

GEF EO Terminal Evaluation Review Form

1. PROJECT DATA				
GEF Project ID: 775		Review date:		10/04/2006
		at endorsement (Million US\$)		at completion (Million US\$)
IA/EA Project ID:	PO66534 (IA-ID-WB 908)	GEF financing:	0.974663	0.985638
Project Name:	Choco-Andean Corridor	IA/EA own:	2.353266	2.228194
Country:	Ecuador	Government:	-	-
		Other*:	0	3.862500
		Total Cofinancing	2.353266	6.090694
Operational Program:	3, 4	Total Project Cost:	3.327929	7.076332
IA	WB	<u>Dates</u>		
Partners involved:	Fundacion Maquipucuna (FM)	Work Program date		05/01/2000
		CEO Endorsement		06/21/2000
		Effectiveness/ Prodoc Signature (i.e. date project began)		07/14/2000
		Closing Date	Proposed: 07/31/2003	Actual: 07/31/2003
Prepared by: Ines Angulo	Reviewed by: Antonio del Monaco	Duration between effectiveness date and original closing: 36 months	Duration between effectiveness date and actual closing: 36 months	Difference between original and actual closing: No difference
Author of TE:	-	TE completion date: 06/30/2004	TE submission date to GEF OME: 09/21/2005	Difference between TE completion and submission date: 15 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	S	-	-	HS
2.2 Project sustainability	N/A	-	-	MU
2.3 Monitoring and evaluation	HS	-	-	S
2.4 Quality of the evaluation report	N/A	N/A	-	HS

<p>Should this terminal evaluation report be considered a good practice? Why? Yes. It presents the information in a very clear and concise manner. It also makes a comprehensive assessment of the achievement of project outcomes, its sustainability, and replicability.</p>
<p>Is there a follow up issue mentioned in the TE such as corruption, reallocation of GEF funds, etc.? No.</p>

3. PROJECT OBJECTIVES, EXPECTED AND ACTUAL OUTCOMES

3.1 Project Objectives

- **What are the Global Environmental Objectives? Any changes during implementation?**
The TE identifies the general goal as the conservation of the threatened biodiversity of the Choco-Andean ecosystems of northwest Ecuador -- the Choco and the Andean cloud forests – through securing their functional connectivity, while tackling some of the underlying social factors that drive deforestation.
A review of the Project’s Document shows that there were no changes during implementation.

- **What are the Development Objectives? Any changes during implementation?**
 - a) To establish conservation priorities and guidelines for the Choco-Andean bioregion taking into account spatial patterns of distribution of biodiversity.
 - b) To establish a pilot corridor in the southern ecosystems of this bioregion by increasing the extent of the area under conservation and sustainable management between protected areas.
 - c) To increase the quality, quantity, and availability of environmental information, facilitating decision-making related to conservation and sustainable management of biodiversity in the Choco-Andean bioregion.
 - d) To design and establish a system of incentives for conservation and sustainable management in the Choco-Andean bioregion.
Both the TE and the Project Document describe the same development objectives.

3.2 Outcomes and Impacts

- **What were the major project outcomes and impacts, as described in the TE?**
The project had important outcomes relating to its objectives:
 - a) Conservation priorities were identified through GIS analysis, and discussed and validated through several local and national workshops. As a result 4 different routes for the Choco-Andean Corridor were identified and supported by the project.
 - b) The project established a pilot area (route 1). Over 1,100 ha were purchased for conservation and 500,000 trees were planted on farms spread over an area of 200 ha.
 - c) The project developed a comprehensive GIS environmental database for the entire macro region that is publicly available, carried out 3 years of integrated pest management research on coffee and plantain systems, developed and tested monitoring protocols for water quality, bird diversity, and Carbon budgets, and conceptualized and implemented a very successful environmental education program.
 - d) The project was instrumental to the materialization of a national certification program for ecotourism, and 3 ecotourism operations in the area were certified by the Ministry of Tourism and the Ecuadorian Ecotourism Association. It also helped farmers and organizations to group through the Choco Andes Alliance and promote organic and high niche markets of coffee and cocoa.

4. GEF OFFICE OF M&E ASSESSMENT

4.1 Outcomes

A Relevance	Rating: HS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In retrospect, were the project’s outcomes consistent with the focal 	

areas/operational program strategies? Explain	
The project fits GEF OP3 & 4 strategies, priorities and goals, it follows the guidelines of Ecuador's biodiversity policies, and it will implement part of the Ecuador Master Plan for Biodiversity Protection developed with GEF support under the international CBD. Most importantly, the project has resulted in the protection of more than 20,000 ha in the area.	
B Effectiveness	Rating: HS
<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>Information included in the TE shows that the project achieved most, and even over achieved some, of the performance indicators. Particularly successful were the activities of land titling or conservation easements, reforestation, community involvement in alternative productive activities, participation of students from local and national schools in the environmental program, among others.</p> <p>The TE mentions that although the Maquipucuna Land Trust hasn't been established yet, it already has a 1 million dollar match pledged and several communities are willing to set aside land for conservation.</p>	
C Efficiency (cost-effectiveness)	Rating: S
<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, overall, the project maintained expenses within budget. Cost-effectiveness was taken into account when implementing the project's activities. For example, the PIR2003 explains that since purchasing forestland was found to be more economical than reforestation, FM gave priority to purchase of forestlands for conservation purpose. The TE describes that a study of 3 types of primate populations was suspended because the results didn't justify the costs. On the other hand, it mentions that, due to the dollarization and inflation, the salary level the project could offer dropped and was not sufficient to attract the highest caliber professionals originally planned.</p>	

Impacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the project achieved impacts or is it likely that outcomes will lead to the expected impacts? <p>Information provided in the TE shows that the project was successful at achieving outcomes that will have a positive impact regarding the conservation of threatened biodiversity in the Choco-Andean ecosystem:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Key areas for conservation were identified along the corridor and the project built the grass roots level support and infrastructure required to expand protected areas through the establishment of community reserves and sustainable economic development projects. - The Naturalist Environmental Education program created by the project not only increased local and national awareness but is also expanding into an international environmental education and research initiative. - The establishment of an international commercialization and branding strategy using the umbrella brand, Choco Andes™, to market shade grown organic coffee and cocoa, and other products from the region generated large support and expectations among farmers looking for viable markets.

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
According to the TE, although FM has started several income-generating opportunities in the communities, they have yet to be self-sufficient. The establishment of market for the community	

products has become the main risk facing the development of sustainable economic activities. It also states that the coordinator focused on the OCP Ecotrust, instead of an eco-trust for the entire corridor. It makes no mention of any government plans to invest money in the region.	
B Socio political	Rating: ML
The TE concludes that while the project was successful at identifying local and community level conservation opportunities and achieving their commitment, the time period for the GEF grant was not sufficient to institutionalize the Choco-Andean Corridor at the government or national levels. It also mentions that government involvement was not pursued after the change of Presidencies, but that it is likely that the new officials will also agree to proceed with the agreements especially if funding is available. The last PIR identified that the issue of lack of clarity of land tenure in parts of the Conservation Corridor may jeopardize the project objective.	
C Institutional framework and governance	Rating: ML
The TE mentions that Maquipucuna, which is the first private protected area established by an NGO in South America, is at risk of losing a third of its property or close to 2000 ha through a government sponsored land grab.	
D Environmental	Rating: MU
The last PIR described the construction of the OCP pipeline as one of the main environmental threats, but the TE concluded that in this case the perception of the risks were higher than the actual risks. In addition, the TE identifies that the risk posed by the local charcoal production is far more important and require urgent attention.	

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

A Financial resources	Rating: L
B Socio political	Rating: L
C Institutional framework and governance	Rating: L
D Environmental	Rating: L
Overall Rating on Sustainability as calculated by the old methodology: L	

4.3 Catalytic role

1. Production of a public good Information from the GIS database developed by the project is publicly available and is being widely used by different organizations and communities of the area.
2. Demonstration Results from the pest management research on coffee and plantain systems in the mid elevations (some already published) are being transferred to farmers.
3. Replication The children's environmental education program designed and introduced at the Maquipucuna Reserve is being adopted by several organizations, and is already self sufficient.
4. Scaling up The Choco-Andean Corridor was used as a case study during the National Workshop on Conservation Corridors, which produced the National Principles for the Design of Conservation Corridors. Both, Maquipucuna and the Georgia Botanical Garden, are building on their joint success and have launched an international conservation and educational program called "Our Shared Forests: Georgia and Northwest Ecuador's bird connection"

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

A. In retrospect, 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)	Rating: S
<p>As described in the project brief, the monitoring program was designed to produce a good, but static, assessment of biodiversity patterns and baseline information on connectivity parameters. A comprehensive logframe was developed, targets were determined and practical organization and logistics were identified.</p> <p>The TE indicates that monitoring protocols were developed and tested for more than 7 different research themes. The original logical framework and the progress annual targets were the basis for M&E activities. The project staff met at least on a monthly basis to share results, concerns and to coordinate activities. At the community level, an annual operating plan was drawn with each community involved, and at the end of the year before drawing the next operating plan there was a joint evaluation. The Bank management team met with the project staff every semester and carried out an extended evaluation exercise, which included the review of half-year progress reports and meetings, as well as field visits.</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 style="text-align: right;">Rating: S</p>	
<p>Although the TE mentioned that the project's broad interdisciplinary nature presented a challenge to M&E, it assesses that towards the end of the project, each component had achieved more structure, and as preparation to function with financial self-sufficiency, a new dimension to financial monitoring and evaluation was introduced within FM.</p> <p>It also mentions that the project established a database and monitoring protocols, and that one of them (the Stream Visual Assessment) was designed explicitly with community participation.</p>	
<p>C. Was M&E sufficiently budgeted and was it properly funded during implementation?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Rating: HS</p>	
<p>The project brief mentions that project's M&E activities were under the budget planned for objective 3. The TE makes no mention of any lack of funding.</p>	
<p>Can the project M&E system be considered a good practice?</p> <p>Yes. The project had a well planned logframe that was the basis for M&E activities, and was very successful at involving several stakeholders in M&E activities (local communities, research institutions, etc).</p>	

4.5 Lessons

Project lessons as described in the TE

<p>What lessons mentioned in the TE that can be considered a good practice or approaches to avoid and could have application for other GEF projects?</p>
<p>TE included the following lessons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Getting agreement of all stakeholders is not always possible, nor necessary. FM approach was to aggregate communities that shared similar interests and then work with a group that contained representatives from each community. - Be conservative when setting objectives for eco-regional conservation. Success at one scale is not necessarily perceived as success at all scales. For instance, the project met communities frustrated about their experience with previous eco-regional projects, which were considered successful by their funding and implementing agencies, but only produced studies, planning and meetings, and didn't concrete visible short-term improvements. - Innovative methods of conservation and development are best left to those people who will carry them out and who will ultimately gain or lose from the outcomes. Therefore, projects should focus resources on stakeholders that directly influence land use change. - Communities with strong social fabrics can be stronger partners for conservation. Objectives of projects should be adjusted according to an analysis of social capital of the communities.

- Engaging communities successfully requires that conservation projects provide them with strong incentives to participate, and a strong market based approach is one of the most efficient ways.

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? Yes. The TE includes a comprehensive assessment of all planned objectives, outputs and activities.	HS (6)
B. Is the report internally consistent, is the evidence complete/convincing and are the IA ratings substantiated? Yes. TE presents convincing evidence, but it does not include any ratings.	S(5)
C. Does the report properly assess project sustainability and /or a project exit strategy? Yes. It discusses the achievements and challenges facing the sustainability of the project, including its capacity to adapt to change, to sustain interest of key stakeholders and to reach financial sustainability.	HS (6)
D. Are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive? Yes. Lessons included in the TE are interesting and well supported.	S(5)
E. Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used? Yes.	HS (6)
F. Does the report present an assessment of project M&E systems? The TE provides a short but comprehensive assessment of project M&E systems (for monitoring social and environmental factors, and for monitoring the project implementation itself).	S (5)

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:
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Explain: The system of incentives to conservation implemented by the project, especially the production and marketing of various natural products was still on its early stages by the time the project ended. It would be interesting to assess whether these activities were successful or not, and if they had any final impact on the livelihoods of local people. In addition, the TE observes that the GEF Council strongly recommended considering follow-up financing on completion of the 3-year project, pending overall success.

4.8 Sources of information for the preparation of the TE review in addition to the TE (if any)
Project brief, Trust Fund Status Report2003

