

GEF EO Terminal Evaluation Review Form

1. PROJECT DATA				
GEF Project ID: 885		Review date:		
IA/EA Project ID: GFL-7632-2731-4340	GEF financing:	<u>at endorsement</u> (Million US\$)	<u>at completion</u> (Million US\$)	
Project Name: Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in The South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand	IA/EA own:	16.41	16.41	
Country: Regional: Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand & Viet Nam:	Government:	0.63	0.84	
	Other*:	17.01	19.37	
	Total Cofinancing	0.0	0.0	
Operational Program: OP 8: Water Body based operational program	Total Project Cost:	17.64	21.21	
IA: UNEP	Dates	34.05	37.62	
Partners involved: Secretariat for the Action Plan for Seas of East Asia (EAS/RCU); South China Sea Informal Working Group (SCS-IWG); FAO; IOC-WESTPAC; Wetlands International Asia-Pacific; SARCS; SWOL; Ministries of Environment in each country	Effectiveness/ Prodoc Signature (i.e. date project began)		January 2002	
	Closing Date	Proposed: March 2007	Actual: January 2009	
TER Prepared by: Neeraj Kumar Negi	TER peer reviewed by: Aaron Zazueta	Duration between effectiveness date and original closing (in months): 63 months	Duration between effectiveness date and actual closing (in months): 85 months	Difference between original and actual closing (in months): 22 months
Author of TE:	Helen T. Yap Josh Brann	TE completion date: May 2009	TE submission date to GEF EO: August 2010	Difference between TE completion and submission date (in months): 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 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	HS	S	S	S
2.1b Sustainability of Outcomes	N/A	ML	ML	ML
2.1c Monitoring and evaluation	NA	S	S	ML
2.1d Quality of implementation and Execution	NA	NA	NA	S
2.1e Quality of the	N/A	N/A	S	S

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

The report is lucid and comprehensive. It presents a sound analysis of the project performance. The coverage of financial aspects is, however, weak.

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

The terminal evaluation notes that by the end of December 2008 about US \$ 76,000 of the funds disbursed to the specialized coordinating units had either not been accounted for or had not yet been returned to UNEP. This could be a concern if this was not resolved by the time project was financially closed.

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 submitted for CEO Endorsement, the overall goals of the project are *“to create an environment at the regional level, in which collaboration and partnership in addressing environmental problems of the South China Sea, between all stakeholders, and at all levels is fostered and encouraged; and to enhance the capacity of the participating governments to integrate environmental considerations into national development planning.”*

The project logframe included in the document lists the following as the overall objectives:

- *“Improved regional co-ordination of the management of the South China Sea marine and coastal environment”;*
- *“Improved national management of the marine and coastal habitats”;*
- *“Improved integration of fisheries and biodiversity management in the Gulf of Thailand”*

The mid-term review and the terminal evaluation reports for the project do not note any change in the overall goals and objectives of the project.

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 the project appraisal document submitted for CEO Endorsement, the medium term objectives of the project is *“to elaborate and agree at an intergovernmental level, the Strategic Action Programme encompassing specific targeted and costed actions for the longer-term, to address the priority issues and concerns. More specifically the proposed activities are designed to assist countries in meeting the environmental targets specified in the framework SAP that was developed over period 1996-1998.”*

The project logframe included in the appraisal document lists the following as the expected outcomes of the project:

- *“Adoption of improved mechanisms for regional co-operation in the management of the environment of the South China Sea”;*
- *“Jointly agreed actions relating to fisheries and environment in the Gulf of Thailand”;*
- *“Adoption of the SAP at a regional level”;*
- *“Acceptance of the TDA and SAP at a National level”;*
- *“Implementation of components of the SAP”;*
- *“Regional database for planning and Management.”*

The mid-term review and the terminal evaluation reports for the project do not note any change in the medium term objectives and expected outcomes of the project.

Overall Environmental Objectives	Project Development Objectives	Project Components	Any other (specify)
NA	NA	NA	NA

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)
NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

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>The project was focused on strengthening the foundation to address transboundary concerns of the South China Sea. It is highly relevant to the international waters focal area of the GEF – especially OP 8, water body based operational program – because it aims to understand the root causes of the environmental threats to the South China Sea such as modification of habitats, over exploitation of the living aquatic resources, and pollution, and aims to address these concerns through regional, national and local actions identified in a strategic action plan prepared as one of the project activities. The process through which the transboundary diagnostic analysis (TDA) was prepared allowed incorporation of the inputs from the participating countries. The planned activities of the project are based on this analysis and, therefore, also reflective of the national priorities of the participating countries.</p>	
b. Effectiveness	Rating: S
<p>According to the terminal evaluation, the project significantly contributed to regional coordination of management of the South China Sea marine and coastal environment by further developing regional networks. It was effective in developing in-country capacity, understanding of the concerns relevant to the South China Sea, and mechanisms for management of coastal and marine habitats at the national level. The demonstrations on habitat restoration – which accounted for 25 percent of the project outlay – were successfully implemented. However, given the political context, the project has had limited success in addressing fisheries related transboundary concerns. The results of its land based pollution related demonstrations were mixed – activities were implemented successfully in only one of the two sites.</p> <p>Based on the information gathered through monitoring, consultations carried out with the participating countries, and experience gained through implementation of the project activities, especially the emerging experiences from implementation of the prioritized demonstration activities, the strategic action plan prepared during the project preparation stage (1996-2001) was updated and elaborated in 2008. Although the participating countries were expected to endorse the action plan at the regional level, it has not been endorsed at that level. A key constraint has been the given geo-political context – due to a history of territorial conflicts the participating countries have been wary of signing agreements that involve regional commitments. Nonetheless, several of the activities proposed in the SAP, especially those that do not require transboundary cooperation for implementation – i.e. the national action plans, had been adopted. In Thailand the prioritized actions specified in the revised strategic action plan (2008) were incorporated into its National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan, formally approved by the cabinet in January 2008. In China the arrangements for implementation of the prioritized actions were incorporated into the socio-economic development plans of the central and provincial governments. Cambodia and Malaysia have adopted their respective national action plans. In Vietnam the national action plans were completed but had not been formally adopted. In Indonesia some of the actions had been adopted while the action plan on wetlands related concerns had not been completed at the time the evaluation was conducted. In Philippines national action plans for priority actions other than those for land based pollution were complete but had yet to be adopted. The terminal evaluation report clarifies that at the time of the evaluation was conducted these actions had yet to be implemented. Nonetheless, some elements of these planned actions were being incorporated by some countries in their ongoing ecosystem management policies and practices.</p> <p>Several (11) habitat restoration demonstration activities on mangroves, sea grass, coral reefs and wetlands, were undertaken in the participating countries with GEF support. Some of these activities have led to reduction in local environmental stress. For example, a flier on the Masinloc coral reef demonstration site notes that due to continuous patrolling a decrease in illegal fishing and increase in recruitment of sea-cucumbers have been observed. Similarly, in Hepu Sea grass demonstration site more than 50000 illegal wooden post and 13 illegal mollusk cultures were cleaned. For most demonstration sites, however, stress reductions have not been reported. Poor monitoring of stress reductions is a weak link as this should have been an important M&E element for the demonstration activities.</p> <p>The lack of participation of China and Malaysia in the fisheries component affected the ability of the project to address sustainable management of transboundary fish stocks in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand. The remaining five</p>	

participating countries (Cambodia, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam) participated in the working group on fisheries. The major activities undertaken as part of the SCS project included identification of areas important for protection and management of fish stocks that are of transboundary importance in the Gulf of Thailand, and development of regional and national plans for development of fish *refugia* in the area. To prioritize areas important for protection and management of transboundary fish stocks, 52 locations that were known to be important spawning and nursery habitats were assessed. Of these 14 were identified for priority action, and 9 other sites were identified for action in the second tier of priority. Four national management plans and a regional management plan were prepared. The scope of physical activities undertaken as part of this component was relatively modest and in line with the resources allocated to it in the project budget. Two demonstrations were undertaken on addressing land based pollution. In the Ling Ding Yang site, China, problems due to conflicts with the government development plans were encountered in implementing the pilot activity. On the other hand, the implementation in the other pilot site in Batam, Indonesia, was successful due to strong support by the local government. A report on “Modeling the Carrying Capacity of the South China Sea Marine Basin with respect to Nutrient Loading from Land-based Sources” was also published.

According to the terminal evaluation, project had significant achievements in terms of contributions to regional coordination of management of the South China Sea marine and coastal environment by further developing regional networks of environmental management institutions, nongovernment organizations, and professionals, over and above what already existed. During the project’s lifetime these networks were reported to have functioned well, with regular meetings held and documents produced containing data on environmental status as well as issues important for ecosystem management. The project website was highly effective in sharing information with the stakeholders.

c. Efficiency (cost-effectiveness)

Rating: MS

The project was completed after a delay of about two years. According to the terminal evaluation a part (4 to 6 months) of this delay could be attributed to the SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) epidemic in the area in early 2003. Given the complex nature of the project, and the fact that it was effective in accomplishing most of its targets, this delay is not excessive. A few of the planned activities were not completed in time – these include completion of some of the national action plans and completion of physical activities in a few demonstration sites. In the overall scheme of things these failings were relatively minor and balanced by instances where the actual outputs exceeded the expectations or were accomplished with lesser resources.

The project management seems to have been mindful of cutting costs. For example, the terminal evaluation reports, the regional meetings were held in locations outside of the capital cities to reduce the costs of such meetings. However, some other measures may have had mixed results. For example, for a considerable time period during project implementation the project coordinating unit was understaffed. According to the evaluation this may have led to some cost savings but its overall effect on project achievements is unlikely to have been positive.

The terminal evaluation reports that due to efficiency gains the project was able to make savings. It returned some amount back to the GEF. The evaluation, however, does not clarify as to how much amount was returned. It also reports that about US \$ 750,000 of such savings was transfer to the GEF Small Grant Programme (SGP) to undertake community level projects that address the transboundary international water concerns. The evaluation does not report on the extent to the activities undertaken by SGP were completed and the results of these activities.

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

Project’s main focus was not on generating environmental impacts that could be attributed to the project but on strengthening a foundation to facilitate such results in future through follow up activities. Nonetheless, the project did entail undertaking 13 demonstration activities – 11 on habitat restoration and two on controlling land based pollution – in the participating countries at the local level. From the literature produced by the project in some instances a reduction in activities that lead to environmental stress – such as illegal fishing, waste water disposal, etc. – has been reported. This evidence is largely anecdotal in nature as the project M&E has not included stress reduction indicators that could systematically track such impacts. Moreover, the impacts reported so far are local and of a small scale. To achieve substantial impacts their replication is required at a much wider and intensive scale.

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 terminal evaluation, the sustainability of the achievements of the project are contingent on the extent the participating countries and donor agencies, including GEF, are willing to implement the strategic action plan (SAP) prepared as part of this project. So far the uptake of the SAP by participating countries, especially of the national components and community demonstrations, has been substantial. The evaluation reports that some of the countries are beginning to integrate national action plans of the SAP into their ongoing marine and coastal management activities.

<p>Several projects that follow up on the SAP are in the GEF project pipeline – some of these had been approved and were being implemented even before the closure of the SCS project. Some of the demonstration sites have received additional follow-up funding from the national, provincial and local governments, or from other donors. However, the uptake for some of the regional aspects is not as robust and may require more groundwork. Given that the participating countries and other donors are willing to support many of the elements of the SAP, overall the financial risks seem to be moderate.</p>	
b. Socio political	Rating: ML
<p>The political context in which the project was implemented is quite challenging. The participating countries continue to have many outstanding and difficult to resolve territorial conflicts. This makes these countries wary of entering into binding regional agreements. A result of this has been the difficulty that is being faced in getting the SAP endorsed by the participating countries at the regional level. Despite these constraints, which are likely to continue, the fact that the participating countries are able to talk and find areas of common interest for collaboration lowers the overall socio-political risk. Much progress can still be made by sidestepping the contentious issues.</p>	
c. Institutional framework and governance	Rating: ML
<p>The SCS was implemented by the UNEP. Although the project was implemented within the institutional framework of the COBSEA (Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia) Secretariat that is hosted by the UNEP, there was little operational linkage between the SCS project and the COBSEA Secretariat. The terminal evaluation reports that as a result of this disconnect the SCS project did not result in institutional strengthening of the COBSEA Secretariat. The evaluation opines that COBSEA might need further support to be able to follow up on the gains made by the SCS project. The interviews conducted by the Evaluation Office for its impact evaluation of the GEF activities confirm the terminal evaluation's findings. For the transboundary fisheries related aspects the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC), which is primarily a capacity-building organization of the region but with increasing experience promoting responsible fisheries for regional food security, seems to be an appropriate institution given its experience and mandate. Of the two follow up full size projects being prepared to implement the SAP, one that focuses on habitat restoration is proposed to be executed by COBSEA. The other project under preparation will lead to establishment of a functional network of fish refugia and this is planned to be executed by SEAFDEC.</p> <p>At the local level, the project is reported to have been effective in building institutional capacities of the participating communities of the demonstration sites. In some instances the local government counterparts have taken over the responsibility of managing the demonstration sites after the project activities were completed. These institutions are likely to play an important role in sustaining the activities at the local level.</p>	
d. Environmental	Rating: ML
<p>The SAP and activities undertaken as part of the plan developed by project do not face risks due to environmental concerns at least in the medium term. However, in the long term the action plan may need to be adapted to the climate change risks. According to the terminal evaluation report, although the project did undertake two small activities that address climate change, overall little attention has been given to this aspect.</p>	

4.3 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>The project is reported to have exceeded the expected cofinancing by about 20 percent. The cofinancing was critical for the achievement of GEF objectives. The cofinancing supported activities were well integrated in the project as cofinancing contributions supported project activities across the board; it was especially important for the demonstration activities. The terminal evaluation does not explain as to how the project was able to realize higher level of cofinancing.</p> <p>A dubious practice followed in reporting on cofinancing is inclusion of "personal cofinancing" by staff as cofinancing contribution. The terminal evaluation reports that the extra personal time spent by the staff on work related to the project amounts to over US \$ 400,000. While the staff may have indeed worked extra hours, unpaid work by staff is certainly not a good practice as far as implementing agency is concerned. Moreover, considering such extra work by the staff that was paid for by the project stretches the definition of cofinancing to the extreme. Else there should also be scope for negative adjustments when such paid staff underperforms!</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>The project was extended beyond its expected completion date (at start) by 22 months. One of the reasons for the delay was occurrence of SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) epidemic in the project area in early 2003. The terminal evaluation indicates that the fact that project was understaffed for some period could have also contributed to delays in some aspects of project execution. Direct MoUs and contracting with the Specialized Executing Agencies is</p>	

also suggested to have been a constraint in some situations. Overall, based on the information provided in the terminal evaluation it could be said that the delays did not have a negative effect on project outcomes and sustainability.

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.

The participating countries demonstrated varied levels of ownership for the project activities. Of the seven countries, five – excluding China and Malaysia – demonstrated high level of country ownership. For countries that already had similar ongoing activities, the project was an important supplement. However, for those with lower level of baseline activities it was a critical component of their national commitments.

Extensive consultations with China were required to bring it on board. Its eventual participation was qualified because it decided not to participate in fisheries and coral reefs related activities. During the implementation of the project China showed high levels of ownership for the activities that it had agreed to participate in. Malaysia, despite the fact that in past it has committed substantial resources to protection of key marine habitats, continues to have reservations on future participation in the implementation of the strategic action plan.

The terminal evaluation indicates that the ownership demonstrated at the local level was of a high order. It attributes this to the site selection procedure adopted for the demonstration sites.

4.4 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): MS

The M&E plan of the project was strong in terms of attention given to project progress monitoring. The plan covered aspects such as progress reporting, reviews, terminal evaluation, and post completion evaluation. Nonetheless, the logframe presented in the project document was insufficiently developed. Most of the indicators included in the logframe are output and process indicators. The M&E plan did not include stress reduction indicators, despite demonstration activities being included in the project design. The M&E plan, therefore, is relatively weak on monitoring for outcome and impact evaluation aspects. The funding for M&E was included in the project management budget.

b. M&E plan Implementation Rating (six point scale): MS

Based on the information provided by the terminal evaluation it may be inferred that the project implementation progress monitoring was satisfactory. M&E plan implementation was carried out as designed: the project steering unit prepared progress reports; mid-term review was conducted to assess the implementation progress; and, the project director also prepared a terminal report documenting the experience of the project implementation process. Most of the monitoring activities were accomplished in a timely manner. Information from the monitoring system was used in adaptive management. Throughout the project implementation period, minor adjustments were made in the project design based on the information received through monitoring. For example initiative on blast fishing research was dropped; the scope of the project website was increased based on the information on higher than expected usage of the project website, etc.

The weaknesses in terms of near absence of stress reduction indicators persisted during the implementation. As a result, although the progress reports and other evaluative literature on demonstration site tracks the implementation process well, the stress reductions are not being tracked. The allocated budget for M&E was sufficient. The terminal evaluation, however, does not clarify whether financial arrangements have been made to support the post completion independent evaluation of the project.

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.

According to the terminal evaluation, the level of supervision and backstopping support provided by the UNEP varied during the course of the project. This, it reports, was partially due to staff turnover in UNEP, and due to UNEP also operating as the lead executing agency of the project. UNEP allowed the project team sufficient space and flexibility on operational issues. This facilitated smooth progress in project implementation. However, on other areas UNEP could have performed better. Based on the information provided in the terminal evaluation report, it appears that even through the project was implemented under the auspices of the COBSEA – hosted by the UNEP – it had few operational linkages with it. UNEP as an implementing agency could have ensured that the project has strong linkages and that it also contributed to building of institutional capacities of the COBSEA.

The Quality of Supervision Review undertaken by the Evaluation Office in 2008-09 assessed the quality of supervision services provided by UNEP during the two year period 2007- 08. It rated overall quality of supervision for that two year period to be highly satisfactory. The implementing agency scored highly in terms of focus on results and fiduciary and due diligence aspects. Nonetheless, the scope of the supervision review in terms of time period covered and issues considered is much narrower.

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.

Overall the performance of the executing agencies was satisfactory. There was a delay in project completion. A few of the planned outputs were not completed including some national action plans and a few activities in the demonstration sites. Such failings were balanced by the efficiencies shown by the executing agencies in execution of most of the activities of the project.

UNEP, which hosted the project coordination unit (PCU), was the overall executing agency for the project. The first three project components were executed at the regional level by the Regional Working Groups (RWGs) and at the national level by the Specialized Executing Agencies (SEAs). The project management was successful in engaging highly qualified scientists and environmental practitioners in project execution structure. Based on the information provided in the terminal evaluation report, the communication and coordination of activities among the specialized executing agencies and between the project coordinating unit and specialized agencies seems to have worked well.

For project execution, in the project structure distinguished between the scientific & technical functions and political function. The mid-term review and the specially managed project review (SMPR under taken by the GEF Secretariat) had a positive assessment of the project management structure – they concluded that in the given context the management structure has been effective because it facilitated speedier decision addressing some of the political constraints.

The project activities were generally implemented at the local level through memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the PCU and the SEAs. In some situations the bilateral agreements led to slower execution because of lower level of oversight at the national level. In Vietnam – in contrast – the execution arrangements were based on a three-way MoU, and – according to it appears to have provided an additional level of oversight and to have facilitated swifter execution.

About US \$ 750,000 saved during project execution was transferred to GEF Small Grant Programme (SGP) to undertake community level project that address transboundary international water concerns.

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

Following is the summary of the good practices listed in the terminal evaluation report:

- The geographical and political complexities should be taken into account during the project preparation phase, especially so for projects that involve countries with divergent histories, cultures, development trajectories and national priorities.
- Contracts with the most appropriate national or local institutions should be executed in a manner that conflict or overlap with the jurisdiction and responsibilities of other bodies is minimized or avoided.
- The approach of the PCU to execute MOUs directly with each SEA led to efficiency in transaction. However, it also led to excessive workload on the limited staff of the PCU. Entering into arrangements that lower the level of oversight from the central could be a mitigating strategy.
- The overall management structure of the project allowed for a distinct separation of technical and political functions in decision making at the national and regional levels. This helped the project effectively address some of the political constraints. This could be considered as a model for interventions that are executed in similar circumstances.
- The direct engagement of the local community leaders proved to be an effective strategy for coupling existing

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.

<p>local governance structures to project goals and activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The terminal evaluation lists project’s approach to tracking of in-kind cofinancing as an excellent example for other projects. While tracking contributions of the partner organization through this mode is certainly commendable, tracking of “personal cofinancing”, i.e. extra hours of work done by the project staff, seems to be a bit of overstretch. • Without adequate results based M&E framework including quality indicators, outcomes and impacts are unlikely to be reported on. • Lack of clarity on the definition of the wetlands caused difficulties in the coordination of the work of different sub-components within a country, and caused problems even in the standardization of research and monitoring methodologies. • It is important to ensure that the knowledge products of a project become part of the formal publications. Else, there is a danger that these will not have a longer shelf life.
<p>b. Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation</p> <p>Following recommendations are listed in the evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once endorsed by the participating countries the SAP should be implemented. • During the implementation phase of the follow up activities there should be close cooperation between the project implementation unit and COBSEA Secretariat to build the institutional capacities of the latter and improve the long term sustainability of the project results. • A SAP implementation project should include further development of regional scientific and technical indicators on the environmental quality and status of the South China Sea in areas beyond the coastal habitats, or apply appropriate previously specified indicators. • To increase the likelihood of success, discussions on the potential development of a regional South China Sea management framework must involve all relevant national level stakeholders. • Where appropriate, and where national participants have the requisite capability, project research outputs and experiences should be published in the international, peer reviewed literature to ensure broader dissemination and longevity of results. • Urgent measures should be taken to secure the long-term sustainability of the project website, which is an internationally recognized resource on marine and coastal conservation for the South China Sea region.

6. QUALITY OF THE TERMINAL EVALUATION REPORT

<p>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.</p> <p>The information gathered by the Evaluation Office through other sources suggests that limited role of COBSEA in implementation of the SCS project had to do with the personality clashes within UNEP. Relative isolation in which COBSEA Secretariat and the SCS project steering unit operated may have facilitated smoother project execution in the short run. However, an opportunity to build the institutional capacities of the COBSEA was lost in the bargain.</p> <p>This project was also covered under the Quality of Supervision Review 2008-09 undertaken by the Evaluation Office for the Fourth Overall Performance Study and Annual Performance Report 2009. The findings of this assessment have also informed this review.</p>

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?	S
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?	S
c. To what extent does the report properly assess project sustainability and /or a project exit strategy?	S
d. To what extent are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive?	S
e. Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used?	MS
<p>The evaluation report does provide some information on the actual cofinancing. However, it is at the aggregate level. The report does not provide detailed information on the actual utilization of the GEF grant. Although it does inform that some of the savings were returned back to GEF, it</p>	

does not specify the quantum.	
f. Assess the quality of the reports evaluation of project M&E systems?	S

7. SOURCES OF INFORMATION FOR THE PRERATATION OF THE TERMINAL EVALUTION REVIEW REPORT EXCLUDING PIRs, TERMINAL EVALUATIONS, PAD.
Field visits by the Evaluation Office to the project site as part of the impact evaluation of the South China Sea IW activities of the GEF.
Quality of Supervision Review 2008-09 by the GEF Evaluation Office