

GEF EO Terminal Evaluation Review – Project ID 863

1. PROJECT DATA				
GEF Project ID:		863	Review date: 01/08/2010	
IA/EA Project ID:			at endorsement (Million US\$)	at completion (Million US\$)
Project Name:		Community Managed Sarstoon Temash Conservation Project (COMSTEC)	GEF financing: IA/EA own: 0.83	0.72
Country:		Belize	Government: 0.02	0.02
			Other*:	
			Total Cofinancing	0.26
Operational Program:		OP 2 and OP 3	Total Project Cost:	1.07
				1.40
IA	The World Bank	<u>Dates</u>		
Partners involved:	IFAD, Government of Belize, Sarstoon Temash Institute for Indigenous Management (STIIM)	Effectiveness/ Prodoc Signature (i.e. date project began)		October 2002
		Closing Date	Proposed: December 2005	Actual: June 2006
Prepared by: Rajesh Koirala	Reviewed by: Neeraj Negi	Duration between effectiveness date and original closing (in months): 38	Duration between effectiveness date and actual closing (in months): 45 months	Difference between original and actual closing (in months): 7
Author of TE: Punta Gorda (ICR)		TE completion date: January 2006	TE submission date to GEF EO: January 2009	Difference between TE completion and submission date (in months): 36 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 AND KEY FINDINGS

Please refer to document GEF Office of Evaluation Guidelines for terminal evaluation reviews for further definitions of the ratings.

Performance Dimension	Last PIR	IA Terminal Evaluation	IA Evaluation Office evaluations or reviews	GEF EO
2.1a Project outcomes	S			S
2.1b Sustainability of Outcomes	N/A			ML
2.1c Monitoring and evaluation				S
2.1d Quality of implementation and Execution	NA	NA	NA	S
2.1e Quality of the evaluation report	N/A	N/A		MS

2.2 Should the terminal evaluation report for this project be considered a good practice? Why?

No. The terminal evaluation for this project should not be considered a good practice. It does not discuss delays, effectiveness, and M&E in details.

2.3 Are there any evaluation findings that require follow-up, such as corruption, reallocation of GEF funds, mismanagement, etc.?

No such finding has been reported in the terminal evaluation.

3. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

3.1 Project Objectives

a. What were the Global Environmental Objectives of the project? Were there any changes during implementation?

According to the project appraisal document the objective of the project was to “reduce land degradation and conserve globally significant biodiversity resources in the Sarstoon Temash National Park (STNP) and its buffer zones.”

No change in the project objective has been reported in the terminal evaluation.

b. What were the Development Objectives of the project? Were there any changes during implementation? (describe and insert tick in appropriate box below, if yes at what level was the change approved (GEFSEC, IA or EA)?)

According to the ICR, “the specific project objectives were to conserve biodiversity and increase habitat in productive landscapes of Sarstoon Temash National Park (STNP) in the buffer and influence zones by (a) environmentally sound agricultural productivity improvements and small income generating activities; (b) community self-organisation strengthened; (c) biodiversity assessed by communities status and trends monitored; (d) resource Management Plan for STNP Developed; (e) national Park regulations and the Management Plan implemented and enforced; and (f) project Implemented Efficiently.”

Based on the information available in the ICR, there were no changes in the development objectives.

Overall Environmental Objectives	Project Development Objectives	Project Components	Any other (specify)	
c. If yes, tick applicable reasons for the change (in global environmental objectives and/or development objectives)				
Original objectives not sufficiently articulated	Exogenous conditions changed, due to which a change in objectives was needed	Project was restructured because original objectives were over ambitious	Project was restructured because of lack of progress	Any other (specify)

4. GEF EVALUATION OFFICE ASSESSMENT OF OUTCOMES AND SUSTAINABILITY

4.1.1 Outcomes (Relevance can receive either a satisfactory rating or a unsatisfactory rating. For effectiveness and cost efficiency a six point scale 6= HS to 1 = HU will be used)

a. Relevance	Rating: S
<p>According to the project appraisal document, the project was relevant to the GEF’s operational programs on Coastal, Marine and Freshwater Ecosystems (OP 2) and Forest Ecosystems (OP 3). As stated in the project appraisal document, the project was also consistent with the country priorities. Belize ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity in 1993. As mentioned in the ICR, this project complemented the Maya Leaders Association 10 Points agreement with the Government of Belize and the Memorandum of Understanding between the National Garifuna Council and the Government of Belize in 2000. COMSTEC complemented the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor (MBC) and the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef System initiatives at the regional level. It supports conservation of continuous eco-systemic bands of natural areas, buffer zones and connectors, containing high levels of diversity of flora and fauna, both terrestrial and marine.</p>	
b. Effectiveness	Rating: S
<p>According to the ICR, the project achieved all six outcomes specified in the project appraisal document. The most notable achievement was engagement of the local communities in all aspect of conservation leading to increased biodiversity habitat in the buffer and influence zone of Sarstoon Temash National Park (STNP). Further description is presented below.</p> <p>Environmentally sound agricultural productivity improvements and small income generating activities introduced: Five buffer zone communities planted cacao in 75 acres, 50% of which was expected to produce cacao seeds in its fifth year. Through revolving fund, five community schools initiated food security and income generating projects. Because of the project activities following changes were observed: elimination of slash and burn agriculture in the park, the regulation of remaining non-slash and burn dry season corn fields, and the reduction of cross border incursions and illegal activity in the park. In addition village boundary demarcation done by the project increased land</p>	

tenure security which would further enhance shifting from short term exploitation to long term community forestry development.

Community self-organisation strengthened: Communities were involved in all aspects of the planning, decision making and Implementation of the park management plan. Trainings were provided to communities to develop organizational skills.. Communities selected rangers to patrol park boundaries, and staff for village resource centre to control access to the SNP. Community members made annual plans and set standards for project activities. Indigenous community demand for agriculture land for cultivation in the STNP significantly reduced and community attitudes and behaviors with respect to reforestation with native species have been favorably altered.

Biodiversity assessed by communities, status and trends monitored: With participation of local communities, the project collected baseline information on physical and biological environment such as flora, fauna, water, hydrological features and the information was incorporated in the park management plan. Moreover, the project documented traditional indigenous knowledge of local resources, socio-economic assessment, and eco-tourism potential.

Resource Management Plan for the STNP and its Buffer Zones developed: SATIIM signed a co-management agreement with Government of Belize on behalf of the five indigenous communities, and management plan for five communities was formally adopted by the Ministry for Natural Resources and Environment. In the national park and buffer zone, infrastructures like trails and bridges were made. Areas within the park that are ecologically and culturally important were identified and protected.

National Park Regulations and the Management Plan implemented and enforced: Twenty six miles of park boundary have been surveyed. Four park rangers and one park manager have been employed. SATIIM and FUNDAECO developed a bi-national Sarstoon River watershed management plan. In collaboration with defense force, the project coordinated patrols in the national park. SATIIM geo referenced field information on biodiversity, community agriculture and park threats in a standardized database.

c. Efficiency (cost-effectiveness)

Rating: S

According to the ICR, the incremental cost analysis showed that the project was efficient. Moreover, the Fourth Overall Performance Study 2009 reports the performance of SATIIM to be efficient. Also there is no reported delay in project implementation, and the project was cost effective option given the conservation related issues it was trying to address. SATIIM, the executing agency, implemented the project efficiently through strategic alliances with the EcoLogic Development Fund, Fundación para el Eco-desarrollo y la Conservación (FUNDAECO), Toledo Conservation Trust (TCT), Institute of Development and Environment (TIDE) and the Maya Leaders Alliance (MLA)

4.1.2 Impacts: summarize the achieved intended or unintended impacts of the project.

Bi-national collaboration, particularly with FUNDAECO and AKTinamit in Guatemala, has promoted a model for community based management of fisheries resources which can be replicated on the Guatemalan side of Amatique Bay.

According to the ICR, because of the STNP management plan prepared by the project, “positive changes” in the policy framework have occurred. Other policy changes are also likely to happen as a result of the village boundaries demarcated by SATIIM. Because of boundary demarcation, territorial dispute emerged between Belize and Guatemala regarding the management of a remote park located along the border.

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. Use a four point scale (4= Likely (no or negligible risk); 3= Moderately Likely (low risk); 2= Moderately Unlikely (substantial risks) to 1= Unlikely (High risk)). The ratings should be given taking into account both the probability of a risk materializing and the anticipated magnitude of its effect on the continuance of project benefits.

a. Financial resources

Rating: ML

According to the GRM, SATIIM lacks the sustained income for basic operations (staff salary, energy cost, office). However due to strong managerial and institutional capacity, SATIIM has been able to establish good relationship with long term donors including Belize’s Protected Area Conservation Trust, Oak Foundation and CI, which reduces risks to continued financial support to project activities.

b. Socio political

Rating: L

As mentioned in the GRM, the GOB has recognized traditional rights for sustainable extraction from the national park. Communities have increased their level of understanding and commitment to conservation and have built their capacity for cooperation and initiative.

c. Institutional framework and governance

Rating: L

According to GRM, SATIIM has capacity to assist communities to manage the national park and to design and implement major projects for biodiversity conservation and community development. Such institutional development has resulted in better planning, evaluation, personnel and office management; improved accounting, procurement, budgeting and financial planning.

d. Environmental

Rating: L

There seem to be no environmental risk.

4.3 Catalytic role

<p>a.. Production of a public good</p> <p>According to the Fourth Overall Performance Study 2009, with increased managerial capacity, SATIIM has been able to secure additional funding from the donors and collaborate with regional conservation projects. As mentioned in the ICR, government has recognized the role of community participation in conservation. Participating in trainings, local people have increased their ecological knowledge and income generating skills. Indigenous communities have realized importance of their traditional knowledge on resource management.</p>
<p>b.. Demonstration</p>
<p>c.. Replication</p> <p>According to the ICR and GRM, the concept of community based biodiversity conservation has not been replicated yet, but SATIIM is actively involved in replicating the experience of COMSTEC to the communities in the buffer zone of the STNP and whole Toledo District. For this, along with community leaders SATIIM has piloted activities to address the issues such as environmental degradation and increasing poverty in the district. In a new project (National Protected Areas Project) which is under consideration of the Bank and GEF, all lessons learned from the COMSTEC project are taken into account for project design and project implementation.</p>
<p>d.. Scaling up</p> <p>According to the Fourth Overall Performance Study 2009, improved policy, legislative and protected area co-management frameworks for Belize is in part due to this project.</p>

4.4 Assessment of processes and factors affecting attainment of project outcomes and sustainability.

<p>a. Co-financing. To what extent was the reported cofinancing (or proposed cofinancing) essential to achievement of GEF objectives? Were components supported by cofinancing well integrated into the project? 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 it did, then in what ways and through what causal linkages?</p>
<p>As mentioned in the ICR, co-financing was essential. Financial support from the Government of Belize and IFAD/CDM was not materialized, but the government supported in-kind, uniforms, staff The project requested and got funding from other organizations such as Oak Foundation, the UNDP, and Conservation International.</p>
<p>b. 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 it did, then in what ways and through what causal linkages?</p>
<p>No delay in project implementation is reported in the ICR and PIRs.</p>
<p>c. 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.</p>
<p>The Government provided technical and staff support to the project. According to the Fourth Overall Performance Study 2009, Belize has formed a national level GEF operational committee to "better rationalize the use of GEF resources."</p>

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

<p>a. M&E design at Entry Rating (six point scale): MS</p>
<p>M&E plan was not finalized during the project design. Only potential indicators for each outcome were included. The reason for not preparing M&E plan, as stated in the project document, is to develop indicators and the plan with direct community involvement. However, a more complete M&E plan could have been prepared before the commencement of the project.</p>
<p>b. M&E plan Implementation Rating (six point scale): S</p>
<p>As mentioned in the ICR, the project continuously monitored the biodiversity after its base line information on status and trend was compiled. The project also had a system of receiving community feedbacks on project performance and objectives. According to the GRM 2005, SATIIM invested in internal monitoring and evaluation, and also conducted a mid-term evaluation.</p>
<p>b.1 Was sufficient funding provided for M&E in the budget included in the project document? No separate budget was allocated to M&E in the project document.</p>
<p>b.2a Was sufficient and timely funding provided for M&E during project implementation? Unable to assess.</p>
<p>b.2b To what extent did the project monitoring system provided real time feed back? Was the information that was provided used effectively? What factors affected the use of information provided by the project monitoring system?</p> <p>According to the ICR, information provided by mid-term evaluation was incorporated during the final year of the project. As per its recommendation, village boundaries of four communities were mapped, tourism business plan was prepared, a woman was included in the board of directors of the project, a biodiversity database was created, and coordinated patrols were conducted in the park.</p>
<p>b.3 Can the project M&E system (or an aspect of the project M&E system) be considered a good practice? If so,</p>

explain why.

The project M&E system can be considered a good practice. As mentioned in the ICR, recommendations of the mid-term evaluation were addressed by the project. According to the GRM, midterm evaluation with participation of the Board of Directors set focus on poverty as a major threat to biodiversity conservation, presented an improved set of indicators for each component, and revised budget and orientation of activities on objectives. The recommendations provided by PIRs were implemented.

4.6 Assessment of Quality of Implementation and Execution

a. Overall Quality of Implementation and Execution (on a six point scale): S

b. Overall Quality of Implementation – for IA (on a six point scale): S

Briefly describe and assess performance on issues such as quality of the project design, focus on results, adequacy of supervision inputs and processes, quality of risk management, candor and realism in supervision reporting, and suitability of the chosen executing agencies for project execution.

As described in the GRM, the implementing agency, the Bank, supervised the government and assisted by sharing best practices of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. The Bank's support enabled the SATTIM to define the general strategy for the development of each component.

c. Quality of Execution – for Executing Agencies¹ (rating on a 6 point scale) S

Briefly describe and assess performance on issues such as focus on results, adequacy of management inputs and processes, quality of risk management, and candor and realism in reporting by the executive agency.

According to the GRM, the overall project management is timely and efficient enabling to achieve the project goals. The financial accounting system provided budget planning and monitoring. GRM reports that external and internal financial controls were satisfactory. The project timely submitted progress and financial reports to the Bank. SATTIM succeeded in implementing effective accounting, procurement and contracting procedures, and created systems for individual staff planning, monitoring and evaluation.

5. LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Assess the project lessons and recommendations as described in the TE

a. Briefly describe the key lessons, good practice or approaches mentioned in the terminal evaluation report that could have application for other GEF projects

The ICR provides the following four lessons learned from this project.

1. Local communities possess traditional indigenous knowledge which is useful to protected area management. By involving local communities in planning and implementation process, indigenous knowledge can be mainstreamed in park management. Encouraging both elder and younger people participation help to maintain such knowledge for long time.
2. Resolving insecure land tenure by demarcating village boundaries and legally recognizing them reduces deforestation and other property right issues in the buffer zone.
3. Supporting income generating enterprises for local communities can reduce pressure on national parks. Investment in micro-enterprises in a geographically isolated and marginally developed area may not sufficiently address poverty reduction.
4. SATIM could collaborate with regional stakeholders like NGOs, GOs, tour operators, and local communities to share experience of COMSTEC and develop other projects in partnership.

b. Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation

The ICR recommends:

1. The Government of Belize needs to take legal action to recognize village boundaries surveyed by the project, support the Toledo Healthy Forest Initiative for strengthening village governance institutions for land and natural resource management, and develop community forest enterprises for poverty reduction.
2. According to the GRM report, the Bank should apply 'the Belizean model of Community Biodiversity Conservation (CBC)' to other relevant projects under implementation or under preparation.

6. QUALITY OF THE TERMINAL EVALUATION REPORT

¹ Executing Agencies for this section would mean those agencies that are executing the project in the field. For any given project this will exclude Executing Agencies that are implementing the project under expanded opportunities – for projects approved under the expanded opportunities procedure the respective executing agency will be treated as an implementing agency.

6.1 Comments on the summary of project ratings and terminal evaluation findings based on other information sources such as GEF EO field visits, other evaluations, etc.

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 document GEF Office of Evaluation Guidelines for terminal evaluations review for further definitions of the ratings. Please briefly explain each rating.

6.2 Quality of the terminal evaluation report	Ratings
a. To what extent does the report contain an assessment of relevant outcomes and impacts of the project and the achievement of the objectives? It describes activities carried out for each project's component, achievements, and outcomes.	MS
b. To what extent the report is internally consistent, the evidence is complete/convincing and the IA ratings have been substantiated? Are there any major evidence gaps? The report is consistent. However, there are a few cases of incomplete evidence.	S
c. To what extent does the report properly assess project sustainability and /or a project exit strategy? The ICR describes sustainability at community level and institutional level.	MS
d. To what extent are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive? Lessons learned are evidence based and comprehensive.	S
e. Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used? The ICR presents the total GEF funding by activity and total co-financing by the agencies providing support, but it does not include combined project cost (total and per activity) and per activity co-financing.	MS
f. Assess the quality of the reports evaluation of project M&E systems? The ICR provides a good assessment of M&E systems design and implementation.	MS

7. SOURCES OF INFORMATION FOR THE PRERATATION OF THE TERMINAL EVALUTION REVIEW REPORT EXCLUDING PIRs, TERMINAL EVALUATIONS, PAD.