

Terminal Evaluation Review form, GEF Evaluation Office, APR 2014

1. Project Data

Summary project data			
GEF project ID		772	
GEF Agency project ID		1810	
GEF Replenishment Phase		GEF-2	
Lead GEF Agency (include all for joint projects)		UNDP	
Project name		Community Based Conservation in the Bamenda Highlands	
Country/Countries		Cameroon	
Region		Africa	
Focal area		Biodiversity	
Operational Program or Strategic Priorities/Objectives		3- Forest Ecosystems 4-Mountain Ecosystems	
Executing agencies involved		BirdLife International	
NGOs/CBOs involvement		Lead executing agency	
Private sector involvement		No involvement	
CEO Endorsement (FSP) /Approval date (MSP)		10/16/2000	
Effectiveness date / project start		3/13/2001	
Expected date of project completion (at start)		12/31/2004	
Actual date of project completion		12/31/2004	
Project Financing			
		At Endorsement (US \$M)	At Completion (US \$M)
Project Preparation Grant	GEF funding		
	Co-financing		
GEF Project Grant		1.0	1.0
Co-financing	IA own		
	Government		
	Other multi- /bi-laterals	1.30	0.79
	Private sector		
	NGOs/CSOs	0.79	0.56
Total GEF funding		1.0	1.0
Total Co-financing		2.09	1.35
Total project funding (GEF grant(s) + co-financing)		3.09	2.35
Terminal evaluation/review information			
TE completion date		01/2007	
TE submission date			
Author of TE		Aliou Sali	
TER completion date		12/11/2014	
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	N/A	N/A	MS
Sustainability of Outcomes	ML	N/A	N/A	MU
M&E Design	N/A	N/A	N/A	MS
M&E Implementation	N/A	N/A	N/A	UA
Quality of Implementation	N/A	N/A	N/A	UA
Quality of Execution	N/A	N/A	N/A	UA
Quality of the Terminal Evaluation Report			N/A	MU

3. Project Objectives

3.1 Global Environmental Objectives of the project:

According to the Project Document (PD) (Annex D), the global environmental objective is for “the entire Kilum-Ijim Forest and at least 8 other Bamenda Highlands montane forests to be effectively managed by local communities with support from government and traditional authorities for conservation and sustainable use”.

Cameroon is among the top ten countries in Africa for biodiversity. The montane forests, the highest mountain range in West Africa and a Pleistocene refuge, are particularly diverse and rich in endemic and endangered plant, bird, amphibian, reptile, mammal and insect species. These forests are under threat from human pressures, especially from clearance agriculture. This has reduced the natural forest cover and has led to forests fragmentation, especially within the Bamenda Highlands, which lies in the northernmost part of the range (PD, pg.7). There are many communities adjacent to forests in the Bamenda Highlands, and people have a shared goal of conservation and sustainable forest management.

3.2 Development Objectives of the project:

Two projects were merged to create the Community Based Conservation in the Bamenda Highlands project. Those two projects (The Kilum-Ijim project and the Bamenda Highlands Forest) had separate objectives. However, they were inter-connected and evolved into one project the Community Based conservation in the Bamenda Highlands (TE, pg.9)

The development objective of the project is “to support the efforts of the Government of Cameroon in general, and the people of the North West Province in particular, to conserve the forest” (PD, pg.3). This objective will be reached by raising widespread awareness of forest values; supporting development of management and control systems for sustainable management of forests (capacity building); and providing communities with the capacity to manage resources sustainably.

Overall this project will support communities around the Kilum Ijim forest and at least eight other sites in the Bamenda Highlands to manage their forests for the benefit of local communities while maintaining the ecological value of the forests in the long term. Capacity for forest management and

sustainable use of natural resources will be increased among communities, government and NGOs in the North West Province, and critical biodiversity sites will be identified and advocated for protection.

The project has 4 outcomes, as defined in the PD:

- (1) Communities, government and civil society are aware of forest values and forest adjacent communities and other stakeholders have incentives to manage them for biodiversity
- (2) Functional management and control systems for sustainable management of forests exist (among government, NGOs and community-based organizations)
- (3) Critical biodiversity sites are known, and protected through appropriate legal mechanisms
- (4) Communities have the ability to use their natural resources more sustainably and in a way which supports forest conservation

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

No changes were reported in the PIR and/or the TE.

4. GEF EO assessment of Outcomes and Sustainability

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

Relevance can receive either a Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory rating. For Effectiveness and Cost efficiency, a six point rating scale is used (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory), or Unable to Assess. Sustainability ratings are assessed on a four-point scale: Likely=no or negligible risk; Moderately Likely=low risk; Moderately Unlikely=substantial risks; Unlikely=high risk. In assessing a Sustainability rating please note if, and to what degree, sustainability of project outcomes is threatened by financial, sociopolitical, institutional/governance, or environmental factors.

Please justify ratings in the space below each box.

4.1 Relevance	Rating: Satisfactory
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The project is relevant to the national strategy; the Government of Cameroon (GoC) has supported several conservation initiatives to help conserve montane forest. Activities at Kilum-Ijim, which this project is scaling up to an ecosystem level, were partially supported by the GEF “Programme for Conservation and Management of Biodiversity in Cameroon” (PCGBC). Lessons and experiences in terms of both technical on-site activities and institutional issues associated with Ministry of Environment and Forests (MINEF) have informed the design and activities of this project (PD, pg.2). The concern of the GoC about the degradation of montane forests, and the determination to stop the loss and deterioration of forest through sustainable resource management, is demonstrated in the objectives of the draft NBSAP.

Moreover, this project is also relevant to UNDP programme of environmental support in Cameroon; “through this programme immediate experience and lessons in both replicating and scaling up a direct working model of community based forest management will be obtained” (PD, pg.7). Cameroon is also one of the recipient countries of the GEF-UNDP “African NGO-government partnerships for sustainable biodiversity conservation” project.

For the GEF, the project’s objectives are inline with two GEF Operational Programs: OP3- Forest Ecosystems and OP4 -Mountain Ecosystems.

Finally, the project also responds to the CBD, to which Cameroon is signatory.

4.2 Effectiveness	Rating: Moderately Satisfactory
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The TE does not provide a rating on effectiveness, but this TER finds effectiveness to be Moderately Satisfactory, based on the evidence and assessment provided in the TE. According to the TE, “impressive results have been attained in terms of awareness creation, biodiversity conservation, attribution of community forests, capacity building within the communities and stakeholders” (TE, pg.32). The project was successful thanks to the stakeholders’ involvement. However, while there have been achievements in this project, the activities are not enough to support communities that directly depend on the forest for their livelihood (TE, pg.32).

One on hand, there are 22 functional community forests under Forest Management Institutions (FMIs) and federations. The total area under effective community management is a total of 16,993ha. The total land area under government management for conservation is 19,673ha (The total area of the remaining montane forests in the Bamenda Highlands is approximately 66,000ha (PD, pg.3). A significant number of biodiversity surveys were carried out to determine the biodiversity composition of the areas. A fair percentage of the population has adapted sustainable forest dependent economic activities. Progress was made to establish the Technical Operations Unit (TOU) and an Independent Functional System for Monitoring Forest (IFSMF) in the Bamenda Highlands.

On the other hand, the Technical Operational Unit (TOU) and the Independent Functional System for Monitoring Forest (IFSMF) did not go operational and therefore impacted the project’s sustainability. There are still serious threats to the plants and animals species observed in the forest such as illegal and unsustainable exploitation for medicines, poaching, encroachment by crop farmers, grazing of animals in critically prohibited sites etc. And the adaptation of the economic activities by the populations is at a small scale and not well planned to bring the desired impact on livelihood enhancement (TE, pg.28).

4.3 Efficiency	Rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory
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The efficiency of the project is Moderately Satisfactory. There were several factors that impacted the project's efficiency.

According to the TE, there were "differences in interpretation of various financial and institutional policies involved in the process" (TE, pg.29). Moreover, the IA and EA were slow in responding to project issues. The government of Cameroon's financial contribution was limited. This contribution should have helped set up the TOU and IFMSF as well as facilitating the acquisition of legal documents for FMIs. However, those did not go operational (as mentioned above in the effectiveness section). The TE finds that there was not enough involvement of the "institutional stakeholders" such as the municipal councils, influential community groups, administration and relevant government services. Finally, there were lapses in effective financial management and control by both funders as well as implementers (TE, pg.29).

4.4 Sustainability	Rating: Moderately Unlikely
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The Terminal Evaluation does not provide a rating for sustainability of project outcomes. This TER assesses a rating of Moderately Unlikely, based on the evidence provided in the narrative of the TE which notes significant risks regarding financial and institutional sustainability.

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

Environmental Sustainability: Unable to assess

There is no information on the environmental sustainability of the project

Financial Sustainability: Moderately Unlikely

According to the TE, the FMIs are not financially sustainable, there is a poor collaboration between FMIs and administration and poor financial management skills, which affect the financial sustainability of the project as a whole. Moreover, the TE suggests that financial support by funders and other stakeholders should last longer to ensure sustainability. Finally, according to the TE (pg. 32) "the activities are not enough to support communities that directly depend on the forest for their livelihood".

Institutional Sustainability: Moderately Unlikely

According to the TE, "the exit strategy was well thought of at the level of instituting a Technical Operations Unit (TOU) to support FMIs" (TE, pg.28). However, it was not clear how the process would become sustainable through the FMIs. FMIs received little in the way of equipment, documents and other assets when the project ended. Moreover, the creation of an independent functional monitoring unit would have helped the project in becoming sustainable; however, it was no properly designed to address its independence, functioning and sustainability (TE, pg.28).

Socio-political Sustainability: Likely

The knowledge and skills gained by the communities through this project will help ensuring sustainability. Beekeeping, improved farming systems, reforestation, fire protection etc. are visible and will remain. The general population is more aware of forest values, and the project has helped in understanding the notion of community forest in which community ownership with legal entitlement has been secured for sustainable management of community forest.

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?

There is no information in the TE and/or in the PIR about cofinancing.

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?

According to the PIR (pg.1) the project was suspended the 31st of May 2014 due to funding shortfall, and was finally closed on 31/12/2004. Therefore the project did not need any extension. However there is no detailed explanation for this delay.

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:

According to the TE, the country ownership was strong. The Government of Cameroon, also had initiated conservation efforts in the Kilum/Ijim forest due to its importance (TE, pg.24). However, as mentioned above (efficiency section), the financial contribution of the GoC was low and it impacted the establishment of the TOU and the IFMSF and therefore project’s sustainability.

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: Moderately Satisfactory
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No rating on M&E Design at entry is provided in the TE. This TER rates M&E design at entry as moderately satisfactory. Reasons for this rating are: inclusion of indicators and targets for monitoring and evaluation, and the responsibility for M&E is clearly defined. However, there is no clear budget for the M&E and some of the indicators are vague and inconsistent. The indicators are all quantitative, and do not provide for an assessment of the quality of outputs.

For example, the indicators for outcome 1 are (PD, pg.4)

- Levels of participation in programme-organised events/activities for environmental awareness and advocacy
- Number of people in general population and in government with increased awareness of forest values

Those indicators are aimed at building a wider public constituency for forest conservation and appreciation of forest values. While the outcome 1 is “Communities, government and civil society are aware of forest values and forest adjacent communities and other stakeholders have incentives to manage them sustainably for biodiversity” and therefore including building local incentives for sustainable management. But this aspect overlaps with Outcome 4. The indicators for outcome 4 are:

- Number of individuals in selected sites who adopt forest-dependent economic activities
- Number of individuals in selected sites who adopt techniques of using natural resources more sustainably

Outcome 4 is focused on communities using their forests sustainably, which by definition must be based on genuine incentives to do so. Therefore, outcome 1 overlaps with outcome 4 on the subject of building local incentives.

Moreover, there are no clear differences between outcome 2 and 4. In outcome 2, community institutions should effectively manage their forests while in outcome 4 local communities should have the ability to meet their needs without damaging forests.

Overall, the design and approach is sound, but the logical presentation of arguments is weak (PD, pg.50).

6.2 M&E Implementation	Rating: Unable to Assess
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There is no information in the TE and/or the PIR about the M&E implementation.

7. Assessment of project implementation and execution

Quality of Implementation includes the quality of project design, as well as the quality of supervision and assistance provided by implementing agency(s) to execution agencies throughout project implementation. Quality of Execution covers the effectiveness of the executing agency(s) in

performing its roles and responsibilities. In both instances, the focus is upon factors that are largely within the control of the respective implementing and executing agency(s). A six point rating scale is used (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory), or Unable to Assess.

Please justify ratings in the space below each box.

7.1 Quality of Project Implementation	Rating: Unable to Assess
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There is no information in the TE and/or the PIR about the quality of project implementation.

7.2 Quality of Project Execution	Rating: Unable to Assess
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The only information available about the executing agency is:

The executing agency was Birdlife International Secretariat in the UK. The coordinating office shared the same office with the BHFP in Bamenda. Birdlife International through support of funding from Cameroon Biodiversity Conservation Society (CBCS) maintains 2 site staff in the Kilum-Ijim area. Though the idea of the TOU was conceived from the start of the project for a very strategic role, it never materialized (TE, pg.21)

Therefore the quality of execution cannot be assessed.

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.

New protected areas have been established as a result of this project; Plantlife Sanctuary of c.1,000ha. Additionally 16,993ha is now under community management and protection (PIR, annex 1).

Two sites (Bafut-Ngamba forest reserve and the Kimbi Game reserve) have legal protection status and have a total surface area of 9.248ha, they received support from the project(TE, p.24)

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.

Local communities now manage community forests which have conservation as a primary objective, and these communities are supportive of a core PA – the Plantlife sanctuary (PIR, Annex 1)

The institutionalization of a micro-grant scheme in 2002 by the project supported FMIs to establish income generating activities like bee keeping, community retail shops, vegetable garden, pig farms etc. A total of 5,130,280frs was disbursed for these activities that was determined to have a bearing in the sustainable management of community forests (TE, pg.27).

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

Based on individuals and focused group discussions with the FMIs, community members and representatives of some traditional authorities, NGOs and former project staff, the level of awareness about protected areas is high and ranges between 60%-100%, with higher percentages in Kulum-Ijim area as compared to the Bamenda Highlands areas (TE, pg.12).

b) Governance

16 out of 18 FMIs in the Kulum-Ijim component are legalized entities (CIGs) and have their management plan signed, according them the legal rights to manage community forests (TE, pg.14)

8.4 Unintended impacts. Describe any impacts not targeted by the project, whether positive or negative, affecting either ecological or social aspects. Indicate the factors that contributed to these unintended impacts occurring.

No unintended impacts are reported in the TE and/or 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.

The concept of community forest is being replicated out of the Kilum/Ijim area (TE, pg.13). No other information is given about this replication example.

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 following lessons are given in the TE (pg.31):

- (1) The concept of community forest is tenable to the community but must be accompanied by realistic alternatives for livelihood to minimize dependency on the forest.
- (2) The role of traditional institutions (traditional council, 'kwifon', Fon etc) and FMIs are indispensable in the performance, management and sustainability of the conservation processes
- (3) The duration of support to the communities by funders and other stakeholders is very crucial for the empowerment of the communities to carry on with the conservation processes in the long term. Projects of this nature, scope and complexity should be designed and executed for at least 10 years.
- (4) The cumbersome process of acquiring legal rights is a disincentive to the FMIs/communities and has to be simplified else, community forest attribution is perceived as unrealistic.
- (5) The value of the forest varies from the project perspective to the community perspective and communities sometime seem to be in a dilemma which one to pursue.
- (6) Projects of this nature which infringe on the livelihood of people are always seen as a threat especially at the beginning.
- (7) The evaluation of projects which are long ended though advantageous in terms of assessing impact and sustainability, are usually difficult and complicated since documentations, management structures and staff are not available or easily contacted.
- (8) Project of the magnitude without a corresponding and genuine government support is subject to crisis and risk of failure.
- (9) Project management style that has a lot of bureaucracy and centralization of decision making will eventually become unpopular and would likely yield little results.
- (10) The exploitation of community forest for revenue and community development as conceived in community forestry is not realistic in some community forests with low economic potentials.

9.2 Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation.

The following recommendations are given in the TE (pg.34):

The capacity of MINFOF/MINEP, NGOs, CBOs and more especially FMIs were inadequately built to ensure long term sustainability of the project. Any subsequent project intervention should carryout a thorough need assessment and training for the different interest groups.

- (1) The FMIs as the main structure to manage community forests needs financial and infrastructural support (office space, means of mobility and forest surveyance) to be effective.
- (2) Any future project should carefully address the interest of key stakeholders (traditional authorities, municipal councils, Administration, MINEP/MINFOF, special interest groups like hunters, grazers, beekeepers, etc) at all levels to minimize on conflict and ensure sustainability.
- (3) Training on the legal tools for forest governance such as the forestry law should be carried out so that all stakeholders have a fair understanding of community forestry governance.
- (4) Considering that the TOU and the IFSMF never went operational and constituted a major setback, to the performance and sustainability of the project, this should be seriously considered and put in place by the government.
- (5) Any subsequent project should work with already existing structures (NGOs, FMIs, Federations, and CBOs).
- (6) Community based processes must be participatory but the project management approach was more of less top-bottom.
- (7) The livelihood component though realized to an extent in the KI site and virtually nothing in the BH site constitutes a crucial aspect to help forest dependent communities reduce their dependency on the forest.
- (8) It was realized that a number of key primary stakeholders (livestock farmers especially cattle, sheep and oat grazers) continued to carryout activities in the community forests and protected areas because of no other option for their livestock survival.
- (9) The project implementation in some of the livelihood activities targeted the inappropriate people
- (10) While it was good that the government participates in both project concept and implementation, on most cases, the financial interest of some of the representatives overshadowed the overall project objective and the role they were supposed to play.
- (11) The exit strategy of the project and more especially the sharing and liquidation of project assets did not consider the sustainability of the project as FMIs and their federations were highly marginalized and handicapped to continue the project activities.

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	The report contains a detailed assessment of project's	MS

contain an assessment of relevant outcomes and impacts of the project and the achievement of the objectives?	achievements. The assessment is very detailed but there is no synthesized analysis of project' achievements as a whole. However, it does not contain assessment on quality of execution and implementation.	
To what extent is the report internally consistent, the evidence presented complete and convincing, and ratings well substantiated?	The report is consistent and evidences are complete. However there is no rating given.	MS
To what extent does the report properly assess project sustainability and/or project exit strategy?	The report assesses project's sustainability in a very brief way. There are not enough details and explanations for the sustainability assessment.	MU
To what extent are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive?	The lessons are supported by the evidences presented in the report. Lessons and recommendations are very comprehensive.	S
Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used?	The project costs are not given in the TE. And the efficiency assessment is too brief to be useful; there are not enough explanations, and not enough justifications.	HU
Assess the quality of the report's evaluation of project M&E systems:	The M&E system is not assessed at all; neither the M&E at entry, nor the M&E implementation.	HU
Overall TE Rating		MU

$$0.3 * 8 + 0.1 * (3+5+1+1) = 2.4 + 1 = 3.4$$

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