

## Terminal Evaluation Review form, GEF Evaluation Office, APR 2014

### 1. Project Data

Summary project data			
GEF project ID		634	
GEF Agency project ID		568	
GEF Replenishment Phase		GEF-2	
Lead GEF Agency (include all for joint projects)		UNDP	
Project name		Conservation and Sustainable Use of the Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve's Coastal Biodiversity	
Country/Countries		India	
Region		Asia	
Focal area		Biodiversity	
Operational Program or Strategic Priorities/Objectives		2-Coastal, Marine and Freshwater Ecosystems	
Executing agencies involved		Ministry of Environment and Forests	
NGOs/CBOs involvement		one of the beneficiaries, secondary executing agencies	
Private sector involvement		one of the beneficiaries, secondary executing agencies	
CEO Endorsement (FSP) /Approval date (MSP)		1/9/2001	
Effectiveness date / project start		2/7/2002	
Expected date of project completion (at start)		01/31/2010	
Actual date of project completion		12/31/2012	
Project Financing			
		At Endorsement (US \$M)	At Completion (US \$M)
Project Preparation Grant	GEF funding	0.22	0.22
	Co-financing		
GEF Project Grant		7.65	7.65
Co-financing	IA own	1.0	1.05
	Government	16.98	10.60
	Other multi- /bi-laterals	1.12	
	Private sector		
	NGOs/CSOs		
Total GEF funding		7.87	7.87
Total Co-financing		19.10	11.65
Total project funding (GEF grant(s) + co-financing)		26.97	19.52
Terminal evaluation/review information			
TE completion date		05/2013	
TE submission date		12/31/2013	
Author of TE		Dr. Mohamad Kasim, and Dr. Phillip Edwards	
TER completion date		11/25/2014	
TER prepared by		Nelly Bourlion	
TER peer review by (if GEF EO review)		Joshua Schneck	

## 2. Summary of Project Ratings

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

## 3. Project Objectives

### 1.2 3.1 Global Environmental Objectives of the project:

The Global Environmental Objective of this project is, as stated in the PD (pg.21) “to conserve the Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve’s (GoMBR) globally significant assemblage of coastal Biodiversity and to demonstrate, in a large biosphere reserve with various multiple uses, how to integrate Biodiversity conservation and sustainable coastal zone management and livelihood development”.

The Gulf is known to harbor marine biodiversity of global significance, falling within the Indo-Malayan realm, the world’s richest region from a marine biodiversity perspective. The Gulf is one of the richest coastal regions in India, with an estimation of 3,600 plant and animal species (PD, pg.8). The Reserve is an international priority site, due to its bio-physical and ecological uniqueness, and its global significance. The IUCN Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas, UNEP, UNESCO, and WWF, identified the Reserve as an area of “particular concern” given its diversity and special, multiple-use management status (PD, pg.8).

### 1.3 3.2 Development Objectives of the project:

The development objective of the project is to empower local communities to manage the coastal ecosystem and wild resources in partnership with Government and other stakeholders and to make all accountable for the quality of the resulting stewardship (PD, pg.21).

The Immediate objective is the “establishment and effective participatory management of the Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve through the application of strengthened conservation programs in the Park core area and enabled sustainable livelihood development in the Reserve as a whole” (PD, pg.21).

To reach this objective specific Government and village-level institutional capacities will be strengthened, stakeholders will apply sustainable livelihoods, and an independent statutory Trust will ensure effective inter-sectorial cooperation in the sustainable conservation and utilization of the GoMBR’s biodiversity resources (PD, pg.1).

There are five outcomes in the project logframe (PD, pg.32):

2. GOMBR Trust and Corresponding Appropriate Long-term Funding Mechanism

3. Strengthened operations of the Gulf of Mannar National Park
4. Strengthen the infrastructure of the Park
5. Operational Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve Management
6. Sustainable Livelihood Development Support for Local Stakeholders

6.2 3.3 Were there any **changes** in the Global Environmental Objectives, Development Objectives, or other activities during implementation?

The original logframe was revised several times but never approved. In 2006, a revision was made but no changes were endorsed formally. A second attempt was made in 2009, the logframe was revised to covert the five “components” to “outputs” rather than devising the more usual set of outcomes and outputs, and revised the indictors down to 27, however this revision was never formally approved (TE, pg.13).

Even if the logframe was never formally revised, the first meeting in 2002 of the Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve Trust’s (GoMBRT) Board of Trustees changed the project’s implementation strategy to concentrate on awareness raising and livelihoods development for the coastal village communities. However, they did no change the logframe, budget or timetable (TE, pg.19).

Therefore, overall there has been **no** formal change of GEO, DO, and/or project activities.

#### 4. GEF EO assessment of Outcomes and Sustainability

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

6.3 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.

<b>4.1 Relevance</b>	Rating: Satisfactory
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The project is implemented in an area of global importance for marine biodiversity. The project implementation strategy is relevant to GEF and national priorities.

This project is consistent with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and its guidance from the Conference of the Parties that has been ratified by India in 1994. This project is designed to support the primary objectives of the CBD: the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable-use of its components, and the equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of these components. It integrates conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity into relevant plans and

policies, and therefore it fulfils the requirements of article 6: General Measures for Conservation and Sustainable Use. The project also supports both article 7: Identification and Monitoring and article 8: *In-situ* Conservation by strengthening the park management and the targeted species and habitat management, research and monitoring programme. Article 10: Sustainable Use of Components of Biological Diversity and article 11: Incentive Measures are also supported by this project through the development and demonstration of alternative, sustainable livelihood options that avoid or minimize adverse impacts on biological diversity, providing incentives for sustainable use. Finally, the project supports article 12: Research and Training and article 17: Exchange of Information by promoting targeted research on priority biodiversity in the Gulf, providing training in technical and managerial areas, and developing linkages for exchange of information (PD, pg. 19).

This project is also relevant to the GEF strategies and it has been approved under Operational Programme 2: Coastal, marine and freshwater ecosystems, and as part of Strategic Objective Biodiversity #1– Catalyzing sustainability of protected areas.

Finally, the government and the state of Tamil Nadu designated the coastal marine area of the Gulf of Mannar as a National Biosphere Reserve in 1989 in order to conserve the Gulf’s 21 coastal islands and their surrounding shallow water mangrove, coral and seagrass habitats. The Ninth Five-Year Plan of the Government of Tamil Nadu, 1997-2002, describes the baseline activities planned for implementation in the project area (PD, pg.10).

4.2 Effectiveness	Rating: Moderately Satisfactory
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Overall, the project has achieved most of its main development objectives but it has not yielded its global environment objective, and had major shortcomings with regards to intended institutional and policy reforms.

In 2002, the Board of Trustees’ decided to change the project’s implementation strategy to concentrate on awareness raising and livelihoods development for the coastal village communities. This led to an unbalanced project strategy, with conservation management actions ignored in favor of concentrating on the more easily implemented actions relating to enforcement and livelihoods. The resulting approach to conservation of the Biosphere Reserve was not cohesive and comprehensive. The GoMBR Trust has been formed, but because of this change in strategy it is not a decision-making body as strong as initially planned, it is reduced to awareness raising and research functions instead of being a conservation body. Its independent long-term financing has not been capitalized, even though the Government has agreed to fund it after project completion (TE, pg.32). This change in strategy also had an impact on policy and institutional reforms that have been largely ignored. A Management Plan was developed for the Reserve but it is weak on prescription and recommendations. Moreover, there is no evidence that it is being used for the day-to-day management.

On the positive side, all the “socio-economic” actions have been very successful. The protection of Biosphere Reserve has been strengthened thanks to the creation of a Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) office. Awareness programs have been very useful; coastal fishers are now aware of the need for conservation, sustainable utilization of marine resources, operation of eco-friendly fishing gears, banning destructive fishing practices and village conservation measures. A Village Marine Conservation and Eco-development Council was developed in each of the 248 villages. Fisherfolk children spend time at schools instead of assisting parents, and fisher folk youth have been part of vocational training programs. The microcredit programs have resulted in team work among communities, and the members earn a decent pay, and are able to educate their children. A novel interpretation center has been set up to portray the diversity in the Gulf, role of Trust and its activities, achievements, pollution hazards and the need for conservation.

<b>4.3 Efficiency</b>	Rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory
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Overall, efficiency is rated moderately unsatisfactory. The TE notes “concerns over high management costs raised by others, and notes some small concerns that certain organizations were favored despite inflated costs” (TE, pg.30). Moreover there have been various delays, and a 3-year project extension.

Financial information is provided in two different sources, the MTE and UNDP-CO. Overall, financial planning and management was unsatisfactory. UNDP thought that the records kept by the project’s office were “likely to have inaccuracies” (TE, p.26). The sum disbursed at the end of the project represents 72.1% of the original budget, and this follows after ten years of implementation rather than the intended seven. The Project has failed to secure any of its co-financing in the form that was originally committed; government contribution changed from cash to in-kind, this type of co-financing is untraceable, and therefore, the actual sum spent may be less that estimated (TE, pg.27). According to the TE, “accounting and reporting appears to have been adequate, but the inability of the Project or the UNDP-CO to provide sufficient information within an appropriate timeframe is of concern” (TE, pg.28).

Moreover, the TE raises two other concerns regarding financial management:

- (1) the project management costs engendered by the Project (20% of the total costs for the 2010 Annual Work Plan) are very high. The MTE and the UNDP-CO, in a letter to the Project Director in 2010, drew attention to this issue but it was not resolved (TE, pg.29);
- (2) Although 12 institutions have participated in the project to undertake research, some 25% of the total was spent on research done with SDMRI in Thuthukudi. According to the TE, there is resentment amongst the local scientific community which expected a more equitable share of the contracts (TE, p.30).

4.4 Sustainability	Rating: Moderately Unlikely
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TE rates sustainability of project outcomes as Moderately Likely. However, this TER assesses a lower rating to sustainability, finding that institutional sustainability is of significant concern.

Risks to the sustainability of project outcomes is further assessed along the following four dimensions:

**Financial Sustainability: Likely**

The long term funding mechanism has not been capitalized by the project; this weakened the Trust's ability to fund its own initiatives. However, the micro-finance system implemented by the project is profitable and strong enough to be sustained; and the State Government is committed to continue funding various aspects of the project. For example "the State Government has taken over direct payment of the contracts of the Field Project Workers; is paying the salaries of the Anti-poaching Watchers through the Forest Department budget along with the funding necessary to pay for the patrol boats; and has agreed a budget to pay for the Trust activities during the period 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013 as the Project ceases all activities" (TE, p. 61).

**Institutional sustainability: Moderately Unlikely**

The main concern in terms of sustainability is the institutional framework and governance. The GoMBR Trust has been established and as high level of support from the State Government. However, there are weaknesses in its functioning. It has no specific home: within the government it is seen as an independent body, while in the NGO/community it is seen wholly as part of the government. Moreover, its coordination committee does not meet frequently and there has been questioning about its effectiveness. Finally, its scope of action is reduced, and relates only to conservation awareness-raising. Therefore those weaknesses are significant risks to long-term sustainability of the Trust (TE, pg.61).

**Environmental Sustainability: Unable to assess**

No information is provided in the TE on environmental risks to the sustainability of project outcomes.

**Socio-political sustainability: Likely**

Thanks to the implementation though a participatory process, most of the stakeholders support the Project's aims and want to continue conservation actions because of the benefits they brought. Moreover, the micro-credit program improved family incomes and therefore the beneficiaries are very supportive in continuing the program. The TE also mentions that the awareness-raising programmes were successful, and help the sustainability of the project "through increased agitation from the artisanal fishers for bottom trawling to be curbed within the Biosphere Reserve".

## 5. Processes and factors affecting attainment of project outcomes

6.4 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?

The project had a planned budget of US\$ 20.94 million cash and US\$ 5.80 million in-kind (TE, pg.16).

The major sources of co-financing were the Forest Department, as well as the wide range of organizations within the State Government (TE, pg.19). While the government contribution was clearly identified as cash co-finance in the PD, the TE states that this cash contribution was reduced to US\$ 269,811 and in-kind finance became US\$ 10,597,736. (TE, pg.26).

The State Government decided to change its cash co-financing to in kind co-financing. The TE explains that there was no specific reason given why, and the TE states that he "cannot understand how or why the UNDP-CO allowed this to happen" (TE, pg.26). For example, the Government did not give the US\$ 4 million share of the capitalization of the Long Term Funding Mechanism as envisaged in the Project Document. However, the TE does not assess if this lack of co-financing impacted the results and if it did, in which way.

6.5 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 Project Document was signed in 2002. Project progress was negligible until 2005 when efforts to increase delivery were made. The MTE was therefore delayed until April 2008. The Project was granted a three-year extension from the end of 2009 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012 (TE, pg.15). The reasons for those delays are not given precisely in the TE. The TE mentions that the frequent rotation of Government staff resulted in breaks in continuity and changed levels of competence, therefore created delays (TE pg.22).

6.6 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:

The project involved several organizations and a large number of communities, which brought a strong level of ownership from the stakeholders.

However, while country ownership of the project was strong, the Government of Tamil Nadu has altered the project's focus to fit its own ideas of what was needed. The TE believes that this was due to a lack of consultation with the government at the time of project design. As stated in the TE, during implementation, the Government of Tamil Nadu decided to emphasize "the livelihood and protection aspects at the expense of the higher level policy and institutional changes that were necessary and expected, and the management actions that could have encouraged the sustained use of marine resources have been largely overlooked" (TE, pg.64). According to the TE "it is clear that the State

Government remains committed to the Biosphere Reserve, yet only in its own peculiarly conservative way” (TE pg.64).

## 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.

<b>6.1 M&amp;E Design at entry</b>	Rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory
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The PD calls for comprehensive and integrated M&E processes; calls for a number of reviews by representatives of the Government, the executing agency, and UNDP; an information baseline on ecosystem structure and function and sustainable use established during the first year of the project to provide a basis for future monitoring and evaluation; and a logframe with indicators etc. (PD pg.37)

However, according to the TE (pg.30) the design period was very drawn out, and at that time the M&E standards were different and M&E was given little attention. The resulting logframe defines components rather than outcomes; includes 43 indicators that do not meet best practices (they’re not SMART, to use the GEF acronym (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timely)); and most of them lack quantitative targets. For example, one of the indicator for the project goal is “Trust/Foundation established, cross-sectoral linkages for coordinating and enforcing coastal development activities”, this indicator is not measurable, nor specific, nor timely. Another example of poor indicator is one related to component D “GIS/Information management system at existing institution strengthened”, this indicator is not specific and is too broad. Moreover, the PD does not have any dedicated budget allocation for M&E. The Project Document and the logframe do not clearly convey the overall implementation strategy; some of the necessary details are not adequately detailed (TE, pg.17).

<b>6.2 M&amp;E Implementation</b>	Rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory
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Overall, M&E implementation has been moderately unsatisfactory. Good progress was made on monitoring, including strong internal activity monitoring, but this had limited impact on project implementation, and there were issues with the logframe and adaptive management.

The project was approved in 1999 and started in 2002. There was no inception workshop and therefore the logframe was not revised. During the first meeting of the GoMBRT Board of Trustees in 2002, the implementation strategy was changed to concentrate on awareness raising and livelihoods development for the coastal village communities, but the logical framework, budget or timetable was not changed. At the time of the MTE in 2008, this change had not been formally approved. In 2006, the logframe was revised, but no changes were endorsed or made formally. In 2008, the MTE recommended that the



logframe be revised,. This was done in 2009, when a new logframe was developed and produced. This 2009 logframe converted the five “components” to “outputs” and revised the indicators down to 27, and this TER finds that most of the revised indicators are SMART. But once again, this version was not adopted, because the project was believed to be very close to its end at that time. Even after receiving the 3-year extension, the new logframe was never formally adopted and played no role in project implementation.

Moreover, the PIRs have devised a simplified set of indicators from the logframe for their own use. According to the TE (pg.19) “There is no record of how these were adopted, and changed between PIRs, but there is evidence from the interviews that these amended indicators were the ones that the Project’s management considered the most important and seem to have reported against”.

## 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: Moderately Unsatisfactory
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The TE assesses a rating of Moderately Satisfactory for Quality of Implementation. This TER assesses a lower rating, finding that UNDP performance had significant shortcomings, particularly with respect to keeping the project on track and focused on the original objectives.

The UNDP signed the quarterly budgets and annual workplans. They provided an assurance role by always having a presence on any selection panel; they also acted to help the project enter into contractual arrangements with physical and legal persons (TE, p.19). The level of supervision provided by UNDP was of good standards on a day-to-day basis, in that UNDP provided adequate supervision through its involvement in the meetings of the PSC and Board of Trustees and through the annual PIRs. UNDP was also helpful throughout the implementation period, providing good guidance, honest and constructive criticism, and helping to overcome particular problems as necessary.

However, UNDP was not strict enough in “guarding GEF’s interests, providing insufficient oversight intervention on the really serious issues that have arisen during the Project” (TE, p.24). The serious issues, as mentioned in the TE, can be summarized as follow:

- the decision by the first Board of Trustees’ meeting in 2002 to unbalance the Project by concentrating on the local livelihood and awareness functions at the expense of the higher level policy and institutional reforms;

- the inability of the Project to review and update its logframe;
- the move by the State Government to provide its co-financing contribution as in-kind instead of as cash as it had committed to; and
- the non-capitalization of the Long Term Funding Mechanism .

The project was implemented under a national implementation modality that restricted UNDP’s involvement; however, UNDP provided “insufficient oversight intervention to confront the State Government and seek compromise resolutions”. Co-financing promised by the Government was not delivered, the signed cover page of the Project Document states that the Government of Tamil Nadu will contribute US\$ 16.9 to the project yet by page two of the Project Brief inside the Project Document, this figure has been reduced to US\$ 11.2 with no reason. And then this cash contribution became reduced and to mostly in-kind contribution. The TE states that “these enormous changes in the different types of finance appear not have raised a single query from the CO, even though the MTE drew indirect attention to the issue” (TE, pg.25). Another issue with UNDP-CO implementation raised by the TE is that the GEF money was provided for conservation actions to “*catalyse the sustainability of protected areas*” and not undertake a social development project. The TE states that “the UNDP-CO should have reminded the State Government that it signed a contract with GEF to that effect and taken steps to reorient the Project back to its original concept at a much earlier stage”.

Additionally, with the slow start of the project it is difficult to understand how the project could start without an inception workshop or the revision of the logframe. The logframe was revised twice, once after the MTE recommendations. None of these revisions were adopted, and part of the responsibility for this rests with UNDP. During all of the ten years of implementation, the project lacked a proper logframe.

Therefore, the quality of implementation is rated Moderately Unsatisfactory.

<b>7.2 Quality of Project Execution</b>	Rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory
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TE rates Quality of Project Execution as Moderately Satisfactory, however this TER assesses a slightly lower rating of Moderately Unsatisfactory, finding significant issues with execution.

The executing agencies of the project are the Tamil Nadu Department of Environment and Forests (TNDofEF) in close collaboration with the national Ministry of Environment and Forests (PD, pg.16).

The project did not set up parallel executing structures but chose to work directly through government institutions. Senior State Government officials were prominent in providing support and in being involved in some of the coordination committees established under the GoMBR Trust (TE, g.19). Three NGOs were contracted to undertake aspects mainly concerned with awareness-raising. Thirteen scientific research institutions were also contracted to undertake the scientific aspects of the project.

Overall, the quality of execution has been mixed. The management team has produced good results on the ground where it has been enabled to work, but at the State level, the Government changed the project's emphasis to fit its own ideas of what is needed and therefore, results elsewhere have been underwhelming. The project intentions was to establish a singular coordinating structure for the Biosphere Reserve along with a sustainable funding mechanism to enable it to undertake conservation activities, however, the project became more emphasized on the livelihood and protection aspects at the expense of the higher level policy and institutional changes that according to the TE "were necessary and expected, and the management actions that could have encouraged the sustained use of marine resources have been largely overlooked" (TE, pg.64).

The project oversight has been confused and generally poor. The risk-averse strategy has negatively impacted the project, by not taking innovative steps on institutional and policy reform, going instead for more easily implemented activities on protection and socio-economic development (TE, pg.20).

There was also frequent changes in project staff which had consequences in achieving the desired results; "the frequent rotation of Government staff in other departments resulted in breaks in continuity of approach and changed levels of technical competence, thereby creating delays and decreasing the effectiveness of coordination committees" (TE, pg.22).

## **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 below that this is indeed the case. 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.

As stated in the TE, the project resulted in the following environmental changes (TE, pg.33):

- Live coral cover increasing by 2.2% between 2003-12
- Complete cessation of coral-mining within Biosphere Reserve,
- Decreases in number of poaching incidents
- Enforcement increased through new boats to increase anti-poaching patrols and employment of 33 Anti-poaching Watchers for deployment on islands to improve surveillance capability
- Increase in total fish landings of 7.83% between 2008/9 and 2011/12.
- More than 4000 species have been recorded in the new inventory of the marine flora and fauna from the Gulf surpassing the earlier reports that stand at 3600 species.

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 Project recruited 66 Field Project Workers on a contractual basis from the fisher communities to facilitate the formation of Village Marine Conservation and Eco-development Councils (VMCEDCs) established in all 248 villages within the coastal zone of the Reserve through which awareness and educational activities have been organized for 77,000 fisherfolk (TE, pg.48).
- A total of 2,341 self-help groups have been formed comprising 34,699 members (>76.7% women) and given access to low-interest micro-credit through a corpus fund capitalised with IRs. 77.5 million (US\$ 1.435 million) but now standing at IRs 99.5 million (US\$ 1.843 million). The Field Project Workers have assisted each group to open a bank account, taught the officers how to operate it, helped to guide loan applications, collected the monthly dues of the revolving fund and the interest thereon, and provided general support to the self-help groups as needed (TE, pg.48).
- More than 1,900 youths from the fishing communities have undergone short vocational trainings on 22 courses to help provide employment outside of the fishing industry (TE, pg.34)
- Additional tuition has been provided to 2,500 students in 26 schools to help with critical examinations (TE, p.34).

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

The Project raised awareness on marine conservation issues through a variety of means and claims to have reached nearly 100,000 people in all 248 VMCEDCs formed.

A documentary film, *Healing Troubled Waters*, about the activities of the Trust has also been made and shown widely.

Awareness and educational activities have been organized for 77,000 fisherfolk through establishment of 248 Village Marine Conservation and Eco-development Councils.

(TE, pg.43).

## b) Governance

A management plan entitled Integrated Management Plan for the Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park and Biosphere Reserve (2007-2016) has been produced (TE, pg.40)

Some policies have been introduced that promote conservation in the Reserve but only one appears to be related directly to Project actions – that of introducing a seasonal ban on the collection of seaweed between 1<sup>st</sup> March and 15<sup>th</sup> May each year (TE, pg.39).

The State Government has introduced a policy whereby fishermen will receive a subsidy to convert bottom trawlers to long-line boats to exploit offshore stocks; but again this is a response to a wider problem rather than being something derived from the Project.

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 impact is reported in the TE and in the PIR.

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.

There has been no replication or scaling-up of any aspect of the Project, and no visible attempt to do so at either national or State level, although the UNDP-CO notes that the Project has *“contributed to the larger policy processes in the country, including the Coastal Regulation Zone Notification that tries to balance conservation and development in the coastal region”* (TE, pg.63).

The main catalytic role has come at the demonstration level where a range of innovative approaches have been piloted successfully and should prove replicable, but then in many cases they themselves are replications of models used widely with the GEF portfolio (TE, pg.63).

The Government of Tamilnadu has announced that the Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve Trust will be supported by the state government after the closure of the project. Some of the vocational training activities supported by the Trust will now be supported by the Tourism department.

Protection of the National Park and intelligence has strengthened in the past one year, with the establishment of Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB). After project closure, the Forest Department

will support the department related activities including the protection and management of the National Park boundaries.

## **9. Lessons and recommendations**

6.7 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.

There is only one lesson given in the TE (pg.65): “the project document is a contract and should be treated as such”.

The signatures on a Project Document indicate that it a contractual agreement between those parties. UNDP, as implementing body, should have taken care, especially during projects that are carried out under the national implementation modality, that changes are not made that undermine the conservation benefits that are intended to come from GEF’s financing. If these are tabled and insisted upon by Governments or their representatives and run contrary to GEF’s interests, the contractual nature of the agreement should be evoked and, if necessary, a veto raised even if ultimately that means cancelling the project. If the original Project Document had shown a design which was effectively a social development project with some increased awareness and enforcement measures and that had only US\$ 10.5 million in in-kind co-financing from a single body, there is no way GEF Council would have sanctioned US\$ 7.65 million for the Project. UNDP, both the Country Office and the Regional Technical Office, should keep such things in mind.

6.8 9.2 Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation.

The following recommendations are given in the TE (pg. 64)

1. The independent auditors should examine the issues, decision-making, and apparent failure of the mechanisms connected to the co-financing of this Project as part of the Country Office Audit Plan later in the year.
2. The UNDP-CO should assist the State Government in passing control of the Trust to the Indian Administrative Service.
3. The UNDP-CO should assist the State Government in providing the GoMBR Trust with the powers of compliance monitoring through the Environmental Protection Act 1986.
4. The UNDP-CO should assist the Trust in examining the feasibility of providing another tier of loans to be available for the expansion of business enterprises.
5. The UNDP-CO should assist the Trust in examining the feasibility of allocating a proportion of the corpus fund for use in community-based projects.

## 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 report contains a very detailed assessment of outcomes, impacts and outputs. Achievements and shortcomings of each objective and outcome are given.	<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 very complete. All explanations are comprehensive and convincing. The ratings are given very clearly for each category, except for M&E design.	<b>S</b>
To what extent does the report properly assess project sustainability and/or project exit strategy?	The report assesses project sustainability in details. Each category (financial, environmental etc.) is explained and assessed.	<b>S</b>
To what extent are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive?	The lessons learned and recommendations are supported by the evidences in the report. However, the TE only gives one lesson, even though it is understandable that the TE wants to emphasize on one important issue, other interesting and useful lessons could have given. The recommendations are also very focused on this particular project, they lack a more general view and applicability to other projects.	<b>MS</b>
Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used?	The TE contains information about the project costs (planned vs. actual). The costs are broken down per activity, and co-financing is reported. However, the TE mentions that it has had difficulties in finding hose information, and there might not be precisely representative.	<b>S</b>
Assess the quality of the report's evaluation of project M&E systems:	The M&E system is properly assessed. The issues with the changes in logframe not adopted are raised are explained,	<b>MS</b>

and the M&E implementation is discussed. However, the E does not give a rating or M&E design, which is not really justified.	
<b>Overall TE Rating</b>	<b>S</b>

$$0.3*10 + 0.1 * 18 = 3+1.8 =4.8$$

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