

GEF EO Terminal Evaluation Review Form for OPS4

1. PROJECT DATA				
GEF Project ID: 864		Review date:		
		<u>At endorsement</u> (Million US\$)		<u>At completion</u> (Million US\$)
IA/EA Project ID:		GEF financing:	\$0.75	\$0.73
Project Name:	Multi-agency and Local Participatory Cooperation in Biodiversity Conservation in Yunnan's Upland Ecosystems	IA/EA own:		
Countries:	China	Government:	0.79	0.90
		Other*:	0.15	0.00
		Total Cofinancing	0.94	0.90
Operational Program:	OP#4: Mountain ecosystems; Focal Area: Biodiversity	Total Project Cost:	\$1.69	\$1.63
IA	UNDP	<u>Dates</u>		
Partners involved:	Govt. of Yunnan Province, Univ. of Wisconsin, USCEF, Univ. of Chiangmai, Yunnan Academy of Social Sciences (YASS)	Effectiveness/ Prodoc Signature (i.e. date project began)		June 2001
		Closing Date	Proposed: June 2004	Actual: Aug. 2005
Prepared by: Pallavi Nuka	Reviewed by: Neeraj Negi	Duration between effectiveness date and original closing (in months): 36 months	Duration between effectiveness date and actual closing (in months): 50 months	Difference between original and actual closing (in months): 14 months
Author of TE:		TE completion date: July 9, 2006	TE submission date to GEF EO: May, 2008	Difference between TE completion and submission date (in months): 22 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	N/A	N/A	S
2.1b Sustainability of Outcomes	L	N/A	N/A	ML
2.1c Monitoring and evaluation	N/A	N/A	N/A	UA
2.1d Quality of implementation and Execution	N/A	N/A	N/A	UA
2.1e Quality of the evaluation report	N/A	N/A	HU	U

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

No, the terminal evaluation was conducted almost a year after project closing, and is in reality an ex-post evaluation

rather than a terminal project evaluation. The terminal evaluation is not based on intended project outcomes and there is no discussion on whether some critical project indicators were ever met. Much of the TE report covers the operation of community based co-management organizations and the importance of micro-finance for rural development. Only one farmer, the head of a village co-management group, was interviewed. There is minimal discussion of the project's impact on biodiversity conservation. There is no discussion on project implementation, M&E systems, project costs, or co-financing amounts. And, no ratings are included for any of the various aspects of project implementation

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

No such findings were mentioned the in the TE report.

3. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

3.1 Project Objectives

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

As described in the ProDoc, The global environmental objective of this project was to conserve globally significant biodiversity in the region of Wuliangshan (Yunnan Province) through community-based sustainable resource management, with the full cooperation and collaboration of different stakeholders.

There were no changes in global environmental objectives during implementation.

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)?)

The project was designed to address the threats to mountain ecosystem biodiversity at two sites: the Wuliangshan Reserve (which encompasses the Lingbaoshan National Forest Park) in Nanjian County and the Qinshan Watershed in Yunxian County. Both sites suffer from the lack of a system for integrated planning and management, low levels of local community involvement in conservation and management, as well as a lack of capacity and awareness regarding biodiversity conservation. The development objectives were to:

1. Test and refine replicable models of community-based natural resource management on a watershed basis.
2. Reduce immediate threats and address root causes of biodiversity loss.
3. Develop reserve management approaches that assure ecosystem integrity and preservation of biodiversity.

From the ProDoc, the project had five complementary components:

1. Creation of inter-sectoral planning and management mechanisms.
2. Capacity building of Wuliangshan Reserve Co-management Council (WRCC) and Qinshan watershed management council (QWMC).
3. Promotion of ecologically sustainable livelihoods.
4. Public Awareness, Training and Education
5. Community-based biodiversity inventory and monitoring.

There were no changes in development objectives during implementation.

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, causing a change in objectives	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 (of outcomes to focal areas/operational program strategies and country priorities) Rating: S	
A.1. What is the relevance of the project outcomes/results to:	
(i) The national sustainable development agenda and development needs and challenges?	
The project is relevant to both the national and regional sustainable development agenda. In addition to containing globally significant biodiversity, both project sites are important regional watersheds. Limited management resources and large population pressures pose serious risks to the remaining forests in these areas. Consistent with China's central government priorities, the project will support efforts to work with local communities and apply indigenous knowledge to natural resource management.	
(ii) The national environmental framework, agenda and priorities?	
China has launched a large-scale reforestation program at the national level. Following the 1998 flooding, China banned all logging operation along the middle and upper reaches of the Yangtze River to reduce erosion and restore mountain ecosystem. This project was designed to complement the government of China's efforts to conserve forest areas, with specific reference to the biodiversity of mountain ecosystems in the tropical and sub-tropical zones. In 1994, China completed its Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and promulgated the Act of Reserves. In its 9 th Five-Year Plan (1996-2000), China aims to establish 1,000 Reserves of 100 million hectares, which accounts for 10.4% of the nation's total land area. One of those Reserves is in the Wuliangshan Mountain Range of Yunnan Province. The Yunnan Provincial Govt. has initiated an environmental restoration program to restore upland ecosystems along the Lancang/Mekong River in the Wuliangshan Mountain Range, the proposed site for this project.	
(iii) The achievement of the GEF strategies and mandate?	
This project is relevant to the GEF Operational Program 4 -- Mountain Ecosystems, and the Biodiversity focal area.	
(iv) The implementation of the global conventions the GEF supports (countries obligations and responsibilities towards the convention as well as the achievement of the conventions objectives)	
This project supports China's obligations under the Convention on Biological Diversity, ratified in 1993.	
A2. Did the project promote of International (Regional and / or Global) Cooperation and Partnership¹	
Not applicable.	
b. Effectiveness	Rating: S
As the TE report covers only a few aspects of project achievements, the following assessment also draws substantially on information from the annual PIRs. Based on the PIRs from 2004 and 2005 (the final years) and the TE report, the project has achieved most of its intended outputs. The main achievements have been the development community based co-management organizations and a micro-credit program. However, the project's biodiversity M&E system was finalized too late to provide evidence on whether there is an improvement in performance on environmental indicators.	
The project established community based co-management (CM) councils through direct election by village residents. The co-management councils have been expanded to 20 villages in the two project areas and 11 of these councils were registered NGOs by project closing. Villagers are primary stakeholders in the co-management organizations, while government agencies and private firms are outside partners. The co-management councils have formulated community regulations for biodiversity conservation and nature resources management and serve as a bridge of coordination between county government, nature reserve management, and villagers. Based on information in the TE report, the CM councils are functioning well. In one case, a CM council was able to resolve a boundary conflict between a village and a nature reserve. The 2004 PIR notes that there has been a reduction of conflicts between the government agencies (Nanjian County Nature Reserve Bureau and Yunxian County Forestry Bureau) and local villagers, and the number of poaching cases has gone down.	
The CM councils have also been active in managing the micro-credit program established by the project. The micro-credit program was established to reduce human pressure on biodiversity. Based on information in the TE report, the micro-credit program has provided loans to 2,211 households with a repayment rate of 100%, and has been quite successful in reaching the very poor. Households have used loan funds for trade and animal husbandry. The 2004 PIR notes that villagers reduced their frequency of entering the adjacent Wuliangshan Nature Reserve from 2-3 times per week to 1-2 times per month, due to the large amount of time spent on activities supported by micro-loans. In other cases, micro-credit projects have helped to cut daily fuel wood consumption to half or even one-third of the original level. However, a comprehensive survey of borrowers and comparison to the baseline socio-economic survey is necessary to establish the real impacts of this program on rural incomes and the quality of local environments.	
The project's outreach and awareness raising outputs were met. The project carried out diverse forms of education and awareness building on environmental conservation and the TE report notes that "the environmental awareness of villagers and stakeholders was raised, while the conservation capacities of local government agencies were improved."	

¹ Please consider for regional and global project only

The 2005 PIR indicates that educational and training activities have reached 16 villages, and over 3000 people. Primary school textbooks were prepared and a DVD was produced. Project experiences were disseminated widely through various channels, including local media, an international workshop, and visiting delegations.

Awareness of biodiversity conservation in government agencies has been improved, and there has been some coordination of policies. The provincial, county, and township levels are participating in the co-management mechanism, and have drafted integrated plans for local conservation and development. A Yunnan Provincial Office for Sustainable Management of Upland Ecosystems (YPO-SMUE) was established, consisting of field staff seconded from relevant Yunnan government agencies and bureaus, but the TE report does not mention if this office continues to function post-closing. The project was to build the capacity of the Wuliangshan Reserve Co-Management Council and Qinshan Watershed Co-Management Council, through staff training and equipment investments. Based on information in the PIRs, staff training was undertaken, but the extent of equipment and infrastructure investments is not clear.

The baseline Biodiversity Inventory Reports for the two project sites were completed in 2002, but the plan for the biodiversity monitoring system was only completed and implemented in the last year of the project. National experts designed the monitoring plan in conjunction with villagers, and villagers themselves conduct ongoing monitoring. The TE report does not provide any results from this monitoring, and only mentions “the populations of birds and snakes have increased.” There is no information in the TE report or in the PIRs on changes in the quality of forest habitat or impacts on threatened species.

c. Efficiency (cost-effectiveness)

Rating: S

In the proposed budget (ProDoc), GEF funding focused on inter-sectoral planning, capacity building, and public outreach components. While there is no information in the TE report on project costs or implementation, it does indicate that the key outputs for each component were delivered. The micro-credit program, financed largely through the county government, has been highly efficient. Repayment rates are at 100%, and over 2,000 loans have been disbursed. The information from the PIRs supports this assessment. Although the project closed a year later than planned, there is no mention in the TE report or in the PIRs of the implications of implementation delays.

d. To what extent did the project result in trade offs between environment and development priorities / issues (not to be rated) – this could happen both during the designing of the project where some choices are made that lead to preference for one priority over the other, and during implementation of the project when resources are transferred from addressing environmental priorities to development priorities and vice versa. If possible explain the reasons for such tradeoffs.

The project design supported both environmental and developmental priorities through components targeting co-management and sustainable use of livelihoods, as well as strengthened management of conservation areas. There is insufficient information in the TE report to determine if there were tradeoffs between environmental and developmental priorities during implementation.

4.1.2 Results / Impacts² (Describe Impacts) (please fill in annex 1 – results scoresheet and annex 2 – focal area impacts (against GEF Strategic Priority indicators, where appropriate and possible)

This project has resulted in more effective management of reserve areas and increased support for conservation through the establishment of village co-management councils, public outreach, and education. The co-management councils have reduced conflicts between reserve management agencies and local populations, and given communities a voice in regional development planning. The micro-credit program initiated under this project has seen an unprecedented level of participation by the poorest households. According to the TE report, the micro-credit program “has helped improve rural incomes and alleviate some root causes of biodiversity loss.” Training of reserve area staff and the creation of a provincial office for conservation have contributed to government capacities and policy coordination at province, district, and local levels.

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.

² Please consider direct and indirect global environmental results; any unexpected results; local development benefits (including results relevant to communities, gender issues, indigenous peoples, NGOs and CBOs)

a. Financial resources	Rating: L
Project staff was transferred from several other government agencies to create a new provincial bureau for coordination on conservation policies. This bureau will continue to be funded by the Govt. of Yunnan Province and some project activities will continue. The micro-credit program has been very successful, with a 100% repayment rate and is likely to continue lending activities.	
b. Socio-economic / political	Rating: L
Giving local leaders and villagers full authority to expand the co-management organization has greatly strengthened ownership of the project by local populations. The Watershed Co-Management Councils have been expanded to 20 villages from the original 2 villages and villagers' awareness of and commitment to biodiversity conservation has been greatly enhanced through active involvement and participation in project activities.	
c. Institutional framework and governance	Rating: ML
The institutional framework for sustainability appears strong as the project was carried out by a newly created agency in the provincial government. The community based management program has been expanded and replicated at neighboring sites. Some co-management Councils formally registered as NGOs, and as such will be able to apply for external funding. The perspectives of local government and the agencies managing reserve areas were not presented in the TE report, and it is not known to what extent these bodies support the project.	
d. Environmental	Rating: L
No significant environmental risks were noted.	
e. Technological	Rating: N/A
There are no technological risks associated with this project.	

4.3 Catalytic role³

a. INCENTIVES: To what extent have the project activities provide incentives (socio-economic / market based) to contribute to catalyzing changes in stakeholders?
The Environmental Trust Fund (June 2002) and the Alternative Energy Support Fund (April 2003) micro-credit programs were established to promote sustainable livelihoods. A total of 270 households have borrowed a total of RMB 94,000 have to finance investments in energy-saving stoves, farming equipment, and biogas pits.
b. INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE: To what extent have the project activities contributed to changing institutional behaviors?
The creation of directly elected co-management councils has created a mechanism by which villagers' interests can be incorporated into local and provincial decision-making on conservation. These councils function as intermediaries to resolve conflicts over resource rights and educate local people about conservation needs and policies.
c. POLICY CHANGE: To what extent have project activities contributed to policy changes (and implementation of policy)?
Project activities have not led to any policy changes.
d. CATALYTIC FINANCING: To what extent did the project contributed to sustained follow-on financing from Government and / or other donors? (This is different than co-financing.)
The project has not received any sustained follow-on funding.
e. PROJECT CHAMPIONS: To what extent have changes (listed above) been catalyzed by particular individuals or institutions (without which the project would not have achieved results)?
No project champions were mentioned.

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

a. Co-financing. To what extent was the reported cofinancing (or proposed cofinancing) essential to 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 it did, then in what ways and through what causal linkages?
The proposed co-financed of \$0.90 M was approximately 55% of the total project cost of \$1.63M. This co-financing was essential for the sustainable livelihoods component and the micro-credit program, as well as the community based biodiversity monitoring plan. The co-financing was split between the country and provincial governments, and it did materialize, but there is no information on the amounts contributed by each entity. Additional co-financing from the Univ. of Wisconsin and USCEF was proposed, but these contributions never materialized.
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?

³ Please review the 'Catalytic Role of GEF: How is it measured and evaluated – A conceptual framework' prior to addressing this section.

No delays in project implementation or completion were noted in the TE report or in the PIRs.
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.
Country ownership has had a positive impact on project outcomes and sustainability. The county and provincial governments provided co-financing, project staff and in-kind resources. The project staff came from different provincial government agencies and ownership of the project at the provincial level was critical for establishing and empowering the village co-management councils. Country ownership has also been helpful for disseminating project experiences nationally and for replicating the experience with the co-management councils in villages throughout the region.

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

a. M&E design at Entry	Rating (six point scale): S
The project's M&E plan in the project appraisal document included a logical framework with a list of objectively verifiable indicators, means of verification, and critical assumptions. Monitoring and evaluation was to be conducted by integrated teams of villagers, local leaders, technical service agents, administrators and scientists. The evaluation process included a pre-program evaluation of project design, formative and summative evaluations during implementation and ex-post impact evaluations.	
b. M&E plan Implementation	Rating (six point scale): UA
The TE report does not contain any information on M&E implementation.	
b.1 Was sufficient funding provided for M&E in the budget included in the project document? Unable to Assess	
b.2a Was sufficient and timely funding provided for M&E during project implementation? UA	
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? Unable to assess.	
b.3 Can the project M&E system (or an aspect of the project M&E system) be considered a good practice? If so, explain why. Unable to assess.	

4.6 Assessment of Quality of Implementation and Execution

a. Overall Quality of Implementation and Execution (on a six point scale): UA
b. Overall Quality of Implementation – for IA (on a six point scale): MS <i>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.</i>
The implementing agency for this project was the UNDP. The TE report does not describe implementation by the IA. But, based on information in the PIRs, IA oversight and supervision was adequate. Tripartite meetings occurred annually to review operational procedures, project concepts and activities. The outbreak of SARS in China in 2003 prevented international experts from visiting the project sites for technical support and advice. However, national experts and the staffs from the provincial project management office continued to visit project sites. The project terminal evaluation, for which the IA is responsible, was conducted one year after closing, and is of very poor quality (as rated below). Greater IA oversight and review of the terminal evaluation team's findings might have led a better assessment of project implementation and outcomes.
c. Quality of Execution – for Executing Agencies⁴ (rating on a 6 point scale): UA <i>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.</i>
The executing agency, the Yunan Project Office of Sustainable Management of Upland Ecosystems, was a team made up of experts from various provincial government agencies. Project offices at the county level managed operation at each demonstration site and oversaw the utilization of the government funds through the co-management councils. There is no information in the TE report on the quality of execution, but the PIRs indicate that the project implementation progressed smoothly.

⁴ 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.

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 TE report does not contain a section summarizing “key lessons” or “good practices”

b. Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation

1. *Phase II of the project should be implemented as soon as possible.* Building on the past experiences and strong will of local people, we recommend Phase II of YUEP be implemented in project area and replicated to neighborhood villages and other regions.
2. *A linkage between nature reserves, the watershed and the international river is necessary.* The YUEP project site is located in the Wuliangshan natural reserve. This region is not only important for biodiversity conservation, but also for watershed conservation in the upstream of Mekong River. Therefore, the YUPE project should integrate concerns in the GEF focal areas of biodiversity and international rivers. A large intervention would better support development and conservation in this ecologically critical and economically marginal region.
3. *Training for alternative livelihood is important.* Much past training centered on environmental conservation. There were few training opportunities for farmers to develop skills in alternative livelihoods especially in off-farm activities (such as cottage enterprises, construction, eco-tourism, etc) and marketing. Some farmers lack the skills to use new technologies and agricultural inputs. Thus, there is a need to adjust the content of the training program to better meet farmers’ needs for alternative livelihoods as well as new appropriate technologies.

6. QUALITY OF THE TERMINAL EVALUATION REPORT

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? The information provided on project outcome achievements has major gaps.	MU
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 missing information on several project components and contains no ratings.	HU
c. To what extent does the report properly assess project sustainability and /or a project exit strategy? There is no assessment of project sustainability.	U
d. To what extent are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive? The TE report does present any lessons learned, but it does include some recommendations for replicating and improving the project.	U
e. Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used? The report does not mention actual project costs or co-financing amounts.	HU
f. Assess the quality of the reports evaluation of project M&E systems? There is no evaluation of the project’s M&E system.	U

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

8 Project stakeholders and Key Contacts (Names, addresses, emails etc – mandatory for field visit countries)

--

9. Information Gaps (for Field visit countries only)

--