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Acronyms

ADG	Assistant Director General
AM	Adaptive Management
BH	Budget Holder
C&R	Conclusions and Recommendations
CAS	Chinese Academy of Sciences
CBD	Convention on Bio-Diversity
CDD	Community Driven Development
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CET	Centre for Education and Technology (Chile)
CMP	Conservation Measures Partnership
COAG	Committee on Agriculture
COP	Conference of Parties
CPF	Country Programme Framework
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DENR	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
ERAHS	East Asia Association for Agricultural Heritage Systems
FAOR	FAO Representation / Representative
FE	Final Evaluation
FO	Functional Objective
FSP	Full Scale Project
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
GIAHS	Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems
GPI	Global Partnership Initiative
HQ	Head Quarters
HR	Human Resources
IGSNRR	Institute for Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research (China)
iGS	interim GIAHS Secretariat
INIA	National Institute for Agricultural Research
INRAA	National Institute for Agricultural Research in Algeria
INGO	International Non-Government Organisations
ISC	International Steering Committee
LEGA	(FAO) Legal Office / Branch
LFM	Logical Framework Matrix
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoE	Ministry of Environment
MTE	Mid Term Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
n/a	not available
NSC	National Steering Committee
NIAHS	Nationally Important Agricultural Heritage System
NR	Natural Resource
NRL	Natural Resources Land Department
OED	Office of Evaluation
OP	Operational Programme
PDF	Project Development Fiche
PES	Payment for Ecosystem Services

PGRFA	Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
PM&E	Planning Monitoring and Evaluation
ProDoc	Project Document
RAF	Resource Allocation Framework
RP	Regular Programme
SAC	Scientific Advisory Committee
SC	Steering Committee
TL	Evaluation Team Leader
SO	Strategic Objective
SMART	Specific Measurable Assignable Realistic and Time-related (indicators)
SWOT	Strength Weakness Opportunities Threats
TOR	Terms of Reference
TL	Team Leader
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WHS	World Heritage Site
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development

Executive Summary

ES1. OED launched the final evaluation (FE) of the FAO/GEF-funded initiative, “Conservation and Adaptive Management of Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems” (the Project) in June 2014. The independent evaluation team comprised two experts, Mr. W. Olding and Mr. P. Warren (see Annex 2). The main purpose of the FE was to, determine progress being made towards the achievement of outcomes, taking into account the recommendations of the MTE, and also, to recommend further follow up and other course correction, if needed. In addition, the evaluation was intended to support FAO’s thematic evaluation work on Genetic Resources.

ES2. The Project’s goal echo’s Convention of Bio-Diversity’s (CBD) Article 10(c) was “*To protect and encourage customary use of biological resources in accordance with traditional cultural practices that are compatible with conservation or sustainable use requirements.*” The Immediate objective of the Project was: “To promote conservation and adaptive management of globally significant agricultural biodiversity harboured in globally important agricultural heritage systems or GIAHS”. GEF agreed to provide a budget of USD 3.5 m. over a period of five years (2008-13) to achieve four expected outcomes established in the ProDoc1. (please refer to Annex 1) :

ES3. The FE’s work methodology centred on an evaluation matrix (Annex 6) to guide its document review and field visits in the following countries and GIAHS sites:

- **Algeria:** Ghout Agricultural System at El-Oued Souf, part of the Oases of Beni Isguen (desk review and telephone/Skype interviews only);
- **Chile:** Chiloe Archipelago in Region IX (field visit conducted to the site)
- **China:** 1) Qingtian Rice-Fish Culture System, Zhejiang Province; 2) Shaoxing Kaujishan Ancient Chinese Torreya Tree System, Zhejiang Province and; 3) Honghe Hani Rice Terraces System, Yunnan Province (field visit conducted in all three sites);
- **Peru:** Cusco-Puno Corridor covering four micro-watersheds in Lamay and Lares Districts in Cusco Region and Caritamyá and San José in Puno Region (field visit conducted in both regions);
- **Philippines:** Ifugao Rice Terraces in Luzon Region, (desk review and telephone interviews);
- **Tunisia:** The Historic Oasis System of Gafsa (desk review and Skype interviews only);

ES4. The GIAHS overall concept was first conceived under the Global Partnership Initiative (GPI) launched in 2002 at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa and designed to articulate with CBD’s “Agricultural Biodiversity Work Programme” (1996) and GEF’s Operational Programme No. 13: “Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity of Importance to Agriculture” (2000).

¹ **Outcome 1 (Global):** An internationally accepted system for recognition of GIAHS is in place; **Outcome 2 (National):** The conservation and adaptive management of globally significant agricultural biodiversity harboured in GIAHS is mainstreamed in sector and inter-sector plans and policies in the pilot countries; **Outcome 3 (Local):** Globally significant agro-biodiversity in pilot GIAHS is being managed and sustainably used; **Outcome 4 (Global, National, Local):** Lessons learned and best practices from the pilot Project are widely disseminated to support expansion and up-scaling of GIAHS in other areas/countries and creation of the GIAHS network.

ES5. The ProDoc conceived in early 2008, was originally designed with a budget of USD 6.0 m. from GEF.

ES6. The FE identified a number of design faults evident at the launch of the Project in June 2008. The most significant was the fact the ProDoc was not downsized in terms of its expected outputs and outcomes following the decision of GEF to provide a much smaller budget than planned (USD 3.5 m.). A second important deficiency was the need to establish national project frameworks with the pilot countries before activities could commence. This resulted in considerable delays in implementation of GIAHS in the pilot countries, which in some cases reduced Project activities to as much as half the implementation period planned.

ES7. The Project's theory of change emphasized the global patrimonial value of GIAHS in two ways. First, GIAHS recognises and values at the international level local knowledge and autochthonous technology that has helped establish sustainable and resilient agricultural systems. Second, GIAHS can also be promoted on the international stage as important repositories of bio- and cultural diversity, which humankind cannot afford to lose, because some of its elements (e.g. plant genetic resources for food and agriculture) are important to the future development humankind in terms of food security and sovereignty as well as adaptation to climate change.

ES8. In addition, GIAHS responds to the current threats that risk their continuation; the most important being the loss of local knowledge and practices due to the outward migration of youths and men in search of greater financial security (at the expense of spiritual and social wealth tied into local knowledge, rituals and practices). In particular it focuses attention on educating and supporting governments (national and local), civil society and the farmers themselves that by introducing dynamic forms of conservation and adaptive management through on-site diversification of income sources, adding value to produce, establishing the payment for the environmental services, etc. GIAHS can survive and even thrive.

ES9. The Project design was conceived as a rather ambitious test of the theory of change and was not based on a coherent logical framework (LF) in which results indicators were linked to targets and timelines. In addition, the indicators were not established with baseline data. This limited helped limit internal M&E to mainly operational achievements, rather than support decision makers with results-based information and progress.

ES10. The management structure of the Project was clear and coherent. It was headed by an International Steering Committee (ISC), an interim GIAHS Secretariat (originally conceived as the Global Project Implementation Unit) and supported by a Scientific Committee to mainly support the selection of GIAHS sites and the establishment of national focal points. However, the proposal in the ProDoc to establish a Consultative Group (representing key international stakeholders from UNDP, UNESCO, World Bank, CBD-Secretariat, Bioversity International, INGOs, CSOs, etc.) and a Technical Group (pool of short-term international experts) did not materialise, mainly due to the budget shortfall.

ES11. The budget shortfall was also instrumental in the iGS's decision to downscale its human resources to just two main staff, supported by temporary staff inputs from interns and JPOs. This overloaded the iGS and reduced its capacity to coordinate, support, monitor and communicate developments in the pilot countries. This was not aided by the lack of a risk mitigation strategy as an integral part of project management (also absent in the LF).

ES12. Financial management by the Budget Holder was supportive and expenditure was maintained in line with the budget allocation for outcomes 1-4. However, when the distribution of this expenditure is broken down by country, figures confirm all countries received fewer funds than planned to support activities within the GIAHS sites (except China). This was particularly the case for Chile, Peru and the Philippines. Accounts confirm funds were reallocated from activities to cover management-related costs in these countries (equivalent to a 27.4% increase).

ES13. In terms of the efficiency and effectiveness of the institutional arrangements the role and responsibilities of the ISC were limited. In the six years of implementation 2008-14 (GEF granted a no cost one-year extension to end June 2014) the ISC convened only twice. On both occasions it mainly acted as a platform for the pilot countries and new partner countries to inform each other about their sites and to rubber stamp the official approval of newly selected GIAHS sites. On the latter, the FE identified some limitations in the GIAHS selection process that need to be addressed in future. For example, insufficient time was given to the SAC to assess new GIAHS proposals prior to the ISC meetings. There is also a lack of a clear and standardized weighting/scoring system to support the selection of GIAHS sites. It was also noted the SAC should have more representatives from the pilot countries, as currently only China is represented.

ES14. Concerning the administrative and technical support provided by the iGS, a major finding is it became too dependent on the NR Department (given the iGS director was also the NR Director from 2008-13). Despite the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding to allow for joint implementation agreements between iGS and different FAO departments, none entered into force. At the country level, National Steering Committees (NSC) were only established in China and Chile where GIAHS and the national equivalent (NIAHS) have been/will be formally established. At the local level, stakeholders and beneficiaries were found to be the true champions of GIAHS, aided by the GIAHS coordinators who in the case of the site visits to China, Peru and Chile were found to be highly motivated, qualified and aware of the value of GIAHS. This was also confirmed by the majority of the 121 beneficiaries interviewed in these three countries given they had been instrumental in galvanizing support and alliances with governor/municipal institutions, CSOs, agricultural research institutions, etc.

Achievements of Outputs and Outcomes

ES15. The number of outputs delivered in relation to Outcome 1, was less than planned in the ProDoc. In particular the Project was unable to secure the Public Endorsement of the GIAHS concept, definition and criteria by key international institutions and pilot country governments (output 1.1). As a result the legal status of GIAHS remains unrecognized at the global level meaning the Project was unable to deliver the establishment of a sustainable financing mechanism and institutional support for consolidating and expanding the GIAHS approach as a long-term open-ended programme (output 1.3). In conclusion, the Project has not been able to attain Outcome 1 so far. Nonetheless, the fact Algeria, China, Chile and most recently Peru are committed to supporting and/or financing GIAHS and its replication (which in China already includes NIAHS) provides positive evidence there is strong demand for the international recognition of GIAHS to be resolved. This is further confirmed by the large number of countries who have either become/are applying to be a part of the GIAHS “movement”.

ES16. Output delivery under Outcome 2 was more positive. Identification and implementation of specific measures through which sectoral and inter-sectoral policies and regulations are improved to support conservation and adaptive management of GIAHS (output 2.2) has been delivered in most countries.

ES17. Outputs planned under Outcome 3 were delivered in all pilot countries. The establishment of appropriate stakeholder set-ups (output 3.1) were established in all sites to support local farmers (men and women) come together with customary, state and non-government institutions to engage in collaborative management and promotion of GIAHS. The identification and monitoring of political and socio-economic processes that impact biodiversity and cultural values in GIAHS (output 3.2) was realised at all sites to support local communities value their traditional practices, such as the production of native varieties using organic production methods. On the latter, the Project has supported these methods by deploying environmentally friendly technologies and practices to support the management and productive capacity of agro-ecosystems and their traditional crops (output 3.3). This included environmentally friendly farming practices (Philippines), production of natural pesticides (Peru) and labeling of GIAHS products (China and Chile). Activities were also conducted to promote alternative and/or supplementary livelihoods to assist people meet the challenges of reduced opportunities of working directly on the land (output 3.4). These included the development of arts and crafts, food processing and agro-tourism, promoting local restaurants, shops etc. In conclusion, Outcome 3 has been attained, although more time and resources are required to consolidate it in all pilot countries.

ES18. Finally, planned outputs under Outcome 4 were largely not delivered; namely the implementation of a robust M&E system at global and country levels, the publication on lessons learned from the pilot countries and the preparation of scientific material. Outcome 4 has, therefore, not been attained.

ES19. On Gender and Ethnic Equality the ProDoc included a gender focus, but there is no specific reference to it in the outputs and indicators in the ProDoc or its LFM. This is surprising because the Project relies heavily on rural women and indigenous peoples as key knowledge holders in the GIAHS sites (especially where husbands and sons have migrated) and this should have been an important focus in the reporting. Nonetheless, during the field visits in China, Peru and Chile, the evaluation team interviewed a high level of women beneficiaries in the Project (45% of all end beneficiaries interviewed). In the majority of interviews women (including indigenous women) confirmed they had benefited from the training provided by the Project in alternative livelihoods, which they confirmed had helped them increase monthly income.

ES20. No specific reference was found in the ProDoc and its LFM on activities specifically dedicated to the human-rights based approach, in particular the rights of indigenous peoples living in the GIAHS sites concerned. Nevertheless, the findings from the desk review and field visits confirm that in all cases the Project has respected and supported the human-rights of indigenous peoples, including indigenous women, by recognising, valuing, supporting and promoting their cultural and traditional practices. This has important implications on the human-rights based approach that centres on the rights of the individual and also indicates GIAHS offers a unique learning opportunity into the way indigenous peoples have established and adapted their agricultural heritage systems in harmony with the landscape, the natural resources and the wider ecosystem. In this sense an important lesson learned is that where GIAHS involves indigenous peoples, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples must be the basis for this approach.

ES21. Concerning the promotion and development of partnerships and alliances the evaluation team did not identify specific partnerships and alliances developed by the Project to support an efficient and effective delivery of activities. However, the Project has been a catalyst in capturing funding from donors at new GIAHS sites, including IFAD, BMELV and Japan.

Analysis by Evaluation Criteria

ES22. Relevance: the Project remains highly relevant at all levels witnessed by policy reforms and/or financial commitments to continue the GIAHS initiative, the growth of GIAHS sites to 31 to date covering 14 member countries and it continues to support the implementation of major international agreements and declarations (MDGs, CBD, ITPGRFA, etc.). However, it remains unclear as to how far FAO-HQ is willing to support and lobby for the upgrading of the GIAHS initiative into a regular programme at the Conference in 2015.

ES23. Efficiency: despite the major shortfall in the Project's budget at the start of operations, the lack of a corresponding downscaling of outputs and outcomes and the delays endured in implementation before the country framework agreements were signed with FAO/iGS, the Project still managed to deliver outputs and outcomes, particularly relating to outcomes 2 and 3 in a majority of the six pilot countries and within the GIAHS sites. As a result, the Project did represent value for money, although this was most evident in Algeria, China and Chile.

ES24. Effectiveness: the Project has successfully promoted the conservation and adaptive management of globally significant agricultural biodiversity harboured in globally important agricultural heritage systems at the national and local levels. At the global level considerable effort is needed from the GIAHS member countries to lobby for the official international recognition of GIAHS as currently GIAHS sites can only be recognised legally at the pilot country level, (notably in China since June 2014). Furthermore, the Project did not communicate effectively information on progress, data collection, findings, lessons learned and best practice, etc., that would have provided key stakeholders and FAO with greater capacity to lobby in favour of GIAHS and its recognition on the world stage.

ES25. Sustainability: the current prospects for sustaining and up-scaling GIAHS on the global stage are low given GEF funding ended on 30 June 2014 and no clear decision has been taken within FAO as to whether it will actively lobby support for GIAHS to be adopted as a regular programme within FAO at the Conference in June 2015. This is important, as the adoption of GIAHS as a regular programme will ensure important, albeit limited, funding will be made available to continue GIAHS and, thus look for new donors and funding opportunities to consolidate and upscale the GIAHS movement. Meanwhile, the sustainability of NIAHS is assured in China and in Chile it plans are in place to integrate it as an official agricultural policy commitment that will be supported by adequate institutional capacity and finance.

ES26. Impact: the initial impact of the Project at the global level has been to establish the structure and mechanisms to allow the GIAHS movement grow. To date this has reached a total of 31 GIAHS sites involving 14 partner countries. It has also galvanised FAO country offices to support the up-scaling of GIAHS, most recently witnessed by FAO-RLC holding the international seminar on Cultural Diversity in Cuzco (November 2014) to establish a regional network to promote GIAHS in the Americas. At the country level, the impact of the

Project is most evident in China, where there are now a total of 11 GIAHS sites and some 39 NIAHS sites, which are part of national agricultural policy since June 2014.

Key Conclusions and Recommendations

ES27. GIAHS represents a “movement” with the goal is to support the conservation and adaptive management of as many agricultural systems as possible that meet GIAHS selection criteria. There is thus an urgent need for FAO-HQ to address the future of GIAHS.

Recommendation 1: to FAO.

The evaluation team supports the on-going discussion to incorporate GIAHS into FAO’s RP and recommends that FAO seriously considers this proposal at FAO Conference in June 2015.

ES28. There is no formal international recognition of GIAHS. However, it is evident there is growing demand around the world to join the GIAHS movement. Interviews in the field have also confirmed that GIAHS can add value to the products and services and promotes local and national identity, as well as sectoral interests.

Recommendation 2: to ISC.

To improve the transparency of the decision-making process concerning the designation of GIAHS sites, it is recommended the SAC members are allowed to receive and assess all GIAHS applications in an independent manner to determine their validity against a clear and coherent set of selection criteria and scoring system.

ES29. To implement Recommendation 2 the ET proposes the following:

- i The results should be communicated to the iGS and ISC members at least six weeks before any decision-making by the ISC is planned to allow candidate countries time to respond should the SAC’s decision be negative.
- ii The decision is standardised into one of three categories. For example: 1) Meets GIAHS Selection Criteria; 2) More Information Required; 3) Does Not Meet GIAHS Selection Criteria.
- iii SAC includes more members from developing countries (at least one per region) and that they sit on the SAC for up to five years.

ES30. There is a general lack of a legal and normative framework to integrate GIAHS into national sector/inter-sectoral policies and plans. However, lessons learned in China, confirm all member countries should consider adopting NIAHS to aid national policy promote (and legalize nationally) the GIAHS sites.

Recommendation 3: to ISC and iGS.

It is highly recommended NIAHS is promoted at the national level to facilitate the mainstreaming of GIAHS in national policies, strategies and plans and to strengthen the ownership and alignment of GIAHS at the local, national and, ultimately, global levels. It is also recommended lessons learnt from China are taken into account and specific funding is allocated to support countries who are officially committed to GIAHS/NIAHS or who wish to study it’s potential introduction as a pilot initiative. In the Americas, it is recommended FAO-RLC designates a person to act on the agreements reached in Cuzco at the international seminar on 04-07 November 2014 and follows up with FAO-Peru on the Aide Memoire prepared with the Evaluation team on 18 July 2014.

ES31. Achievement of outputs planned under outcome 4 was largely unfulfilled. This included the global publication on lessons learned on the Project cycle as well as a lack of scientific material conducted within the GIAHS sites.

Recommendation 4: to ISC and iGS.

It is recommended that the lessons learnt publication for the GEF-funded Project is prepared with a specific section on the benefits that derive from the designation of GIAHS sites as well as the associated risks. It is of particular importance to focus on the benefits and risks as perceived by the beneficiaries and the stakeholders. Risks should include any potential change in traditional rotation practices due to the increase in demand for selected crops and/or services and how far risk management strategies incorporate local knowledge, practices and technologies to promote resilient communities that are climate smart.

ES32. GIAHS was found to be highly supportive of indigenous peoples' needs and rights by recognising their ancestral knowledge and practices and involving them in the implementation of capacity building activities within their communities. However, the establishment of a management/master plan to manage each GIAHS site needs to be reviewed because IPs have a different notion of management enshrined in a "life plan" that has no limited time horizon.

Recommendation 5: to ISC iGS and SAC.

It is recommended to specifically review the selection criterion concerning the need for a management/master plan for GIAHS/NIAHS sites where there are IPs. It is important this criterion does not impose a "contemporary" condition on those systems that have been managed by "ancestral" planning methods incorporating their own cosmovision and rituals. Furthermore, in the interests of respecting the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, in particular their right to self determination, the iGS and SAC should assess the possibility of including the provision that a "life plan" has been identified in accordance with traditional best practices and that this will be the basis upon which adaptive management, gender focus and dynamic conservation of the GIAHS sites will be assessed promoted and monitored.²

ES33. The decision to execute the Project through the Ministries of Environment in four countries was less effective than in China and Chile where the Ministries of Agriculture assumed the role main focal points.

Recommendation 6: to FAO, ISC, iGS and all new partner countries.

It is recommended that FAO facilitates the involvement of appropriate Government authorities in all future activities relating to the establishment, implementation and consolidation of GIAHS (and NIAHS). This could lead to the establishment of a national committee including the Ministry of Agriculture and other relevant ministries as deemed fit (such as the ministries responsible for tourism, culture/heritage and tertiary economic development). To support this process, the FAO Country Representations should preferably designate one (or more) officials responsible to help facilitate this development and support iGS activities agreed with the national focal points.

² Indigenous communities expressed their concern that externally imposed "development/master plans" based on short political cycles conflict with internal indigenous systems where time conditions do not prevail because internal leadership is rotated within the community on a one or two-year basis in most cases.

ES34. The internal M&E of the Project functioned as a simple database to track operations and used to prepare six-monthly progress reports. The M&E system was therefore not used to track results (outcomes) and support planning and lessons learned as originally intended.

Recommendation 7: to iGS and partner country focal points.

It is recommended the GIAHS (and NIAHS) sites incorporate an internal results-based monitoring capacity that reports to a national committee and the iGS. Results indicators should be set with beneficiaries and local and national stakeholders and concentrate on a limited number of indicators relating to ethnological, socio-cultural, environmental, infrastructure and economic issues. Indicators must be linked to base line data.

ES35. The Project lacked an effective communication strategy to circulate important information and engage debate on progress, findings, lessons learned and best practices. For example, the association of FAO with GIAHS was found to enhance the overall legitimacy of GIAHS products and services and add value at the same time.

ES36. The project should also explicitly address gender mainstreaming and systematically report on women's participation and access to resources.

Recommendation 8: to ISC, iGS and FAO-HQ.

It is recommended GIAHS (and NIAHS) is supported by an effective communication strategy that provides information and data on key findings and lessons learnt in accordance with the needs of different audiences. This information should include gender-specific findings and recommendations providing details on women and other marginalised groups' access to resources, training and information and should be based on clearly defined indicators and targets. Information on other cross-cutting themes, such as natural resource management and environment, should also be included.

ES37. The sustainability of GIAHS is currently not clear, following the termination of GEF funding on 30 June 2014, meaning the current financing of the iGS and the up-scaling of GIAHS remains uncertain. Despite, the recent adoption of GIAHS at the COAG in its latest meeting in October 2014 much work is required before the approval of GIAHS can be secured as a regular programme as proposed in Recommendation 1. To help secure the approval of GIAHS as a regular programme, FAO-HQ needs an interim solution to GIAHS.

Recommendation 9: to FAO.

FAO identifies a "financial bridging facility" as soon as possible from internal funds to cover the period until at least 01 July 2015 to show it is serious about supporting GIAHS as a RP at the Conference in June 2015.

ES38. To implement Recommendation 9 the ET suggests the following:

- This bridging phase should ensure at least two consultants and a secretary are employed in the iGS to manage the iGS (one permanent global coordinator, one senior expert and the technical officer). A key activity is to work with the FAO country offices on lobbying the partner countries to support the adoption of GIAHS as a RP in June 2015.
- In Latin America, the FAO-RLC should take a leading role ensuring a staff member is designated time and resources to support the lobbying process as well as build up the Regional Network for the GIAHS and act on the recommendations agreed at the International Seminar in Cuzco (04-07 November 2014), building on the conclusion, recommendations and lessons learnt provided in the present evaluation report.

- The iGS identifies the regular programme proposal in coordination with partner countries based on the up-scaling of GIAHS and NIAHS as a fundamental premise in the RP, as well as in a global and regional networking and communication strategy.
- Ensure the GIAHS proposal at the Conference includes greater participation of FAO Departments (in particular Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries) and has identified a suitable funding mechanism to ensure the long-term sustainability of adaptive management of the GIAHS sites. On this, the evaluation team recommends a study is completed including the establishment of a global “GIAHS-NIAHS Trust Fund”.

Key Lessons Learnt

- When a project funding is less than planned a corresponding reduction in the scope of project outputs and outcomes is essential to avoid work overload and safeguard effectiveness;
- The human rights-based approach promoted in any continuation of GIAHS needs to be explicit on its respect for the principles of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, where IPs are concerned;
- GIAHS needs to be founded on NIAHS within the partner countries to help reduce the current legal vacuum that exists (except China), to strengthen the ownership of GIAHS at all levels and to facilitate the promotion of GIAHS labelling of products and services.
- Projects with several expected outcomes should adopt a clear and coherent phased approach to aid indicative and annual planning as well as monitoring of results-based indicators (SMART) and the closure phase with a pre-determined exit strategy that includes a next steps plan.
- GIAHS facilitates dialogue between national government and indigenous communities on issues of mutual interest that national governments and indigenous peoples have generally not been able to open by themselves.
- GEF funding acted as seed capital enabling governments to become aware of the value and benefits of GIAHS and then taking over more control by making public funding available (Algeria, China, Chile);
- Employing qualified and motivated staff/experts at all levels of GIAHS is at least of equal importance to the financial resources made available. As a result, the provision of funds is not the prerequisite of success;
- GIAHS strengthens local and national identity through the unique goods and services they produce or provide, (especially in relation to gastronomy and agro/eco-tourism) and the GIAHS label offers consumers in developed countries the opportunity to purchase these goods and services in support of the continuation of the sustainable agricultural systems from where they came. This is a much more powerful action than purchasing products that are merely labelled organic, or which are part of the Fairtrade network.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background and purposes of the evaluation

1. The Final Evaluation (FE) of the Project was launched by OED in accordance with the FAO/Global Environment Facility Project Document (ProDoc) and the outcomes of the Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) of the GIAHS initiative(April -September 2012).

2. The purpose of the FE, as stated in the Terms of Reference is to, “determine progress being made towards the achievement of outcomes, taking into account the recommendations of the MTE, and also, to recommend further follow up and other course correction, if needed. It will focus on the effectiveness, efficiency and timeliness of project implementation; will highlight issues requiring decisions and follow up actions; identify lessons learned about project design, implementation and management; and highlight technical achievements and lessons learned. Findings of the evaluation will also contribute to the thematic evaluation of FAO’s work on Genetic Resources” (see Annexes 1 and 2).

3. The FE covers the whole project cycle, paying particular attention to progress and achievements since the MTE (June 2012) to determine how far the FAO/GEF GIAHS Project (the Project) has achieved its four main expected outcomes (also termed components) and met project objectives. The goal, objectives and expected outcomes in the ProDoc are summarised as follows:

- Goal: To protect and encourage customary use of biological resources in accordance with traditional cultural practices that are compatible with conservation or sustainable use requirements.”³
- Immediate objective: To promote conservation and adaptive management of globally significant agricultural biodiversity harboured in globally important agricultural heritage systems or GIAHS⁴.
 - Outcome 1 (Global): An internationally accepted system for recognition of GIAHS is in place.
 - Outcome 2 (National): The conservation and adaptive management of globally significant agricultural biodiversity harboured in GIAHS is mainstreamed in sector and inter-sector plans and policies in the pilot countries.
 - Outcome 3 (Local): Globally significant agro-biodiversity in pilot GIAHS is being managed and sustainably used by empowering local communities and harnessing evolving economic, social, and policy processes and by adaptation of appropriate new technologies that allow interaction between ecological and cultural processes.
 - Outcome 4 (Global, National, Local): Lessons learned and best practices from promoting effective management of pilot GIAHS are widely disseminated to support expansion and up-scaling of the GIAHS in other areas/countries and creation of the GIAHS network.

³ This is taken from Article 10(c) of the Convention on Biological Diversity

⁴ GIAHS are defined in the ProDoc as, “Remarkable land use systems and landscapes which are rich in globally significant biological diversity evolving from the co-adaptation of a community with its environment and its needs and aspirations for sustainable development.”(p. 52).

4. During the briefing in FAO-HQ in June 2014, OED and GEF requested the FE assess project progress and achievements at all levels, but ensure greater attention was given in the FE to Outcomes 2 and 3 given the MTE had concentrated on management and global issues. To assist this analysis it was agreed the evaluation team leader would conduct field visits and case studies in three countries, China, Peru and Chile. Meanwhile, the team member would remain Rome-based to conduct important aspects of the document review and conduct interviews at FAO-HQ and telephone/Skype interviews with key stakeholders in Algeria, the Philippines and Tunisia.

5. The final evaluation team (see Annex 2) was mobilised at the end of April to attend the Second Steering/Scientific Committee meeting in FAO-HQ from 28-29 April 2014 and conduct preliminary meetings in advance of the briefing, which was held on 12-13 June 2014. The TL conducted the field visits to China from 15-28 June 2014, to Peru from 6-19 July 2014 and to Chile from 20-26 July 2014. In the meantime, the Evaluation Team Member conducted a series of interviews in FAO-HQ, a review of key documents and telephone/skype interviews. The debriefing, final meetings and presentation of preliminary findings to FAO and GEF stakeholders took place from 05-07 August 2014. The evaluation team's analysis of GIAHS sites focused on the following:

GIAHS Sites Assessed by the FE

Pilot Country	Name of GIAHS Site and Location
Algeria	Ghout Agricultural System at El-Oued Souf (Oases of Beni Isguen)
Tunisia	The Historic Oasis System of Gafsa
China	- Qingtian Rice-Fish Culture System (Zhejiang Province) - Shaoxing Kaujishan Ancient Chinese Torreya Tree System (Zhejiang Province) - The Honghe Hani Rice Terraces System (Yunnan Province)
Philippines	Ifugao Rice Terraces (Luzon Region)
Chile	Chiloe Archipelago (Region IX)
Peru	Cusco-Puno Corridor involving four micro watersheds in Lamay and Lares Districts (Cusco Region) and Caritamaya and San José (Puno Region)

6. The present report was prepared in the period 05-21 August 2014 and submitted to OED on 21 August 2014. Findings of the evaluation have been used to identify a set of lessons learned and determine a set of realistic recommendations designed to enhance the future impact and sustainability of GIAHS as well as support the thematic evaluation on Genetic Resources.

1.2 Methodology of the evaluation

7. The FE was realized in accordance with UNEG Norms & Standards, which are upheld by both FAO and GEF. The evaluation adopted a highly consultative and transparent approach paying particular attention to Project effectiveness (in terms of outputs and outcomes), initial impact of outcomes and the potential sustainability of GIAHS activities both within the pilot countries and at the Secretariat level. Attempts were made in the time available to cover as wide a sample of direct and indirect stakeholders at the global, national and local levels as possible.

8. Triangulation of evidence and information gathered was practiced to validate findings and help justify main conclusions and recommendations. Due to a general lack of results-based monitoring data in the Project at all levels⁵ the evaluation team relied on qualitative assessment through interviews, small group workshops and site inspections in line with the key issues identified in the evaluation matrix (see Annex 6). Overall rating terminology for each of the 4 project outcomes has been provided in sub section 5.2 and on the five UNEG evaluation criteria in sub sections 6.1 to 6.5 in line with GEF guidelines for project evaluations⁶. The recommendations in the present report are based on the premise they are realistic and in accordance with the institutional capacity and resources available at the global, national and/or local levels.

9. The following evaluation tools were used to aid the evaluation team establish effective triangulation of evidence and information before arriving at its conclusions and recommendations:

10. An evaluation matrix designed to aid the identification of evaluation questions and indicators relating to the ToR and UNEG evaluation criteria: relevance, design, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. An assessment of cross-cutting issues was included in the assessment of each of these evaluation criteria (see Annex 6 for full details of the evaluation matrix produced);

11. Review of existing documentation, including the ProDoc, the inception report, annual work plans, six-monthly progress reports, the Project Implementation Reports, financial reports, information provided on the project website, publications produced by the Secretariat and at country/local levels and the terminal country reports⁷ (see Annex 3);

12. Semi-structured and open-ended questions interviews were conducted to elicit stakeholder perception and judgement of the Project experience in line with the questions established in the evaluation matrix. These were conducted directly during the field visits in China, Peru and Chile, or visits to FAO-HQ, or by phone/Skype with key stakeholders and beneficiaries that could not be interviewed in person, (see Annex 4);

13. Focus group interviews or workshops in order to cover as wide a number of stakeholders, or beneficiaries, as possible within the limited time and financial resources available were carried out in the field (see Annex 2);

14. Direct observation in the field to observe the current state of the conservation and adaptive management process in GIAHS sites, including measures to revalue ingenious agro-ecosystems, autochthonous technologies and practices, to conserve genetic resources (agro-biodiversity) in situ and ex situ, to assess resilience and capacity to adapt to climate change and specific actions designed to add value and promote the commercialisation of GIAHS products and services, (see Annex 2);

15. A specific assessment on the conservation of genetic resources in China, Peru and Chile in accordance with a set of questions provided by OED;

⁵ An output data table relating to outcomes was requested at the start of the evaluation exercise to aid assessment of the four main outcomes. However, the table submitted could only provide limited quantitative data due to the lack of funds to operate a robust results-based M&E system; .

⁶ Guidelines for GEF Agencies in Conducting Terminal Evaluations, Evaluation Document No. 3, 2008

⁷ The Global Terminal Report had not been completed at the time of the evaluation reporting phase.

16. Participatory analysis of the strengths, weaknesses opportunities and threats of the Project experience at the end of the evaluation mission in the pilot countries visited, or through the open-ended questions interviews for the countries not visited;

17. Descriptive statistical analysis for the questionnaire;

18. Content analysis for the desk review of main reports and project documents;

19. Result–focused budget analysis.

20. The main limitations and constraints encountered by the evaluation team in applying the above methodology and tools centred on the lack of data in the GIAHS website to include a web-survey on hits, number of up-dates and page extensions, etc., the availability of stakeholders (for example, in Chile they were only available from mid July 2014) and the lack of results-based monitoring data in the evaluation system (M&E) based on results indicators to facilitate the evaluation of project outcomes⁸. It was also apparent at the start of the evaluation in mid June that the funds available for the final evaluation were not sufficient to fund field visits to all six pilot countries and for this reason analysis of Project effectiveness, initial impact and sustainability in Algeria, the Philippines and Tunisia would be limited to findings gathered from the document review, telephone interviews and a distance survey.

21. The decision by OED to conduct site visits to China, Peru and Chile was taken on the basis activities had taken place since the MTE in 2009. The three countries were among major recipients of GEF funding together with the Philippines. The Philippines was excluded due to the realisation of other OED missions in the country in 2014. The evaluation did also contribute to OED’s thematic evaluation on the Conservation of Genetic Resources.. A specific set of questions on the current state of conservation of genetic resources in situ and ex situ in these countries did lead to an intensification of the workload of the evaluation team. However, the inclusion of these questions was found to complement and facilitate the evaluation team’s assessment of effectiveness of GIAHS (in particular in identifying the link between safeguarding agricultural heritage and genetic conservation both in situ and ex situ).

22. To support the final evaluation of the Project the evaluation team produced an evaluation matrix in which key issues from the TOR were addressed through a set of questions by evaluation criteria: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability impact and cross-cutting issues (see Annex 6 Part 1). On the latter the evaluation team aimed to include at least 30% participation of women in interviews in the field. To aid the evaluation team answer these questions an outputs matrix was produced (see Annex 5) and a distance survey in the form of a questionnaire (see Annex 6 Part 2). Both exercises were designed to aid the identification of Project effectiveness in terms of changes in policy, strategies, plans, legislation and regulations at the global, national and local levels and which have produced a positive, or negative impact on: food security, poverty reduction, cultural identity and self-determination, rural employment, tourism, infrastructure development, knowledge management and on cross-cutting issues in particular in relation to gender equality, indigenous peoples’ rights and natural resources management.

⁸ The M&E system and Progress Reports focused heavily on the delivery of activities and outputs, rather than on the achievement of expected results, or “outcomes”. Financial information was established in an accounting system designed to disaggregate and re-aggregate GEF budget lines for the Project.

23. Following the reporting of findings by evaluation criteria based on the above methods, the evaluation team prepared the conclusions and recommendations of the present report. These focus on answering the following key issues from the evaluation matrix:

- **Issue 2:** Relevance of the GIAHS concept and design to the pilot countries development priorities and needs for adaptive and sustainable management of agricultural heritage and the safeguard of its functionalities;
- **Issue 6:** Extent to which the expected outputs have been produced, their quality and timeliness, against project planning at the time of the evaluation and the contribution to the outcome level results, i.e. at completion of the Project;
- **Issue 9:** Extent to which the project contributed to the empowerment of women and men beneficiaries, including the indigenous populations
- **Issue 13:** Efficiency of management and implementation of operations, M&E, steering and coordination, administration and support from FAO Country Offices and national counterpart institutions
- **Issue 15:** Extent to which the project is expected to attain its overall objective?
- **Issue 19:** Perspectives for uptake and mainstreaming of the GIAHS in the pilot countries and beyond

2 Context of the GIAHS Initiative

2.1 General Context

24. In 2002, FAO launched the Global Partnership Initiative (GPI) on conservation and adaptive management of Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD, Johannesburg, South Africa). The GPI was established within the context of CBD's "Agricultural Biodiversity Work Programme" (1996) and GEF's Operational Programme No. 13: "Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity of Importance to Agriculture" (2000).

25. The overall goal of GPI was to respond to the global challenges that undermine family agriculture and traditional agricultural systems that are defined as, "remarkable land use systems and landscapes which are rich in globally significant biological diversity, evolving from the co-adaptation of a community with its environment and its needs and aspirations for sustainable development". These global challenges relate to two main trends. First, the lack of recognition to maintain traditional agricultural systems that have been sustained high levels of agro-biodiversity for hundreds and, in some cases, thousands of years. This has led to their replacement by modern mono-cropping practices dependent on high external agricultural inputs. Second, the lack of incentives to dissuade youths from migrating to urban areas in the belief they will find work and an easier way of life. This trend is reducing the opportunities of passing down ancestral knowledge and autochthonous technologies within traditional agricultural systems.

26. Three major objectives were considered in the PDF formulation period between 2002-07 to address the above-mentioned trends: (1) leverage global and national recognition of the importance of agricultural heritage systems and institutional support for their safeguard; (2) Capacity building of local farming communities and national institutions to conserve and manage GIAHS, enhance income generation and add economic value to goods and services of such systems in a sustainable fashion and; (3) promote enabling policy, regulatory and incentive environments to support the conservation, evolutionary adaptation and viability of GIAHS.

27. Nevertheless, the political and institutional context within which the GIAHS initiative was launched in mid-2008 remained unclear at both the global and national levels within the six pilot countries.⁹ Thus, although it is clear from the ProDoc the six pilot GIAHS sites, "were chosen based on a technical prioritisation prepared by the Steering Committee of the PDF-B, the country interest to participate and the technical and institutional capacity of the institutions involved"¹⁰ and policy conformity with GEF-4 was confirmed¹¹, it was clear none of the six pilot countries had a clear political or policy framework to support the multi-dimensional aspects of the GIAHS initiative. As a result, the Project needed to consolidate the political and technical support it had identified in each pilot country during the PDF-B period before it could identify and secure the approval of the national project frameworks and the co-finance for the six GIAHS sites. Given the political context and technical capacity in the six pilot countries involved was

⁹ The ProDoc states, "*There is no international initiative to date that puts peoples' harmonious relationship with the environment and their active and indispensable role in the creation and maintenance of biological diversity and healthy ecosystems through their agricultural and other livelihood practices at the centre stage*" (p.20). This is also confirmed in the analysis of policy and legislation in the ProDoc (p.140-141).

¹⁰ ProDoc p.8.

¹¹ ProDoc p.23.

very different and in many cases about to change institutionally and/or politically (Chile, Peru and Philippines 2009, Tunisia 2010-11), it is clear maintaining GIAHS in the political process (national and local) was going to be a major challenge; not to mention maintaining and developing support for GIAHS within FAO itself.

28. Indeed, the policy context in which GIAHS found itself within FAO was complex. GIAHS was championed by the director of NRI department at the time, who also assumed the position of Global Coordinator of the GIAHS initiative, which in 2008 only involved the GEF-funded Project for GIAHS in the six pilot countries. However, for other FAO departments GIAHS represented a new concept that was not aligned to its core policy commitments (enshrined in the Green Revolution and establishing market-based linkages between producers and buyers). As a result, the promotion of GIAHS did not appear to the evaluation team to represent a fully mainstreamed policy commitment within FAO; rather it took on the role of a pioneering pilot project designed to gain support and momentum over time within FAO. The Project did not, therefore, enjoy the inter-departmental support it needed at start-up to promote GIAHS in sites where inter-sectoral activities have long been a fully integral part of the agricultural system. For example, in China the GIAHS site fully integrated forestry, fisheries, agriculture and culture; while in Peru agriculture, livestock, crafts and culture were completely linked. This helps to explain why no synergies were established with other relevant FAO interventions (and other donors) in the pilot countries, or at the global level, despite the in-depth stakeholder analysis conducted in PDF-B and incorporated in the ProDoc.¹²

¹² For example, synergies were possible with the DFID-funded “Sustainable Livelihood Programme”, the Forestry Department’s “Collaborative Watershed Management Initiatives”, or with the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGFRA), located within FAO-HQ.

3 Analysis of Project Concept and Design

Box 1-key findings

The Project's theory of change is well conceived, but the Project's design was found to have important limitations. Most noteworthy was the lack of identification of the national project framework documents for the GIAHS sites prior to commencement of implementation. As a result up to two years were lost in some pilot countries before these frameworks were finalised and Project implementation commenced; thus reducing the implementation time drastically. Another important limitation was the lack of a clear results-based focus and SMART indicators in the logical framework. The development of an external risk management strategy was also absent.

3.1 Project Concept (Theory of Change)

29. In the ProDoc GIAHS are defined as, “remarkable land use systems and landscapes, which are rich in globally significant biological diversity, evolving from the co-adaptation of a community with its environment and its needs and aspirations for sustainable development”. The basic features of GIAHS include¹³:

- High levels of biodiversity that play key roles in regulating ecosystem functioning and also in providing ecosystem services of local and global significance.
- Agro-ecosystems nurtured by traditional knowledge systems and farmers' innovations and technologies.
- Ingenious systems and technologies of biodiversity, land and water resource management and conservation that can be used to improve management of modern agro-ecosystems;
- Diversified agricultural systems that contribute to local and national food and livelihood security;
- Farming systems that exhibit resiliency and robustness to cope with disturbance and change (human and climatic-environmental) minimizing risk in the midst of variability;
- Systems that provide local, regional and global ecosystem services;
- systems regulated by strong cultural values and collective forms of social organization, including customary institutions for agro-ecological management, normative arrangements for resource access and benefit sharing, value systems, rituals, etc.

30. The Project's concept emphasizes the global patrimonial value of GIAHS. Global importance of this heritage is twofold:

- i GIAHS recognise and value local knowledge and autochthonous technology in agricultural systems that are sustainable and resilient and;
- ii GIAHS are addressed as important repositories of bio- and cultural diversity, which humankind cannot afford to lose, because some of its elements (e.g. plant genetic resources for food and agriculture) are important to the future development humankind.

31. The Project's theory of change stresses also that GIAHS are human-made environments continuously adapting to meet the challenges of the ever-changing broader natural ecosystems in which they are embedded and finding out ways to satisfy their needs, including new

¹³ ProDoc Section I, 2008.

contemporary needs relating to education, health care, marketing of produce, etc. GIAHS have survived and continue to survive thanks to a continued adaptation process, which includes adaptation to climate variability and change. Throughout history, new plant varieties or cultivars have been selected, new crops have been introduced, new technologies have been invented or imported and adapted to local conditions, innovative forms of social organization of labor have been established, and new cultural elements (such as literacy) have become part of GIAHS people's life. Driven by endogenous evolution or triggered by the influence of inter-cultural diffusion, historical change is an intrinsic feature of GIAHS as of any other agricultural systems. The difference between GIAHSs and the latter is that particular agro-ecological and economic-political features of the broader environment and, to a lesser extent, stronger cultural identities, have prevented the system to implode and turn into something radically different. However, the strength and speed at which global influences are currently reaching GIAHS people (such as modern living and labour-saving technology), pose serious threats to the continuation of GIAHS; the most important being the impact of outward migration of youths to the cities. Hence, if GIAHS are to be preserved, compensatory action needs to be taken, in particular on-site diversification of income sources (e.g. agro-tourism), mechanisms to add value to produce (e.g. geographical origin certification), or payment for environmental services.

32. The Project's theory of change also recognises that for a host of reasons – geographical isolation, lack of services, limited income generation opportunities, etc. – GIAHS people often suffer severe socio-economic disadvantages and are socially and culturally marginalised (in particular indigenous peoples). Hence preservation of GIAHS cannot be promoted without offering GIAHS people the means to improve their livelihoods and access to basic services. In other words, GIAHS continuity cannot be addressed through strict and passive conservation regimes (as in the case of national parks, or UNESCO's World Heritage sites), but requires the empowerment of GIAHS people and the creation of a supportive political environment. In this connection international and national recognition is seen as an effective tool for the dynamic conservation of GIAHS sites.

3.2 Project design

33. The Project's design was conceived as a rather ambitious test of the GIAHS theory of change. This helps explain why the design phase took almost five years to conclude (2002-07), during which time two Project Development Fiches were produced (PDF-A and PDF-B). The Full-size Project (FSP), or ProDoc, was finalised and approved by GEF/FAO in mid 2008.

34. The ProDoc, contains four main sections. Section I: Elaboration and Narrative contains the essential parts of the Project:

- **Part I - Situation Analysis** in which environmental, socio-economic, policy and legislation and institutional contexts are clearly described and an in-depth stakeholder analysis presented. In addition, the threats to GIAHS are assessed and a baseline analysis is provided confirming that at the international level, "agricultural biodiversity, the domesticated and semi domesticated spaces of the landscape and the management systems upon which these rely are not at the core of policy and investment agendas that are primarily oriented to the conservation of wild biodiversity, natural and cultural heritage.
- **Part II - Strategy** in which the reasons for the global, national and local reach of the Project are described and key aspects of the Project are defined (including GIAHS definition, goal, objectives, expected outcomes, assumptions and risks). This subsection

also explains how the Project will support the pilot countries commitment fulfill relevant international agreements such as the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAP) of CBD, and details on replication targets relating to each of the four expected outcomes.

- **Part III - Management Arrangements** in which core commitments are highlighted, in particular how GIAHS fits with FAO's Strategic Framework 2000-15 (in particular Corporate Strategy D on the conservation, improvement and sustainable use of natural resources for food and agriculture) and how it will build linkages with FAO and GEF-fund global and field programmes and activities in the six pilot countries. "Institutional and Implementation Arrangements" are also provided at the global and national level together with the international partners involved.
- **Part IV – Monitoring and Evaluation Plan** describes how FAO M&E procedures will be applied, based on the indicators identified in the logical framework matrix (LFM).
- **Part V – Legal Context** explains the privileges and immunities, settlement of disputes, government obligations and rules governing Project revision.

35. Sections II-IV provide details on incremental cost analysis, (GEF increment) the logical framework, budget, the indicative work plan and additional information. Two important findings arise from an analysis of the ProDoc. The first is that it provides only limited information on how the Project is to be implemented in order to achieve outputs and outcomes. For example, there is very little information on the identification of the national project framework documents for the GIAHS sites in the Participation Plan¹⁴ and no indication at all as to when they should be approved. This proved to be a major drawback in project design as a large chunk of the project's implementation was dedicated to identifying and then obtaining approval of these national project frameworks. Due to the changing political context mentioned in the previous section, the approval of these frameworks took longer than expected in some of the pilot countries (2011 in the case of Chile and Peru), resulting in much shorter project activities in the GIAHS sites than planned in the PDF-B. This finding is significant because it meant some activities had to be downsized, or even abandoned, due to lack of time. This is discussed in more detail in the next section of the report.

36. Second an assessment of the LFM (see Annex 7), indicates it established a very ambitious intervention logic in the ProDoc taking into account the smaller than expected budget available from GEF and the fact national project frameworks needed to be identified and approved before implementation in the GIAHS sites could take place within the five-year timeframe assigned to GEF funding. In particular, Outcomes 1 and 2 were very ambitious if one considers the GIAHS concept needed to be tested first in the six pilot countries before it could be justified and promoted on the international stage and mainstreamed into national policy (in particular inter-sectoral policy). Furthermore, in three countries the Project was to be executed through the government institution responsible for the Environment (Algeria, Peru and the Philippines) and one by an NGO (Tunisia). This helped to disassociate GIAHS from the Ministries of Agriculture which, as also stated by the MTE¹⁵, clearly should have been the logical home for GIAHS and the institution with which FAO has direct access through its country offices.

37. On indicators, the LFM does not capture some relevant indicators provided in the ProDoc. For example, the timelines established in the provisional work plan were not evident in

¹⁴ ProDoc p. 118-120

¹⁵ MTE para. 73, p.15

the indicators to help clarify the phasing of output achievements by expected outcome. Concerning the baseline and target indicators for outcome 3, the land area to be conserved in each of the GIAHS sites contain the same values (i.e. no-further-loss indicators). This indicator is not fully consistent with the theory of change of the Project; namely it focuses attention on land area (landscapes) without indicating the number of people to be supported in this land area. As a result indicators relating to household numbers, or changes in livelihood within these households, as indicated in the livelihoods index table,¹⁶ were not included and promoted in the “Monitoring and Evaluation Plan.”¹⁷

38. In terms of the assumptions and risks in the LFM, these were generally found to be consistent and clearly summarised in relation to the corresponding sections in the ProDoc (p.29-30). Notwithstanding, the integration of a risk management strategy did not appear as an integral part of the management arrangements for the Project under Part III of the ProDoc (p.37).

39. Finally, the evaluation team were unable to find a revision of the LFM by Project Management following the launch of all six national project frameworks from 2011. As a result, the M&E system was not updated to establish a results-based focus to Project implementation according to the indicators in the national project frameworks from 2012. There was also no reflection on the selection process of GIAHS sites and the role of the Scientific Committee at this time. This was touched on in the MTE, but not developed explicitly in its recommendation 4.¹⁸

¹⁶ ProDoc p. 138-139.

¹⁷ ProDoc p.46-47

¹⁸ MTE para. 70, p. 15 and p.71

4 Analysis of the implementation process

Box 2-key findings

Project management was well conceived in the ProDoc, but due to the drastic cut of over 50% in the Project's budget by GEF in 2008, Project management within the iGS had to be severely curtailed and did not have the human and financial resources to perform key functions in a satisfactory manner such as results-based monitoring, running an effective communications strategy and the recruitment of TA from an expert's pool.

Financial management of the Project's funds was satisfactory. However, the Budget Holder was required to conduct several reallocations of the budget to accommodate for the above shortfall and the higher than anticipated global management costs involved in running the Project, which resulted in smaller budgets than planned for Algeria, Tunisia and Peru. Information on expenditure of co-financing sources was also not available, in part due to the complex nature of this finance, which included in some cases both in kind and cash estimates. On institutional arrangements the Project was found to be highly dependent on a small and limited iGS, while the iSC played a very limited role in Project implementation decisions and follow-up.

4.1 Project Management

40. The management structure established in the ProDoc (see Annex 8) is considered by the evaluation team to have been well conceived to implement the Project at global and national levels for the following reasons:

- The implementation of decisions taken by the International Steering Committee (ISC) would be supported by a Scientific Committee¹⁹ (to aid the selection of GIAHS sites) and a Global Project Implementation Unit (GPIU) (to manage operations);
- The GPIU would be supported by a Consultative Group through which key international stakeholders would be represented (UNDP, UNESCO, World Bank, CBD-Secretariat, Bioversity International, INGOs, CSOs, etc.) and a Technical Group would facilitate access to international experts to support implementation in all fields (scientific, legal, social, cultural, economic, etc.);
- The GPIU would enjoy direct access to "National Focal Points" in the six pilot countries who would act as the main filters of the Project at both global-national and national-local levels and vice versa;

41. However, because the ProDoc was approved with a much smaller budget than planned (without a proportional reduction in output targets and expected outcomes), GEF funds allocated to "Management Operations" amounted to just USD 310,220 for the five year period. This was equivalent to USD 62,044 on average per year, which was clearly too little to fund an effective management structure on the lines mentioned above. In addition, co-finance from the six pilot countries amounting to USD 764,434 was assigned to support management operations within the six pilot countries, but this was also too small to compensate for the shortfall in GEF funding (for example, to cover adequate logistical support, or activities such as research).

¹⁹ The Scientific Committee for GIAHS remains made up of voluntary scientists who are mainly from developed countries.

42. In response to this situation, project management had to implement a number of trade-offs. These are summarised as follows:

- Maintain staffing, recruitment of experts from the Technical Group and operational activities to a bare minimum. This resulted in the abandonment of the GPIU concept and instead global activities would be managed through the interim GIAHS Secretariat (iGS), established in FAO in 2008 (global level);
- Increase reliance on the National Focal Points and their respective co-finance to deliver project activities to meet outputs under expected outcome 2 (national level);
- Prioritise support and funding within the GIAHS sites to the benefit of the local communities involved (local level);
- Reduce the scope of support and attention to outputs foreseen under outcome 4 until the latter stages of the project and rely mainly on co-finance to fund key publications (global, national and local levels).

43. Given the big financial challenges faced by project management, the evaluation team believes the above-mentioned strategic decisions were effective in focusing available resources and efforts at the country and/or local levels, where significant results were achieved with respect to outcomes 2 and 3 and which are described in more detail in the next section. However, one caveat was the limited role and responsibilities of the FAO-Representations in the Project, especially in the countries where the National Focal Points were not from the Ministry of Agriculture.

44. The decision to abandon the GPIU concept and replace it with a skeleton service under the interim GIAHS Secretariat (iGS) composed of two FAO officials and one permanent consultant²⁰ resulted in an overload of work and responsibilities that reduced the Project's capacity to articulate and coordinate effectively, especially at the global level, but also at the national level. The inability to recruit technical assistance to fill these gaps was mainly due to internal resistance within FAO to resolve the problem and resulted in major constraints on management of the GIAHS initiative. This is a major reason why the Project was unable to achieve its global targets in relation to outcomes 1 and 4 (despite a one-year extension of the Project to 30 June 2014).²¹

45. In terms of the general management of operations, the evaluation team has identified a number of constraints that affected the overall efficiency and effectiveness of project delivery throughout the Project implementation period. These are summarised as follows:

- The counter signature of the ProDoc by the pilot countries took in some cases around two years to secure (notably Algeria, Philippines, Peru and Chile);
- The decision to manage a large number of Letters of Agreement (LoA) with small budgets in order to get the national framework projects off the ground and maintain flexibility of implementation increased the transaction costs for the iGS;

²⁰ FAO officials were: the Global Coordinator (Director of the NR Department) and the Budget Holder. A Technical Officer was recruited full time to cover all aspects of the GIAHS initiative (i.e. the GEF/FAO Project and all other subsequent projects supporting GIAHS). APOs were employed, but for limited periods.

²¹ The first step of positive discussions on GIAHS took place at the PWB in 2011, the programme committee in 2012 and at the International Treaty in 2013. In 2013 the CCLM and Council subsequently recognised and supported the GIAHS initiative allowing it to be formally endorsed by the COAG in October 2014. However, considerable efforts are still needed to achieve the approval of the Conference Resolution stipulated in the COAG document on GIAHS.

- The finalization of the project framework agreements needed technical support from iGS to ensure they complied with the expected outputs and outcomes of the ProDoc, rules on logistical support, etc., thus exhausting most of the funds available for technical support before implementation of the national project frameworks;
- The presence of external factors, such as general/local elections (Chile, Philippines), strikes (Peru), the lack of institutional presence of the Ministries of Environment, or their equivalent, at the local government level (Peru, the Philippines, Tunisia), changes of the National Focal Person (Algeria), communication difficulties between national and regional governments (Chile), etc. which forced temporary inactivity;
- The Technical officer was not delegated with decision-making powers on operational issues, thus all decisions depended on the Global Coordinator, or on the Budget Holder (BH) for financial matters, which slowed operations on several occasions.

46. The evaluation believes some of these delays could and should have been avoided had a risk management strategy been in place, especially since the MTE in 2012. For example, the MTE flagged the lack of delegation of decision-making to the Technical Officer²², yet centralized decision-making continued until Project closure in June 2014. An assessment of the progress reports (see Annex 3) also confirms constraints on operations were well documented, but due to the introduction of a risk management strategy, mitigation measures were not taken well in advance to reduce impact. Instead, it appears in the progress reports that problems were addressed and resolved as they occurred. This was also confirmed in the interviews with stakeholders. On this, the evaluation team believes clear phasing of operations by outcomes (i.e. outcome 2, 3, 1 in that order with outcome 4 cross-cutting them all) would have helped focus the M&E system of the Project and clarified its vision and mission.

47. In terms of staffing, management at all levels has suffered from a lack of funds available. This has been particularly the case at the global level, where the iGS was unable to recruit a qualified consultant to design and manage the Project's monitoring and evaluation system (M&E), or a communications officer, paying particular attention to achieving outcome 4. Instead, all operations were assigned to the Technical Officer in the iGS who not only lacked decision-making powers, but also secretarial and logistic support. This situation has particularly come to a head during the final stages of the Project, where the evaluation team has witnessed a rather chaotic closure period of GEF funding to 30 June 2014, in which financial accounts, final reports and lessons learnt still have to be finalised.²³

48. The M&E system within the iGS has mainly focused on the monitoring of operational matters and number crunching from which quantitative data on Project implementation can be extracted for reporting purposes. The M&E was thus not developed as a results-based system through which to measure outcomes and impact and support periodic in-depth internal reviews with main stakeholders on project planning, policy dialogue, lessons learnt identification of the exit strategy. For example, this was evident at the ISC meeting in April 2014 where stakeholders from the six pilot countries were invited to present their GIAHS sites without recourse to results, findings, conclusions, recommendations or lessons learnt. Therefore, the evaluation team concludes the GEF rating for the M&E system remained unsatisfactory (U) throughout the Project's implementation period because it did not provide monitoring data to support planning

²² MTE report, para. 94, p.21.

²³ This has not been assisted by the fact GEF-funded operations in Chile ended in June 2014, whereas in Tunisia or Peru they ended in June 2013.

and policy dialogue at all levels, nor did it form an integral part of a communication's strategy. Despite the lack of funds, the iGS should and could have done more to develop such a system and support activities foreseen under outcome 4.

4.2 Financial resources management

49. Details of budget and expenditure under the GEF-funded Project can be found in Annex 9. Table 1 below provides a summary of planned budget against expenditure of GEF funds for the four expected outcomes and project management, plus the government finance allocations (expenditure figures not available at time of writing):

Table 1 Budget and Expenditure by Outcome to 30/06/2014 (in USD)

Outcome	GEF Budget	%	GEF Expenditure	%	Government Co-finance	Co-finance Expenditure	%
Outcome 1 (Global)	374,445	11	375,422	11	1'000,556	n/a	
Outcome 2 (National)	534,441	15	483,959	14	1'344,220	n/a	
Outcome 3 (Local)	1'108,152	32	1'141,627	33	7'383,754	n/a	
Outcome 4 (All levels)	1'172,742	34	1'190,716	34	3'953,909	n/a	
Sub Total	3'189,780		3'191,724		13'682,439	n/a	
Management & Operation	310,220	9	308,276	9	764,434	n/a	
TOTAL BUDGET	3'500,000	100	3,500,000	100	14'446,873	n/a	

50. The table confirms expenditure was in line with the budget allocation for each outcome with a marginal shift in expenditure in favour of activities under outcome 3 over outcome 2. Expenditure by outcome relating to co-financing resources confirmed in the ProDoc (see Annex 9) was not provided to the ET. This is in part due to the complex nature of this finance, which included in some cases both in kind and cash estimates.

51. An analysis of expenditure by pilot country and at global level is provided in the following table and confirms actual expenditure by country did vary in relation to planned budget.

Table 2 Expenditure of GEF Funding by Country to 30/06/2014 (in USD)

Country	GEF Allocation	%	Expenditure 2008-11	Expenditure 2012	Expenditure 2013	Expenditure 2014	Total Expenditure	%
Algeria	200,000	6%	48,346	29,429	-	-	77,775	2%
Chile	600,000	17%	184,306	93,136	93,614	13,067	384,123	11%
China	500,000	14%	418,657	67,607	26,896	1,933	515,093	15%
Peru	600,000	17%	180,627	156,984	116,262	9,908	463,781	13%
Philippines	500,000	14%	112,999	130,164	145,822	1	388,986	11%
Tunisia	100,000	3%	66,644	20,340	1,740	-	88,724	3%
Regional/ Global	1,000,000	29%	592,066	411,362	311,278	220,537	1,535,243	44%
TOTAL	3,500,000	100%	1,603,645	909,022	695,612	245,446	3,453,725	100

									%
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52. Two important findings emerge from the above table. The first is that expenditure levels were higher between 2012-14 (except in Tunisia and Algeria which were small projects). The main reason for this was that many of the project framework documents started implementation in 2011. The second is that the percentage of GEF funding spent to cover global operations was higher than planned, which resulted in less expenditure in Algeria, Chile, Peru and Tunisia than originally planned.

53. An assessment of the breakdown of budget expenditure by activity (see Annex 9) confirms “Contracts” consumed 31% of expenditure, which curtailed expenditure available to hire staff within the iGS under “Professional Salaries” to develop M&E, the communication strategy, legal assessments; on-demand training needs of the pilot countries. The evaluation understands the main reason for high contract expenditure was due by the need to finance a number of unforeseen contracts, in particular local coordinators to implement the Project in the GIAHS sites. For example, local coordinators had to be recruited full time over two years and for a temporary period of up to one year in Chile and the Philippines.

4.3 Efficiency and effectiveness of the institutional arrangements including Government’s participation

54. The most important institutional arrangement governing the Project’s implementation is the International Steering Committee. However, the role of the ISC has been limited in the Project due to two main factors. First, the ISC was not established to provide an active role in the overall management and supervision of the Project. As a result it was not necessary to convene the ISC on a yearly basis to deliberate over progress, discuss lessons learned and approve work plans. Indeed, the ISC only convened twice during the Project’s implementation. Second, the lack of funds prevented the ISC from developing an effective communication strategy with its members through which it could provide strategic guidance to the iGS and SAC. Responses from key stakeholders confirm it has mainly been a platform through which each pilot country informs the others about its sites and where new GIAHS are approved and described.

55. The approval of GIAHS sites depends on the iGS supporting the pilot countries (and other candidate countries) on the procedures and the selection criteria that must be met for GIAHS. To support the approval process and ensure the sites selected possess unique qualities of global interest to science, the iGS is supported by a Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC)²⁴. This Committee continues to experience some weaknesses that need to be addressed. First, the decision-making process on the formal selection of GIAHS is not supported by a similar corresponding scientific committee at the pilot country level where agricultural systems are ranked according to national interest first (Nationally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems, or NIAHS) and then as sites that merit submission for GIAHS status. China has addressed this problem by formally introducing NIAHS, which helps explain why it has been able to increase the number of GIAHS sites in the country, but this has not happened to date in the other pilot countries.

²⁴ The Chair of SAC is a senior officer from the Secretariat of the Global Forum on Agriculture Research located within FAO-HQ

56. Second, the SAC does not enjoy full autonomy over the selection of GIAHS. This was witnessed in the Second ISC, where the iGS Global Coordinator was seen to exercise significant influence over the selection of GIAHS candidates²⁵. Third, the composition of the SAC is based on voluntary members who are available and can afford to participate in it (almost exclusively from the developed countries). This situation means the pilot countries are highly underrepresented in the SAC (only China has a representative on the Committee from the GIAHS pilot countries), which clearly does not help them raise the sense of ownership of GIAHS, nor facilitate the creation of GIAHS champions in the pilot countries as foreseen in the ProDoc. Furthermore, the voluntary nature of the SAC means there is rotation of members, which bodes against the development of a strong institutional memory and there is a need for a standardised scoring/weighting system to safeguard the selection of GIAHS sites

57. In terms of the administrative and technical support provided to iGS by FAO-HQ, the evaluation has found such support remains heavily dependent on the NR department. This is due to the fact GIAHS is a pilot initiative that operates outside FAO's Programme structure. However, given the sustainability of GIAHS depends on a holistic approach it is clear there are many aspects to GIAHS that are of high interest to other FAO departments, in particular Agriculture and Consumer Protection, Forestry, Fisheries and Aquaculture, and Economic and Social Development. Interviews confirm the issue of engaging multi-departmental interest and cooperation in the Project was promoted by iGS within FAO at the end of 2012 resulting in a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The MoU allows for joint implementation agreements to be signed on the condition the department concerned uses its own funds when working within the GIAHS initiative. However, to date no such agreements have been concluded (mainly due to this condition).

58. The lack of inter-departmental cooperation and coordination has resulted in some departments proceeding with the protection of their own "sectoral heritage" interests, which the evaluation team understands has been the case in the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department. There is, therefore, an urgent need for FAO senior management to address this issue in its discussions on the future of GIAHS.

59. At the country level National Steering Committees (NSC) were envisaged in the ProDoc.²⁶ However, the evaluation found only two countries where they have been established and are working actively to support the mainstreaming of GIAHS (Chile and China). In the case of Algeria, Peru and the Philippines, the evaluation team found key stakeholders at the national level to be motivated and committed to GIAHS, but were unable to make major inroads in mainstreaming GIAHS in national policy.²⁷ The following findings explain this situation:

²⁵ The iGS is required to liaise with the pilot countries to support them in the finalisation of GIAHS proposals. Because the Scientific Committee meets only at big occasions such as the ISCs, it is politically too late for it to refuse a proposal by this stage, especially when it is presented by high level government officials. The Scientific Committee therefore needs to meet at least one month earlier to deliberate on GIAHS proposals.

²⁶ Mainly involving representatives from government institutions responsible for agriculture, agriculture research and the environment (but also open to other relevant institutions including tourism, education and culture and economic development)

²⁷ Tunisia is a special case where the project was implemented by an NGO - the Association for the Protection of the Medina of Gafsa (ASM-Gafsa) – reporting to the GEF focal point in the Ministry of Environment.

- In Chile and China the Ministry of Agriculture is the lead agency. In both cases they have used their considerable power and influence to convoke the steering committee meetings with the Ministry of Environment²⁸
- In Algeria, Peru, the Philippines and Tunisia the government institution responsible for the environment is the lead. In all cases they enjoy less power and influence over project implementation because they are government departments/newly created ministries with small budgets and a limited decentralised presence at the local government level. Only in the Philippines did the DENR establish a National Steering Committee;
- In China and Chile regional/provincial government support has been active in supporting the implementation of the Project, which has been aided by a successful communication strategy (especially in China), to promote GIAHS both locally and nationally (resulting in the formal recognition of NIAHS in agricultural policy this year);

60. At the local level, the stakeholders and beneficiary groups were found to be the true champions in helping the Project reach its outputs and outcomes. In the vast majority of cases the GIAHS coordinators²⁹ have been instrumental in galvanising the support of governor/municipal institutions, civil society organisations (CSO) and agricultural research institutions. This is summarised by GIAHS site as follows:

- **Ghout Agricultural System in El Oued Souf - Oases Beni Isguen (Algeria):** six associations have been established to manage the GIAHS site and protect its boundary; the Algerian National Institute for Agricultural Research (INRAA) has conducted research on disappeared and endangered date palm varieties.
- **Chiloe archipelago (Chile):** the governor's office has worked closely with the Chiloe population and CET in the introduction of local ordinances to establish the whole of the Chiloe archipelago as the GIAHS site; governor is supporting CET and Ministry of Agriculture in the introduction of the GIAHS label for 23 products and tourist services from Chiloe. INIA is in discussions on the creation of a local germplasm bank in Chiloe to support the conservation ex situ of Chiloe's agro-biodiversity.
- **Rice-Fish Terraces in Qingtain County (China):** an inter-departmental steering committee for the site has been established to support the local inhabitants implement the GIAHS master plan and boundary lines to protect the site from further loss of traditional practices as well as promote sustainable economic development; the Institute of Ecology (Zejiang University) is conducting a three-year research programme on rice-fish interaction to help save local varieties of fish;
- **Kaijishan Ancient Torreya Tree System, Shaoxing Province³⁰ (China):** an inter-departmental steering committee has been established in 2012 and a community protection plan identified in 2013; the Provincial Agricultural Department is strengthening its scientific capacity on torreya seed management and improving the ancient tree grafting capacity of farmers.

²⁸ In China this now involves other ministries (see Annex 10) In Chile the Ministry of Environment participates because GEF funds are channelled through this Ministry to the Project, although the evaluation team was informed the Ministry feels it only has a subordinate role in this committee.

²⁹ iGS management funds from the GEF allocation were used to employ local coordinators in Chile, Philippines and Peru, although only in the latter was this for the whole duration of the Project.

³⁰ Ratification of the GIAHS site is still required by parliament

- **Hani Rice Terraces in Honghe, Yuanyang county (China):** has an inter-departmental steering committee established at the Prefecture level and headed by the Vice Governor; a local scientific committee operates in the site to research genetic resources, cultural practices, etc. and reports to the national steering committee; an administrative bureau for Hani rice terraces conservation was established and published management regulations for the GIAHS site;
- **Puno-Cusco Corridor (Peru):** the municipalities in Lamay and Lares Districts (Cusco Region) have integrated GIAHS activities into their participatory development plans and employ a municipal officer to consolidate activities with the community-based organisations and local NGOs; in San Jose and Caritamaya Districts local government continues to support livestock activities started under the Project; the National Institute for Agricultural Research has conducted research in the four micro-watersheds within the above-mentioned districts, in particular in Lares.
- **Ifugao Rice Terraces (the Philippines):** the regional director of the Department of Environment helped establish a local committee for the management of the GIAHS site involving key stakeholders such as the the governor of Ifugao, the mayors of the pilot sites and Ifugao community leaders.
- **The Historic Oasis System of Gafsa (Tunisia):** the NGO ASM has been active in mobilising community-based organisations to manage the GIAHS site, which from 2014 is to be based on the application of the “The Community Management Plan for Genetic Resources in Oases”, which articulates the National Charter for the Conservation and Development of the Tunisian Oasis (April 2012).

5 Analysis of results and contribution to stated objectives³¹

Box 3-key findings

Achievement of outputs was satisfactory under outcomes 2 and 3, but unsatisfactory under outcomes 1 and 4.

Gender equality was found to be respected in five countries, while in Algeria the recognition and value of women as important knowledge holders of their agricultural ghou system was not adequately developed by GIAHS. Reporting on gender issues was limited to numbers of women and men participants.

The capacity development strategy placed much more attention on dynamic conservation rather than on developing the livelihood needs of GIAHS households based on the concept of adaptive management. Capacity development activities covered an estimated total of 2,448 participants (mainly small-holder farmers) of which approximately 43% were women.

On Human Rights, GIAHS actively promotes the concept of self-determination of the inhabitants within the sites, which ensures continued access to land and other natural resources. The Project has been successful in forging a number of alliances and partnerships with donors, national and local actors.

5.1 Achievements at Outputs level

61. A full list of the main activities, outputs, reports and publications relating the Project in the six pilot countries and at the global level can be found in Annex 5.

5.1.1 Outputs relating to Expected Outcome 1

Output 1.1: Public Endorsement of the GIAHS concept, definition and criteria by key international institutions and pilot country governments

62. The evaluation mission has interpreted the public endorsement of GIAHS as the ratification of GIAHS as a programme, or policy/part of a policy relating to international organisations and the pilot countries. The evaluation concludes this output has not been achieved at the international level, because GIAHS has not been ratified as a regular programme within FAO. However, it has been achieved in China, because it has ratified a national policy on establishing NIAHS, which legitimises the GIAHS initiative. In the other pilot countries this has not been achieved to date. These conclusions are based on the following findings:

Table 3 Legal Status of GIAHS at Global and National Levels to 30 June 2014

Name of Institution/ Country	Current Level of Legal Recognition of GIAHS
FAO	Official endorsement of GIAHS as a regular programme has not been secured. However, GIAHS concept, definition and criteria are officially recognised by FAO; senior management has informed the evaluation it supports establishing GIAHS into a regular programme; agreement was reached at the Council (June 2014) to discuss the future of GIAHS as a regular programme at the COAG in October 2014. A draft Conference Resolution is being prepared (based on a roadmap drafted in June 2014).

³¹ The term 'results' includes outputs and outcomes

	IGS/FAO goal is to secure endorsement of the GIAHS programme at the Conference in June 2015, (supported by China and other GIAHS countries)
Convention on Biological Diversity-Secretariat	GIAHS cannot be officially endorsed until it is ratified as a regular programme with budget. However, it recognised the GIAHS concept, definition and criteria in its Conference of the Parties in 2010 (COP10 Decision X/34 on agricultural biodiversity). GIAHS was also on the agenda at COP11 (Oct. 2012) in which it was agreed to support its up-scaling and replication; CBD-Sec participated in the GIAHS joint Scientific and Steering Committee Meetings (Apr. 2014).
GEF/World Bank	GIAHS cannot be officially endorsed until it is endorsed as a regular programme with budget in FAO. However, GEF recognises and supports the GIAHS concept, definition and criteria. Future finance under GEF-6 is an option. Use of bi-lateral GEF funds for GIAHS is already planned in some pilot countries (Chile, Peru, the Philippines)
IFAD, UNESCO, the World Heritage Commission (WHC) and UNDP	GIAHS cannot be officially endorsed until it is endorsed as a regular programme with budget in FAO. However, all institutions co-funded the identification of the FSP/ProDoc including identification of potential pilot sites. UNESCO is a member of the ISC. All recognise and support the GIAHS concept, definition and criteria. IFAD also funds promotion of GIAHS in India and Sri Lanka (USD 200,000, from 2011)
Ministry of Agriculture/China	Government officially supports the GIAHS concept, definition and criteria; currently has 11 GIAHS sites approved by the iGS-SAC which are announced on the MOA website and endorsed at national ceremonies; NIAHS was officially approved as a national government programme with its own budget in the MOA in 2013 and was ratified in 2014. The EU Agriculture Committee has established an agreement to cooperate with China on support for GIAHS (2014).
Ministry of Agriculture/Chile	Government officially supports the GIAHS concept, definition and criteria in Chiloe and will promote GIAHS-label in Chiloe from mid August 2014. Two new GIAHS sites under study. No NIAHS policy endorsed to date.
Ministry of Environment or equivalent in Algeria, Peru, the Philippines, Tunisia	Governments officially support GIAHS concept, definition and criteria, but no endorsement of GIAHS, or NIAHS, as a policy/programme has been ratified to date. In Algeria the Ghout agricultural system has been officially recognised in the National Agricultural Development Plan; the Philippines has a draft compendium of NIAHS sites; Peru is in the process of discussions to consider NIAHS as a policy.

Output 1.2: Establishment of an interim GIAHS Secretariat with a statutory mandate and Scientific Advisory Committee, as well as articulation of a process for designating agricultural systems as GIAHS.

63. The iGS and SAC were established in place of the GPIU soon after the launch of the Project in 2008. They are recognised by the ISC, but have not achieved a statutory mandate to date, because GIAHS does not have a legal basis, such as through a regular programme within FAO, or as an International Convention. Due to budgetary constraints mentioned in the previous section, the iGS has been severely understaffed throughout the Project's implementation to 30

June 2014 and the SAC remains a voluntary body with limited powers on the selection of GIAHS sites.

64. The iGS and SAC have established a formal GIAHS application procedure and established a set of guidelines on selection criteria and guidelines. To date the number of approved GIAHS has increased to a total of 31 sites to 30 June 2014 (see Annex 12). Certificates recognising the GIAHS sites are issued by the Chair of the ISC and the Global Coordinator. The MTE stated the designation and processing of these certificates is “relatively meaningless”. The evaluation team do not agree with this statement as the increase in GIAHS sites confirms they are clearly meaningful to the countries that applied for them. The issue is not that they are meaningless; rather their increase in number provides ever stronger grounds for FAO to formalise their international recognition, which could be facilitated by, for example, establishing GIAHS as a regular programme.

Output 1.3 relating to Expected Outcome 1: Establishment of a sustainable financing mechanism and institutional support for consolidating and expanding the GIAHS approach as a long-term open-ended programme

65. The shortfall in GEF funding reported in the previous section, confirmed three important findings:

- It confirmed that in spite of a major shortfall in funding, the GEF-funded Project still achieved many of its planned outputs, including the designation of 31 GIAHS sites.
- It confirmed the concept, definition and criteria of GIAHS were more important to the countries involved than the amount of money available. For example, in China interviews with senior officials revealed the fact there was GEF-funding was more important than the amount available. In other words, GEF-funding acted as “seed money” that helped China open doors to a concept that otherwise would not have got off the ground. Meanwhile, FAO’s association helped legitimise this process.
- It confirmed a sustainable financing mechanism and institutional support are still needed to consolidate the GIAHS initiative globally and NIAHS (or something very similar) nationally.

66. In terms of immediate funding, the evaluation team was informed the GIAHS initiative has been integrated into FAO’s Medium Term Plan 2014-17 and Programme of Work and Budget 2014-15 (under Strategic Objective 2). However, funding will remain limited through these channels until a decision is taken at the corporate level on GIAHS. For this reason, it is proposed a “bridge funding phase” is identified and proposed to FAO shareholders as soon as possible for GIAHS from 01 October 2014 (end of GEF funding for the iGS Technical Officer) to at least 01 July 2015 (following the decision on GIAHS at the Conference) in order a clear strategy is conveyed to promote and gain the approval of GIAHS as a regular FAO programme at the June 2015 Conference.

5.1.2 Outputs relating to Expected Outcome 2:

Output 2.1: Identification and implementation of specific measures through which sectoral and inter-sectoral policies and regulations are improved to support conservation and adaptive management of GIAHS

67. The evaluation team can confirm this output has largely been achieved at the national sectoral level in all six pilot countries, but more needs to be done at the inter-sectoral level in some pilot countries. This assertion is based on the following findings:

- **All countries:** the report on the international policy framework in which GIAHS could be formalized³² was reviewed taking into account new CBD actions and targets (in particular relating to the Aichi biodiversity targets and linking biological and cultural diversity in policy decision-making).
- **Algeria:** the National Plan for Agricultural Development (PNDA) was reformed in 2013. From 2014 the PNDA officially recognises and protects the ghout agriculture system recognised by GIAHS at El Oued Souf in the Sahara desert. Furthermore, from 2015 state funds can be accessed from the PNDA by local agricultural institutions, the National Institute for Agricultural Research of Algeria (INRAA) and farmers to protect, promote and replicate the ghout agricultural system.
- **Chile:** the new government of Michelle Bachelet is committed to GIAHS, stating it forms part of national policy to reduce inequality and to protect its agricultural heritage.³³ The Ministry of Agriculture (MINAGRI) is currently in the process of allocating public funds for 2015 to support the consolidation of GIAHS in Chiloe. It has also established an Environmental Department within the Institute of Agricultural Development (INDAP) to study and protect the country's agro-biodiversity interests. In 2014 a national statute was approved to allow the National Institute of Industrial Property Rights (INAPI) to recognise and operate a GIAHS certification label for Chiloe products. The Minister of Agriculture will inaugurate the initiative with the Governor of Chiloe in mid August 2014.
- **China:** the Ministry of Agriculture has issued a number of circulars (2013-14) that officially establish the mainstreaming of NIAHS in national agricultural policy to support the designation of the 11 GIAHS sites certified to date. The Chinese government has officially ratified 39 NIAHS sites so far. In addition, China has played a major role in the creation of the East Asia Association for Agricultural Heritage Systems (ERAHS) in 2013, involving China, Korea and Japan. ERAHS has stimulated the integration of the GIAHS concept into educational programmes in all three countries³⁴ and was instrumental in supporting the identification of the GIAHS site in Korea (approved at the ISC meeting in April 2014).
- **Peru:** the Ministries of Environment and Agriculture have agreed to re-launch the GIAHS initiative in Cuzco and Puno and are in the process of establishing a national steering committee to discuss the future mainstreaming of GIAHS and the possible adoption of NIAHS³⁵. The Ministry of Environment (MINAM) is currently also identifying a new Action Plan to support implementation of the National Environment Strategy in which the conservation and sustainable use of the country's agro-biodiversity will form an integral part. Interviews with MINAM confirm similar selection criteria used by GIAHS will be included to help identify, recognise and support "agro-biodiversity areas". Meanwhile, the Ministry of Agriculture (MINAG) is

³² Report prepared in 2005 during the PDF-B period by Prof. Harrap, University of Sussex, UK.

³³ GIAHS-Chiloe was officially mentioned in President Bachelet's speech at the 33rd Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean in Santiago, May 2014.

³⁴ All three countries have/will launch Masters-level courses on GIAHS. China also has students studying specific aspects of GIAHS, such as agro-tourism. Korea has promoted the idea of establishing a specific institute on GIAHS to facilitate graduate training programmes on GIAHS.

³⁵ Funding sources are likely to include co-finance (SNIP) and from bi-lateral funds, (in particular GEF6 funds)

currently identifying a new strategic plan for agriculture in which GIAHS will be considered as part of the strategy to support family farming. The National Institute for Agricultural Research (INIA) is also fully committed to the GIAHS initiative given it represents an important way of conserving the country's genetic resources in situ and the reintroduction of native Andean crops and livestock to strengthen food security. Indeed, a regulation is being drawn up that aims at enhancing the role of INIA in protecting the reputation of native foods, consolidating traditional practices and helping producers obtain a premium price for native products.

- **The Philippines:** The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has produced a draft compendium of potential NIAHS sites from which future GIAHS sites would be identified, together with a proposal on the mainstreaming NIAHS. In addition, a Memorandum of Agreement between DENR, Department of Agriculture and the National Commission on Culture and Arts (NCCA) was signed in 2013 to continue to support and promote GIAHS in the country.
- **Tunisia:** National and local stakeholders signed the National Charter for the Conservation and Development of the Tunisian Oases in April 2012. The Charter represents a milestone in Tunisian agricultural policy, because it has helped the national government recognise its highly centralised policies have had a highly detrimental effect on the traditional agricultural systems that have evolved, adapted and thrived in the oases of Tunisia over hundreds, if not thousands, of years. In early 2014 the ASM presented to national government a Community Management Plan for Genetic Resources in Tunisian Oases, supported by an analysis of Legislation, Institutional Structures and Perspectives.

68. Nonetheless, in terms of the proposed building of “linkages with FAO field programmes and activities in the six pilot countries” and “GEF-financed projects”³⁶ the evaluation team found only limited evidence that such linkages had been established and a harmonized approach established. For example, linkages have been established between GIAHS and the Andean Seeds Project financed by AECID/FAO and the LatinCrop Project financed by the UE (Peru) and with the ITPGRFA in Tunisia concerning finance for activities such as the tree biodiversity study in the Gafsa oasis and the community management plan for genetic resources in oases of Tunisia. The conclusion is, therefore, that not enough was done to develop linkages with other FAO and non-FAO projects to help enhance the policy framework for GIAHS and NIAHS. The limited and undefined role of the FAO country offices in the Project and the lack of impetus from FAO-HQ to promote an inter-departmental platform to promote linkages in accordance with the MoU established between NRL/iGS and other departments were clearly contributory factors as to why this did not happen.

Output 2.2: Development of capacities of national-level institutions to mainstream GIAHS in sectoral and inter-sectoral plans and policies

69. The achievement of this output is only possible if there is a policy framework in place that fully recognises GIAHS within a national context; namely NIAHS. Thus to promote these capacities without such a policy framework would make little sense. In the case of China, a policy framework has recently been established that confirms NIAHS and GIAHS are part of a national programme lead by the Ministry of Agriculture. Support in mainstreaming NIAHS and GIAHS in multi-sector policy plans and policies thus makes sense to China. Indeed key stakeholders in the wrap-up meeting in China confirmed support in mainstreaming NIAHS and

³⁶ ProDoc p.39-41

GIAHS is a priority, which they hope will be developed under a regular programme for GIAHS within FAO (and under an International Convention over the long-term). In the meantime, the government has agreed to provide USD 2.0 m. to help develop NIAHS and GIAHS further within China and a further USD 2.0 m. from its South-South Co-operation to support GIAHS globally.

70. In the other pilot countries capacity building on the mainstreaming of GIAHS is not yet an option except in Chile where the new government is in the process of formally embracing GIAHS in its agricultural policy to value cultural diversity and the flow of ecosystem services from agro-ecological landscapes. In addition, FAO-Chile has been formally requested since the evaluation team's visit to the country to assist in the establishment of a proposal to GEF to fund the development of a NIAHS network. In the Philippines, a review of plans, policies, ordinances and regulatory frameworks took place and a policy paper recommending five policy options for NIAHS was produced. In Algeria recognition of the ghout system has been recognized. However, GIAHS (or NIAHS) have not been formally approved by the Governments of the Algeria, Peru, the Philippines, or Tunisia so far. Furthermore, unlike China or Chile, the majority of these countries suffer from regular political and institutional volatility which, together with the lack of funds, has not aided the promotion and adoption of GIAHS in the very short implementation period of the Project (following approval of the national project frameworks).

71. In conclusion, the evaluation team considers the training that has taken place in relation to the attainment of this output has been of limited benefit, especially in the absence of a phasing strategy for the Project. Instead, this output should have focused on: consolidation of GIAHS and NIAHS in national policies, strategies and plans in accordance with demand-driven requests for support from the national governments.

5.1.3 Outputs relating to Expected Outcome 3:

Output 3.1: Establishment of appropriate stakeholder set-ups at the site level that brings together customary, state and non-government institutions (including private sector actors) that will support local farmers to engage in collaborative management and promotion of GIAHS

72. The evaluation team confirms this output has been achieved at all the GIAHS sites under assessment. Local actors have established, or consolidated, existing multi-stakeholder associations that are working with and supporting local farmers develop adaptive management capacity and promote the multiple environmental, ecological, social, cultural and economic products and services derived from the GIAHS sites. This has been supported by the Project through capacity building that included training, organising cultural events, education campaigns, trade fairs and GIAHS labelling on goods and services, communications and publications, etc. The following table summarises the achievements under this output to date:

Table 4 Farmer Organisations & Stakeholder Set-ups Established/Strengthened in GIAHS

Country/GIAHS Site	Farmer Organisations & Stakeholder
Algeria - Ghout Agricultural System in the Oases Beni Isguen, in El Oued Souf	5 Farmer associations have been created within the GIAHS site to support farmers recuperate ancestral practices, reintroduce abandoned native varieties and establish linkages with private sector. These associations work closely with public institutions present in El Oued Souf including Local Government Offices (Directorate for the Environment, INRAA, Centre for Training and Agricultural Extension, Directorate for Culture, Directorate for Tourism, etc.), Public Assemblies for the Communes linked to the GIAHS site, Chamber of Commerce, the University for El Oued and the local media.
Chile - Chiloe archipelago	CBOs based in three main communities (two traditional and one indigenous community) have established a network of farming, craft, tourist, etc. associations in alliance with the Centre for Education and Technology and the Governor's Office for Chiloe to promote the certification of 23 GIAHS products and services in Chiloe (Project "Nodo-SIPAM"). Members from the Consultative Committee for the Project support certification compliance (includes Ministry of Agriculture, ODEPA, Agriculture Regional Secretary, National Tourism Service, Association of Organic Farmers of Chiloe, Austral University and the municipalities of Chiloe); diploma courses conducted by CET on "Territorial Development with Cultural Identity" with local farmers who have little academic background, but are motivated to adapt their practices to exploit niche markets for their products/services and optimise their socio-environmental services.
<p>a) Rice-Fish Terraces in Qingtian County (2008)</p> <p>b) Kuajishan Ancient Chinese Torreya Tree System in Shaoxing (2013)</p> <p>c) Hani Rice Terraces in Honghe (2010)</p> <p>d) Dong's Rice Fish Duck System in Congjiang county (2011)</p> <p>e) Wannian Traditional Rice Culture in Jiangxi Province (2011)</p> <p>f) Aohan Dryland Farming System in Chifeng City (2012)</p> <p>g) Pu'er Tea Traditional Tea Agrosystem in Pu'er City (2012)</p> <p>h) Urban Agricultural Heritage – Xuanhua Grape Garden in Heibei Province (2013)</p> <p>i) Xinghua Duotian Agrosystem (2014)</p> <p>j) Jiaxin Traditional Chinese Date Gardens in Jia county (2014)</p>	<p>a) Village associations established in Longxian village, Renzhuang and Xiaozhoushan villages (250 households) to promote adaptive management in the GIAHS site; three cooperatives produce local fish varieties to sustain traditional rice-fish practices in villages; joint research centre established between IGSNRR and Qingtian government; Zhiang university researching local fish genetics; local migrant has set up rice cooperative in Longxian to produce and market GIAHS rice (creating 50 jobs); several households have set up restaurants to cater for rise in agro-tourism; local school educates children on GIAHS and houses a museum on farming heritage; an ancient temple promotes GIAHS in cultural events and local government has financed the establishment of an eco-park and viewing point. Local Steering Committee at Qingtian County level oversees all aspects of development in GIAHS. Local coordinator from MOA is very active in supporting GIAHS.</p> <p>b) Village associations in process of mobilisation pending approval of the Shaoxing Torreya Community Protection Plan for the GIAHS site (covers 400 km² and 59 villages); agro-tourism park, museum and reception centre established at Zhujji; scientific research on torreya trees and practices is on-going to help producers of torreya nut in production and processing; baseline study completed.</p> <p>c) The level of interaction between state and the indigenous population on promoting the adaptive management of the GIAHS site was difficult to determine. This was not aided by the fact the local population have their own local language and UNESCO have designated a WHS in one of the four counties covered by GIAHS. Interviews indicate indigenous and state-led organisations exist, but run parallel to each other. Random interviews with locals indicated they knew little about GIAHS. However, the Honghe Autonomous Prefecture has established an Administrative Bureau for the Hani Terraces led by a lady from the Hani tribe to help oversee the implementation of the master plan. The Bureau has helped link farmers to potential buyers of purple rice through trade fairs and has supported alternative economic activities linked to agro-tourism to help diversify the local economy, reduce urban migration of youths and strengthen local identity (art centre, restaurants, training); many publications and tourist-based information have been produced to promote GIAHS.</p>

Country/GIAHS Site	Farmer Organisations & Stakeholder
k) Fuzhou Jazmine and Tea Culture System in Fuzhou City (2014)	
Peru - Puno-Cusco Corridor	<p>In the Cusco region: mayors in the municipal districts of Lares and Lamay have fully supported GIAHS by promoting its development in their participatory district development plans; local agricultural experts from the farming communities (“yachachiqs” in Quechua) have been identified and employed as local extensionists to promote ancestral agricultural practices under the slogan, “Live a Full Life” (“Sumak Kausay” in Quechua), in particular the reintroduction of native Andean crops; the Provincial Committee on Agrarian Reconciliation (COPRECA) facilitates local actors and producers to discuss the benefits of traditional agriculture and exchange knowledge and practices on the reintroduction of native varieties and rotation systems; Regional Government implements the “Agro-biodiversity Zoning Project” designed to increase the protection and sustainable use of agro-biodiversity in five provinces; INIA conducts research on native crop varieties to up-date germplasm banks ex situ³⁷ and certify new native varieties (although access to these certified products according to farmers interviewed needs improvement); In Puno region the Association of Farmers in the San José Microcuenca (APACUSJA) supports 13 peasant organisations strengthen their internal governance, communication skills and adaptive management capacity, in particular the management of revolving funds to finance the purchase of seeds for grazing of dairy cattle (one organisation has a fund worth over USD 7,000); the Caritamaya community organisation has been linked to local government to improve breeds of coloured alpacas and support woollen textile production; restoration ancient sukakollo agricultural systems and produce local cheese.</p> <p>Local ordinances have been introduced at the Regional level to protect traditional agricultural systems in Cusco and Puno regions from the use of GMOs and to recognise the nutritional value of specific native crops such as quinoa and lupin (<i>lupinus mutabilis</i>).</p>
Philippines - Ifugao Rice Terraces	<p>The indigenous peoples of Ifugao by law had to be consulted and a “Free and Prior Informed Consent” (FPIC) approved in 2011 to confirm GIAHS was community solicited. This opened the way to set-ups facilitating support to the local community from the public, private and NGO sectors in numerous activities to support adaptive management within the GIAHS site, including enhancing capacities of GIAHS communities to implement livelihood projects (relating to rice processing, traditional weaving, etc.), watershed protection and rehabilitation, organic agriculture and agricultural diversification, promoting culture, products, etc. and land use mapping and zoning</p>
Tunisia - The Historic Oasis System of Gafsa	<p>Through the NGO ASM Gafsa local community institutions were revitalised and supported by technical expertise or local NGOs to develop adaptive management practices designed to safeguard the Gafsa Medina and the oases as sustainable socio-agro-ecological system that safeguards the culture, water resources, agricultural and associated biodiversity and livelihoods of the local population.</p>

³⁷ For example, native varieties of quinoa have been taken from 70 collecting sites in the Lares watershed since 2013. However, there are limited resources to characterize the varieties at the INIA Centre in Puno, (national centre for ex situ conservation of quinoa germplasm).

73. Concerning the sustainability of the above-mentioned set-ups, the evaluation team concludes a positive finding is that the vast majority have been established within existing local government, private or NGO structures where there has been an integration of the GIAHS site into local policy and budgeting. This guarantees at least the sustainability of the GIAHS sites until the next elections in most countries concerned. However, where there is also national support for GIAHS such as in China Chile and at least for the ghout system in Algeria, the long-term sustainability of the GIAHS sites is assured as they have/are in the process of being integrated into agricultural policy and public programmes that will help ensure their long-term financial sustainability.

Output 3.2: Identification and monitoring of political and socio-economic processes that impact biodiversity and cultural values in GIAHS in order to enhance positive effects and empower local communities with knowledge and tools to minimize negative effects

74. The evaluation team identified all countries had produced studies relating to a pertinent issue relating to this output, although in China this was higher in number than the other pilot countries due to the availability of co-finance at the local level. The documents identified by the evaluation team are summarised as follows³⁸:

Table 5 Studies or Publications

Country/GIAHS Site	Name of Study/Publication on Political and Socio-economic Processes that Impact Biodiversity and Cultural Values in GIAHS
Algeria - Ghout Agricultural System in El Oued Souf	- Socio-economic analysis of GIAHS at El Oued
Chile - Chiloe archipelago	- Native Potatoes of Chiloe
China a) Rice-Fish Terraces in Qingtian County (2008) b) Kaijishan Ancient Torreyan Tree System in Shaoxing (2013) c) Hani Rice Terraces in Honghe (2010)	- The Environmental Effect of Rice Field Ecological Agriculture Technology Model - Development of tourism at GIAHS sites - Dynamic Conservation and Adaptive Management of China's GIAHS: Theories and Practices (vol. I, II & III)
Peru - Puno-Cusco Corridor	- Catalogues on Andean Biodiversity (native potatoes, oca, native maize, coloured alpacas and llamas, quinoa and canihua), which also supported the production of the Catalogue on Commercial Varieties of Quinoa (Andean Seeds Project/FAO)
Philippines - Ifugao Rice Terraces	- Assessment of Agricultural Biodiversity in Some Pilot Sites of GIAHS-IRT at Hungduan, Ifugao, Philippines
Tunisia - The Historic Oasis System of Gafsa	- Historical analysis and assessment of Oasis of Gafsa - The Oases of Tunisia: Legislation, Structures and Perspectives - Tree biodiversity in the Historic Oasis of Gafsa

75. In all cases, except in the case of China, the above documents were not part of on-going research or monitoring. This was due to the short implementation time of the GIAHS activities following approval of the national project documents. For example, Peru, the Project was implemented over a period of two years (2011-13).

³⁸ A selection of the most relevant publications are included only

Output 3.3: Screening, testing and deployment of environmentally friendly technologies and practices that improve the management and productive capacity of agro-ecosystems and their traditional crops, as well as new co-evolved races

76. A few activities were conducted in relation to the achievement of this output and are listed in the table below. The evaluation observed the training conducted in Peru was still being practiced during the site visit in San Jose and in Chile the certification of GIAHS products is on-going and supported at all levels (local, regional and national). The evaluation did not have time to follow-up on the current state of affairs regarding the activities/documents listed in the table below.

Table 6 List of Activities or Studies on Environmentally Friendly Technologies and Practices

Country/GIAHS Site	
Algeria - Ghout Agricultural System in the Oases Beni Isguen, in El Oued Souf	- Modes de Gestion des Eaux Traditionnel et Moderne.
Chile - Chiloe archipelago	Certification of GIAHS Products and Services Territorial Learning Programme
China a) Rice-Fish Terraces in Qingtian County (2008) b) Kajibishan Ancient Torreyan Tree System in Shaoxing (2013) c) Hani Rice Terraces in Honghe (2010)	- Classic Model for Environmental Management of Rice Field Ecological Agriculture - Cross-visits between and among GIAHS sites
Peru - Puno-Cusco Corridor	Training for agricultural technicians and farmers on the utilization of organic waste in cattle feed
Philippines - Ifugao Rice Terraces	- Visit/collaboration from Japanese government to Philippines to analyze the deployment of environmentally friendly technology in the GIAHS site - Farmers' Field School and climate smart agriculture training
Tunisia - The Historic Oasis System of Gafsa	Updated water guide on the water tower system in Oases Support on waste management in the oasis

Output 3.4: Design and implementation of programmes for alternative and/or supplementary livelihoods to assist people meet the challenges of reduced opportunities for working directly on the land

77. The evaluation team identified a number of efforts to support the local communities in the GIAHS sites visited to develop jobs in non-farm activities either on a permanent or part-time basis. These are listed in the following table:

Table 7 Non-Farm Activities Generated by the Project

Country/GIAHS Site	Non-farm Activities Facilitated by the Project in the GIAHS Sites
Algeria - Ghout Agricultural System in El Oued Souf	- Improved traditional textiles manufacture - Traditional cooking and recipes - tourist circuits - zoo - Date food processing and packing
Chile - Chiloe archipelago	Low impact agro-tourism and eco-tourism (bird watching) Food processing and preserves Craftwork (textiles and wood) Restaurants using local products and dishes Promotion of Chiloe gastronomy in hotels

Country/GIAHS Site	Non-farm Activities Facilitated by the Project in the GIAHS Sites
China a) Rice-Fish Terraces in Qingtian County (2008) b) Kauijishan Ancient Torreyan Tree System in Shaoxing (2013) c) Hani Rice Terraces in Honghe (2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Food processing - Agro-tourism eco-tourism and cultural tourism - Restaurants - Museum of agricultural heritage - Small enterprise development - Food processing, packaging and labelling - Hotels - Craftwork - Shops selling local goods
Peru - Puno-Cusco Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional food processing Recipe books Agro-tourism, eco-tourism and cultural tourism Traditional medicine manufacture Cheese making Improved traditional textiles manufacture
Philippines - Ifugao Rice Terraces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agro-tourism, eco-tourism and ethno-cultural tourism - Food processing - Rice wine making - Traditional textiles manufacture - Forestry products
Tunisia - The Historic Oasis System of Gafsa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Date processing and packing Arts and crafts centre Agro-tourism, eco-tourism, cultural tourism

78. The evaluation was unable to obtain information from the project on the number of jobs created due to the establishment of the GIAHS sites and the subsequent training. However, it evident at all sites there has been a small increase in job creation in mainly tertiary activities and food processing. However, in all cases there is a need to consolidate these activities by improving the quality assurance of products and services and in finding niche markets where local native products can be sold. The development of labeling to sustain this activity is also still to be perfected.

Output 3.5: Documentation and publishing of information about the case histories of establishment and management of GIAHS

79. Very few documents have been produced in relation to the achievement of this output. Following the launch of the Project with much less funding than anticipated, there was an explicit requirement from management to reduce the costs associated with research and case study publications. It is therefore not surprising the Project did not fulfill this output. The relevant documents produced are summarized as follows:

Table 8 List of Documents/Publications on GIAHS Case Histories

Country/GIAHS Site	Documents/Publications on GIAHS Case Histories
Algeria - Ghout Agricultural System in the Oases Beni Isguen, in El Oued Souf	
Chile - Chiloe archipelago	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities and Challenges of GIAHS in Chiloe - Managing and conserving GIAHS - The role of women in conserving agricultural biodiversity
China a) Rice-Fish Terraces in Qingtian County (2008) b) Kauijishan Ancient Torreyan Tree System in Shaoxing (2013)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Book series on agricultural heritage systems (in Chinese) - Coffee table book on first 10 years of GIAHS in China to 2014 (in Chinese)

Country/GIAHS Site	Documents/Publications on GIAHS Case Histories
c) Hani Rice Terraces in Honghe (2010)	
Peru - Puno-Cusco Corridor	
Philippines - Ifugao Rice Terraces	Compendium of Potential GIAHS/NIAHS sites Policy Working Paper – Mainstreaming GIAHS in the existing policies and programmes
Tunisia - The Historic Oasis System of Gafsa	Gafsa Oases Strategic Action Plan for Community Management of Plant Genetic Resources in the Gafsa Oasis
All GIAHS	- Food and Wisdom, 2013 (contains information on all GIAHS sites)

5.1.4 *Outputs relating to Expected Outcome 4:*

Output 4.1: Implementation of the project’s M&E plan at global and pilot-country levels and adapting project implementation according to the outcomes

80. The M&E Plan at global and national levels did not have a dedicated M&E expert to design and operate a results-based system full time due to the restricted budget and the decision taken within iGS to maintain a skeleton service. In its place, the iGS managed a basic tracking system to record operational progress. Hence, the evaluation team has generally not been able to obtain valuable qualitative data to help its results analysis and instead has had to rely heavily on its review of progress documents, data and feedback collected in the field from the three pilot countries visited and information gathered from its semi-structured interviews by telephone/in person.

81. The decision not to develop a more robust M&E system for a project in which qualitative information is crucial given the global, national and local reach of the Project and the number of countries and GIAHS sites involved was, in the evaluation team’s opinion, an error, which should have been addressed in 2012 following the MTE when all national project frameworks were in operation. Furthermore, this would have greatly assisted planning the final stages of the Project and the realisation of the other outputs foreseen under outcome 4, which were only partially, or fully unachieved.

Output 4.2: Preparation of a global publication on lessons learned and best practices emerging from the pilot countries on the identification, designation and participatory management of GIAHS.

82. This document has not been compiled to date, in part due to the delay in the preparation of the global termination report, which is not available at the time of writing. The evaluation team have been informed a small balance in GEF funds as at 30 June 2014, has been used to fund a three-month extension of the Technical Officer in the iGS to complete the termination report and global publication on lessons learned.

83. However, the evaluation team have identified a number of lessons learnt during its assessment of activities at the global, national and local levels. These can be found in the final section of this report.

Output 4.3 Preparation of scientific reports and publications arising from project investigations and implementation

84. Due to limited funding of the Project, the iGS took the decision to largely remove GEF funding for scientific research activities. For example, in Peru and Chile the local coordinators confirmed to the evaluation team that funds were to be concentrated on activities with the beneficiaries and that research activities would have to be funded through co-finance, or other means. In Peru co-finance was not available, so important scientific research on the intricate and profound local knowledge associated with the GIAHS, on genetic resources, or on autochthonous technologies applied in the four micro watersheds involved, was not researched.

85. Nevertheless, due to the innovation and determination of the coordinators scientific research was conducted by other means in Peru, which included support from the Andean Seeds Programme. In other countries valuable research was conducted through other means. The evaluation mission team was able to identify the following scientific/technical publications that were inspired, or influenced by the GIAHS concept and which support interest to FAO's normative work:

Table 9 Scientific/Technical Publications Inspired/Influenced by GIAHS Concept

Country/GIAHS Site	Documents/Publications on GIAHS Case Histories
Algeria - Ghout Agricultural System in El Oued Souf	Not evaluated
Chile - Chiloe archipelago	Bird Watchers Guide in Chiloe Book, From Yucatan to Chiloe – Dynamic Territories in Latin America
China a) Rice-Fish Terraces in Qingtian County b) Kaijishan Ancient Torreya Tree System in Shaoxing (2013) c) Hani Rice Terraces in Honghe (2010)	- National mail stamps on the torreya tree - National magazine article on the Torreya tree system and the nutritional value of torreya nuts - Book, Hani Agricultural Life and Customs
Peru - Puno-Cusco Corridor	- Quinoa Species of Peru – From the Andes to the World - Catalogue of the National Collection of Quinoa Germplasm - Mother Quinoa “Ayara” – Cuisine Recipes for Different Types of Quinoa - Catalogue of Commercial Varieties of Quinoa - Haute Cuisine Restaurants in Puno Using Typical Products from the Region (ARTEYSA) - Customs of native potato (Cusco Region)
Philippines - Ifugao Rice Terraces	Not evaluated
Tunisia - The Historic Oasis System of Gafsa	Not evaluated
All GIAHS (Global documents)	See output 4.4

Output 4.4: Creation and maintenance of a web-based information management system

86. The iGS has successfully established the GIAHS website since 2010, which also promotes the GIAHS logo on behalf of FAO. According to access tracking figures a high level of usage has been registered by stakeholders, the scientific community, researchers and the general public. According to interviews with users (stakeholders) this can be explained by:

- The extensive information provided on each GIAHS site and partners. The evaluation confirms this has been up-dated since new GIAHS sites were approved at the ISC at the end of April 2014;
- The announcement of new activities to be held under the GIAHS initiative. For example, the “First High Level Training Course on GIAHS - Think Globally, Act

Locally” to be held in China 14-28 September 2014 (financed by China’s South-South Co-operation) is currently advertised on the home page (<http://www.fao.org/giahs/giahs-news-events/news-detail/en/c/239731/>);

- Direct links to multi-media, publications, success stories, workshop proceedings, etc.

87. Nevertheless, the evaluation confirms the website did not develop a web portal through which key stakeholders could access wider sources of information, databases, etc. of the partner countries or relating to the GIAHS sites, nor does it provide information on hits, likes, links to other relevant sites, etc.

5.2 *Achievements at Outcome level*

5.2.1 *Achievement of Expected Outcome 1: An internationally accepted system for recognition of GIAHS is in place (Global)*

88. The Project has not achieved this outcome, although with reference to the proposed replication strategy established in the ProDoc, the Project did help secure additional funding for the GIAHS initiative and the designation of 15 new GIAHS sites to 30 June 2014 (see Annex 12). The ISC and iGS currently find themselves in a difficult position, because the setting of this outcome was essentially a pre-condition for the continuation of GIAHS at the global level (under a regular programme of FAO)³⁹. By setting the stakes so high the risk has always been that any progress and efforts in developing GIAHS at the national and local levels could be left high and dry if GIAHS was not endorsed globally (by the Conference) and established as a regular programme in FAO (an internationally recognised system).

89. As a result the current situation is that GEF funding for GIAHS has ended and there is no official system in place to recognise and support the global activities of the initiative⁴⁰. Clearly the ISC/iGS did not identify this risk and the necessary mitigation measures in time to ensure this either did not happen, or that a temporary “bridging solution” was in place until a long-term solution was found to GIAHS. Senior officials from all three pilot countries visited expressed their concerns to the evaluation team over this situation, in particular the lack of communication from FAO as to its position on GIAHS. In all three countries there was a clear message that GIAHS should be continued as a regular programme in FAO. Indeed, the Chinese delegation believe the establishment of GIAHS as a regular programme should be considered as a stepping stone to an International Resolution on GIAHS in the long-term. They have also shown a strong commitment to continuing GIAHS in the post GEF phase through a commitment of USD 4.0 m. of which USD 2.0 m. will be used to fund international training courses and exchanges.

90. In the near future (2014) FAO needs to formally address this situation and ensure the iGS is able to continue a minimum of operations until a permanent solution is reached. In particular an immediate bridging facility is required to enable the iGS to operate with a small team of consultants to ensure outstanding key documents are produced on lessons learned,

³⁹ There is no clear explanation as to what “an internationally accepted system for recognition of GIAHS” should be in the ProDoc or PDF-B. Mention is made of a Convention, but for the purposes of the evaluation this has been interpreted as a regular programme within FAO (given this is the most logical step for a project of global interest to proceed within FAO)

⁴⁰ GIAHS has secured funding to support GIAHS sites designated in other partner countries, but not to fund global activities.

finalisation of the global termination report and preparation of the future proposal to consolidate the GIAHS “movement” over the long-term.

5.2.2 *Achievement of Expected Outcome 2: The conservation and adaptive management of globally significant agricultural biodiversity harboured in GIAHS is mainstreamed in sectoral and inter-sectoral plans and policies in pilot countries (National)*

91. The GEF-funded outputs mentioned in the previous subsection have made a significant contribution to meeting outcome 2, although this varies according to pilot country due to a number of factors including timing, political and technical issues and external factors. However, a crucial finding from this outcome is that GIAHS becomes much more strategic to national development policy objectives and is better understood when it is underpinned by NIAHS.

92. The Chinese establishment of NIAS since 2012 has been spectacular. Not only has it enabled the country identify a total of 39 sites to date, but it has helped local government throughout the country refocus and develop a better understanding and respect for its agricultural heritage as well as identify the potential of the multi-dimensional goods and services they produce. GIAHS is therefore an external concept that now fits perfectly within a policy context underscored by NIAHS in China.

93. For the Scientific Committee and iGS, the existence of NIAHS also helps the selection process, because there is assurance the GIAHS sites proposed have already passed through a national ranking process by the Chinese authorities and national scientific committee (using similar selection criteria to GIAHS). Furthermore, the NIAHS-GIAHS process is mutually reinforcing. On the one hand it has developed a new national and scientific capacity which in turn is leading to an increase in the number of champions of GIAHS. On the other, it enables the iGS and the Steering Committee to have more sites to promote its cause around the world and promote joint ventures, exchanges, etc.

94. To conclude, the evaluation team considers the development of the NIAHS initiative in China to be of enormous significance to the future of GIAHS because it has:

- Demonstrated to successfully establish the national policy framework in which it can be mainstreamed, thus fulfilling the replication strategy proposed in the ProDoc;
- Strengthened the ownership of GIAHS at the global, national and local levels;
- Put into place a national regulatory system that iGS-SAC can monitor and;
- Provided a true alternative to the World Heritage System, which is not suitably matched to protecting and sustaining human living systems in which man and his environment constantly interact⁴¹
- Stimulated new scientific research and socio-economic activities in the country.

95. In Chile formal commitments to establishing a NIAHS-GIAHS network are underway and the Philippines is ready to develop their own NIAHS policy should additional funds be made available by international donors. However, due to time and funding constraints there was not enough time to formally establish such a policy although the national counterpart authorities

⁴¹ This was witnessed at the Hani Terraces GIAHS where the WHS only recognises part of the Hani terraces system (a landscape focus)

in Peru indicated they are committed to studying further the viability of introducing a national policy on NIAHS.⁴²

5.2.3 *Achievement of Expected Outcome 3: Globally significant agro-biodiversity in pilot GIAHS is being managed and sustainably used by empowering local communities and harnessing evolving economic, social, and policy processes and by adaptation of appropriate new technologies that allow interaction between ecological and cultural processes (Local)*

96. The outputs indicate the Project has helped to bring about positive change in the minds of the local population that have participated in the Project. The evaluation team conclude this outcome has been achieved to an extent, but clearly more time is needed to monitor change over a longer period of time to determine the true effects and impact of the activities funded. The positive changes identified by GIAHS in the field in China, Peru and Chile are summarised as follows:

- The vast majority of farmers interviewed⁴³ - men and women – felt empowered because GIAHS supports the principle of self-determination;
- The concept recognises and values local knowledge and practices (which in some cases has resuscitated their own value of the agricultural system)
- GIAHS has established new public-civil partnerships that consolidate traditional forms of organisation among farmers and learning routes;
- Native varieties of crops and livestock have been recovered and promoted as organic products (in some cases even leading to the replacement of hybrid varieties);
- Designation of GIAHS has added value to the products they produce because they are recognised by GEF/FAO (especially native products);
- GIAHS represents a viable way of conserving genetic resources in situ (especially the wild relatives of native crop varieties);
- GIAHS has attracted local and national investors, stimulating growth and jobs in the tertiary sector;
- GIAHS is attracting scientific research, in particular on native crops that farmers have adapted to climate change, but also in other areas such as education, tourism and culture.

97. The threats associated with GIAHS need also to be identified, closely monitored and mitigated in a timely manner. The evaluation team identified the following threats in the field visits:

- Temptation by farmers to over produce in-demand/certified/labelled varieties at the expense of other varieties (threat to traditional rotation systems);
- A lack of incentives for youths to stay on the land (migration is seen as the only option)
- Information and studies on GIAHS are not tailored to the needs of different audiences (and thus lose impact)

⁴² This will depend on FAO's continued commitment to support and promote the GIAHS initiative following the ending of GEF funding in 2014.

⁴³ A total of 131 (60 women) end beneficiaries such as farmers and local entrepreneurs were interviewed during the field visits: China 62 (39 men 23 women); Peru 52 (25 men; 27 women) and; Chile: 17 beneficiaries (7 men and 10 women).

- The lack of effective communication (does not reveal true costs and benefits of migration to the cities, jungle, fisheries or mining industries, etc.);
- Too much attention on adding value to products without identifying niche markets first and developing marketing capacity and networks (producing products or services the public may not want or know)
- Agricultural extension services or NGOs employ “outsiders” rather than harness local capacity (must speak the local language/dialect);
- Training techniques are not suited to local farmers (not on-the-spot focused);
- Competition between and among ministries (reduces expectations);
- Political cycles last just five years (a strong civil society is needed to maintain the continuation of local policies on GIAHS).
- Lack of record keeping among farmers (inability to track progress)
- Lack of a tourism strategy (control of numbers to control increase in rubbish, erosion, intrusion, hotel expansion, etc.)

98. On the proposed replication strategy for outcome 3 in the ProDoc, the evaluation team confirms on-farm demonstrations in the following have been highly successful in encouraging follow-on farmers to replicate conservation and adaptive management within the site and, in the case of China and Peru in other areas of the country:

- Introduction of environmental education and on traditions and mythology (China)
- Establishment of reception centres (China)
- Introduction of native varieties of Andean crops identified in the GIAHS sites and certified by INIA (Peru)
- Yachachiks (local agricultural knowledge holders) have been called upon to train and share experiences with the local community on adaptive management of their agricultural systems (Peru)

5.2.4 *Achievement of Expected Outcome 4: Lessons learned and best practices from promoting effective management of pilot GIAHS are widely disseminated to support expansion and upscaling of the GIAHS in other areas/countries and creation of the GIAHS network (Global, National, Local)*

99. This outcome was not achieved at the global level. The lack of funds within the iGS has been a major reason why a consultant was not recruited to assist in the identification and synthesis of lessons learned and best practices from the pilot sites. This situation as already mentioned in 5.2.1, needs to be resolved and a publication on lessons learned produced to support the identification of the proposal to the Conference justifying the conversion of GIAHS into a regular programme within FAO.

100. In terms of the dissemination of national level information and lessons learned on GIAHS, the evaluation team is also reluctant to say this outcome has been achieved. There is evidence that a selection of important documents have been uploaded into the GIAHS website and some publications have been handed out the ISC, but the evaluation team believes this outcome can only be achieved if such information is disseminated within a communication strategy with a particular goal in mind. This regrettably was not the case.

101. In conclusion, the Project was not able to capitalize on country-level experiences to support the international advocacy efforts envisioned under Outcome 1. However, one positive development has been the establishment of the Experts Committee for GIAHS in China, which

contributed to the creation of ERAHS in 2013, which is an inter-country platform for scientists from China, Japan and Korea to exchange information on GIAHS in their respective countries and between the sites.

5.3 Gender equality

102. The ProDoc provides explicit evidence that, a gender focus was incorporated. Attention to vulnerable, groups and in particular women and indigenous peoples was certainly a major concern. The number of references to gender/women and indigenous peoples – which are respectively quoted 15 and 49 times – illustrate as proxy indicator, the importance given by the ProDoc to the two issues. Notwithstanding, in the Project logframe there is no specific reference about outputs and activities specifically focusing on women and indigenous peoples.

103. Concerning women the ProDoc addresses the following specific issues:

- In most sites men outmigration is necessary to meet the need of the household. Subsequently, farming workload tend to increase among women.
- In some sites, women play a particular role in the farming systems which make them the repository of traditional agriculture practice.
- In some sites, women empowerment should be approached as a pre-condition of GIAHS conservation and sustainable development.

104. Concerning indigenous peoples, the ProDoc addresses the following specific issues:

- Indigenous peoples are often the creator and custodians of GIAHS;
- Indigenous peoples' knowledge and management experience related to nature and the environment is a resource to contemporary developmental challenges;
- There is scope for action on national legislation on indigenous peoples and minorities (Peru, Chile, the Philippines) and vice versa;
- The Project would contribute to recognize the cultural identity and rights of indigenous peoples/ quality of life (according to the UN declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples”.

105. Results of the document review conducted by the evaluation team confirm gender was not mainstreamed in key documents, such as the Progress Reports. Indeed, these documents did not include a specific section on gender/cross cutting issues, which focused on women's access to resources, training, etc. An assessment of the termination reports of the five countries that have submitted them (excludes Chile where only a draft has been produced to date), also reveals they have not been submitted according to a standardised format in which gender is a specific topic of analysis. However, all countries were found to have incorporated the gender issue in their termination reports. This was particularly evident in the Philippines. In Algeria and Tunisia there was also clear information on gender, including specific projects for women, such as loom weaving in Tunisia and date selection in Algeria.

106. During the field visits in China, Peru and Chile the evaluation team interviewed a large number of women beneficiaries in recognition of their important role as knowledge holders (45% of interviewees were women), well in line with targets established in the methodology (30% that included indigenous women). In most cases the women interviewed by the evaluation team confirmed they had been active beneficiaries of GEF-funded activities and reported increased management and/or productive capacity. In all three countries, women's groups also confirmed they had increased family income and that their status had improved vis-à-vis their husbands. In

Peru, for example, the women's textile association in Pampacoral (Lares, Cusco) confirmed they had increased their income on average by USD 70 p/month due to the sale of improved textiles. Another women's group had increased income on average by USD 95 p/month from the sale of guinea pigs (a micro project that has had no technical assistance since the closure of operations in June 2013). In Chile, there were also numerous examples where women were active participants in the activities conducted by CET and confirmed they were direct beneficiaries in environmental, social and economic-related activities. Participation numbers can be found in Annex 11.

107. In conclusion, the evaluation mission believes the Project activities by and large did mainstream a gender focus in at least five of the pilot countries, although this was not found to be the case in Algeria. However, this gender was not adequately addressed in the Project's progress and annual reports. For example, attention was given to participation in terms of numbers, but not on an analysis of the value of women's participation and knowledge in GIAHS from the environmental, social, cultural and economic perspectives.

5.4 Capacity development

108. Capacity development in its broadest sense has been an important element of Project implementation strategy at all levels. Development of scientific capacity was found to have been promoted through various activities including:

- Debate through academic events;
- Dissemination of GIAHS concept and approach among policy makers;
- Through international conferences and meetings and;
- Awareness raising among the public at large (through the production of popular learning materials, and the implementation of GIAHS-promotional events, such as a fairs and festivals).

109. These activities aimed at strengthening the understanding of GIAHS at the national level and at promoting relevant national policies in connection with output 2.1.

110. The Project's capacity development work at the grassroots level, i.e. on learning and awareness raising activities for farmers, local NGOs and local governments was a major focus of the project. This was important to support the credibility and development of the international and national policy environment on GIAHS as well as harness public opinion on the relevance of GIAHS and significance of the holistic approach practiced by the local population.

111. This evaluation confirms a detailed stocktaking of grassroots-level capacity development events has taken place, confirming 62 activities were implemented by the Project in the period 2011-2012. This inventory is presented in detail in Annex 11. Several considerations concerning Project capacity development practice at the grassroots level can be elicited from of these data, which are summarized as follows:

- All together the content of the capacity development events tends to focus on the dynamic conservation of GIAHS (40 capacity development events). Less attention was given to the identification and implementation of complementary livelihoods options (12 events). This indicates the capacity development strategy placed more attention to dynamic conservation events, rather than to livelihood needs of GIAHS people (such as adding value to GIAHS produce through branding and marketing, diversification of income generating activities in areas such as agro/eco-tourism facilities).

- Although there are difference from country to country, depending on prevailing national education practice, active adult learning interactive methods (e.g. workshops, action research), prevail over conventional, “vertical” training courses (40 over 62).
- Most capacity development events involved a variety of national and local stakeholders. In training courses and workshop, farmers have join with administrators, school teachers, students, and researchers. Together with the above trend for active education this helped to promote a twoway top-down/bottom up flow of information in which GIAHS inhabitants learned from experts and experts learned from farmers (such as the yachachiqs in Cusco, Peru, or Chiloe sheep breeders in Chile).
- Coverage of capacity development activities is very high. Based on an estimated total of 2,448⁴⁴ participant farmers engaged in Project activities in all six pilot countries, 1667 have participated in Project capacity development activities (about 70% of total participants)
- The proportion of women participants in Project capacity development activities amount to an estimated 43%, which confirms the evaluation team’s assertion in the previous subsection that the project did have a gender focus⁴⁵. Furthermore, given the growing trend of outward male migration in the GIAHS sites, it is clear women’s participation in GIAHS is crucial to reduce dependency on remittances and promote jobs in on-farm/off-farm employment. This is particularly relevant in those communities where women play a pivotal role in conserving and reproducing variety and cultivars germoplasm.

5.5 Human-Rights Based Approach

112. Attention to vulnerable groups and in particular women and indigenous peoples are certainly a major concern as evaluated in the Project’s theory of change (Section 3). The Project’s objectives are coherent with the human-rights based approach in that they focus on recognising, valuing and conserving the knowledge and practices of marginalised groups of society - notably indigenous peoples and at the same time empowering them to manage their adaptation to the current context and challenges of the market economy.

113. Notwithstanding, in the LFM in the ProDoc there is no specific reference about outputs and activities specifically focusing on the human-rights based approach, in particular the rights of indigenous peoples who live in many of the GIAHS sites involving the pilot countries⁴⁶.

114. Concerning the rights of marginalised women the ProDoc addresses them in relation to addressing the following issues:

- Outmigration of men leaving women heads of the household for long periods and with the farming workload.

⁴⁴ Total figure taken from the distance survey conducted by the evaluation in all six pilot countries

⁴⁵ Algeria is an exception in this connection. Participating women are only 6% of total participants and is limited to participation in a training on organization GIAHS produce fairs. Culture and recent history of the country are likely to explain this mismatch with the general trend.

⁴⁶ Indigenous peoples are the predominant group of the inhabitants in the following GIAHS sites: Ghout System, Algeria (Berbers); Hani terraces, China (Yi and Hani tribes), Ifugao rice terraces, Philippines (Ifugao with diverse dialects), Cusco-Puno Corridor, Peru (Aymara and Quechua). They are also an important group in Chiloe, Chile (Huilliche).

- Women's role in managing the farming systems is high, thus meaning they are important knowledge holders;
- Women's empowerment is a pre-condition of GIAHS conservation and sustainable development in some sites (such as in Peru and Chile).

115. On indigenous peoples, the ProDoc addresses the following specific issues:

- Indigenous peoples are often the creator and custodians of GIAHS
- Indigenous peoples' knowledge and management experience related to nature and the environment is a resource to help face contemporary developmental challenges;
- There is scope for action on national legislation on indigenous peoples and minorities (Peru, Chile, the Philippines) and vice versa;
- The Project would contribute to recognize the cultural identity and rights of indigenous peoples/quality of life, (although there is no explicit mention of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples).

116. The findings from the field visits confirm that in all cases the Project has played particular attention to respecting the human-rights of indigenous peoples, including indigenous women, by recognising, valuing and supporting their cultural and traditional practices (such as promoting the crops/animals they use and introducing them in local/national gastronomy; respecting, researching and replicating traditional agricultural practices and technologies; improving the quality and design of their arts and crafts and finding new markets; understanding rituals and ceremonies and recording them or promoting them through publications or fairs, etc.). This was confirmed in the interviews conducted with indigenous peoples and their leaders. However, the right to self determination may be impinged by the requirement of a "development" or "master" plan when the SAC deliberates over the selection of new sites. In general indigenous communities were found not to limit their management activities within the GIAHS sites to time cycles; rather planning is conceived as an on-going community-based planning process managed by the regular rotation of leaders within the indigenous communities themselves.

117. Concerning the reference to right to food and decent rural employment the evidence presented in this report shows that the Project has been conceived and implemented to support grassroots stakeholders maintain their agricultural practices, which because they have been sustained over hundreds or thousands of years, confirms the Project is heavily focused on conserving and improving their right not just to consume food, but more importantly their own varieties of food. Although, implicit in the Project, this approach also confirms the Project's conviction to securing employment in agriculture and relating to their agricultural systems (such as tourism, restaurants and arts and crafts).

118. In conclusion, a crucial finding from the evaluation is that GIAHS supports the people's system of agriculture, which in all cases is identified with practices that rely on producing high levels of agro-biodiversity (rather than monocultural systems dependent on high chemical inputs) and that this is part of the long-term food security strategy based on a community, NOT an individual, focus to existence and continuation. This has important implications on the human-rights based approach that centres on the rights of the individual and This has important implications on the human-rights based approach that centres on the rights of the individual and confirms GIAHS offers a unique learning opportunity into the way indigenous peoples have established and adapted their agricultural heritage systems in harmony with the landscape, the

natural resources and the wider ecosystem⁴⁷. In this sense an important observation is that where GIAHS involves indigenous peoples, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples must be the basis for this approach.

5.6 Partnerships and Alliances

119. The evaluation team was generally unable to identify specific partnerships and alliances developed by FAO within the Project to support an efficient and effective delivery of activities. A few exceptions were found and have been reported elsewhere in this report, but by and large this finding is testimony to the fact the Project with FAO's support did not actively establish inter-departmental alliances or synergies with other organisations such as UNESCO, UNEP, or UNDP. This is surprising given Part II of the ProDoc included a specific section on, "Linkages with FAO Field Programmes and Activities in the Six Pilot Countries" and, "Linkages with GEF Financed Projects". The evaluation team understands from its interviews within the organisation that departments do not have a culture of interaction and in some cases maintain opposing ideological differences, which may not support the GIAHS approach.

120. Nevertheless, the Project did act as a catalyst to help forge alliances with donors to fund new GIAHS sites and at the national and local levels partnerships and alliances were much more evident. The most significant alliances established are summarised in the following table:

Table 10 Alliances and Partnerships Established at the National/Local Levels of GIAHS

Pilot Country/GIAHS Site	Alliance/Partnership
iGS-SAC	BMELV (Germany), IFAD (Small Grant Funds - GCP/GLO/295/UCP, GCP/GLO/296/IFA and GCP/GLO/469/IFA), Japan Trust Fund (GCP/INT/154/JPN) Japan-APO Programme (GCPA/INT/079/JPN) and Ishikawa Prefecture (Japan), FTTP (Turkey), Regional Rice Initiative (FAO-HQ since 2013 in support of SO2 goals), MDG Fund (China)
Algeria - Ghout Agricultural System in El Oued Souf	Ministry of Agriculture-INRAA-five date producer associations (although according to INRAA it was difficult to integrate women's participation in this alliance, due to a lack of time to sensitize the associations on the importance of their participation as knowledge holders)
Chile - Chiloe archipelago	Ministry of Agriculture-CET-Governor-Chiloe-municipalities-CBOs have established the Platform for Bio-cultural Diversity and Territories focusing on the following main activities: - promotion of local GIAHS products and services with a strong cultural identity; - strengthening of local associations of innovative producers of agricultural and non-agricultural products and services to develop the local economy (hotels, restaurants, tourist services, etc.), label key products, marketing

⁴⁷ For example, in Cuzco, Peru, the terraced system represents an intricate agricultural system designed to primarily to protect food security from the effects of frost. Because cold air is heavier than warm air, the terraces are designed to escape most of the cold air that descends to the grazing lands on the valley floor. Meanwhile, stone walls supporting the terraces and irrigation channels are designed to produce a greenhouse effect because heat absorbed in the stone during the day is released slowly. Thus, when the system produces resilient, native crop varieties that are adapted to the Andes, there is a high chance the farmer's food security will be guaranteed (especially when crop rotations are maintained).

Pilot Country/GIAHS Site	Alliance/Partnership
	<p>capacity and establish support services (training, diplomas, workshops, identification of markets, etc.).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - supporting the participation of local actors in the public, private and civil society sectors in the inter-change of experiences and lessons learnt; - establishing capacity at different educational levels to support the integration of cultural identity in territorial development; - upscaling of good practices and methods within Chiloe, as well as at the national level and regional levels.
<p>China a) Rice-Fish Terraces in Qingtian County b) Kauijishan Ancient Torreyan Tree System in Shaoxing (2013) c) Hani Rice Terraces in Honghe (2010)</p>	<p>Inter-departmental alliances of several ministries at the national, provincial and local levels together with scientific/research establishments, the local state media entities and village level cooperatives and farmer organisations (see Annex 10).</p>
<p>Peru - Puno-Cusco Corridor</p>	<p>Alliances between municipal councils and regional government were established during the Project, but have not been maintained due to political divisions at the two levels of government. However, Lares and Lamay in Cusco maintain local alliances with local NGOs and CBOs. In Puno local alliances were observed between the Azangaro municipality and the Association of Livestock Producers in the San Jose Micro Watershed. Also the regional government continues to support GIAHS through an alliance with the National University of the High Plain of Puno, the LatinCrop Project funded by the EU and the government-funded PECSA project designed to improve the value of alpaca wool in Puno Region.</p>
<p>Philippines - Ifugao Rice Terraces</p>	<p>No alliances have been formally established at the national level although an alliance is being considered with the Rice Plus – Dynamic Conservation and sustainable use of agro-biodiversity in rice and other farming systems in agricultural landscapes of the Philippines and up-scaling of GIAHS would require the alliance of the Registry of Cultural Properties, the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (ADSDPP Process) the Department of Agriculture (NPAAD and SAFDZ) and DENR (in particular the division responsible for Protected Area Management Plans). Local alliances between the Ifugao indigenous community and the provincial and municipal governments continue to operate to support the application of dynamic conservation integrated in the Master Development Plan since 2013.</p>
<p>Tunisia - The Historic Oasis System of Gafsa</p>	<p>Letters of Agreement between the Ministry of Environment, the Regional Agricultural Development Commission, Institute for Arid Regions of the Medinine, Institute of Research and Agricultural Education and the NGO-ASM. ASM maintains partnerships with CBOs in Gafsa, including producer associations covering milk, fruit, vegetables, livestock, etc. to advocate the benefits and needs of GIAHS to the Ministry of Environment.</p>

6 Analysis by evaluation criteria

Box 4 - key findings

The Project is highly relevant both in terms of meeting international commitments (MDGs, CBD, etc.) and alignment to current policy in most of the pilot countries where they continue to actively support the GIAHS sites nationally (Algeria, China, Chile and Peru), and/or locally (Chile, Peru, Tunisia and the Philippines)

6.1 Relevance

121. The Project was identified over a period of five years between 2002 and 2007. During that time two Project Development Fiches (PDF-A and PDF-B) were produced. The objectives of the Project were agreed and established in the Full-Sized Project (FSP) - ProDoc. The evaluation team confirms project objectives are highly relevant to FAO's objectives and its Strategic Framework 2000-15, in which support to efforts to address the integrated management of biological diversity for food and agriculture is a priority. They also support international efforts to implement the following:

- The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), in particular MDGs 1 and 7 concerning eliminating extreme poverty and ensuring environmental sustainability;
- The UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), in particular Articles 8j and 10a that refer to respect, preserve and maintain knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and; protect and encourage customary use of biological resources in accordance with traditional cultural practices that are compatible with conservation or sustainable use requirements);
- The International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources of Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA), in particular relating to the Global Plans of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA), for Animal Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
- The Convention for the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage (UNESCO), in particular with respect to the preservation measures and monitoring mechanisms of natural WHS.
- The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), in particular relating to adaptation of agriculture to the effects of climate change;
- The UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD);
- The principles of Aid Effectiveness, in particular the principles of enhancing ownership, policy alignment and mutual accountability and harmonization. On the latter, the ProDoc lists a number of linkages with other FAO and GEF projects.

122. At the national level, project objectives in the ProDoc were aligned to national development policy through the implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAP) in the six pilot countries and in some countries to specific policies such as, National Food Security Programmes (Algeria and Peru), or the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (the Philippines). In addition, GIAHS was linked to FAO field programmes and activities and GEF-financed projects in the six pilot countries.

123. In terms of the relevance of the Project in the current context, the evaluation team asserts GIAHS remains highly relevant to its main stakeholders and end beneficiaries in the six pilot countries, but its relevance at the global level is still not secure. This assertion is based on the following findings:

- At the global level (outcome 1 of the ProDoc) there are currently a total of 31 GIAHS sites covering 14 countries⁴⁸.⁴⁹ However, no international system, such as a regular programme for GIAHS within FAO, was secured prior to the closure of GEF funding on 30 June 2014. However, the proposal to convert GIAHS into a regular programme within FAO was discussed at the last Council meeting and further discussion will be conducted at the next Committee on Agriculture (COAG) planned in October 2014. As a result iGS-SAC continues to have inadequate financial and human resources to run operations and consolidate the GIAHS concept at the global level.
- At the national level (Outcome 2) the relevance of GIAHS remains high in the pilot countries for the following reasons:
 - **Algeria:** GIAHS remains highly relevant because it has played a major role in reforming the country's National Plan for Agricultural Development (PNDA). Since 2014 the PNDA officially recognises and protects the GIAHS ghout agriculture system in the Sahara desert. Furthermore, from 2015 state funds can be accessed from the PNDA by local agricultural institutions, the National Institute for Agricultural Research of Algeria (INRAA) and farmers to protect, promote and replicate the ghout agricultural system.
 - **Chile:** the new government of Michelle Bachelet openly supports GIAHS, stating it forms part of national policy to reduce inequality and to protect its agricultural heritage.⁵⁰ The Ministry of Agriculture (MINAGRI) is currently in the process of allocating public funds for 2015 to support the consolidation of GIAHS in Chiloe. It has also established an Environmental Department within INDAP to study and protect the country's agro-ecological interests. Furthermore, in 2014 a national statute was approved to allow the National Institute of Industrial Property Rights (INAPI) to recognise and operate a GIAHS certification label for Chiloe products. The Minister of Agriculture will inaugurate the initiative with the Governor of Chiloe in mid August 2014. Also FAO-Chile has been approached in September 2014 to support the Ministry of Agriculture propose financial support from GEF to fund the establishment of a NIAHS network in the country.⁵¹
 - **China:** the government actively supports and officially recognizes GIAHS, which since 2012 has been underscored by the establishment of national agricultural policy Nationally Important Agricultural Heritage Sites (NIAHS). These are approved by a National Scientific Committee. To date, China has 11 GIAHS and 39 NIAHS sites. In addition, GIAHS has played a major role in the creation of the East Asia Association for Agricultural Heritage Systems (ERAHS), between China, Korea

⁴⁸ The six pilot countries, India, Iran, Japan, Kenya, Korea, Morocco, Tanzania and Turkey.

⁴⁹ For example, China has agreed to commit USD 2.0m. to promote GIAHS through its South-South Co-operation and will host a high level international training course in September 2014 entitled "Think Globally; Act Locally". Peru has agreed to support FAO conduct an International Workshop on Indigenous People's Culture in Cusco at the end of 2014 in which a central theme will be discussion and proposals on the future direction of GIAHS.

⁵⁰ GIAHS-Chiloe was officially mentioned in President Bachelet's speech at the 33rd Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean in Santiago, May 2014.

⁵¹ The support of FAO Chile and RLC in facilitating and consolidating GIAHS in the country is a major factor behind this development.

and Japan in 2013. ERAHS is stimulating the integration of GIAHS into educational programmes in all three countries⁵² and was instrumental in supporting the identification of the GIAHS site in Korea (approved by the iGS-SAC in April 2014).

- **Peru:** The Ministries of Environment and Agriculture are in the process of establishing a national committee in which the future mainstreaming of GIAHS and the adoption of NIAHS will be discussed⁵³. The Ministry of Environment (MINAM) is currently identifying a new Action Plan to support implementation of the National Environment Strategy in which the conservation and sustainable use of the country's agro-biodiversity will form an integral part. Interviews with MINAM confirm similar selection criteria used by GIAHS will be included to help identify, recognise and support "agro-biodiversity areas". Meanwhile, the Ministry of Agriculture (MINAG) is currently identifying a new strategic plan for agriculture in which GIAHS is being considered as part of the strategy to support family farming. The relevance of GIAHS also remains high for the National Institute for Agricultural Research (INIA), given GIAHS has helped stimulate research and the conservation of genetic resources (in situ and ex situ) due to the reintroduction and recognition of native Andean crops and livestock. Indeed, a regulation is being drawn up that aims at enhancing the role of INIA in protecting the reputation of native foods, consolidating traditional practices and helping producers obtain a premium price for their authentic products.
- **Philippines:** The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has produced a draft compendium of potential NIAHS sites to support the identification of new GIAHS sites in a similar way to the Chinese model. In addition, a Memorandum of Agreement between DENR, Department of Agriculture and the National Commission on Culture and Arts (NCCA) was signed in 2013. However, the national focal point for GIAHS has confirmed additional external funding and support is needed to help establish national policy commitment on NIAS and GIAHS.
- **Tunisia:** Approval of the National Charter for the Conservation and Development of the Tunisian Oases in April 2012 represents a milestone in Tunisian agricultural policy; because it has helped the national government recognise its highly centralised policies are detrimental to traditional agricultural systems in the oases.
- At the local level (outcome 3) the relevance of GIAHS is very high for the reasons explained below:
 - **Algeria:** GIAHS is leading to a recovery of the *ghout* agricultural systems which were together with many native varieties of date palms and other flora in a process of abandonment. INRAA has also been able to develop its research efforts in the *ghout* systems. For example, INRAA is producing new data and information on the conservation of genetic resources in situ, which in turn is helping to sensitise the local population on the role of local flora and fauna in supporting the sustainability of the *ghout* system. As a result highly drought resistant native varieties of date palms are now in production and from 2015, national funds will be accessed by farming communities to support and expand the *ghout* system for the first time.

⁵² All three countries have/will launch Masters-level courses on GIAHS. China also has students studying specific aspects of GIAHS, such as agro-tourism. Korea has promoted the idea of establishing a specific institute on GIAHS to facilitate graduate training programmes on GIAHS.

⁵³ Funding sources are likely to include co-finance (SNIP) and from bi-lateral funds, (in particular GEF6 funds)

- **Chile:** GIAHS remains highly relevant. The Project Node-GIAHS (Nodo-SIPAM) will finance the Centre for Education and Technology in Chiloe (CET-Chiloe), to implement and promote the Chiloe label for a period of two years from August 2014. The objective of the label is to add value to an initial set of 23 GIAHS products. In addition, the government aims to learn lessons from this exercise to determine whether new linkages with local and national commercial networks will have an impact on income generation and youth employment in traditional agriculture⁵⁴. Findings will also aid MINAGRI consider the replication of GIAHS at two new sites in Araucanía and Atacama regions. GIAHS is seen as a viable way of opening up national dialogue with the country's indigenous population and this could lead to the formal mainstreaming of GIAHS in agricultural policy.⁵⁵
- **China:** local government structures are in place to support the management and monitoring of GIAHS and NIAHS sites (see Annex 10). GIAHS (and NIAHS) help local authorities and line agency staff recognise traditional knowledge and practices at the sites as well as the multiple benefits they produce, including new economic activities that can stimulate the local economies of GIAHS and jobs (such as GIAHS labelling, agro/eco tourism and environmental services). An increase in scientific-related research and investigation is also leading to media and television spots, new publications, educational texts, etc. on GIAHS.
- **Peru:** Local government continues to support GIAHS in its participatory local plans and budgets (especially in Cusco). Demand has grown for native crop varieties and livestock products produced organically and/or considered of superior taste to hybrid alternatives, which in turn has also led to an increase in the prices paid for them. Communities also continue to restore native grasslands and ancient practices, around the Lake Titicaca basin such as sukakollos (raised crop land) and natural drainage pond networks (cochas) which are also of tourist interest (see Annex 13);
- **Philippines:** GIAHS remains relevant to the Ifugao Provincial Office (IPO). For example, the IPO is involved in the implementation of the GIAHS Master Plan, which was revised in 2013 to secure greater coordination of on-going projects and initiatives in and around the site. In addition, it supports the development of the Ifugao Farmers Field School, designed to promote adaptive management within traditional farming techniques, the promotion of agro-tourism and consolidation of the Heritage Learning Centre in the interests of developing awareness and recognition of ethno-agro-ecological knowledge and practices.
- **Tunisia:** the establishment of the National Charter has facilitated the Association for the Protection of the Gafsa Medina (ASM Gafsa) - former implementing agency of the GIAHS project - to secure funding to produce the Community Management Plan for Genetic Resources in Oases and a Study on Legislation, Institutions and Perspectives for the Future (Jan. 2014). The Community Management Plan has been approved and aims to support dynamic conservation of the Gafsa Oasis and ensure sustainable development through adaptive management practices established, revived during the Project's implementation to the end of 2013. The national government has agreed to commit national funds to support the implementation of this plan.

⁵⁴ A major challenge in Chiloe is that too many youths either seek work in the fishing sector, in particular salmon farming, or migrate to Chile's major cities, in particular Santiago.

⁵⁵ A wider multi-sectoral approach to GIAHS is less clear given the highly centralised and vertical nature of Chilean government. For example, the Ministry of Environment confirmed it has played a limited role in GIAHS, even though GEF funding had to be channelled through it to GIAHS.

124. Concerning coherence with the UNDAF, the ProDoc confirms that the identification and selection of the sites during the PDF-B period was done with the acceptance and in accordance with the priorities of the countries involved.

6.2 Efficiency

Box 5 – key findings

Project efficiency has been moderately satisfactory given the Project has managed to transform limited resources into the majority of outputs foreseen under outcomes 2 and 3, although this has not been the case under outcomes 1 and 4. Overall the Project represents value for money given GIAHS has obtained some significant results at relatively low cost to GEF. Nevertheless, efficiency could have been improved had there been an effective results-based monitoring system in place from the outset.

125. Following analysis of key documents and an assessment of budget expenditure, the overall conclusion of the evaluation team is that the Project represents value for money given a number of activities have transformed available resources into intended results (especially in relation to outcomes 2 and 3). This is an important finding taking into account GEF allocated much fewer funds than was expected following the finalisation of the ProDoc (USD 3.5 m. instead of USD 9.0 m. planned). Consequently, the iGS was forced to take some drastic measures which, as indicated in Section 4 above, resulted in the curtailment of some activities and much smaller staff levels to run global operations. As a result the delivery of outputs in relation to global activities (outcomes 1 and 4) did not happen, or were not fully achieved.

126. In terms of the institutional setting and management structure adopted by the Project, the evaluation team found the global-national-local set-up was well conceived in the ProDoc. However, the severe limitations of funds meant the management structure at the global level was underfunded and thus unable to exercise a satisfactory level of management in a number of areas, including the operation of a results-based M&E system, an effective communications strategy, or technical assistance support. This resulted in the Project relying heavily on the resources, commitments and level of leverage of the national authorities involved in each country.

127. The evaluation team found a strong correlation between the level of progress in implementation and the lead national authority involved. In the case of China and Chile the delivery of outputs under outcome 2 was found to be high under the leadership of their respective Ministries of Agriculture; whereas in Peru, the Philippines, Algeria and Tunisia delivery of outputs was found to be less advanced under the leadership of their respective Ministry/Department of Environment. This finding is based on the fact the Ministry of Agriculture in all the pilot countries has traditionally enjoyed considerable power and influence over national policy, has access to significant national resources and maintains an institutional presence at the local level. The younger Ministries/Departments of Environment, in contrast, do not enjoy such levels of support and influence. Indeed, interviews in the pilot countries confirmed this. For example, in Peru the Ministry of Environment confirmed GIAHS could not survive without the Ministry of Agriculture playing a significant role in the future. The Philippines also recognised this in 2013, when it established an MOU with the Ministry of Agriculture to promote NIAHS.

128. Concerning operations, the evaluation team identified a number of constraints that affected Project efficiency. These included:

- The delay in securing the necessary agreements to the ProDoc and project framework resulted in a short implementation time-frame in which to attain outputs and outcomes and forced the abandonment or reduction of activities in some pilot countries (especially Peru⁵⁶ and the Philippines);
- The lack of fewer financial resources than originally planned meant all countries were unable to request international technical assistance;
- Bureaucratic procedures at country and FAO levels hindered the procurement of materials, seeds, livestock, etc., most of which involved small quantities;
- Lack of adequate baseline data and targets relating to human development and income generation to support informed planning and implementation decisions;
- Absence of a communications strategy to guide the decisions, use and dissemination of key documents, publications, media events, etc.
- The need to work in many languages to support effective networking, internal evaluation, dissemination of information, etc.
- Publications could not be published in some languages due to costs (Chinese, Arabic, or the local languages of the indigenous peoples involved)
- The absence of risk management in the iGS to help identify foreseeable risks and take the necessary measures to mitigate them in time.

129. In terms of the efficiency of decision-making the evaluation team found stakeholders and beneficiaries generally felt they had been able to participate actively in the planning and implementation of activities at the national and local levels; but not at the global level. For example, in Peru the two local coordinators spoke fluent Qechua (Cusco coordinator) and Aymara (Puno coordinator) which interviewees confirmed facilitated their participation. Furthermore, the mayors in the Districts of Lara and Lamay were from the local community and grasped very quickly the GIAHS concept and how it could benefit their communities⁵⁷.

130. Finally, in terms of the M&E system the evaluation team have confirmed earlier in this report that due to lack of funds it was designed only to monitor operations and crunch numbers; not to track results. Moreover, there was no clear phasing of activities according to the outcomes assigned to support M&E. Thus progress reporting focused mainly on narratives of what had been implemented and planned in the next semester.

6.3 Effectiveness

Box 2 – key findings

The Project has been moderately satisfactory in meeting its immediate objective in a relatively short implementation period. For example, GIAHS has been successfully integrated into agricultural policy in China (2014), is in the process of doing so in Chile, will be supported financially in Algeria from 2015 and Peru has recently endorsed its commitment to re-launch GIAHS in Cuzco and Puno.

⁵⁶ In Peru the late signing of the ProDoc and project framework meant it was not able obtain public resources from the Ministry of Economy and Finance, as these had to be approved in the National System for Public Investment. As a result the iGS had to fund two local coordinators in Cusco and Puno, but with almost not funds to cover logistics and technical/administrative support.

⁵⁷ The mayor in Lamay even changed the name of the agriculture and livestock fair to “agro-biodiversity fair”

131. In accordance with the findings and conclusions provided in section 5, the evaluation team confirms the Project has been effective in meeting expected outcomes 2 and 3, but not in achieving outcomes 1 and 4. The conclusion reached is that the Project has successfully promoted the conservation and adaptive management of globally significant agricultural biodiversity harboured in globally important agricultural heritage systems at the national and local levels. Despite that, the Project was not able to translate these achievements into the development of an international system that guarantees the consolidation and upscaling of the GIAHS concept over the long-term. This was mainly due to the short duration of Project funding, lower than expected funding from GEF (and co-finance from some pilot countries) and a lack of effective coordination and leadership within FAO to establish synergies with other FAO project and programmes and in discussing the future of GIAHS well in advance of the cut-off of GEF funding.⁵⁸ As a consequence of this, the Project was not effective in delivering several important outputs relating to outcome 4. In particular, the Project was unable to conclude a publication on key lessons learnt at the global, national and local levels.

6.4 Sustainability

Box 3 – key findings

The Project’s sustainability remains moderately unsatisfactory at the global level due to the lack of a formal financial and technical commitment to support the consolidation and up-scaling of the GIAHS sites. However, the COAG has endorsed the GIAHS initiative, which paves the way for the presentation of GIAHS as a regular opened-ended programme within FAO at the international Conference in June 2015. **At the national level** the financial sustainability of the GIAHS sites is likely in Algeria, China and Chile and moderately likely in the other pilot countries.

132. The current prospects for sustaining and up-scaling GIAHS on the global stage are low given the funding from GEF ended on 30 June 2014 and no decision has been taken within FAO as to whether it will continue to receive support and finance. However, the sustainability of NIAHS would appear to be assured in countries such as China and Chile where NIAHS represents an official policy commitment and there is adequate institutional capacity and finance in place to ensure its continuation. Peru has also agreed in November 2014 to re-launch public funding for the GIAHS sites in Cuzco and Peru as well as advance national debate on the adoption of NIAHS as a formal government programme in which institutional capacity to run the programme would have to be developed (with the aid of the iGS/FAO).

133. The evaluation team believe the continuation of GIAHS as a project would not resolve the issue of sustainability, because GIAHS represents a process of on-going and adaptive development within a self-sustaining system of agriculture, rather than an initiative that has a clear start and end date. Furthermore, it represents a “movement” in which the goal is to support the conservation and adaptive management of as many agricultural systems as possible that meet GIAHS selection criteria around the world (both in developing and developed countries). This will clearly take a long time and will need constant support, monitoring and evaluation. The evaluation team concludes the sustainability of GIAHS could be assured if it is adopted as an open-ended regular programme within FAO. This is substantiated by the fact FAO has been identified in this report as providing the international legitimacy needed by the pilot countries to

⁵⁸ The evaluation team considers this could have been determined at the ISC in April 2014.

establish and promote the GIAHS sites. On 8th October 2014, the COAG officially adopted GIAHS and this fulfils an important pre-requisite before it can be presented as a regular programme to the Conference in June 2015. However, there is no guarantee GIAHS will be adopted at this Conference in which case an alternative (Plan B) needs to be identified given FAO has an obligation to the partner countries to find an alternative UN institution that could take over and successfully support the future development of GIAHS. One viable alternative is IFAD, which is already supporting the establishment of GIAHS sites in India and Sri Lanka.

134. The sustainability of GIAHS operations will depend on the assignment of a critical mass of permanent technical and administrative staff within the iGS, as well as a permanent and independent SAC made up of at least 50% of scientists from the GIAHS countries and who sit fixed terms of engagement. The iGS-SAC must also engage the FAO Country Offices under a clear mandate to help sustain and promote negotiations with the national authorities on the consolidation and replication of GIAHS. Equally, FAO-HQ must ensure GIAHS is supported by an inter-departmental body through which synergies and mutual strengthening options are identified, implemented and followed up. Finally, global financial sustainability needs to explore options such as Trust/Endowment Funds, Sinking Funds and contributions from GIAHS members.

135. Sustainability, at the national level will depend heavily on the establishment of a NIAHS-GIAHS policy framework (or something very similar), learning lessons from the Chinese NIAHS model, in particular the establishment of a national scientific committee and a national NIAHS-GIAHS secretariat, preferably housed in the Ministry of Agriculture. Again, institutional sustainability will depend on adequate finance from government to maintain a small team of qualified permanent officials covering political, technical and administrative duties.

136. The environmental, social and cultural sustainability of the GIAHS (and NIAHS) sites will depend on the lobbying support for the GIAHS concept in local government to ensure the plan designed to support the sustainable management of the GIAHS site is aligned with local policy and public investment funding. On these grounds, the evaluation mission has reservations a master plan approach to managing GIAHS-NIAHS sites is the best approach when indigenous communities are involved. The evaluation team discussed this issue with stakeholders in China, Peru and Chile and proposed negotiations with the indigenous communities should focus on their perceptions of management of the site; namely a “life plan” that allows the traditional practice of internal rotation of leaders to continue to implement a set of sacred principles (associated with the selection criteria for GIAHS-NIAHS) that bypass the risks of a master plan subject to support from political cycles that may lead to the loss of champions.

137. The economic sustainability of the farming communities in the GIAHS sites will depend heavily on four principles. The first is the optimization of traditional practices and their adaptation up to the point where the sustainability of the agricultural system is not breached. The second is the optimization of traditional practices and their adaptation is managed by knowledge holders (wise persons) from the local community who are supported to sensitize and train their community on the benefits of adapting to new technologies, practices and strategies to improve livelihood that they have first assessed and accepted. The third is diversification of the local economy in GIAHS must be based on capacity as well as competitive advantage. And the fourth is that farmers must be taught the rules of the market economy so that they understand what niche markets are and how they can be exploited using the GIAHS or NIAHS brand name.

138. Finally, sustainability of GIAHS must ensure there is a continual learning process in place, based on effective monitoring and research on outcomes and impact of GIAHS at all

levels. The findings and lessons learned need to lead to changes that can be mainstreamed into policies, strategies and plans in order to promote the perpetual “rotation” of the GIAHS along the sustainable development “road”.

6.5 Impact

Box 4 – key findings

Project impact has been satisfactory leading to China’s decision to adopt NIAHS and propose four new GIAHS sites, all of which have since received approval from the SAC and iGS. In addition, a total of 21 new GIAHS sites have been approved covering a total of 8 new participating countries.

139. The evaluation team believe the initial impact of GIAHS so far has been surprisingly high at the global level despite the shortcomings of finance and time. This is justified by the fact there seems to be growing demand in many countries around the world to join the GIAHS “club”. This was clearly witnessed at the ISC meeting in April, where two more countries had their GIAHS proposals approved and several other countries attended to present their potential sites (Ecuador, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Thailand and Turkey).

140. Clearly there is a latent force moving the GIAHS movement forward that cannot be coming from the iGS. In the case of Asia, China is playing a proactive role. This is already witnessed by the ERAHS and the recent decision to dedicate USD 2.0 m. from its South-South Cooperation to promote GIAHS through regional workshops, training, etc. In addition, China has invited a French Delegation to the Jasmine Tea GIAHS site to establish a twinning programme with Climats du Vignoble from Burgundy, in which both sides will cooperate on preserving agricultural heritage, promoting their products and developing agro-tourism. The FAO’s Regional Office in Santiago is also clearly promoting GIAHS in Latin America and the Caribbean. This is confirmed by an agreement with the government of Peru to host a global meeting of Indigenous Peoples in Cusco, in which a core theme will be GIAHS. The evaluation concludes therefore that GIAHS is moving ahead at the global level despite of the weaknesses in the iGS-SAC.

141. At the national level, GIAHS has been replicated at a further ten sites since the first site was established in Qingtian County and 39 NIAHS sites have been designated since 2012. Impact of GIAHS in Chile, is also showing positive signs with discussions taking place on the identification of two more GIAHS sites. In Peru, the national political situation is less clear on the replication of GIAHS, in part due to the absence of the Ministry of Agriculture in the Project until recently. However, information from various sources in the country, as well as outside, is that Peru has many “sleeping GIAHS” in the country, especially in the Andes and tropical Andes that urgently need to be recognised by GIAHS. Information collected from the three pilot countries not visited also confirms positive impact is emerging from GIAHS. In Tunisia, the Oasis Charter allows the country to identify other oases that are of national or international importance. The NGO ASM-Gafsa has developed in-depth capacity in preserving and developing traditional oasis management practices and will be a major influence on the identification and designation of new oases to be preserved and supported under the Charter. In Algeria, the reform of the National Agricultural Development Policy will enable the safeguarding and expansion of the ghout agricultural system in the Sahara desert from 2015. In addition, a new potential GIAHS site (The Balconies of Ghoufi) was presented at the ISC in April 2014.

142. At the local level the impact of GIAHS is growing. The most important impact for farmers has been the expansion of awareness on GIAHS and increased demand for local native varieties of crops, fish, livestock and their by-products, because they are organically produced in agricultural systems recognised by the United Nations. This has increased prices for many native products, which has encouraged the reintroduction of native species and varieties that had been abandoned or forgotten.

143. On the other side, some negative impacts of GIAHS have also been identified. At the global level there are increasing indications that political pressure is being exerted to either get on the short-list for GIAHS and/or obtaining certification of GIAHS sites so as to join club. At the national level the lack of a champion to push GIAHS indicates the opportunities to replicate GIAHS are much lower than where they exist. Lastly, at the local level negative impact of GIAHS is observed in particular when specific crops are in high demand leads to loss of rotation systems. This has happened in Puno, Peru where farmers are still paying for the removal of germplasm banks in situ to grow high demand cash crops.

GEF Rating

144. In order to facilitate comparison with routine reporting to GEF and contribute to the GEF programme learning process, the evaluation presents the success of the project on the GEF six-point scale system: Highly Satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Moderately Satisfactory (MS), Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), and Highly Unsatisfactory (HU).

145. The following table provides a summary of the GEF ratings applied in this report and which are in line with the Guidelines for GEF Agencies in Conducting Terminal Evaluations (2008).

Table 11 GEF Ratings for Terminal Evaluations

Evaluation Criteria	Rating	Comments	Ref. Section
Achievement of objectives	MS	Moderately Satisfactory because GIAHS has promoted and enhanced the conservation and adaptive management of globally significant agricultural biodiversity harboured in all six pilot sites, but only in China, Chile and Algeria were national policy changes secured to recognise and/or support financially the GIAHS sites beyond the Project.	6.3
Attainment of outputs and activities	MS	Moderately satisfactory because it was unable to attain the outputs foreseen under outcomes 1 and 4. These outputs and outcomes remain important in legitimising the GIAHS initiative globally and through which lessons learned and best practice can be communicated to support the development and consolidation of GIAHS as a worldwide “movement”	5.1
Progress towards meeting GEF- focal area priorities/objectives	S	Priority 1 - Biological Diversity: GIAHS is fully meeting this GEF priority by protecting, researching and promoting the high levels of agro-biodiversity found at all six pilot sites; Priority 2 - Climate change mitigation: indirectly GIAHS is helping to fix CO2 emissions by protecting sites that include forested areas in all pilot countries. Priority 3 - Climate change adaptation: the GIAHS initiative promotes agricultural systems that have inherent qualities designed to constantly adapt to climate change and variability. Therefore, the GIAHS sites were found to be resilient to climate change and therefore of interest to science, thus helping to recognise the value of traditional agricultural systems in building resilient rural communities.	5.2

Evaluation Criteria	Rating	Comments	Ref. Section
		Priority 4 - Land degradation: The GIAHS initiative actively promotes and supports traditional agricultural systems that are based on the sustainable use of natural resources for hundreds/thousands of years.	
Cost-effectiveness	MS	The Project achieved value for money in relation to outcomes 2 and 3 where it was able to deliver outputs with less funds than planned in the PD. This was aided by national and/or local government co-finance commitments in at least three pilot countries (China, Chile and Peru). Cost effectiveness was not achieved in relation to outcomes 1 and 4 where many outputs foreseen did not materialise.	6.2
Impact	S	The Project has stimulated debate on protecting and encouraging the customary use of biological resources in accordance with traditional cultural practices that are compatible with conservation and sustainable use requirements. To date more than 20 countries have shown an interest in participating in GIAHS, of which 14 have so far successfully established GIAHS sites (recognised by the SAC and iGS). In addition, GIAHS has attracted other donors to support the identification of new GIAHS sites (including IFAD and German Cooperation)	6.5
Risk and Risk management	MU	The Project did not integrate a risk management strategy into its planning and implementation	3.1 & 4.1
Sustainability	ML ⁵⁹	<p>Financial risks remain as GEF funding has ended and there is no concrete evidence GIAHS will receive further support and funding from FAO and GEF. Financial support from other donors such as IFAD and German Cooperation as well as from the pilot countries, (in particular China), will not be enough to fund GIAHS as a global initiative/programme over the long-term;</p> <p>Socio-political risks: there is evidence of instability in countries such as Peru (elections leading to regular changes of personnel and shifts in government policy) and Tunisia (social unrest remains a problem due to the lack of jobs and political reform);</p> <p>Institutional framework and governance risks: there is positive feedback from senior management in FAO and from the COAG on the importance of supporting GIAHS, but considerable work is required to obtain approval of GIAHS as a regular programme at the FAO Conference in June 2015.</p> <p>At the national level in China, Chile and Algeria financial commitments have been secured, the socio-political situation is relatively stable and the institutional framework is in place to continue supporting the GIAHS sites (and NIAHS sites in the case of China). In Peru a new government commitment has been reached in November 2014 between the Ministries of Environment and Agriculture to re-launch the GIAHS initiative with government finance. In these countries the GEF sustainability rating is likely. In the Philippines and Tunisia the sustainability rating is moderately likely, because there are inadequate financial, political and institutional commitments in place to guarantee the continuation of the GIAHS initiative beyond 2014.</p> <p>At the local level, the GIAHS sites in all pilot countries are proving to be more resilient to the effects of climate change</p>	6.4

⁵⁹ Moderately Likely – only applicable to GEF Evaluation Criteria “Sustainability”

Evaluation Criteria	Rating	Comments	Ref. Section
		than neighbouring modern agriculture based primarily on mono-cultural activities. The GEF sustainability rating of the GIAHS sites at the local level is therefore considered to be satisfactory.	
Stakeholder participation	S	Stakeholder participation was satisfactory in all three GIAHS sites visited, despite logistical constraints in Peru. In the other three sites, the evaluation mission identified strong participation from the local authorities, but was unable to determine how proactive end beneficiaries were in the GIAHS sites.	4.3, 5.3, 5.4 & 5.6
Country ownership	MS	China has taken over full ownership of GIAHS and this has resulted in the establishment of NIAHS and four new GIAHS sites. Chile is committed to GIAHS, plans to promote up to two new GIAHS sites and is assessing the introduction of NIAHS as a national policy. In Peru the GIAHS site has been re-launched and the introduction of NIAHS will be considered in coming months involving a selection of government institutions. In Algeria, the government fully recognises the ghout agricultural system and will provide finance for its consolidation and replication from 2015. Country ownership of GIAHS in Tunisia has been strengthened by the approval of the Oasis Charter, but it is not clear how far the government is willing to help fund the application of this Charter. In the Philippines, the government has confirmed to the evaluation team that additional external finance is required before GIAHS and NIAHS can be considered as a national policy	4.3 & 6.4
Implementation approach	MS	The project's implementation approach was hampered by limited staff and financial resources, which resulted in a lack of personnel to manage a results-based monitoring system, an effective communication strategy, risk management, etc. As a result planning and implementation was not guided and supported as originally planned.	4.1
Financial planning	MS	The Project faced constant financial constraints, which required regular adjustments that resulted in smaller budgets for Peru, Algeria and Tunisia.	4.2
Replicability	S	GIAHS has been replicated at four new sites in China and in a total of 21 new sites covering 8 countries. In addition, there are several countries who have/are about to submit GIAHS proposals	6.5
Monitoring and evaluation	U	Operations and outputs were monitored, but there was no M&E system in place to measure results and support informed decision making on planning and implementation.	4.1

7 Conclusions and Recommendations

146. In accordance with OED guidance, the conclusions provided in this section focus on six key issues defined in the evaluation matrix in section 1.2 – Methodology of the Evaluation and reproduced in Annex 6.

- **Issue 2:** *Relevance of the GIAHS concept and design to the pilot countries development priorities and needs for adaptive and sustainable management of agricultural heritage and the safeguard of its functionalities*

147. The GIAHS concept was found to be highly relevant at the national and/or local levels in all six pilot countries. Despite the GEF funding problem and the design deficiencies explained in section 3.2, GIAHS represents an important means through which dialogue between national and regional/provincial government can be facilitated with indigenous/local people on issues of mutual interest; including food security, sustainable economic development, cultural identity, human/indigenous rights, reduction of outward migration, the protection of agro-biodiversity and conservation of ecosystems and their environmental services. This has led to notable national and/or local policy changes in several pilot countries that confirm GIAHS corresponds to national development priorities relating.

148. However, the relevance of GIAHS for the pilot countries is clouded by the lack of clarity at the global level as to whether it will be funded and promoted under a formal and long-term commitment by FAO. This has not been compounded by the fact there has been a lack of inter-departmental cooperation and coordination within FAO, which has led to some departments proceeding to protect their specific “sectoral heritage” interests. For example, the evaluation team understands the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department have been attempting to conserve such practices.

149. Senior officials from all three pilot countries visited expressed their concerns to the evaluation team over this situation, in particular the lack of communication from FAO on its position vis-à-vis GIAHS. For example, in all three countries there was a clear message that GIAHS should be continued as a regular programme in FAO. They have also shown a strong commitment to continuing GIAHS in the post GEF phase through a commitment of USD 4.0 m. of which USD 2.0 m. will be used to fund international training courses and exchanges. There is an urgent need for FAO senior management to address this issue taking into account the continuation of a new phase of the Project would not resolve the issue of sustainability. GIAHS represents a “movement” in which the goal is to support the conservation and adaptive management of all those agricultural systems that meet the GIAHS selection criteria.

Recommendation 1: to FAO.

The evaluation team supports the on-going discussion to incorporate GIAHS into FAO’s RP and recommends that FAO seriously considers this proposal at the Conference of member countries in June 2015.

- **Issue 6:** Extent to which the expected outputs have been produced, their quality and timeliness, against project planning at the time of the evaluation and the contribution to the outcome level results, i.e. at completion of the Project;

150. Overall, the evaluation team considers the Project was more effective in achieving its planned outputs in relation to outcomes 2 and 3 than it was for outcomes 1 and 4. However, given the shortfall in funding and the short timeframe, this still represents a significant

achievement and confirms the piloting of GIAHS has been a success at the country and local levels.

151. In relation to expected Outcome 1, outputs have not been achieved as planned. For example, the public endorsements of GIAHS at the international level together with the establishment of iGS and SAC with a statutory mandate still need to be formalised. The evaluation team considers it was unrealistic to expect to deliver these outputs before testing GIAHS first in the pilot counties. Concerning output 1.2, the evaluation team found that although the iGS-SAC did not secure a formal mandate, it did establish a process for designating GIAHS; even if questions remain on the level of transparency within the decision-making process. This process has succeeded in designating a total of 31 GIAHS to date. This confirms 25 new GIAHS sites have been designated since the launch of the GEF-funded Project in June 2008. Although there is no formal international recognition of this process, it does demonstrate there is a growing demand for GIAHS at the national level. Interviews confirm, among other things, GIAHS certification adds value to the products and services that come from the sites and promotes national identity.

Recommendation 2: to ISC.

To improve the transparency of the decision-making process concerning the designation of GIAHS sites, it is recommended the SAC members are allowed to receive and assess all GIAHS applications in an independent manner to determine their validity against a clear and coherent set of selection criteria and scoring system.

152. It is suggested that:

153. 1) The results should be communicated to the iGS and ISC members at least six weeks before any decision-making by the ISC is planned to allow candidate countries time to respond should the SAC's decision be negative.

154. 2) It is recommended this decision is standardised into one of three categories. For example: 1) Meets GIAHS Selection Criteria; 2) More Information Required; 3) Does Not Meet GIAHS Selection Criteria.

155. 3) to have more SAC members from developing countries (at least one per region) and that they sit on the SAC for up to five years.

156. Outputs under Outcome 2 have been more encouraging. Concerning output 2.1 national policy has been modified to support conservation and adaptive management of GIAHS. This is particularly the case in China which has formally adopted GIAHS and NIAHS in its national agricultural policy. The outcome so far has been the creation of 39 NIAHS and 11 GIAHS to date. In Algeria, government has reformed the National Agricultural Development Plan in order to recognise, safeguard and allow funding of ghout agriculture from 2015. In Tunisia the approval of the Oasis Charter has secured national funding to support the replication of the GIAHS initiative at Gafsa. Assessment of output 2.2 produced an important finding. It confirmed the mainstreaming of GIAHS in national sector and inter-sectoral policies and plans is difficult to establish unless it corresponds to a coherent national policy on GIAHS. The establishment of NIAHS in China was found to do just this and, at the same time, clarify the global, national and local aspects of ownership of GIAHS. Thus, in the other pilot countries achieving the mainstreaming of GIAHS has not happened at the national level.

Recommendation 3: to ISC and iGS.

It is highly recommended NIAHS is promoted at the national level to facilitate the mainstreaming of GIAHS in national policies, strategies and plans and to strengthen the ownership and alignment of GIAHS at the local, national and, ultimately, global levels. It is also recommended lessons learnt from China are taken into account and specific funding is allocated to support countries who are officially committed to GIAHS/NIAHS or who wish to study its potential introduction as a pilot initiative. In the Americas, it is strongly recommended FAO-RLC designates a person to act on the agreements reached in Cuzco at the international seminar on 04-07 November 2014 and follows up with FAO-Peru on the Aide Memoire prepared with the Evaluation team on 18 July 2014.

157. Achievement of Outcome 3 was linked to 5 outputs. Activities under outputs 3.1 (stakeholder set-ups) 3.3, (environmental technologies) and 3.4 (alternative livelihoods) were evident in the three pilot countries and positive changes were recorded, in particular in relation to environmental management activities and increases in income from native varieties demanded in local and national markets because of their superior taste, association with organic production methods and GIAHS label. Indeed, the recognition of GIAHS by FAO was found to increase the legitimacy of GIAHS products and services, resulting in many cases in a 20 per cent increase in added-value. Output 3.4 was achieved through the delivery of a large number of capacity building exercises. The field visits revealed many of these activities were still in operation, establishing local products and services in the local economy and raising household income. Achievement of outputs 3.2, and 3.5 was less clear, especially the latter, although some studies were found to have helped empower the local community take informed decisions, such as in Puno, Peru, where a number of catalogues on Andean biodiversity were used to produce publications of local and national interest, and which have helped support the normative function of FAO.

158. Achievement of outputs under outcome 4 was largely unfulfilled as planned and as a result, this outcome was not met. The M&E system, for example, was not established as a results-based focus and thus was of limited value to Project planning. The global publication on lessons learned is also not available. On the preparation of scientific material there were not enough resources to promote project research.

Recommendation 4: to ISC and iGS.

It is recommended that the lessons learnt publication for the GEF-funded Project is prepared with a specific section on the benefits that derive from the designation of GIAHS sites as well as the associated risks. It is of particular importance to focus on the benefits and risks as perceived by the beneficiaries and the stakeholders. Risks should include any potential change in traditional rotation practices due to the increase in demand for selected crops and/or services and how far risk management strategies incorporate local knowledge, practices and technologies to promote resilient communities that are climate smart.

- **Issue 9:** Extent to which the project contributed to the empowerment of women and men beneficiaries, including the indigenous populations

159. The evaluation team found the Project concentrated primarily on monitoring the number of women participants in capacity building and other support activities funded by the Project at national and local levels. Although this has allowed the evaluation team to conclude participation of women in most pilot countries did reach at least 30 per cent of all participants, it does not mean they gained increased access to financial resources, training, or information. However, women (including indigenous women) interviewed in the field visits in China, Peru and Chile, confirmed in the vast majority of cases that they had benefited from increased income from the

sale of GIAHS products and services and that this had improved their value and recognition within their family unit and local community organisation. Furthermore, GIAHS was found to be highly supportive of indigenous peoples' needs and rights by recognising their knowledge and practices and involving them in the implementation of capacity building activities within their local communities.

160. In terms of empowerment to participate more actively within political and public circles this was difficult to determine given the GIAHS sites in most cases have only been in existence for three or less years. However, the evaluation team are able to conclude the role and responsibilities of local women (and men) in the establishment of management/master plans required for each GIAHS site (one of the criteria that must be met before the ISC can formally designate GIAHS sites) needs to be reviewed taking into account IPs manage their GIAHS sites on the basis of "life plans" rather than a master plan with a limited time duration of around 5 years.

Recommendation 5: to ISC iGS and SAC.

It is recommended to specifically review the selection criterion concerning the need for a management/master plan for GIAHS/NIAHS sites where there are IPs. It is important this criterion does not impose a "contemporary" condition on those systems that have been managed by "ancestral" planning methods incorporating their own cosmovision and rituals. Furthermore, in the interests of respecting the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, in particular their right to self determination, the iGS and SAC should assess the possibility of including the provision that a "life plan" has been identified in accordance with traditional best practices and that this will be the basis upon which adaptive management, gender focus and dynamic conservation of the GIAHS sites will be assessed promoted and monitored.⁶⁰

- **Issue 13:** Efficiency of management and implementation of operations, M&E, steering and coordination, administration and support from FAO Country Offices and national counterpart institutions

161. The efficiency and effectiveness of project implementation was hindered by deficiencies in the design of the ProDoc. The project's duration of five years is considered to be disproportionate to the objectives and outcomes established. Furthermore, the four outcomes of the Project were not clearly connected to timelines to indicate the achievement of outcome 1 was dependent on testing GIAHS first under outcomes 2 and 3. This was not aided by a LFM in which the timing of outcomes was not evident in the indicators and targets. Also significant, was the decision to include the identification of the national project frameworks within the ProDoc. This resulted in a significant reduction of the implementation time for the project frameworks (in some cases, such as Peru and Chile this was just two-years). Furthermore, there was almost no information or guidance in the ProDoc on the design of these projects. Conversely, the identification of stakeholders and beneficiaries was given a lot of attention, which included an in-depth stakeholder analysis. This analysis confirmed four pilot countries would execute the Project through the Ministry Environment (or equivalent) and two under the Ministry of Agriculture (in Chile and China). The evaluation considers this decision affected the effectiveness and efficiency of Project delivery because the Ministries of Environment (or equivalent) are not ideal candidates to bring about changes in agricultural policy. Moreover, the analysis did not identify any synergies with other FAO departments or donors.

⁶⁰ Indigenous communities expressed their concern that externally imposed "development/master plans" based on short political cycles conflict with internal indigenous systems where time conditions do not prevail because internal leadership is rotated within the community on a one or two-year basis in most cases.

Recommendation 6: to FAO, ISC, iGS and all new partner countries.

It is recommended that FAO facilitates the involvement of appropriate Government authorities in all future activities relating to the establishment, implementation and consolidation of GIAHS (and NIAHS). This could lead to the establishment of a national committee including the Ministry of Agriculture and other relevant ministries as deemed fit (such as the ministries responsible for tourism, culture/heritage and tertiary economic development). To support this process, the FAO Country Representations should preferably designate one (or more) officials responsible to help facilitate this development and support iGS activities agreed with the national focal points.

162. The inadequacy of the budget allocations to achieve outputs and outcomes was another factor that hindered Project efficiency. The decision by GEF to cut the budget allocation by half to USD 3.5 m. shortly before the ProDoc was approved, forced the Project's management to take a number of difficult spending decisions, which resulted in a drastic reduction in staffing. As a result the Project was unable to manage its global obligations effectively and efficiently. This was therefore another reason why outcomes 1 and 4 were not met. Meanwhile, a concentration of activity in the pilot countries would ensure the iGS could rely on co-finance to support field activities and at the same time enhance ownership of GIAHS.

163. The absence of funds meant the internal M&E was maintained as a simple database to track operations, which was used to prepare six-monthly progress reporting. The M&E system was therefore not used to track results and support planning and lessons-learned as originally intended.

Recommendation 7: to iGS and partner country focal points.

It is recommended the GIAHS (and NIAHS) sites incorporate an internal results-based monitoring capacity that reports to a national committee and the iGS. Results indicators should be set with beneficiaries and local and national stakeholders and concentrate on a limited number of indicators relating to ethnological, socio-cultural, environmental, infrastructure and economic issues. Indicators must be linked to base line data.

- **Issue 15:** Extent to which the project is expected to attain its overall objective?

164. The Project's initial impact has been surprisingly positive in spite of the lack of funds and a lack of global management. Most impressive has been the large increase in GIAHS sites in recent years, which currently totals 31 sites and 14 partner countries. A number of new countries are also preparing proposals, confirming there is a lot of interest in joining the GIAHS "club". The fact that GIAHS is associated with FAO is enhancing credence and a sense of legitimacy. At the national level GIAHS has also had a positive impact. In China a total of 11 GIAHS sites have been approved by the iGS-SAC and this has been facilitated by the creation of NIAHS, which allows the country to establish a hierarchy of sites. In addition, China is promoting GIAHS through its South-South Cooperation by providing USD 2.0m. to fund international training events on GIAHS. It has also helped establish ERAHS between China, Japan and Korea, which recently aided Korea present its first GIAHS at the ISC in April 2014. Other countries have shown an interest to adopt GIAHS in national policy, including Chile, the Philippines and Peru.

165. Surprisingly, there is no specific reference to a gender focus in the outputs and indicators in the ProDoc or its LFM. This is surprising because the Project relies heavily on rural women and indigenous peoples as key knowledge holders in the GIAHS sites (especially where husbands and sons have migrated) and this should have been an important focus in the reporting. Results of the document review conducted by the evaluation team confirm gender was not mainstreamed in key documents, such as the Progress Reports.

Recommendation 8: to ISC, iGS and FAO-HQ.

It is recommended GIAHS (and NIAHS) is supported by an effective communication strategy that provides information and data on key findings and lessons learnt in accordance with the needs of different audiences. This information should include gender-specific findings and recommendations providing details on women and other marginalised groups' access to resources, training and information and should be based on clearly defined indicators and targets. Information on other cross-cutting themes, such as natural resource management and environment, should also be included.

- **Issue 19:** Perspectives for uptake and mainstreaming of the GIAHS in the pilot countries and beyond

166. The sustainability of GIAHS is currently not clear, following the termination of GEF funding on 30 June 2014, meaning the current financing of the iGS and the up-scaling of GIAHS remains uncertain. Despite, the recent adoption of GIAHS at the COAG in its latest meeting in October 2014 much work is required before the approval of GIAHS can be secured as a regular programme as proposed in Recommendation 1. To help secure the approval of GIAHS as a regular programme management needs to prepare both its termination report and the publication on lessons learned to help guide the contents of the GIAHS programme proposal.

Recommendation 9: to FAO.

FAO identifies a “financial bridging facility” as soon as possible from internal funds to cover the period until at least 01 July 2015 to show it is serious about supporting GIAHS as a RP at the Conference in June 2015.

To implement Recommendation 9 the ET suggests the following:

- This bridging phase should ensure at least two consultants and a secretary are employed in the iGS to manage the iGS (one permanent global coordinator, one senior expert and the technical officer). A key activity is to work with the FAO country offices on lobbying the partner countries to support the adoption of GIAHS as a RP in June 2015.
- In Latin America, the FAO-RLC should take a leading role ensuring a staff member is designated time and resources to support the lobbying process as well as build up the Regional Network for the GIAHS and act on the recommendations agreed at the International Seminar in Cuzco (04-07 November 2014), building on the conclusion, recommendations and lessons learnt provided in the present evaluation report.
- The iGS identifies the regular programme proposal in coordination with partner countries based on the up-scaling of GIAHS and NIAHS as a fundamental premise in the RP, as well as in a global and regional networking and communication strategy.
- Ensure the GIAHS proposal at the Conference includes greater participation of FAO Departments (in particular Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries) and has identified a suitable funding mechanism to ensure the long-term sustainability of adaptive management of the GIAHS sites. On this, the evaluation team recommends a study is completed including the establishment of a global “GIAHS-NIAHS Trust Fund”.

8 Lessons Learned

Lesson learnt 1 (design and effectiveness):

The decision to reduce the financial budget of the Project should have led to a downscaling of project outputs and outcomes in the Project Document in order to avoid overloading and unrealistic annual planning of targets that could not be met

Lesson learnt 2 (design and effectiveness)

167. The human rights-based approach promoted in any continuation of GIAHS needs to be explicit on its respect for the principles of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. This is particularly important in relation to:

- The right to practice and maintain indigenous internal organisation and cosmovision (self determination) is understood, respected and either integrated into any externally imposed plan/strategy for the GIAHS sites, or used to establish a “life plan” for the GIAHS site based on traditional planning best practices.
- The right of each indigenous community to continue and maintain their agricultural practices and technologies is understood and respected first, before adaptive management practices are promoted, such as:
 - The way crops are handled, stored and used in accordance with rituals and beliefs⁶¹
 - The traditional rotation methods used and through which native varieties and wild relatives are conserved in situ and constantly adapted to climate change⁶²;
 - The indispensable role of livestock/fish in maintaining the system as well as an alternative financial savings mechanism and by-product producer/service provider (wool, milk, meat, transporter, plough, fertiliser producer, etc.) is respected;
 - Indigenous knowledge on growing seasons is combined with modern technologies, such as climate forecasting.
- The right to include indigenous knowledge in local education establishments in or around the GIAHS sites.
- The right to use local knowledge holders (wise persons) recognised and trusted by their local community to conduct agricultural “extension” and promotion in the local language.

Lesson learnt 3 (design and effectiveness):

168. GIAHS needs NIAHS! Through the China experience the evaluation team has learnt the replication of GIAHS sites needed a national policy framework in which it could operate and enhance its relevance vis-à-vis public, private and civil society institutions. NIAHS provides this framework and at the same time facilitates the decision-making process on the designation of new GIAHS by the iGS-SAC. NIAHS also helps to strengthen the ownership of GIAHS at the

⁶¹ For example, in Peru the potato is considered a living organism that must be cared for and “reared” rather than produced. As a result, it can only be cut/peeled after a ritual has been done first on the land from where it came. The University of the Andes believes the “potato tradition” is a major reason why Peru has over 4,000 varieties and is the only country that still has all nine species of potato.

⁶² The evaluation team observed production and experimentation of new varieties is part of a scientific experiment to find which varieties (and animals) adapt best to a particular environment and climate.

global, national and local levels and makes the future labelling of products from GIAHS easier to understand and certify at the national and international levels.

Lesson learnt 4 (design and sustainability):

169. Projects with several expected outcomes need a phased approach to meeting their outputs and this should be linked to SMART indicators in LFM⁶³. Phases should include a clearly identified inception phase with key activities to be fulfilled before proceeding with the implementation of activities. Activities also need to be phased by expected outcome and supported by an effective risk management strategy to identify foreseeable threats and mitigate/remove them in a timely manner. A closure phase is also crucial in which to implement a pre-determined exit strategy that includes a next steps plan. A suitably qualified expert should be hired to steer the inception and closure phases; thus freeing management to concentrate on strategic issues, such as planning and financial management.

Lesson learnt 5 (design and efficiency):

The decision not to develop a more robust M&E system during the first year of the Project was an error, given the achievement of the Project's fourth outcome was highly reliant on the accumulation of monitoring data and information and its synthesis in order to identify lessons learned and best practice, as well as communicate this to other pilot countries through appropriate networking arrangements and regional-level training courses.

Lesson learnt 6 (effectiveness and sustainability):

170. GIAHS facilitates dialogue between national government and indigenous communities on issues of mutual interest. GEF/FAO thus opened doors national governments, or indigenous communities could not open by themselves. However, to support and promote informed dialogue the iGS and partner countries should have established an effective results based M&E system (see lesson learnt 4) in order outcomes could be measured both through quantitative data and information (based on SMART indicators) and qualitative indicators based on interviews, workshops and surveys.

Lesson learnt 7 (effectiveness and impact):

171. Donor (GEF) funding acts more as seed capital allowing national and/or local governments to recognise and value GIAHS, while the association of FAO in designating GIAHS sites gives legitimacy to the concept and adds value to products and services for GIAHS sites.

Lesson learnt 9 (efficiency and effectiveness):

172. Finding and employing qualified and motivated experts/officials at all levels of GIAHS is at least of equal importance to the financial resources available. In other words, the provision of funds is not the prerequisite of success, rather just one factor.

Lesson learnt 8 (impact):

173. GIAHS strengthens local and national identity through the unique goods and services they produce or provide, (especially in relation to gastronomy and agro/eco-tourism) and the GIAHS label offers consumers in developed countries the opportunity to purchase these goods

⁶³ It is argued outcome 1 for GIAHS should have been outcome 3 and timed to happen after meeting outcomes 1 and 2.

and services in support of the continuation of the sustainable agricultural systems from where they came. This is a much more powerful action than purchasing products that are merely labelled organic, or which are part of the Fairtrade network.

9 Annexes

- 1. Evaluation Terms of Reference**
- 2. Brief profile of evaluation team members**
- 3. List of documents reviewed**
- 4. List of institutions and stakeholders met during the evaluation process;**
- 5. List of main outputs**
- 6. Evaluation Matrix and Evaluation Questionnaire**
- 7. Logical Framework from the ProDoc**
- 8. Organigram of the Project (from the ProDoc)**
- 9. Breakdown of Budget Expenditure by Activity (to 30/06/2014)**
- 10. List of Relevant Policy Documents, Legislation, Regulations and Local Plans Supporting GIAHS in the Pilot Countries Visited**
- 11. Capacity Development Events by Pilot Country**
- 12. List of Countries with GIAHS or Expressions of Interest & Names of GIAHS Sites to 30/06/2014**
- 13. Selected Photos of the GIAHS Sites**