

GEF EO Terminal Evaluation Review Form

1. PROJECT DATA				
GEF Project ID: 681		Review date: 09/18/2006		
		at endorsement (Million US\$)		at completion (Million US\$)
IA/EA Project ID:	61317	GEF financing:	0.73	0.73
Project Name:	San Lorenzo: Effective Protection with Community Participation	IA/EA own:		
Country:	Panama	Government:	0.54	0.56
		Other*:	0.96	1.88
		Total Cofinancing	1.50	2.44
Operational Program:	3, 2	Total Project Cost:	2.23	3.16
IA	World Bank	<u>Dates</u>		
Partners involved:	Panamanian Center for Research and Social Action (CEASPA)	Work Program date		-
		CEO Endorsement		06/17/1999
		Effectiveness/ Prodoc Signature (i.e. date project began)		07/27/1999
		Closing Date	Proposed: 06/30/2003	Actual: 12/2003
Prepared by: Ines Angulo	Reviewed by: Neeraj Negi	Duration between effectiveness date and original closing: 47 months	Duration between effectiveness date and actual closing: 51 months	Difference between original and actual closing: 4 months
Author of TE:	-	TE completion date: 10/2003	TE submission date to GEF OME: 03/06/2006	Difference between TE completion and submission date: 29 months

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

2. SUMMARY OF PROJECT RATINGS

GEF EO 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). GEF EO 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. IEG)	GEF EO
2.1 Project outcomes	HS	-	-	S
2.2 Project sustainability	N/A	-	-	ML
2.3 Monitoring	HS	-	-	MS

and evaluation				
2.4 Quality of the evaluation report	N/A	N/A	-	MS

Should this terminal evaluation report be considered a good practice? Why?

While this TE does a good job at presenting the entire project's basic information, it does not always include enough evidence to support the assessment of some of the project's outcomes and impacts.

Is there a follow up issue mentioned in the TE such as corruption, reallocation of GEF funds, etc.?

No

3. PROJECT OBJECTIVES, EXPECTED AND ACTUAL OUTCOMES

3.1 Project Objectives

• **What are the Global Environmental Objectives? Any changes during implementation?**

According to the TE, the Global Environmental Objective is to support the effective protection of the new San Lorenzo Protected Area (PA) in association with efforts to contribute to the long-term conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor; and to strengthen stakeholder support for the protected area.

A review of the Project brief shows that there were no changes during implementation.

• **What are the Development Objectives? Any changes during implementation?**

The TE lists the following as the development objectives of the project:

1. develop and execute a management plan with participation from national authorities, local communities and non-governmental organizations
2. contribute to the establishment of an appropriate institutional framework for the management of the new protected area
3. establish financial mechanisms to generate resources for the long-term financial viability of the new protected area
4. develop an education and training program to increase local capacity to use and support the sustainable management of natural resources in the project area.

The wording of the last objective is different in the project brief:

4. increase local capacity to use and manage natural resources sustainably but the indicators and expected outputs in both documents are the same.

3.2 Outcomes and Impacts

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

According to the TE the project had following outcomes:

- Under the Law 21 of 1997 which decides land uses of the reverted lands (Panama Canal), the San Lorenzo area was under two management categories: protection forest and protected landscape. As a result of this project the area was declared a National Park.
- Management Plan for the San Lorenzo PA was developed, and agreed: annual operating plans have been prepared and negotiated with FIDECO (the Ecological Trust Fund), park guards have received equipment and training.
- The project produced the first Protection Plan and Sign Maintenance Plan for a PA in Panama. These are serving as models for similar efforts in other PAs.
- CEASPA has worked in communities in the buffer zone in sustainable production, community-based tourism, and gender and development. Results include the establishment of a coffee producers' association; establishment of a nursery producing native trees and ornamental plants; introduction of organic agriculture and soil conservation to the area; establishment of rural tourism committees, and the holding of three annual Agro-Ecotourism festivals in Escobal.
- Raised the visibility of the area. San Lorenzo PA has been recognized in several international publications (by National Geographic, IUCN, GEF, etc), and a volunteer also

researched and published a book about it.

4. GEF OFFICE OF M&E ASSESSMENT

4.1 Outcomes

A Relevance	Rating: S
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In retrospect, were the project's outcomes consistent with the focal areas/operational program strategies? Explain. 	
<p>According to the project brief, the project falls within OP 3 and 2. Project's outcomes have strengthened the San Lorenzo PA, which is an important biological link of the Panama Atlantic Mesoamerican Biological Corridor. In addition, the San Lorenzo area is considered a priority area for conservation in the National Environment Strategy, and the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan being prepared by the National Environment Authority (ANAM).</p>	
B Effectiveness	Rating: S
<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)? 	
<p>This review finds, based on the information provided in the TE, that overall the project was very successful at achieving all expected outputs, but it was less so at achieving expected outcomes (mainly when execution of project's elements were under governments responsibility).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The San Lorenzo Management Plan was developed through a consultative process and agreed upon by 4 government agencies. It was signed by the National Environmental Agency Administrator after the project ended (PIR2004). - The protected area and Sherman are managed by an interinstitutional agreement between the Interoceanic Regional Authority, the National Environment Authority, the Panamanian Tourism Institute and the National Culture Institute. However the TE mentions that even though the Management Plan presented several alternatives for managing the area, no final decision had been made in this regard by the end of the project. - Studies of alternative mechanisms for the financial viability of the area were made for the Management Plan in 2001, and updated in 2003. A couple of these alternatives have been implemented; for example, a cooperation agreement was signed between ANAM, Fundación Natura, and CEASPA, to open a dedicated bank account to receive funds for this protected Area, but the Controller General's office has yet to give approval of the agreement. Other options require certain decisions to be made by the government and are still pending. - CEASPA has worked with communities in the buffer zone in sustainable production (establishment of a coffee producer's association and a nursery), community-based tourism (establishment of rural tourism committees and holding of 3 annual Agro-Ecotourism festivals), and gender and development (establishment of 4 active women's groups). 	
C Efficiency (cost-effectiveness)	Rating: MS
<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 and did that affect cost-effectiveness? 	
<p>According to the TE, there was a change in government just when the project started, which lead to a few changes in priorities, causing some delays in project implementation. In the case of the Interoceanic Regional Authority, the change in government meant a change in the orientation of the development in Sherman by private enterprise and considerable delays.</p> <p>It also concludes that, in general, across all sectors, the execution of public sector commitments was slow; for example the agreement on the Management Plan by four government agencies took two years and three months (the project plan expected to have the agreement in six months).</p>	

The project was very successful at leveraging additional funds from several sources, almost US \$1 million more than originally budgeted. These funds were mostly spent in capacity-building and community development activities. The PIR 2004 mentions that a brief extension to the project duration was requested in the beginning of 2003.

Impacts

- **Has the project achieved impacts or is it likely that outcomes will lead to the expected impacts?**

The TE describes that at the time the project initiated, shortly after the reversion of the San Lorenzo area to the Panamanian authorities, there was no assurance that its rich biodiversity would be protected in the long term. The project area had no clear protected area status, had no management plan, and did not have a local constituency to support and protect it. As a result of this project, this key area of pristine habitat now has a significant degree of protection. It is legally a protected area (National Park) with an agreed management plan.

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

A Financial resources	Rating: ML
Although the Management Plan developed by the project lays out a menu of mechanisms to assure the financial sustainability of the area, the TE clarifies that ultimately these decisions have to be made by government institutions. No such initiative is mentioned in the TE, but other organizations have shown interest in financing conservation projects in the area; for example USAID has agreed to finance the delimitation of the National Park, at the request of the national environmental authority.	
B Socio political	Rating: ML
The TE mentions that basic needs of the rural population in the area (housing, water and sanitation, communications, etc) are far from being satisfied and that could eventually affect the communities' positive attitude towards the conservation of the area. It also describes that although local community organizations are active in the buffer zone, their participation inside the PA itself is minimal and that co-management with community participation is still away in the future. Finally, it explains that because of the specific political characteristics of the area (recently transitioning from military to civilian use), "national security requirements" can override, at least temporarily, all efforts made and achieved by a project	
C Institutional framework and governance	Rating: ML
According to the TE, the management structure of the park had not been yet established by the end of the project, and as long as this is not resolved, overlapping jurisdictions will continue to present difficulties. It also mentions that the National Environment Authority is in the process of developing regulations for several topics of direct relevance to project components, and until these regulations are in place, there are no standard procedures for implementing several aspects of the project. Most importantly, the TE mentions that the reduction in the frequency of the project's field visits coincided with a decline in government interest in the project.	
D Environmental	Rating: ML
Investments contemplated both in the PA and in Sherman (through concessions) are handled exclusively by the government and, so far, there has been no public discussion of environmental impact studies, or carrying capacity studies. The TE specifically mentions the risk of negative impacts caused by the infrastructure related to the Panama Canal expansion projects.	

Provide only ratings for the sustainability of outcomes based on the information in the TE:

A Financial resources	Rating: ML
B Socio political	Rating: ML
C Institutional framework and governance	Rating: ML

D Environmental	Rating: L
Overall Rating on Sustainability as calculated by the old methodology: ML	

4.3 Catalytic role

<p>1. Production of a public good The San Lorenzo PA Management Plan is on the website of the project, at www.sanlorenzo.org.pa.</p>
<p>2. Demonstration The project implemented a multi-media communication strategy that used methods as mobile workshops, guided tours, mobile photographic exhibition, and publication of a book, among others, to promote the propagation of information on San Lorenzo national park.</p>
<p>3. Replication The cooperation agreement for the establishment of a dedicated bank account to receive and manage funds raised specifically for the San Lorenzo PA is serving the Fundacion Natura and ANAM as a model for other PAs. The use of the US Forest Service methodology of applying Recreational Opportunities Spectrum planning is now being used in preparing Management Plans for other National Parks in the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor.</p>
<p>4. Scaling up -</p>

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

<p>A. In retrospection, was the M&E plan at entry practicable and sufficient? (Sufficient and practical indicators were identified, timely baseline, targets were created, effective use of data collection, analysis systems including studies and reports, and practical organization and logistics in terms of what, who, when for the M&E activities)</p>	<p>Rating: MS</p>
<p>According to the Project Brief, M&E activities would be carried out by CEASPA and supervised by World Bank supervision missions. It also identified relevant project indicators in order to assess project development, and clarified that biological and monitoring of the protected area was to be carried out in accordance with the management plan developed as part of the project's activities. The TE gives no specific information on how this monitoring was designed.</p>	
<p>B. Did the project M&E system operate throughout the project? How was M&E information used during the project? Did it allow for tracking of progress towards projects objectives? Did the project provide proper training for parties responsible for M&E activities to ensure data will continue to be collected and used after project closure?</p>	<p>Rating: MS</p>
<p>According to the TE, the project produced regular quarterly reports on progress, and a Mid-term Review was carried out by an external consultant. It also mentions that park rangers were equipped and trained, and that some local people received training in analyzing land vegetation cover and monitoring of raptor migrations. The TE mentions that the National Environmental Authority (ANAM) carried out annual exercises in monitoring the effectiveness of the PA management, using 45 indicators. The TE does not provide any specific description of these annual monitoring exercises, but experience shows that the use of such a high number of indicators is not recommended due to lack of adequate baseline information and the high costs of gathering all the necessary information needed.</p>	
<p>C. Was M&E sufficiently budgeted and was it properly funded during implementation?</p>	<p>Rating: MU</p>
<p>The TE mentions that the frequency of field supervision missions during the project life was less than expected due to supervision budget constraints. According to the project brief, approximately 20% of the budget was planned for the "effective management and evaluation"</p>	

component.
Can the project M&E system be considered a good practice? Not enough information is presented to make this assessment. Although all CEASPA did produce all expected reports, there is no specific information in the TE about what indicators were actually used, when or how was the information obtained.

4.5 Lessons

Project lessons as described in the TE

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?
Following are the major lessons listed in the TE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There were great benefits of using a larger umbrella project to support a small focused one, that gives much greater resonance to the impact of the small one (as in the cases of Fundacion Natura, Community, Coffee and Environment) - Communication is vital, a website and an attractive book mean people take you seriously. - The siren call of “national security requirements” can override, at least temporarily, all efforts made and achieved by a project.

4.6 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.

4.6.1 Comments on the summary of project ratings and terminal evaluation findings
In some cases the GEF Evaluation Office may have independent information collected for example, through a field visit or independent evaluators working for the Office. If additional relevant independent information has been collected that affect the ratings of this project, included in this section. This can include information that may affect the assessment and ratings of sustainability, outcomes, project M&E systems, etc.
No additional information was available to the reviewer.

4.6.2 Quality of terminal evaluation report	Ratings
A. Does the report contain an assessment of relevant outcomes and impacts of the project and the achievement of the objectives? Analysis of project outcomes and objectives attained is discussed fairly systematically. There is no real assessment in relation to the indicators described in the Project Brief.	MS (4)
B. Is the report internally consistent, is the evidence complete/convincing and are the IA ratings substantiated? It is consistent most of the times, but there are some exceptions. For example it concludes that “project objectives have been met overall”, but fails to include convincing evidence to show that financial mechanisms to ensure the financial viability of the San Lorenzo PA have been established, or to show to what extent the local capacity to use and support the sustainable management of the area has been improved. In addition, it does not include any ratings.	MS(4)
C. Does the report properly assess project sustainability and /or a project exit strategy? The TE assesses both the strengths and weaknesses of the project sustainability in a clear and comprehensive way.	S (5)
D. Are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive? Lessons are drawn from the project’s experience with stakeholder participation,	MS (4)

project design and implementation, but some of them are very vague (for example: "teamwork and networking are key" or "people love to learn new things")	
E. Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used? Yes. It includes all the required information and gives a detailed description of leveraged resources.	HS (6)
F. Does the report present an assessment of project M&E systems? The assessment of M&E is weak. For example it doesn't say what specific indicators were measured, or how the necessary information was gathered. Also, it mentions that the government was in charge of monitoring the effectiveness of the protected area but gives no account on how this important information was used by the project.	MU (3)

4.7 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: X	No:
Explain: Decisions over concessions of investors in Sherman only began in mid 2003, when the project was ending, and are key in regards to the protection, conservation, financing and management of the San Lorenzo National Park. An assessment of these activities and their effect on the park is therefore highly recommended.		

4.8 Sources of information for the preparation of the TE review in addition to the TE (if any) Project document, PIR 2004
