation areas, with considerable success. However, the TE indicates that the ICM is not a sustainable system yet because there are continuing conflicts between development and conservation interests. In addition, sufficient human resources, with specific responsibility for ICM, must be devoted at each administrative level from the national government to coastal communities.	
C Institutional framework and governance	Rating: 4 (ML)
The TE indicates that the project's emphasis on capacity-building for different sectors and decision-making levels, as well as its support for biodiversity inventory, and the monitoring of ecosystems and processes, have enabled CITMA and key SCE stakeholders to achieve technical self-sufficiency and sustainability in many ICM functions. This is particularly true for the scientific and biodiversity protection components, which are managed by highly competent and technically specialized personnel in Havana and the five provinces. However, the fundamental institutional structure is still lacking. A functioning ICM Authority is necessary in the long-run to manage the system's implementation across the SCE, to assume the gradual transfer of project functions and help society to realign their use of coastal resources so that ecosystems remain productive and viable for future generations.	
D Ecological (for example, for coffee production projects, reforestation for carbon sequestration under OP12, etc.)	Rating:
N/A	
E Examples of replication and catalytic outcomes suggesting increased likelihood of sustainability	Rating:
The TE did not provide specific examples of replication.	

4.3 Assessment of the project's monitoring and evaluation system based on the information in the TE

<p>A. Effective M&E systems in place: What were the accomplishments and shortcomings of the project's M&E system in terms of the tools used such as: indicators, baselines, benchmarks, data collection and analysis systems, special studies and reports, etc.? Rating: 6 (HS)</p>	
<p>The TE indicates that the project conducted outstanding work on developing verifiable impact indicators to provide feedback to the project process. An enormous amount of reliable information has been collected by the project. For example, the GIS includes some 150 thematic maps, the 8 monitoring stations are generating data on a regular basis, and some 95 technical reports and 254 documents have been generated. The project had M&E systems for each activity and the TE indicates that the annual project reports, tri partite meetings and other evaluations were used for project M&E. In addition, the TE mentions that the project conducted some baseline studies to assess stakeholder perceptions to assess changes in behavior following the training modules of the modified objective 4.</p>	
<p>B. Information used for adaptive management: What is the experience of the project with adaptive management? Rating: 4 (MS)</p>	
<p>The TE indicates that the information that is generated is not easily accessible by the many institutions that participate in the project and need the information to make decisions. The TE indicates that the annual reports and meetings allowed the project to make changes in the regulations for fisheries, and the construction of tourism infrastructure. Although the project acted upon several recommendations from the Mid-term review, the TE indicates that it did not react decisively enough to deal with the serious financial and institutional sustainability issues clearly pointed out by that review.</p>	
<p>Can the project M&E system be considered a good practice? No</p>	

4.4 Quality of lessons

Weaknesses and strengths of the project lessons as described in the TE (i.e. lessons follow from the evidence presented, or lessons are general in nature and of limited applicability, lessons are comprehensive, etc.)

<p>What lessons mentioned in the TE that can be considered a good practice or approaches to avoid and could have application for other GEF projects?</p>
<p>(1) group capacity-building activities with representatives from many institutions sets the stage for future cooperation; (2) early successes in demonstrating environmental and socio-economic benefits from project activities motivates stakeholders; (3) the ecosystem approach, though it often implies a very large project area, is still the most relevant unit for a biodiversity project; (4) the early commitment by GEF to support a three-phase project over a long-term horizon has allowed the design approach to evolve in an incremental manner - building capacities, consolidating processes and enhancing prospects for sustainability.</p>

4.5 Quality of the evaluation report Provide a number rating 1-6 to each criteria based on: Highly Satisfactory = 6, Satisfactory = 5, Moderately Satisfactory = 4, Moderately Unsatisfactory = 3, Unsatisfactory = 2, and Highly Unsatisfactory = 1. Please refer to the "Criteria for the assessment of the quality of terminal evaluation reports" in the document "Ratings for the achievement of objectives, sustainability of outcomes and impacts, quality of terminal evaluation reports and project M&E systems" for further definitions of the ratings.

<p>4.5.1 Comments on the summary of project ratings and terminal evaluation findings</p>
<p>In some cases the GEF Office of M&E may have independent information collected for example, through a field visit or independent evaluators working for the Office of M&E. If substantial independent information has been collected, then complete this section with any comments about the project.</p>
<p>N/A</p>

<p>4.5.2 Quality of terminal evaluation report</p>	<p>Ratings</p>
<p>Does the report contain an assessment of relevant outcomes and impacts of the project and the achievement of the objectives? Yes, the evaluation provided a good account of relevant outcomes in line with the project objectives. However, an explanation of why the last objective was changed would have been useful.</p>	<p>5 (S)</p>

<p>A. Is the report internally consistent, is the evidence complete/convincing and are the IA ratings substantiated? The TE provided complete and convincing evidence and the report is generally consistent. One exception is the ratings that were not always substantiated. Often, significant shortcomings were raised in the TE and the ratings remained Highly Satisfactory. For example, objective “4) strengthen capacities for Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) to attain sustainable development” is rated HS but the TE indicates that although the ICM authority has been established, it has not yet been made effective because of lack of funding and government support. Also, objective 3 “educate and inform stakeholders about biodiversity conservation” was rated HS but the TE indicates that additional work is also required in capacity-building and environmental education. These ratings should have been satisfactory instead.</p>	4 (MS)
<p>B. Does the report properly assess project sustainability and /or a project exit strategy? yes</p>	5 (S)
<p>C. Are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive? Yes, and they are very useful for other GEF projects such as the one on phased approach to projects.</p>	5 (S)
<p>D. Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used? Yes, a very complete account of GEF and co-financing funds used as well as a very transparent breakdown of actual disbursements. This is a good practice for other projects.</p>	6 (HS)
<p>E. Does the report present an assessment of project M&E systems? Yes, although a better description of the measuring process of the environmental impacts presented in the TE would have been useful.</p>	5 (S)

4.6 Is a technical assessment of the project impacts described in the TE recommended? Please place an "X" in the appropriate box and explain below.

Yes:

No: X

Explain:

Is there a follow up issue mentioned in the TE such as corruption, reallocation of GEF funds, etc.? No

4.7 Sources of information for the preparation of the TE review in addition to the TE (if any)

Project brief and terminal evaluation report