

Terminal Evaluation Validation form, GEF Independent Evaluation Office

1. Project Data

Summary project data	
GEF project ID	9720
GEF Agency project ID	GCP/SLC/211/GFF, FAO Project ID: 642843
GEF Replenishment Phase	GEF-6
Lead GEF Agency (include all for joint projects)	FAO
Project name	Developing Organisational Capacity for Ecosystem Stewardship and Livelihoods in Caribbean Small-Scale Fisheries (StewardFish)
Country/Countries	Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Region	Latin America & Caribbean
Focal area	International Waters Choose an item.
Operational Program or Strategic Priorities/Objectives	LDCF/SCCF: Programme 7-Foster sustainable fisheries. Strategic Action Programme for the Sustainable Management of the shared Living Marine Resources of the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem and Adjacent Regions (CLME+ SAP) of April 2013
Stand alone or under a programmatic framework	Standalone
If applicable, parent program name and GEF ID	N/A
Executing agencies involved	<p>NATIONAL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fisheries Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Fisheries and Barbuda Affairs, Antigua and Barbuda - Fisheries Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Fisheries, Water Resource Management, Barbados - Fisheries Department, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Belize - Fisheries Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Guyana - Fisheries Division, Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries, Jamaica - Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Agriculture, Food Production, Fisheries, Cooperatives and Rural Development, St. Lucia - Fisheries Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Rural Transformation, St. Vincent and the Grenadines <p>REGIONAL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) - Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations (CNFO) - Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) - University of the West Indies Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (UWI-CERMES) - Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC)
NGOs/CBOs involvement	National Fisherfolk Organizations (NFOs), Fisherfolk Organisations (FFOs): beneficiaries
Private sector involvement (including micro, small and medium enterprises) ¹	20 Private sector agencies: beneficiaries
CEO Endorsement (FSP) / Approval (MSP) date	7/14/2017
Effectiveness date / project start date	5/1/2018 (Actual EOD); 1/7/2018 (actual start)
Expected date of project completion (at start)	4/30/2021
Actual date of project completion	9/30/2021
Project Financing	

¹ Defined as all micro, small, and medium-scale profit-oriented entities, including individuals and informal entities, that earn income through the sale of goods and services rather than a salary. ([GEF IEO 2022](#))

		At Endorsement (US \$M)	At Completion (US \$M)
Project Preparation Grant	GEF funding	0.055	0.055
	Co-financing		
GEF Project Grant		1.777	1.356 ²
Co-financing	IA own	0.5	0.104
	Government	4.813	4.013
	Other multi- /bi-laterals	0.15	0.15
	Private sector		
	NGOs/CBOs	1.3	1.3
	Other	0.35	0.35 ³
Total GEF funding		1.832	1.411
Total Co-financing		7.113	5.917 ⁴
Total project funding (GEF grant(s) + co-financing)		8.945	7.328 ⁵
Terminal evaluation validation information			
TE completion date		June 2022	
Author of TE		Jan Voordouw, Cecile Brugere, Sherry Heileman	
TER completion date		12/22/2022	
TER prepared by		Emanuele Bigagli	
TER peer review by (if GEF IEO review)		Neeraj Negi	

² As of 30 June 2021 (TE, p. 11).

³ The amount of USD 350,000 refers to an in-kind contribution from the University of West Indies, Centre for Resource Management & Environmental Studies (UWI-CERMIS; TE, p. 111).

⁴ As of 30 June 2021 (TE, p. 11).

⁵ As of 30 June 2021 (TE, p. 11).

2. Summary of Project Ratings

Criteria	Final PIR	IA Terminal Evaluation	IA Evaluation Office Review	GEF IEO Review
Project Outcomes	S	---		S
Sustainability of Outcomes		ML		ML
M&E Design		MS		MS
M&E Implementation		S		S
Quality of Implementation		S		S
Quality of Execution		HS		HS
Quality of the Terminal Evaluation Report				HS

3. Project Objectives and theory of change

3.1 Global Environmental Objectives of the project:

The objective of this project was to empower fisherfolk throughout fisheries value chains to engage in resource management, decision-making processes and sustainable livelihoods, with strengthened institutional support at all levels (TE, p. iii). The TE (p. 9) notes that no Global Environment Objective was articulated, but this is implicit in Outcome 2.1 with respect to healthier habitats and reduced pollution.

3.2 Development Objectives of the project:

No explicit Project Development Objective (PDO) has been articulated, although it is implied in the title of the project as well as in Outcome 3.1 with respect to sustainable fisheries livelihoods and food and nutritional security (TE, p. 9).

3.3 Were there any **changes** in the Global Environmental Objectives, Development Objectives, or project activities during implementation? What are the reasons given for the change(s)?

The Final PIR 2021 (p. 78) reports that the Project Steering Committee approved the utilization of the underspent funds (due to delays in activities because of COVID-19) to implement more on-the-ground activities under Component 3 (*Securing sustainable livelihoods for food and nutrition security*), including two sub-projects: one for the provision of technical assistance to fisherfolk affected by the volcanic eruptions in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, in such areas as safety at sea and post-harvest equipment, and of assistance to develop a shock responsive social protection action plan; and one for the provision of technical assistance to facilitate market-driven utilization of fish waste within the context of a national platform (possibly linking to/building on existing initiatives) in Barbados. These sub-projects were rapidly and successfully implemented during the final months of the project (TE, p. 29).

3.4 Briefly summarize project's theory of change – describe the inputs and causal relationships through which the project will achieve its long-term impacts, key links, and key assumptions.

- **Problem:** habitat degradation, fisheries over-exploitation, and the impacts of climate change on habitats and fisheries affect the high dependence on living marine resources for food and livelihoods of local populations, which are highly vulnerable; also, the concentration of fisheries infrastructure in the

coastal zone and the increasing intensity of extreme weather events are major risks to countries' economies and people's wellbeing.

- **Barriers:** 1. Limited capacity of fisherfolk organizations to implement fisheries policies and plans; 2. Limited capacity of fisheries state agencies to support fishing industry institutions and stewardship; 3. Exclusion of fisherfolk in ecosystem stewardship practices for fisheries sustainability; 4. Limited benefits derived from the experience and best practices of past fisheries livelihood interventions; and 5. Exclusion of fisherfolk in project monitoring and evaluation, which constrains their learning for adaptation.
- **Aim:** support the implementation of the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems project (CLME+) Strategic Action Plan in member states of the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) by empowering fisherfolk throughout fisheries value chains to engage in resource management, decision-making processes and sustainable livelihoods, with strengthened institutional support at all levels
- **Strategy:** (1) Developing organizational capacity for fisheries governance; (2) Enhancing ecosystem stewardship for fisheries sustainability; (3) Securing sustainable livelihoods for food and nutrition security; (4) Project management, monitoring and evaluation, and communication.
- **Impact:** contribute to a healthy marine environment in the Caribbean Seas LME, which supports the wellbeing and livelihoods of the people and optimizes the region's development needs.

4. GEF IEO assessment of Outcomes and Sustainability

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

The outcome ratings (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and overall outcome rating) are on a six-point scale: Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory. The sustainability rating is on a four-point scale: Likely to Unlikely.

Please justify the ratings in the space below each box.

4.1 Relevance and Coherence	S
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The TE rates relevance as Highly Satisfactory, and this review rates it as Satisfactory. The project was very relevant to GEF, FAO, and national objectives, priorities, and plans; the design was solid and consistent with the objectives, although it had some weaknesses that hampered the achievement of some Outcomes.

The project is considered highly relevant to project countries, the wider region and internationally (TE, p. 17). The project is relevant to GEF International Waters Focal Area Objective IW3 "Enhance multi-state cooperation and catalyze investments to foster sustainable fisheries, restore and protect coastal habitats, and reduce pollution of coasts and Large Marine Ecosystems" (TE, p. 17). The project is also relevant to the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-2031, the FAO Country Programming Frameworks for the participating countries, and aligned with Priority Area 3 of the UN Multi-Country Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for the English and Dutch-speaking (UNMSDF) Caribbean 2022-2026, contributing also to the related Joint UN Sub-Regional Implementation Plan under the UNMSDF for Barbados and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States countries, in particular Strategic Priority A: Sustainable and Resilient Caribbean (TE, pp. 17-18). It is complementary to existing project being implemented in the region and engaging similar stakeholders, such as CLME+ sub-projects, Small Scales

Fisheries Gender project, and Climate Change Adaptation in the Eastern Caribbean Fisheries Sector Project 4FISH (TE, p. 18). Finally, the project was considered as highly relevant also by the stakeholders (TE, p. 21).

The project design was consistent with the important principles of the ecosystem approach to fisheries (TE, p. 18). However, some outcomes were over-ambitious, and the project had some weaknesses in the results framework with respect to outcomes, indicators, and appropriateness of some activities to achieve the outputs and outcomes (TE, p. 18). More in detail:

- The activities and outputs of Component 3, designed to address Barrier 4 (see Section 3.4) were not adequate to achieve the outcome.
- The development of sustainable livelihoods during the project's lifetime was over-ambitious because of the wide range of factors that should have been considered, and which should have been covered under a separate project (TE, p. 19).
- The institutionalization of good governance and learning for adaptation among fisher folk organizations was over-ambitious (TE, p. 20).
- Pilot projects, as well as a greater level of financial resources, would have been of benefit to achieve the results for the sustainable livelihoods sub-component (Outcome 3.1).
- The indicators, baselines and targets did not respond to the monitoring needs of this process-oriented project, and were too general, i.e., not quantifying or elaborating on the "positive change" required for the indicators in Components 1-3.

4.2 Effectiveness	S
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The TE rates effectiveness as Satisfactory, and this review concurs. The project achieved almost all ex-ante targets, some of which were exceeded, although it did not achieve Outcome 3.1.

The TE (p. 22) notes that the project was highly effective, considering the short timeframe and the severe impact of COVID-19; 11 of the 12 outputs were delivered with a high level of achievement, and the last output was underway at the moment of the TE. The number of target beneficiaries (personnel and leaders of Fisherfolk Organizations and National Fisherfolk Organizations, and public agencies) was often exceeded (TE, p. 30). However, the achievement of Outcome 3.1 was moderately unsatisfactory, because it was too ambitious to be achieved.

More details for each Component are as follows:

Component 1 – Developing organizational capacity for fisheries governance – the project had a satisfactory performance. It built and professionalized Fisherfolk Organizations leadership and strengthened their governance, including the provision of organizational and financial training, although with different results across countries (Outcome 1.1; TE, p. 23). Moreover, workshops were organized to strengthen the capacity of National Fisherfolk Organizations, and pilot projects were designed in each country to alleviate previously identified gaps in capacity (Outcome 1.2; TE, pp. 24-25).

Component 2 –Enhancing ecosystem stewardship for fisheries sustainability – The project had a satisfactory performance. training courses were delivered on participatory ecosystem approach to

fisheries, which were found useful by beneficiaries, and a Code of Conduct for Caribbean Fisheries 2020-2025 was developed and endorsed by the CRFM. Despite COVID-19, which made site visits and effective engagement of fishers difficult and forced a reduction of scope and duration of the envisaged pilot projects on coastal management, five pilot projects were successfully conducted on litter (Guyana and Saint Lucia), managing Sargassum influxes (Belize), coral gardening (Jamaica), awareness raising and use of fish waste (St. Vincent & Grenadines; TE, p. 27).

Component 3 – Securing sustainable livelihoods for food and nutrition security – The progress of these activities was overall moderately unsatisfactory, as the outputs for Outcome 3.1 were not achieved because too ambitious. Although all the activities of this Outcome were completed (including identification of lessons from fisheries-related livelihoods and socio-economic projects in the region, preparation of a policy brief highlighting key findings and recommendations from the former, and the communication of best practices), the beneficiaries expressed the need for more on-the-ground activities and tangible results to achieve this Outcome, and the corresponding indicator (number of Fisherfolk organizations’ leaders who engage in livelihood enhancement activities and number of Fisherfolk organizations’ leaders who report positive change due to engagement) was not fully achieved. Finally, in 2021 the unspent funds that became available due to delays and scaling-down of other activities, were used for a pilot project in Barbados on the utilization of fish waste (TE, p. 28).

Component 4 – Project management, monitoring and evaluation, and communication – the outputs and activities under Outcome 4.1 (*Good governance and learning for adaptation institutionalized among fisherfolk organizations*) were satisfactorily completed. This included the preparation of an overview of in-country coordination mechanisms and committees and the engagement of Fisherfolk Organizations in these, and the delivery and sharing of a great number of visibility and educational resources (TE, p. 29).

4.3 Efficiency	S
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The TE rates efficiency as Satisfactory, and this review concurs. The project was cost-effective and the costs and outputs were balanced; it suffered some initial start delays, and other delays due to external circumstances (i.e., COVID-19).

The project was implemented with a high level of efficiency, following established procedures and requirements (TE, p. 45), and adapting to the disruptions by COVID-19 that entailed a slow start; however, delays to some activities due to institutional challenges reduced efficiency and cost-effectiveness (TE, p. 33). Initial delays were due to the long time taken to negotiate the Letters of Agreement with the five regional partners; also, there were delays in procurement of computers and other ICT equipment. Efficiency was high thanks to great adaptiveness of management (thanks to which the two additional sub-projects were implemented in St. Vincent & Grenadines and Barbados), and the high level of interaction on operational, technical and GEF-related issues with other projects involving project partners (TE, p. 35). However, a minor flaw highlighted by the TE (p. 47) is the fact that the results-based financial reporting was not performed.

4.4 Outcome	S
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Summarize key outcomes related to environment, human well-being, and enabling conditions (Policy, Legal & Institutional Development; Individual & Institutional Capacity-Building; Knowledge Exchange & Learning; Multistakeholder Interactions), as applicable. Include any unintended outcomes (not originally targeted by the project), whether positive or negative, affecting either ecological or social aspects.

Where applicable, note how both intended and unintended outcomes have positively and/or negatively affected marginalized populations (e.g., women, indigenous groups, youth, persons with disabilities), and where some stakeholder groups have benefited more/ less than others.

The TE does not rate outcomes, and this review rates outcomes as Satisfactory. The project was very relevant and overall well-designed, although with some weaknesses that hampered the achievement of one Outcome; it was cost-efficient, and had some initial delays and other delays due to unforeseen circumstances (i.e., Covid-19). More details on specific outcomes are reported below.

Environmental. The strengthening of capacity building and collaboration has an indirect positive effect in terms of environmental stress reduction (TE, p. 30).

Socioeconomic. Fisherfolk organizations' leaders did become empowered and their resilience to environmental degradation and climate change impacts was strengthened by the project (TE, p. 55).

Enabling conditions. The project has started to lay a foundation for the achievement in the longer-term of global environmental benefits through strengthening stakeholder capacity for ecosystem stewardship, increased collaboration in the management of shared marine resources and the engagement of a significant number of direct beneficiaries (TE, p. 29). The awareness, knowledge, skills, infrastructure and in Guyana's case the gender equality in governance of Fisherfolk organizations was improved by the project (TE, p. 30). Moreover, the project strengthened the fisheries legal and policy framework at the regional and national levels, contributing to a strengthened implementation of specific actions of the Strategic Action Plan at national level (TE, p. 30). In relation to women, the project contributed to change in gender indicators, in a positive way and researched how improvements could be attained in social protection (income, health, well-being, etc.) of fisherfolk following shocks (such as COVID-19 or a volcanic eruption; TE, p. 30). It tried also to engage youth, which normally display little interest being involved in the fishing industry (TE, p. 53).

Unintended outcomes. Due to COVID-19, fisherfolk made great use of online communication platforms and gained knowledge and capacity in ICT and partnerships between regional organizations were further strengthened (TE, p. 29).

4.5 Sustainability	ML
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Note any progress made to sustain or expand environmental benefits beyond project closure, using stakeholder (rather than project) resources, e.g. through replication, mainstreaming or scaling-up of GEF-supported initiatives. Examples would be farmers adopting practices using own funds, follow-on replication projects, development of plans for scaling, inclusion in local or national legislation, and allocation of government budgets or private sector investments for institutional adoption.

The TE rates sustainability as Moderately Likely, and this review concurs. Although there are some significant risks to the sustainability of project benefits, the net benefits are more likely to continue than abate.

There is a high likelihood that project results will continue to be useful and sustained, and contribute to achievement of long-term impact (TE, p. 36). Also, there is high potential for scaling up and replication of project results through the knowledge generated, strengthened Fisherfolk organizations and National Fisheries Authority (NFA) capacity, training materials, methodologies, tools and documented experiences, and policy instruments (TE, p. 37). However, there are significant financial risks and moderate environmental, sociopolitical and institutional risks to the sustainability of project benefits (TE, p. 38).

Financial. The financial sustainability of the project results is moderately unlikely. The fisheries sector is underfunded by public accounts, and most Fisherfolk organizations do not have sufficient funding to operate, with financial contributions from fisherfolk inadequate and unreliable. Also, NFAs are underfunded and dependent on external donors. The project helped to address these issues, and the development of fish silage industry, if profitable, may reduce financial risks (TE, p. 39).

Socio-political. There are moderate socio-political risks to sustainability. Fisherfolks are gaining more support and recognition, are becoming more organized and engaged in decision-making. Also, there is greater awareness and appreciation of the role of women in the fisheries value chain and the need to support them. However, risks to project sustainability come from the lack of attractiveness of the sector for employment, cultural and traditional practices, and the difficulty to keep fisherfolk interested and engaged (TE, p. 36).

Institutional frameworks and governance. There are moderate sociopolitical risks to sustainability of project results. All countries have strengthened their legal and policy frameworks on fisheries management and are increasingly adopting ecosystem approaches to fisheries. Some NFAs have incorporated some project results into their annual workplans. Management capacity of Fisherfolk organizations fluctuates because staff is voluntary and changes regularly after elections, causing lack of institutional memory, risks to attracting and retaining members and conducting several functions (TE, p. 38).

Environmental. The project started to strengthen capacity to reduce pressures from unsustainable fishing practices entailing environmental degradation; however, external factors such as harmful tourism practices, land-based activities and climate change impacts make environmental sustainability as moderately likely (TE, p. 38).

5. Processes and factors affecting attainment of project outcomes

5.1 Co-financing. To what extent was the reported co-financing essential to the achievement of GEF objectives? If there was a difference in the level of expected co-financing and actual co-financing, what were the reasons for it? Did the extent of materialization of co-financing affect project's outcomes and/or sustainability? If so, in what ways and through what causal linkages?

By 30 June 2021, 83% of co-financing was delivered, and is expected to be higher in the final financial reports, based on the activities carried out after that date. Lower co-financing was observed in Antigua and Barbuda (32%) due to the impact of COVID-19 that caused the closure of the Fisheries Department and Barbados (70%), due to delays in providing a subvention to the national fisherfolk organization (Final PIR 2021, p. 80) and also from FAO/Western Central Atlantic Fisheries Commission (WCAFC) (21%; TE, p. 47). Also, co-financing was negatively impacted by the closure of the Belize Marine Conservation and Climate Adaptation project and the Conservation of Marine Resources in Central America (in Belize), limitations of funds spent because lack of human resources being able to lend full participation in some components of the project (in Jamaica), and delay in start-up of projects such as COASTFish (in Saint Lucia; Final PIR 2021, p. 80).

5.2 Project extensions and/or delays. If there were delays in project implementation and completion, then what were the reasons for it? Did the delay affect the project's outcomes and/or sustainability? If so, in what ways and through what causal linkages?

The project was extended three times due to the impacts of COVID-19: the first time to 31 July 2021 (automatic extension granted by GEF in the scope of COVID-19) and subsequently to 30 September 2021 in order to compensate for the various delays in implementation. A final extension to 31 March 2022 facilitated the delivery of ICT equipment (TE, p. 34).

5.3 Stakeholder ownership. Assess the extent to which stakeholder ownership has affected project outcomes and sustainability. Describe the ways in which it affected outcomes and sustainability, highlighting the causal links.

The adoption of a highly participatory, bottom-up approach that considered the needs and capacity of the key beneficiaries, resulted in a high level of ownership of the projects and its results among stakeholders (TE, p. 48). The high and significant ownership by fisherfolk, including women, of project results will ensure likely continuation of project benefits, although some difficulties were observed in engaging youth (TE, p. 49).

5.4 Other factors: In case the terminal evaluation discusses other key factors that affected project outcomes, discuss those factors and outline how they affected outcomes, whether positively or negatively. Include factors that may have led to unintended outcomes.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused a disruption of travel to attend workshops and conduct field work (TE, p. 31). The project management team and regional executing partners evaluated the situation, revised the Work Plan and got the support of the Project Task Force and the Regional Project Steering Committee to make the changes necessary to facilitate project delivery with a limited extension in time (Final PIR 2021,

p. 57). This included also moving meetings and workshops on-line, expand training in ICT, covering additional beneficiaries (TE, p. 31), and mobilizing unspent funds to implement two additional sub-projects (see Sections 3.3 and 4.2).

6. Assessment of project's Monitoring and Evaluation system

Ratings are assessed on a six point scale: Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory.

Please justify ratings in the space below each box.

6.1 M&E Design at entry	MS
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The TE rates M&E design as Moderately Satisfactory, and this review concurs. The M&E plan was complete and practical, addressing GEF requirements, and including clear roles and reporting schedule, as well as applicable indicators and tracking tools also at mid-term; however, the quantitative indicators chosen did not allow to capture the achievement of some outputs.

The M&E plan was complete, including clear reporting schedule, an implementation plan with activities, roles and responsibilities, and dedicated budget. Indicators were aligned to the GEF IW tracking tool also at mid-term (TE, p. 40).

The M&E plan was complete and consistent with GEF and FAO requirements, and the design engaged a number of stakeholders. However, only quantitative indicators were established for the achievement of some outputs (TE, p. 22), which do not capture sufficiently the progress of the project and should have been complemented by qualitative indicators (TE, p. 39) and over-all surveys (TE, p. 33) measuring change in capacity, relationships, and new actions by stakeholders (TE, p. 39).

6.2 M&E Implementation	S
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The TE rates M&E implementation as Satisfactory, and this review concurs. The M&E plan as implemented as expected, with regular data collection and use for adaptive management and implementation, and high-quality reporting; the tracking tool was not implemented.

The M&E plan was implemented as expected; the M&E information collected was regularly reported and used to foster learning and adaptive management during implementation, and periodic meetings were held as scheduled. Reporting was of high quality, as it included also significant qualitative information apart from the reporting on indicators (TE, p. 41). Although not compulsory, an MTR was planned to be done, but it was cancelled at the end (TE, p. 41). Also, baseline data were meant to be updated during project implementation, but this was not done (TE, p. 40). The tracking tools was not implemented, which was done by the evaluators (TE, p. 33).

7. Assessment of project implementation and execution

Quality of Implementation rating is based on the assessment of the performance of GEF Agency(s). Quality of Execution rating is based on performance of the executing agency(s). In both instances, the focus is upon factors that are largely within the control of the respective implementing and

executing agency(s). A six-point rating scale is used (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory), or Unable to Assess.

Please justify ratings in the space below each box.

7.1 Quality of Project Implementation	S
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The TE rates quality of project implementation as Satisfactory, and this review concurs. The performance of the implementing agency met the expectations, with good coordination, communication, and adaptive management; the initial delays due to administrative procedures were tackled, although too late to impact the project.

The quality of implementation by FAO was high. The Regional project Steering Committee provided effective oversight and technical guidance (TE, p. 42). FAO showed a high level of adaptive management, both individually and collaboratively with executing partners (TE, p. 22). The dialogue and coordination with partners and beneficiaries were high, thanks to monthly check-in meetings to discuss issues and find solution, a strategy that was innovative and of value especially during COVID-19 (TE, p. 42). FAO faced delays in the approval of the letters of Agreement due to FAO administrative procedures, and in procurement; to address them, it started a process of improvement in administration and operational functioning, which happened too late to impact the project, but are currently giving results (TE, p. 43).

7.2 Quality of Project Execution	HS
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The TE rates quality of project execution as Highly Satisfactory, and this review concurs. The performance of the executing agencies was fundamental to ensure the success of the project, without any flaws, thanks to their experience, effective communication, coordination and adaptive management.

The regional executing agencies were instrumental in the success of the project, showing a high quality of management and delivery of outputs (TE, p. 44). This was possible thanks to: partners' experience and expertise; results-based management; effective and regular communication with FAO and among themselves; participatory planning of activities with beneficiaries; regular and detailed monitoring and reporting, aligned with the PIRs and PPRs; and transparent decision making and tackling problems in a collective manner (TE, p. 44). Executing agencies adapted to changes posed by COVID-19, as well as to delays in project implementation by FAO, by putting in place measures to ensure the execution of project activities (TE, p. 45).

8. Lessons and recommendations

8.1 Briefly describe the key lessons, good practices, or approaches mentioned in the terminal evaluation report, including how they could have application for other GEF projects. Lessons must be based on project experience.

The TE (p. 58-60) proposes the following lessons from project experience:

Lesson 1. It is strategic and effective to have competent regional partners executing most interventions of a project within a collaborative framework. It is also efficient when these partners are responsible for the disbursement of project funds (e.g., through microgrants) to project beneficiaries at the national level. This method helps to circumvent some of the potential issues that can arise from countries' internal administrative procedures and provide an additional level of technical support.

Lesson 2. Regular check-in meetings of the executing partners proved to be an excellent mechanism for coordination in times of unpredictability. Coordination was vital in StewardFish, a project spread over multiple countries, with multiple co-executing partners and with many activities targeting a specific limited audience (the National Fisherfolk Organizations or lead primary fishers' organization) in a short time period. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the regional partners jointly employed local activities coordinators and sought additional synergies in implementing the project activities. The monthly partners check-in meetings, which complemented the less regular PSC meetings, proved to be a valuable mechanism to facilitate coordination among the partners.

Lesson 3. Letters of Agreement between FAO and the regional partners provided an important level of flexibility and supported agile project management. Due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, and to a lesser extent the shock of the volcanic eruption in St. Vincent, the project interventions and methodologies for their implementation had to be modified significantly. The Letters of Agreement proved flexible, allowing for agile management between the partners, and re-allocation of financial resources where needed. On the other hand, revision of Letters of Agreement was sometimes drawn out and caused delays. Having institutional partners who are able to continue the work while Letters of Agreement are being revised is very strategic.

Lesson 4. For a project to empower fisherfolk and build their leadership skills, it must be recognized that their needs, vulnerabilities and capacities vary and project objectives and activities must be tailored accordingly. Equally, the diversity of actors and supporting networks must be embraced.

Lesson 5. Fisherfolk can be motivated to learn to master the needed communication technology skills to participate in on-line delivery of project activities, but on-the-ground activities and physical presence of project personal are also essential since some activities and outputs cannot be achieved through virtual means. Virtual sessions need thorough planning and preparation and in-country liaisons/coordinators are key for their successful implementation. The local coordinators play an important (at time crucial) role in mobilizing the fisherfolk and assist in their optimum participation in online sessions. Engagement with fishers must be frequent and continuous and incentives help to keep them involved to ensure uptake of new practices and promote development of new behaviors. While virtual engagement was necessary due to COVID-19 restrictions, it cannot replace in-person engagement with fishers and their communities who may not have access to or be comfortable with virtual platforms or when activities involve practical on-the-ground actions such as pilot projects on ecosystem stewardship and Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries.

Lesson 6. Pilot projects proved a useful support to larger interventions and objectives. Fisherfolk are more likely to be interested in involvement in projects which demonstrate tangible benefits for the fishing communities and industry. Conducting on-the-ground activities and providing tangible benefits for local

fisher' communities help build satisfaction and sustainability. The series of individual pilot projects were tools for effecting specific localized interventions, generate learning and implement capacity building at the same time.

Lesson 7. Flexibility in project design, execution, and management approach is crucial to increase preparedness and adaptability for unforeseen extreme events, circumstances and crises. The project's regional executing partners were flexible and adaptive, could build synergies and at times, take over tasks from each other. Also, the fact that FAO and the Regional Project Steering Committee allowed the many adjustments as long as they did not change the project objective, greatly assisted in achieving satisfactory project delivery.

Lesson 8. It is useful to reflect on the Logframe of the project around mid-term, in particular its indicators and assumptions/risks and make amendments if needed, even if a mid-term evaluation is not required. The project would have benefited from an internal exercise to review the project's logical framework.

8.2 Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation.

The TE (p. xvi) proposes the following recommendations:

- To Regional Organizations – Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organizations (CNFO) and UWI-Center for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES) should investigate the possibility of certification for courses provided by the CNFO Leadership Institute and the capacity of the latter should be strengthened including through formalized partnerships with other regional organizations to use it as a platform to deliver training to fisherfolk.
- To Regional Organizations - The regional organizations that co-executed the project should investigate and scout opportunities to continue engaging the Fisherfolk organizations in organizational development and leadership building and ecosystem stewardship.
- To FAO/SLC, Regional Organizations and National Governments - Continue to promote the engagement of inter-sectoral stakeholders in EAF and fisheries management through supporting the strengthening of National Inter-sectoral Coordination Mechanisms and Fisheries Advisory Committees.
- To FAO/SLC, Regional Organizations and National Governments - Mobilize staff resources to use the wealth of studies produced, tools and experiences to maximize the utilization of knowledge. Disseminate the products to additional audiences, with a view on GEF-8 (which will have a focus on SIDS).
- To FAO at large - FAO should introduce Results-Based financial reporting for the projects it implements.
- To FAO/SLC - In future institutional and project programming activities, build on the foundation laid by StewardFish in gender analysis and the processes initiated to empower women engaged in the fisheries industry.

9. Quality of the Terminal Evaluation Report

A six-point rating scale is used for each sub-criteria and overall rating of the terminal evaluation report (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory)

Criteria/indicators of terminal evaluation quality	GEF IEO COMMENTS	Rating
1. Timeliness: terminal evaluation report was carried out and submitted on time?	The TE was finalized more than 6 months after, and submitted within 12 months from, project closure	S
2. General information: Provides general information on the project and evaluation as per the requirement?	The TE provides GEF project ID, list of the executing agencies, key project milestones and GEF environmental objectives, and lists evaluators	HS
3. Stakeholder involvement: the report was prepared in consultation with – and with feedback from - key stakeholders?	The TE identified key stakeholders and incorporated their feedback for TE finalization	HS
4. Theory of change: provides solid account of the project's theory of change?	The TE presents the theory of change, discussing causal links and mechanisms to achieve intended impact, key assumptions, and indicates the assessment of whether these remained valid	HS
5. Methodology: Provides an informative and transparent account of the methodology?	The TE provides a complete account of the methodology used, including sources, list of interviewees, project activities and sites, and identifies limitations	HS
6. Outcome: Provides a clear and candid account of the achievement of project outcomes?	The TE assesses relevance to GEF, FAO, and national priorities, and of project design; rates effectiveness for all targets and discusses factors that affected it; evaluates efficiency and timeliness	HS
7. Sustainability: Presents realistic assessment of sustainability?	The TE provides a comprehensive evaluation of sustainability, including all risks, their likelihood and impacts, and an overall rating	HS
8. M&E: Presents sound assessment of the quality of the M&E system?	The TE thoroughly evaluates M&E design and implementation, including the use of information for adaptive management	HS

9. Finance: Reports on utilization of GEF funding and materialization of co-financing?	The TE reports on use of GEF resources, type, sources, and quantity of co-financing and discusses reasons for excess/deficient materialization, but not how this affected project results	S
10. Implementation: Presents a candid account of project implementation and Agency performance?	The TE evaluates implementation and execution of the project, discussing factors that affected their performance and how challenges were addressed	HS
11. Safeguards: Provides information on application of environmental and social safeguards, and conduct and use of gender analysis?	The TE reports on safeguards and on the gender analysis, including related actions	HS
12. Lessons and recommendations are supported by the project experience and are relevant to future programming?	The TE includes lessons based on project experience and discusses their applicability; it presents recommendations with clear action taker and description of action needed	HS
13. Ratings: Ratings are well-substantiated by evidence, realistic and convincing?	Ratings are supported with sufficient and credible evidence	HS
14. Report presentation: The report was well-written, logically organized, and consistent?	The TE is written in English; it is well written, easy to read, well-organized, consistent, and makes good use of tables and charts	HS
Overall quality of the report		HS

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

ANNEX 1. GEF IEO THEORY OF CHANGE FRAMEWORK

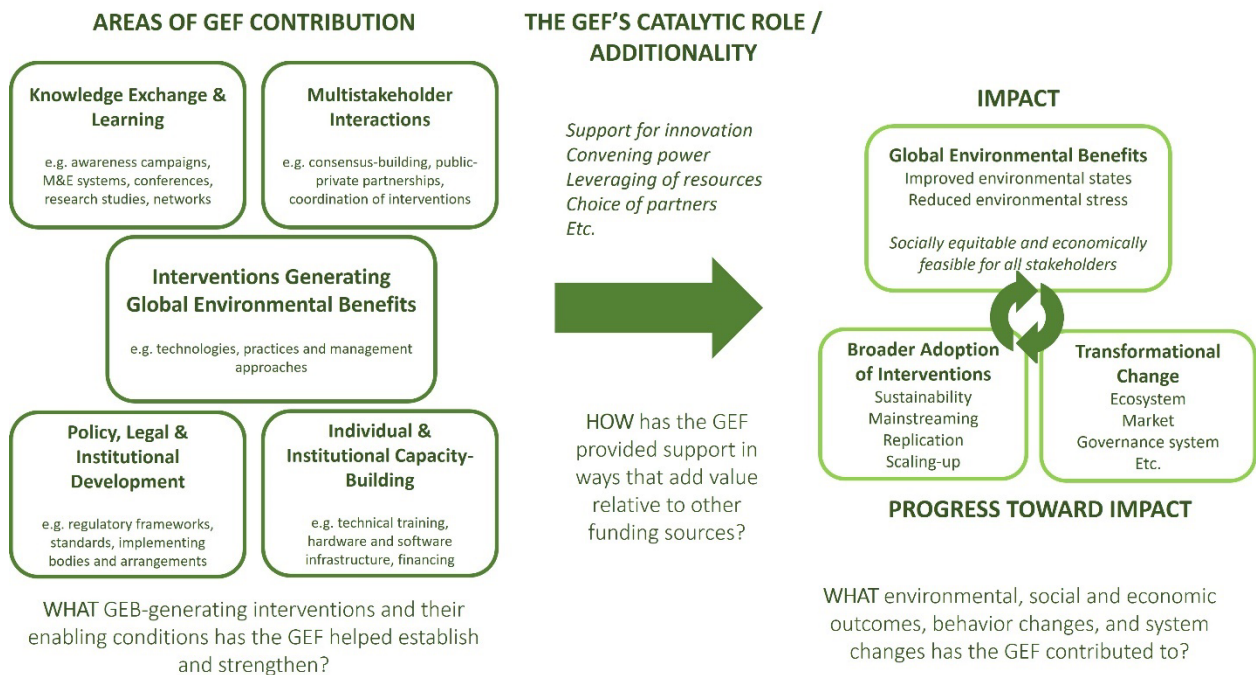


Figure 1. The GEF IEO's updated Theory of Change Framework on how the GEF achieves impact

The general framework for the GEF's theory of change (figure 1) draws on the large amount of evaluative evidence on outcomes and impact gathered over the years by the GEF Independent Evaluation Office. The framework diagram has been updated to reflect the IEO's learning since OPSS5 (GEF IEO 2014, p. 47-50) about how the GEF achieves impact, as well as the evolution of the GEF's programming toward more integrated systems-focused and scaled-up initiatives.

The framework outlines the three main areas that the IEO assesses in its evaluations: a) the GEF's contributions in establishing and strengthening both the interventions that directly generate global environmental benefits, and the enabling conditions that allow these interventions to be implemented and adopted by stakeholders, b) the GEF's catalytic role or additionality in the way that the GEF provides support within the context of other funding sources and partners, and c) the environmental, social and economic outcomes that the GEF has contributed to, and the behavior and system changes that generate these outcomes during and beyond the period of GEF support.

The circular arrow between impact and progress toward impact, as before, indicates how bringing about positive environmental change is an iterative process that involves behavior change (in the form of a broader group of stakeholders adopting interventions) and/or systems change (which is a key characteristic of transformational change). These three areas of change can take place in any sequence or simultaneously in a positively reinforcing cycle, and are therefore assessed by the GEF IEO as indicators of impact.

Assessing the GEF's progress toward achieving impact allows the IEO to determine the extent to which GEF support contributes to a trajectory of large-scale, systemic change, especially in areas where changes in the environment can only be measured over longer time horizons. The updated diagram in particular expands the assessment of progress towards impact to include transformational change, which specifically takes place at the system level, and not necessarily over a long time period.

The updated diagram also more explicitly identifies the link between the GEF's mandate of generating global environmental benefits, and the GEF's safeguards to ensure that positive environmental outcomes also enhance or at the very least do not take away from the social and economic well-being of the people who depend on the environment. Thus the IEO assesses impact not only in terms of environmental outcomes, but also in terms of the synergies and trade-offs with the social and economic contexts in which these outcomes are achieved.

ANNEX 2. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Intervention	Any programmatic approach, full-sized project, medium-sized project, or enabling activity financed from any GEF-managed trust fund, as well as regional and national outreach activities. In the context of post-completion evaluation, an intervention may consist of a single project, or multiple projects (i.e. phased or parallel) with explicitly linked objectives contributing to the same specific impacts within the same specific geographical area and sector. https://www.gefio.org/evaluations/gef-evaluation-policy-2019
Activity (of an intervention)	An action undertaken over the duration of an intervention that contributes to the achievement of the intervention's objectives, i.e. an intervention is implemented through a set of activities. E.g. training, (support to) policy development, (implementation of) management approach.
Outcome	An intended or achieved short- or medium-term effect of a project or program's outputs. https://www.gefio.org/evaluations/gef-evaluation-policy-2019
Impact	The positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a project or program, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. https://www.gefio.org/evaluations/gef-evaluation-policy-2019
Environmental outcomes	Changes in environmental indicators that could take the following forms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stress reduction: reduction or prevention of threats to the environment, especially those caused by human behavior (local communities, societies, economies) • Environmental state: biological, physical changes in the state of the environment http://www.gefio.org/sites/default/files/ieo/evaluations/ops5-final-report-eng.pdf
Social and economic outcomes	Changes in indicators affecting human well-being at the individual or higher scales, e.g. income or access to capital, food security, health, safety, education, cooperation/ conflict resolution, and equity in distribution/ access to benefits, especially among marginalized groups.
Synergies	Multiple benefits achieved in more than one focal area as a result of a <i>single intervention</i> , or benefits achieved from the interaction of outcomes from at least two separate interventions in addition to those achieved, had the interventions been done independently.

	http://www.gefio.org/evaluations/evaluation-multiple-benefits-gef-support-through-its-multifocal-area-portfolio-map-2016
Trade-offs	A reduction in one benefit in the process of maximizing or increasing another benefit. http://www.gefio.org/evaluations/evaluation-multiple-benefits-gef-support-through-its-multifocal-area-portfolio-map-2016
Broader adoption	The adoption of GEF-supported interventions by governments and other stakeholders beyond the original scope and funding of a GEF-supported intervention. This may take place through sustaining, replication, mainstreaming, and scaling-up of an intervention and/or its enabling conditions (see definitions below). http://www.gefio.org/sites/default/files/ieo/evaluations/ops5-final-report-eng.pdf
Sustainability	The continuation/ likely continuation of positive effects from the intervention after it has come to an end, and its potential for scale-up and/or replication; interventions need to be environmentally as well as institutionally, financially, politically, culturally and socially sustainable. https://www.gefio.org/evaluations/gef-evaluation-policy-2019
Replication	When a GEF intervention is reproduced at a comparable administrative or ecological scale, often in different geographical areas or regions. http://www.gefio.org/sites/default/files/ieo/evaluations/ops5-final-report-eng.pdf
Mainstreaming	When information, lessons, or specific aspects of a GEF initiative are incorporated into a broader stakeholder initiative. This may occur not only through governments but also in development organizations and other sectors. http://www.gefio.org/sites/default/files/ieo/evaluations/ops5-final-report-eng.pdf
Scaling-up	Increasing the magnitude of global environment benefits (GEBs), and/or expanding the geographical and sectoral areas where they are generated to cover a defined ecological, economic, or governance unit. May occur through replication, mainstreaming, and linking. http://www.gefio.org/evaluations/evaluation-gef-support-scaling-impact-2019
Transformational change	Deep, systemic, and sustainable change with large-scale impact in an area of major environmental concern. Defined by four criteria: relevance, depth of change, scale of change, and sustainability. http://www.gefio.org/evaluations/evaluation-gef-support-transformational-change-2017
Additionality	a) Changes in the attainment of direct project outcomes at project completion that can be attributed to GEF's interventions; these can be reflected in an acceleration of the adoption of reforms, the enhancement of outcomes, or the reduction of risks and greater viability of project interventions. b) Spill-over effects beyond project outcomes that may result from systemic reforms, capacity development, and socio-economic changes. c) Clearly articulated pathways to achieve broadening of the impact beyond project completion that can be associated with GEF interventions. https://www.gefio.org/sites/default/files/ieo/council-documents/files/c-55-me-inf-01.pdf