



**Project “Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas
System of Costa Rica”
PIMS 3423
GEFSEC ID 2773**

**FINAL PROJECT EVALUATION
“Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System of Costa Rica”
(2008-2014) ATLAS OUTPUT ID 00056040.**

Duration of the consultancy: From October 27 to February 28, 2015.

FINAL REPORT

“We will find a way, otherwise, we will create it”



January 08, 2015, Barra Honda National Park, Tempisque Conservation Area, SINAC

Hernán Reyes	Ronny Muñoz
International Consultant	National Consultant
Team Leader	

San Jose, March 2015

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acronyms	3
Executive Summary	5
1. Introduction	15
2. Development.....	16
2.1 On the final evaluation of the "Removing Barriers" Project.....	16
2.2 The "Removing Barriers" Project and its development context.....	17
2.3 Outcomes.....	19
3. Conclusions.....	65
4. Recommendations.....	70
5. Lessons learned	75
Annex 1: Terms of Reference of the Evaluation.....	78
Annex 2: Evaluators.....	101
Annex 3: Evaluation Method	103
Annex3.1: Matrix for Evaluation Criteria	¡Error! Marcador no definido.
Annex 4: Original Matrix of the Logical Framework.....	116
Annex 5: Interviews and Agencies Consulted	124
Annex 6: Consulted documents and bibliography	132
Annex 7: Technical Annexes	139
Annex 8: Description of new categories proposed for PAS of SINAC	140
Annex 9: Results of the Project Implementation in ACCVC	141
Annex 10: Logical Framework Matrix. Analysis of Achievements and Outcomes	144
Annex 11: Signature of the Consultants' Code of Conduct Agreement.....	166

Acronyms

ACCVC	Central Volcanic Mountain Range Conservation Area
ACOPAC	Central Pacific Conservation Area
ACOSA	Osa Conservation Area
ACT	Tempisque Conservation Area
ACTo	Tortuguero Conservation Area
BR	Biological Reserve
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CCC	Caribbean Conservation Corporation
CI	Conservation International
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
CLAP	Local Councils on Protected Areas
CO	Country Office
COLAC	Local Councils for Conservation Areas
COLAC-RNVS-BC	Local Council for Barra del Colorado National Wildlife Refuge
COLAGUA	Local Council for Water
COLOPTO	Local Council for the Western Sector of Tortuguero National Park
CONAC	National Council for Conservation Areas
CORAC	Regional Council for Conservation Areas
COVIRENAS	Committees for the Surveillance of Natural Resources
EA	Executing Agency
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ESPH	Public Services Company of Heredia
FECON	Costa Rican Federation for Environmental Conservation
FONAFIFO	National Fund for Forest Financing
FR	Forest Reserve
FUNDECOR	Foundation for the Central Volcanic Range
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GoCR	Government of Costa Rica
ICE	Costa Rican Electricity Institute
ICT	Costa Rican Tourism Institute
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
IDA	Agricultural Development Institute
IDB	Inter American Development Bank
IFAM	Institute for Promotion and Municipal Advisory
INBio	National Biodiversity Institute
INM	National Meteorology Institute
KMIS	Knowledge Management Integrated System
LA	Latin America
LFM	Logical Framework Matrix
LSP	Large-sized Project
M & E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAG	Ministry of Agriculture
METT	Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool
MIDEPLAN	Ministry of Planning
MINAE	Ministry of Energy and Environment
MSP	Medium Sized Project

NBS	National Biodiversity Strategy
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NM	National Monument
NP	National Park
NPC	National Project Coordinator
NPD	National Project Director
NWFP	Non-Wood Forest Products
PA	Protected Area
PAR	Project Annual Report
PAS	Protected Areas System
PDF	Project Development Funds
PES	Payment for Environmental Services
PIR	Project Implementation Review
PMU	Program Management Unit
PNC	Cahuita National Park
PNC	Carara National Park
PNMB	Ballena National Marine Park
PNSR	Santa Rosa National Park
PNVT	Tenorio Volcano National Park
PRODOC	Project Document
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PZ	Protected Zone
RNVSC	Camaronal National Wildlife Refuge
SCVS	Society for Wildlife Conservation
SETENA	National Environmental Technical Secretariat
SINAC	National Conservation Areas System
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
TSC	Tropical Science Center
UN	United Nations
UNCBD	United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UCR	University of Costa Rica
UICN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
UNA	National University
W	Wetlands
WB	World Bank
WLR	Wildlife Refuge
WTO	World Tourism Organization
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

Executive Summary

This report reviews the background requirements for the Final Evaluation of the project "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System of Costa Rica".

This analytical work cannot but start from the beginning, which is precisely when discussion began on the problems of SINAC and its great responsibilities, blurring the dream of change, in early 2004. More than a decade has gone by, and understanding the whole process has been a very interesting and important experience that means a great responsibility to properly frame evaluation criteria within this context.

Fortunately, evaluators in this stage of the project had the experience as they had carried out a Mid-term Review in 2012, which allowed having prior understanding of the extent of relations and objectives pursued, in addition to the importance of the project for the country.

Despite having this important previous knowledge of the different stakeholders and objectives of the project, during this evaluation, special effort had to be made to gauge and assess in true perspective the project outcomes as required by the terms of reference.¹ But we also tried to go well beyond by considering the importance of the work of SINAC and the great hazards diagnosed in the PRODOC, which gave meaning to the Project: The hazards of viability of long-term sustainability of Protected Areas (PA) in Costa Rica.

Again, we perform the historical review of the design and development of the project so as to have the proposed change as a reference, which is, in simple terms, the dream there was when discussions first started in 2004.

We reviewed all the relevant documents produced by and for the Project, the context analysis of the situation of the country in each of the periods, and the more than 100 interviews that were held with various stakeholders. This was done in two missions between the months of December 2014 and January 2015.²

To go over what happened to SINAC institutionally and to its various officers in their past and present tasks has been a very interesting and valuable experience that has provided us with important insights that we hope to have managed in order to adequately express them in this document, so as to serve as a more effective contribution to the pathway of changes and transformations with which the institution and its employees are committed.

For anyone who has worked in an institution the size of SINAC, which has permanent activity throughout the country, with over 1,300 employees, protecting 11 conservation areas, and that is concerned about the biological diversity of 160 Protected Areas (terrestrial and marine/coastal), with a mandate to develop a decentralized and participatory management, it is clear that changing the internal organizational culture is not a simple or quick task. Therefore, in our opinion, this particular evaluation requires to permanently observe not only the outcomes but also to try to discover if they reflect the internal change processes that allow projecting the effects in the medium or long terms.

Therefore, we invite you to take a look not only at the outcomes obtained as if it were a picture taken in January 2015, but also, and what we find much more interesting, we believe that we must try to understand whether these outcomes and the evolution of the achievements of the project reflect or not structural changes, or allow detecting that there are conditions and

See Annex 1. Terms of Reference for the Evaluation

See Annex 5. Interviews and institutions consulted

changes necessary to effectively remove these barriers identified a decade ago. We wanted to look at whether in some cases, even in a larval stage, we can determine the impact of the project and a positive or negative development in the direction of the original proposal for change designed for the project.

Summary of the Project data

Following is Table No.1, which provides the basic information of the project with relevant dates, financing, and implementation as of January 2015, and Table No. 2, showing Financial Performance, broken down by budget level and execution.

Table No.1
Basic Project Data

<i>"Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System of Costa Rica"</i>				
GEF Identification:	46871	Funding	Budget (US\$)	AS OF JANUARY 2015 (US\$)
UNDP Identification:	3423	PROPARQUES	92,000.00	137,800.00
Country:	Costa Rica	Private Sector contributions (FUNDECODES)	193,000.00	1,992,976.00
Region:	LAC	TNC (The Nature Conservancy)	1,861,800.00	900,000.00
Area of interest:	Biodiversity	AECID (Spanish Agency for International Cooperation)	133,323.00	133,323.00
Executing Agency:	National Conservation Areas System (SINAC)	IDB/Tourism	13,253,900.00	1,949,818.49
Important Dates		IDB/Cadaster	1,191,112.50	5,392,514.95
Signing of the project document	October 22, 2008	SINAC	4,334,536.00	2,843,529.89
First Contract (Coordinator)	September 16, 2009	Total co-financing:	21,059,671.50	13,349,962.33
First Steering Committee Meeting	February 26, 2010	GEF	4,368,000.00	4,172,025.88
Delivery of Outcomes of Mid-term Review	July 20, 2012	Total Project Cost:	25,427,671.00	17,521,988.21
Closing Date	March 31, 2015			

Source: Project reports and evaluation calculations.

Table No. 2
Financial Performance

Objective of the project	PRODOC Budget	GEF Funding %	Financial performance as of January 2015, plus committed amount as of March 2015	Total Executed %
Result 1	US\$552,080.00	12.6 %	US\$535,316.24	12.5 %
Result 2	US\$608,000.00	13.9 %	US\$525,487.07	12.2 %
Result 3	US\$812,000.00	18.6 %	US\$723,163.01	16.8 %
Result 4	US\$ 977,360.00	22.4 %	US\$1,153,861.36	26.9 %
Result 4	US\$ 860,200.00	19.7 %	US\$ 658,875.37	15.3 %

Source: Project reports and evaluation calculations.

Project ratings

The following tables summarize the ratings assigned to the Project in accordance with the evaluation of the Logical Framework Matrix (LFM) for achieving the objective and outcomes of the project and finally in agreement with the GEF performance rating for projects. The form and matrices on how these ratings were achieved can be found in Section 2.3.20, and in Annex 10, there is further detail that allows deepening even more on the subject matter.

a) Achievement of Project Objectives: Purpose and Outcomes

Table No. 3
Achievement of the objective and project outcomes

Objective of the project	Indicator	Indicator Rating	Global Objective Rating
Purpose (objective): To eliminate the major systemic and institutional Barriers to sustainability of the Protected Areas System of Costa Rica.	1. Area (in ha.) of protected areas that are legally incorporated into the PA system of SINAC.	S (Satisfactory)	S (Satisfactory)
	2. SINAC efficient operating and management level	HS (Highly Satisfactory)	
	3. Adoption of instruments that allow the incorporation of an eco-regional approach in planning the PA system, particularly through the existing legal framework provided by the legal framework on environment, the Biodiversity Law, the National Parks Act, and the Forestry Act.	MS (Moderately Satisfactory)	
OUTCOME 1: Reformed and improved the legal and political framework of Costa Rica, to ensure long-term effective management and financial and ecological sustainability of the PA system	1. Degree of adoption of PA by the national political system in order to: 1) define the PA system; 2) become the basis on the eco-regional approach of GRUAS II; 3) define a new marine and coastal areas sub-system and 4) define how to integrate ecosystem functions in the territorial planning of Costa Rica.	S (Satisfactory)	HS (Highly Satisfactory)

Comentado [EC1]: Some of the resulting global ratings included here do not match those listed in Table No. 13 "Analysis of Achieved Outcomes Summary". The table has the following ratings:
R1 = AS
R2 = MS (matches)
R3 = MI
R4 = AS
R5 = S (matches)
Please verify and unify. Later, verification must be made against Table No. 14 "Summary Trial by Objectives" so that all are properly coordinated

Objective of the project	Indicator	Indicator Rating	Global Objective Rating
	2. Degree of adoption of the priority sites for reclassification and demarcation to achieve 10% coverage of each type of ecosystem/vegetation to ensure the conservation of the biodiversity of ecosystems of global importance.	S (Satisfactory)	
	3. Degree of preparation and implementation of SINAC strategic planning tools, with the support of the project (SINAC strategic plan and action plan of the corresponding PA system).	S (Satisfactory)	
OUTCOME 2: Improvement of the institutional framework and of the capacities of SINAC protected areas for optimal eco-regional planning and effective management.	1. Degree of redesign of institutional SINAC staff profiles at central and regional levels pursuant to the new SINAC strategic plan and Action Plan of the PA system.	S (Satisfactory)	MS (Moderately Satisfactory)
	2. Degree of implementation of the Integrated Knowledge Management Integrated System (KMIS) and level of integration of financial, ecological, and sustainable tourism data.	MU (Moderately Unsatisfactory)	
OUTCOME 3: SINAC has the financial sustainability for the effective achievement of its strategic objectives and to provide long-term resources for the management needs of the PA system.	1. An optimal fee policy for visitors, which introduced a sliding scale for admission fees to parks with differentiated prices for domestic and foreign visitors.	HS (Highly Satisfactory)	S (slc) (Moderately Unsatisfactory)
	2. Percentage increase in the financial score card of UNDP-GEF (see below).	MS (Moderately Satisfactory)	
OUTCOME 4: SINAC tries different and innovative conservation approaches in conservation areas and in PAs	1. Amount of unresolved land tenure conflicts within the PA system.	S (Satisfactory)	MS (Moderately Satisfactory)
	2. Level of service provided to tourists, condition of infrastructure and accessibility in the 10 most visited PAs of the PA system.	S (Satisfactory)	
	3. A number of public-private concession agreements for provision of non-essential services in the pilot PA and buffer zones in priority areas of conservation of biodiversity - developed and running.	S (Satisfactory)	
	4. A number of co-management agreements operating effectively and greater capacities of PA staff to get involved and to work with local stakeholders such as local businesses, municipalities, and indigenous organizations.	S (Satisfactory)	

Objective of the project	Indicator	Indicator Rating	Global Objective Rating
OUTCOME 5: Successful management models of the PA system escalated and replicated at systemic level through strategic partnerships with key stakeholders.	1. Consultation and coordination have been carried out with multiple stakeholders through agencies of the PA system in the 11 Conservation Areas (CA).	S (Satisfactory)	S (slc) (Highly Satisfactory)
	2. Development of a model for public-private agreements for the provision of non-essential services and for the degree of expansion across the PA system in priority areas for biodiversity conservation.	S (Satisfactory)	
	3. Development of a model of public-private partnerships established between municipalities and ecotourism operators to develop and to maintain biological corridors, and degree up to which it is escalated across the PA system in priority areas for biodiversity conservation.	S (Satisfactory)	

Source: Project reports and details of the analysis in Annex 10.

This table shows that at this level the project would have an overall rating of **Satisfactory (S)**, i.e. the explicit indicators meeting the expected outcomes of the project were satisfied with only minor deficiencies.

b) Rating of the agreement of the UNDP Evaluation Guideline for Projects Funded by FMAM.

Chart N° 4
Performance Rating of the "Removing Barriers" Project

Indicator	Rating	Indicator	Rating
Initial design of M & E	(U) Unsatisfactory	Quality of UNDP implementation	(MS) Moderately Satisfactory
Execution of M & E plan	(S) Satisfactory	Quality of execution: execution agency	(MS) Moderately Satisfactory
General Quality of M & E	(MS) Moderately Satisfactory	General quality of implementation and execution	(S) Satisfactory
Relevance	(R) Relevant	Financial resources:	Likely (L) Negligible Risk
Effectiveness	(S) Satisfactory	Socio-political:	Likely (L) Negligible Risk
Efficiency	(S) Satisfactory	Institutional framework and governance:	Likely (L) Negligible Risk
General rating of Project outcomes	(S) Satisfactory	Environmental:	Likely (L) Negligible

			Risk
		General probability of sustainability:	Likely (L)
			Negligible
			Risk

Source: Project Reports and details of Analysis on Annex 10.

Main Conclusions, Recommendations, and Lessons Learned

Following is a summary of the main conclusions, recommendations, and lessons learned for an integral outlook:

• Design

DESIGN		
Conclusions	Recommendations	Lessons learned
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The "Theory of Change" of the project does not clearly pose the way in which through the big 5 outcomes the five identified barriers would be removed; the projections were unrealistic, the working methodology presented implementation difficulties. Based on the adaptive management that GEF projects may have to adapt the strategy in terms of changes in outputs and indicators, strengthening of the Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and of the Office of Cooperation and projects was achieved. These areas were not contemplated in the original design with which SINAC capabilities were increased and the PAS was consolidated. The management model foreseen in the design of the project did not have sufficient capacity to adequately address the issues with the institutional framework of SINAC. A follow-up plan for monitoring and evaluation of the project was not expressly defined. Despite this, the design for monitoring and evaluation was appropriate. However, the extra functions of the person in charge of topics related to project management and to supporting coordination limited the capacity of the EU to provide adequate follow-up to the project outcomes. The project design did not foresee the institutional context of SINAC as of the project closing in order to provide measures for the sustainability of some of the outcomes, which caused that upon closing, the project's exit strategy has not been defined. The purpose of the project as it was drafted was not consistent with the context existing upon the preparation of the PRODOC. Most of the assumptions were realistic and consistent; others were not relevant nor realistic. However, some relevant assumptions for the project were not considered. Some were fully complied, others only partially. As there were context changes, problems with assumptions, and even new needs and priorities, the logical thing would have been to analyze the original LFM and to propose the necessary changes. The LFM of any project can be adjusted and adapted according to the methodological criteria of GEF. However, in this project, despite the problems, none of the parties ever proposed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the design of new projects, the following should be presented: 1) more precision when stating the way in which outcomes will be obtained, projections for obtaining outcomes, and the work methodology which had implementation difficulties; 2) Follow up plan and project evaluation. Every GEF Project considers adaptive management. The problem is that during the project implementation, executors undertake the LMF as something that cannot be modified, and they do not offer the possibility of adaptation to the foreseen management model on the design to improve the execution level and ensuring outcomes. The project coordination must manage with the SINAC counterpart the strategy for exiting the project, in order to provide sustainability of the outcomes obtained. Concrete indicators with which to measure the project at the beginning must be established, not only at the outcomes level, but also at the products level, in such a way that there is no confusion as to management. If it is not possible to do this at PRODOC, it is advisable to perform this for the project at its onset. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to the lack of adequate tools during the design phase, the change proposal can be seen as lacking clarity, as it is confusing and inaccurate. The use of "logical models" may support the improvement of the preparation of the "Theory of Change" of projects. Topics not included in the original design may be important to increase institutional capacities so a precise project adaptation might be timely. The design of a follow up plan and project evaluation, from the preparation of the project will support assigning the staff for managing the M & E system in the interest of ensuring adequate follow up and project evaluation. An adequate project management must provide the definition of the strategy for exiting the project with enough time in advance. The project revision or adjustment during the different moments of its execution may facilitate its interpretation and management. The project with deep institutional transformation objectives when stating the purpose, must consider if during the time foreseen for this change, it can be achieved. Hence, we will have a better understanding of its achievements and an adequate way of interpreting final outcomes.

DESIGN		
Conclusions	Recommendations	Lessons learned
<p>the change, and as a result, the LFM maintained its original design up to completion date.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicators present relevance, definition, and estimates issues, so it was hard to provide follow up to the outcomes included in the LFM and in the project strategy. 		

• Project Management

PROJECT MANAGEMENT		
Conclusions	Recommendations	Lessons learned
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The UNDP Program Officer for the Project, as pointed out in the Mid-term Review, did not facilitate the process and even helped generating complex problems and hindrances in the Implementation process. Before the Mid-term Review took place, a change was made by the UNDP counterpart appointing a new Program Officer who remains to date as the person in charge of the project. This Program Officer acted with a very practical sense promoting the execution of activities and helping the PMU to make consultancies move forward. However, there was not enough care exerted in improving relationships with the SINAC Executive Secretariat represented especially by its focal points and it did not take advantage of the TAC for strengthening ties with SINAC representatives. It is clear, however, that UNDP established a good communication relationship with the PMU direction, especially since 2012, and this allowed taking the great leap in execution of the activities in the latest two years. The project had a slow design process between 2004 and 2008, a slow execution process until the Mid-term Review of 2012, and later on, there was an accelerated execution between the second half of 2012 and January 2015. The slow design process and the slow later implementation caused that inside SINAC, the appropriate degree of importance was not assigned to it as it was regarded as foreign to SINAC. The proposal for TAC to strategically orient PMUs was partially achieved since the end of 2012 and in 2013. The Direction of SINAC only overlooked and directed the project for strengthening the institution in all its capacities, since mid 2012 to 2014. To this date, there is still no clarity as to the path required to provide continuity and to take advantage of the project contribution. There is no exit strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The recommendation is to establish a plan to strengthen and develop inter-institutional ties that allow overcoming the lack of trust between UNDP, represented by the Program Officer and the management staff of SINAC. TAC should provide at least weekly follow up to the Project closing process to ensure its closing with finished funded products. PMU should agree with TAC on an internal disclosure plan of the products obtained by SINAC to promote knowledge of the same, the possibility of using it as a tool, and the needs for later work to continue progressing to remove barriers PMU must deliver a comprehensive Project report containing at least an analysis of the quality of the products, a report of closing activities showing evidence that activities were held, reports required by UNDP, confirmation of acceptance by the counterparties of UNDP, reception of physical project assets by SINAC, financial closing, operative closing of legal provisions of staff and all the contracts and commitments generated by the project, and a reflection on recommendations and lessons learned from its management. It is vital for SINAC Executive Direction, to constitute an operative change for Change Management that can begin with SINAC members who participated in TAC and other relevant officers, to take advantage of the great commitment there is within SINAC staff with its institution to generate the required changes. We recommend a specific evaluation of the information technology development plan for it to be more functional according to achievement needs of SINAC. Implementation of a performance appraisal model that allows determining individual evolution and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It can be said that this project has been characterized as having an extensive participation of the multiple actors involved. What has been done in the past two years is especially important in the work performed directly with AC regarding its strengthening, systematization of experiences, working on indigenous issues, and promotion of CORAC and COLACS. Raising and systematizing experiences was done in an especially participative manner, and the choice of consultants was a great decision through the implemented working methodology in which the different participants were actively involved in the construction of products. Participation was increased with the work of NGOs, community groups, municipalities, grassroots organizations, indigenous people, local entrepreneurs and farmers, in different products promoted by the project. The experiences using methodologies and participative techniques incorporating other stakeholders in a participative manner in the definition of activities shows that not only is it possible, but also shows the benefits of incorporating, as part of the daily work, these techniques and forms of acting in networks in an institution that structurally works in a participative manner. Therefore, it is possible and necessary to replicate participation as part of the "institutional DNA". The project's complexity tested not only the management capacity of SINAC but also of UNDP as Project administrator leaving it very clear how important it is to establish a good communication to prevent problems and to achieve excellence in the development of the



SUSTAINABILITY		
Conclusions	Recommendations	Lessons learned
<p>achievement of several outcomes of the project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> These environmental factors such as problems with official approval of the strategic, legal, and regulatory framework, moderate economic issues and social stability that might generate risks to sustainability of the results to the extent in which it is translated into budget cuts and that SINAC has not endeavored new improvement actions for funding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following this same idea of rescuing public-private initiatives, environmental education, sustainable lifestyles in buffer zones, local participation and inclusion, indigenous agenda, etc., it is necessary to carry forward a plan that allows massively replicating these in such a way that they are in fact an institutional stamp shown with pride. Financially, it is important to ensure that all CAs effectively use the different financial tools they have to improve their income so as to concretely reduce their requirements at the central level and to expand tasks with fresh resources. From the analysis of the currently on-going Financial Plan in SINAC, it is expected that this time activities arise, as well as a concrete action route to be followed in order to expand the resources of the whole system. Just as it was pointed out in the corresponding analysis, we believe that even though it is true that this topic was not adequately achieved within the project, SINAC has the capacity to address this topic and it should be completed at the central level and at CA level, applying concrete measures beginning this year, and the Executive Direction should provide follow up to every detail of these measures. SINAC must achieve the development of the topic of knowledge management. As it has been pointed out in different parts of this document, knowledge management must be institutionalized and operationalized in the structure and in management processes of the different SINAC levels. It is recommended to try to hire an independent IT evaluation for the process and future perspectives of IT Support services at SINAC. This is beyond reach of the project, but it would be advisable to do this with SINAC's own resources so as to have an independent technical back up that delivers confirmation or that shows alternatives to this process which appears as too slow from a management outlook. 	

1. Introduction

The Project "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System of Costa Rica" is without any doubt one of the most important GEF-funded projects regarding its objectives and long-term impacts to reduce threats to Biodiversity in Costa Rica.

The strategic importance of this project for GEF is consistent with its Strategic Priority called BD1, "Catalyzing the sustainability of the protected areas system", and its importance for Costa Rica is that SINAC is responsible for managing a little more than 26% of the continental surface and almost 1% of the oceanic surface of a country that is considered a significant contributor to the unique biological diversity in Central America, as it houses three biomes, 20 life zones, 33 ecoregions, and more than 60 vegetable formations, and since it has a variety of marine and land ecosystems, it is considered one of the nine countries in the world with a very high diversity of organisms of the forest ecosystem. In addition, the strategic importance of the project is found not only in the fragility of its ecosystems and on a very distressing outlook for threatened species, but mainly on one of the conclusions from a series of studies³ that were used as the basis for carrying out this project. The importance of an effective management inside and outside of the CAs is essential to ensure the ecological viability of conservation and protection of the biodiversity in the country.

This final evaluation of the "Removing Barriers" Project is done after a little more than a decade of the initial design meetings thereof, in 2004, and more than six years since the signing of the project agreement on October 22, 2008. However, in effective terms, the first coordinator was hired on September 16, 2009, and the manager on November 16, 2009. The process of induction of administrative and technical issues ended in a workshop on December 01, 2009. The first meeting of the Steering Committee took place on February 26, 2010. The Mid-term Review delivered its final outcomes on July 20, 2012, highlighting the serious problems at the onset and during execution, which showed that it was unlikely to comply with the initial 60-month term, that was supposed to be completed by November 2013. Very low execution levels (20.88% as of May 2012) and very low ownership levels by SINAC were evident. This seriously threatened the achievement of the objectives of the project, keeping the risks that triggered it: threats to biodiversity in the protected areas system and the need for consolidation of the system of protected areas in Costa Rica. In other words, the need to strengthen financially, legally, and structurally, and the ability to take care of its mandate, kept SINAC at almost the same conditions diagnosed four years before.

The final evaluation began by contract in late October 2014; however, measurements made in December and January 2015, have been used to the extent possible so as to have the latest information available to properly display the outcomes of the project.

As will be seen later on when concrete information is provided, the subsequent evolution as of July 2012, changed radically in terms of execution of the budgeted activities. Commitment of SINAC with the project under the new authorities is essential for these substantive changes to occur.

³ a) Evaluation of the current situation of biodiversity and sustainability/ecological representativeness of the Wild Protected Areas System, INBio, 2006; b) GEF Costa Rica: Una perspectiva sobre el Medio Ambiente 2002, MINAE, UNEP, 2002; c) Análisis de Vacíos de Conservación en Costa Rica, SINAC, 2007 and 2009; d) Informe de País Implementación del Convenio sobre Diversidad Biológica, (CDB), SINAC 2006.

It is very interesting to note that the high execution performed in just over two years is an important fact that has decreased the risks and clearly contributed to the process of "removing barriers", which was not exempt of problems as discussed further on. However, the analysis of interviews with the different stakeholders can be seen as a change of attitude that can be interpreted as an effective process of cultural change within SINAC.

Obviously, many of the structures and activities of SINAC have remained for many years to this date. Nevertheless, integration within the staff of the diagnosis of a decade ago regarding the problems and responsibilities they have and the urgent need to undertake improvements in their tasks such as the urgency to modernize, to incorporate technology, to undertake the challenge of complex issues such as the indigenous agenda, the functioning of CORAC and COLACS, etc., and to take measures in view of the retirement of a high percentage of staff has become evident both in Conservation Areas and in the Executive Secretariat of SINAC. This point is especially relevant in the analysis of the achievements and their sustainability within the project. In many cases, this cultural change cannot be directly attributed to the actions of the project. Even so, it is very relevant as process analysis and delivers greater certainty about the possibility that these changes will continue to develop and especially many of the products of the Project are used effectively as tools for change to definitely make them a reality as dreamed by SINAC and to further guarantee the protection of biodiversity and to ensure the system of conservation areas in Costa Rica.

2. Development

2.1 On the final evaluation of the "Removing Barriers" Project

According to the terms of reference, we proceeded to the realization of the Final Evaluation (FA), which by nature is a requirement of UNDP and GEF projects. This evaluation was conducted in accordance with the policies, guidelines, rules, and procedures of UNDP and GEF, with the following objectives:

General Objective:

A final evaluation must be executed for the "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System of Costa Rica" Project, foreseen in PRODOC and in the framework of of GEF/UNDP provisions, to provide the relevant, decision-making agencies with enough and relevant information to define future actions for SINAC.

Specific objectives:

- To adequately assess the initial preparation of the project, considering the evolution along its execution and environmental conditions, as well as the implications of national policies and actions and the cyclical impact of cooperation.
- To analyze and assess, in a comprehensive and independent manner, the Project outcomes, devoted specifically to the impact of the actions taken with respect to their objectives and logical framework.
- To extract key lessons learned and to practice and formulate recommendations regarding sustainability and long-term impact for the Protected Areas System of Costa Rica.

This draft of the final report is intended to provide a complete analysis obtained from the evaluation and to promote discussion between the different stakeholders involved in the Project to improve the final result of the Project evaluation with feedback thereof.

As a complement to this report, a briefing shall be made to the TAC one week after its delivery to collect the opinions of a representative group of Project stakeholders that allows improving the opinions, judgments, and conclusions.

2.2 The "Removing Barriers" Project and its development context

2.2.1 Legal Framework

The National Conservation Areas System (SINAC) is an agency of the Ministry of Environment, Energy, and Telecommunications (MINAET) created pursuant to Article 22 of Biodiversity Law No. 7788, of 1998.

The project is carried out in the form of national execution conducted by the National Conservation Areas System (SINAC), with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as GEF implementing agency. It is part of the Basic Standard Assistance Agreement between the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Government of the Republic of Costa Rica, signed by the parties on August 7, 1973, and enacted by Law 5878 published in "La Gaceta" on January 31, 1976. As well as the Convention on Biological Diversity, which is, a law of the Republic of Costa Rica dated June 30, 1994, (Act # 7416 of 07/28/94) and that was ratified on September 8, 1994 (Decree # 23605-RE).

2.2.2 Beginning and Duration of the Project

Execution was scheduled for 60 months.

The "Removing Barriers" Project formally began on October 22, 2008. The first coordinator was hired on September 16, 2009, and the manager on November 16, 2009. The process of induction of administrative and technical issues ended in a workshop on December 01, 2009. The first meeting of the Steering Committee took place on February 26, 2010.

In real terms, the project effectively began in 2010. The official closing date is November 2013, deadline that has been extended until March 2015, when it is expected to get to the final closing. Therefore, the project will have had an extension of 77 months (6 years and 5 months), i.e. 28% of the initially scheduled time or 66 months after hiring the first coordinator, which would mean a 10% increase from the originally scheduled time.

2.2.3 Identified problems

In the PRODOC, the following threats were identified that are currently undermining long-term sustainability, not only of the individual units of the Protected Areas (PA), but in the entire system.

These pressures can be grouped into three groups of threats that directly or indirectly affect the long-term viability of the PA system: (i) habitat degradation, (ii) habitat conversion, and (iii) overexploitation.

The underlying causes of these threats include: (i) a legislative framework that prevents efficient PA management, (ii) absence or inadequacy of conservation strategies of the management plans of bioregional scale, (iii) the lack of coordination in planning territorial development, (iv) insufficient financial and human resources for the efficient management and reduction of threats in PA, and (v) underestimation of the economic value provided by ecosystem services within and outside PAs.

Barriers were identified that affect the country's efforts to develop and improve management of protected areas. These barriers must be removed to overcome the existing management deficiencies in SINAC. Following are barriers identified:

BARRIER 1: The legal and political framework is complex and incomplete, limiting the operational capacity of SINAC.

BARRIER 2: Inadequate financing system of protected areas and the lack of institutional capacity limits SINAC's ability to capture revenue and to invest in the management of protected areas.

BARRIER 3: Deficiencies in the individual capacity of SINAC field staff limit the effectiveness of management of protected areas.

BARRIER 4: There is little awareness of the role and importance of protected areas for the national economic development and lack of integration of protected areas in the growing tourism industry in Costa Rica.

BARRIER 5: Deficiencies in integrity, connectivity, and representativeness of ecosystems.

General Objective

The objective is to have a system that effectively conserves a representative sample of the biodiversity of Costa Rica that advances on national goals and captures global benefits in a wide range of ecosystems.

The national long-term goal of the project was to "consolidate the protected areas system as a key component of sustainable development in Costa Rica", and the objective was to "overcome the major systemic and institutional Barriers to sustainability of the protected areas system of Costa Rica".

2.2.5 Expected Outcomes

The objective of the project was to be achieved through five interrelated outcomes:

- 1) Legal and political framework of Costa Rica, reformed and improved to ensure effective management and financial and long-term ecological sustainability of the Protected Areas System;
- 2) Institutional framework and capacities of the SINAC Protected Areas System for optimal ecoregional planning and effective management.
- 3) SINAC has financial sustainability to effectively achieve its strategic objectives and to provide resources for the management needs of the PA system in the long term;
- 4) SINAC tries new and innovative approaches to conservation at the level of Conservation Areas and PAs; and
- 5) Successful management models of the PA system escalated and replicated at systemic level through strategic partnerships with key stakeholders. On-site pilot interventions will allow testing at the field the legal and political framework as well as testing and developing new tools to improve the effectiveness of PA management - including different PA governance models - while conducting training and awareness activities. Since long-term sustainability of the PA system depends on the ability of Costa Rica to ensure sufficient financial resources to meet the costs of PA management, sustainable funding will be treated as a crosscutting component.

2.2.6 Organizational Structure

In the PRODOC, the organizational structure under which the project would operate was defined, with the participation of the following agencies:

- 1) UNDP and SINAC comprise the *Project Steering Committee* (PSC), which would be represented by the National Project Director - the SINAC Executive Director - and the resident representative of UNDP in Costa Rica. This committee would ensure political control of the project and would be ultimately responsible for the implementation of the work plan of the project.
- 2) The *Interagency Advisory Committee* (IAC), consisting of a group of key stakeholders related to the management of protected areas in Costa Rica. This committee will help in the coordination with other institutions and organizations related to protected areas and will provide technical information for the project.
- 3) A *SINAC Technical Advisory Committee* (TAC) will be established, comprised by the directors (PAS, MRN) of SINAC and the directors of the Conservation Areas in which the project operates (ACT, ACTo, ACCVC, ACOSA) and the UNDP Programme Officer for Energy and Environment of Costa Rica. This committee would be a vital link between the PMU and the rest of SINAC staff, both at headquarters, as on the field, and would have the responsibility of resolving, in the first instance, coordination problems faced by the project.
- 4) The *Project Management Unit* (PMU), which would be responsible for the daily activities of the project. A project coordinator, a national coordinator, a project manager, an administrative/financial assistant, and a coordination/operations assistant comprise it. *Technical assistance* is established, comprised by a team of specialists, including, among others, a PA management specialist, an administrative/institutional change specialist, a community/livelihoods specialist, and a skills development specialist. The *project coordinator* would be the key person, responsible of maintaining the overall management of the project and of establishing a close collaboration relationship with SINAC leaders and other partners in the project to promote the necessary reforms for sustainability of PAs.

The work plans would also be submitted to CONAC for their annual approval. PMU will also have constant support from the five thematic specialists in the long term. The project coordinator with the previous approval of the Technical Advisory Committee of SINAC would make decisions on staff and consultants.

2.2.7 Project Financing

The project envisaged a total funding of US\$25,427,671. It will be financed by GEF budget of US\$4,368,000, and a contribution by co-financing of US\$21,059,671.

2.3 Outcomes

As noted in section 2.2.2, the project had many problems at the beginning, which delayed its start for a little over a year, and its specific contributions to the product by at least 18 months.

The outcomes evaluation is carried out in January 2015, which constitutes the reference date for the final evaluation for this whole analysis of outcomes. It is important to clarify this because

to this date some consultants have not finished yet. In specific terms, the outcomes are reviewed from point 2.3.1 onwards:

2.3.1 Relevance: Concept and Design

In this evaluation, the PRODOC (the Design Document of the Removing Barriers Project) was reviewed, as well as documents and reports on government policies in Costa Rica. As noted in the Mid-term Review Report, internal and external problems of SINAC were and remain highly relevant for the development of the institution and even more for enhancing the capacity of action of its work in order to ensure the preservation of biodiversity.

The diagnosis of the problem was very accurate and the description of barriers and improvement needs was also precise from the perspective of legal environment factors, requirements of financial strengthening, institutional strengthening and capacity management, rescue and testing of new methods and ways of working, need to improve the investment in PA, overcoming of deficiencies in the individual capacities of SINAC field staff, need to implement an effective way of improving awareness of the role and importance of protected areas in national economic development, integration of protected areas in the growing tourism industry, and improving the integrity, connectivity, and representativeness of ecosystems in Costa Rica.

A design of the project was developed that clearly stated that it would cover many and very complex problems, for which a significant amount of resources was allocated, and it was expected to mobilize a far greater amount, leveraging it from other sources and institutions that had been detected in the diagnostic process.

The design was ambitious and the project management showed that while the diagnosis of the many of the problems to be faced was right, there were some other important considerations that were not addressed, as well as unrealistic assumptions, indicators, and vague targets at the products level and inconsistencies on how the products yield outcomes and in turn allow them to effectively overcome barriers:

a) The complexity of the problems covered topics of a political importance that far exceeded the skills and technical capabilities of SINAC or of the project management unit: Changing the legal environment and also developing a process of economic integration of the PA with the Tourism Industry. These are processes that necessarily require political and economic stability in periods that were beyond the estimated duration of the project. Also, these processes require integration with various ministries and public institutions so that there is a common vision that is subsequently reflected in coordinated activities. This is difficult to do if there are no resources to carry out such encounter processes not originally included in the project. It is even more difficult is to do this to the extent that the achievement of these tasks exceeds presidential political periods, thus modifying national and departmental priorities every four years. In fact, the project began to take shape in the administration of Mr. Abel Pacheco (PUSC), in 2004, and was approved in the administration of Mr. Oscar Arias (PLN), in 2008, and it really started in the administration of Mrs. Laura Chinchilla (PLN), in 2010, to be completed in the current administration of Mr. Luis Guillermo Solís (PAC), in 2015. Fortunately, there has been some continuity in policies. Nevertheless, such important outcomes cannot be demanded from a project from an institution if the potential political variability is not taken into account within such a long execution period.

b) Another aspect that was not adequately covered by the project is the cultural change that was being asked from SINAC. The process of change for SINAC involved removing the 5 barriers and was equivalent to a full restructuring in organizational terms. For a project, no matter how efficient, it is difficult to generate such a revolutionary change within five years in an



institution. While SINAC was created in 1994 and ratified in the Biodiversity Law of 1998, its constitution was the merger of three institutions with longstanding experience in the country; and their officers, even though they had a vast experience and knowledge in forestry, wildlife, and conservation issues, all of vital importance to the work of SINAC, the constitution of SINAC meant to adapt to a new organization and new challenges for which they were not prepared, technically or operatively. The moment in which the change was brought up is certainly timely as SINAC was at a stage of growth toward institutional maturity. Notwithstanding the foregoing, addressing issues and working together with external stakeholders such as civil society and public and private institutions is not a simple issue for any organization, in addition to the need for developing a policy towards indigenous peoples or computer systems modernization to become more efficient and transparent with a professional staff that is mostly about to retire. What we want to acknowledge is that this had to be done, but these challenges exceeded the horizon of actions and resources of any project, and therefore, it cannot be required to have achieved these changes within a five-year period. All this is very relevant when making judgments about the outcomes because if the aim was to lay the groundwork for change, it must be expressed this way and be assessed in a way that considers realistic targets and indicators.

c) The design of the organization for the implementation of the project was simple and adequate but it assumed that SINAC considered the project as its own, including the SINAC Director and the focal points⁴, which would give the strategic perspective, and the PMU should ensure the execution of consultancies. Also, the Implementation Agency should have helped solve problems, but in some situations it even caused the problems to become more serious. Clearly, and as will be discussed in more detail in the following points, there was lack of coordination between key stakeholders⁵ in the project from the beginning to almost the end for different reasons. However, the designed structure occasionally worked in coordination and with clarity of the roles of each person. The levels of distrust among them did not allow the organizational design to work, but it also seems to us that the project did not foresee the complexity of the task and even less that the actors could not get to work on a task that in theory was shared by all.

The proposed change was and remains adequate around the barriers to be overcome, but the task was greater than expected, due to changing factors in the environment, such as the significance of transforming an institution of the magnitude of SINAC, and ultimately, due to the problems entailed by coordinating stakeholders.

⁴While the focal points were not a direct part in the execution, undoubtedly they were indispensable to the attainment of outcomes, products, and activities covered by the project. The quality of consultancies and outsourced tasks has to be certified by those who are in charge of the process, and that is part of the work: to define needs and problems that are translated into terms of reference for hiring consultants, who then must assess whether these allow achieving the desired solutions.

⁵The highest authority that runs the project is SINAC together with UNDP. This means that they should guide the path and make sure that strategically there is progress towards the proposed outcomes and objectives. The most important changes should be agreed between valid representatives of these institutions and in consultation with GEF if these involves changes in budget contributed by them. These institutions must also give direct access to tracking the operational implementation and proper use of resources. The PMU should operationalize the mandate between these institutions, which is the PRODOC, and it must constantly inform them of the progress of the project by conducting consultations on relevant decisions. Specifically in this project, the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), which is a slightly broader body that brings together representatives of these institutions to accompany the process, is designed. We note that there was no smooth coordination between UNDP, SINAC, and PMU representatives throughout the history of the project as reflected in various execution problems.

2.3.2 Analysis of the Logical Framework Matrix

The Logical Framework Matrix maintained its original design until completion; it was not adjusted or modified. Following are the limitations⁶, which should have been considered when the evaluation of the outcomes was made:

- The purpose of the project *"Consolidating the Protected Areas System as a key component of sustainable development in Costa Rica"* remains currently in effect. However, it should be noted that the PAS of Costa Rica, since the PRODOC was prepared, was already a consolidated system, which at that time could obviously be strengthened.
- The objective of this project is: "To eliminate the major systemic and institutional Barriers to sustainability of the system of protected areas of Costa Rica." For this purpose, the design of the project should provide a clear alignment and harmonization of expected outcomes with the identified barriers.
- The PRODOC is the main document and guide for the action of the Project, which poses a very important and interesting diagnosis of the problems to be faced and how to solve them. Nevertheless, it is inconsistent on several points, for example:
 - a. Barrier 1 states: *"The complex and incomplete current legal and regulatory framework of Costa Rica limits the operational capacity of SINAC"*, and the corresponding Outcome 1 states: *"The legal and political framework of Costa Rica has been renovated and improved to ensure long-term effective management and financial and ecological sustainability of the PA system (PAS)"*. Nowhere is it mentioned that the problems that SINAC had were that it lacked instruments of governance which, however, clearly appeared as products to be attained: Product 1.3 SINAC Strategic Plan, officially approved and in operation, and Product 1.4, officially approved and in operation, the Strategic Action Plan of the PA Systems (National Master Plan).
 - b. One of the justifications for Barrier 1 was precisely that SINAC continues to operate with a centralized model of operation: *"SINAC still depends on the central authority of MINAE for all contractual purposes, purchases, and financial transactions"*. Result 1 does not take care of this problem or of the products associated with Result 1. To some extent, this reflects on the issue of self-financing in products 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4, aimed at financial self-sustainability of PAs, but bureaucratic dependence of the central authority is not covered in any part of the project.
- Most of the assumptions were realistic and consistent, and others were partially met. However, some were not considered, and others were not relevant or real:
 - a. The low execution capacity of the PMU inserted into the structure of SINAC, which was shown in the Mid-term Review, was not anticipated;
 - b. Neither was it foreseen that the three programs (Removing Barriers, IDB-Tourism and IDB-Cadaster) were not initiated and executed synchronously as was temporarily expected.

⁶To expand on this topic, see Annex 10, Logical Framework Matrix of the Project: the Analysis of the Purpose and Outcomes shows the analyses performed on the achievement of the purpose and outcomes under the assumptions and indicators of LF.

- c. The Project did not include items on the issue of Marine Protected Areas but the "Barreritas" Project does complement this. (PRODOC was signed in 2011, but it became operational in March 2012, to end in August 2015)
 - d. In the case of the "implementation of the Integrated Knowledge Management Integrated System (KMIS)", the target or the indicator were not considered as there were no skills to become a counterpart of the consultants. The target was proven in practice to be too complex, and the task was postponed until internal discussions began. Actions were taken to allow effectively addressing the task.
 - e. SINAC's budgetary autonomy was a very difficult goal to achieve under the regulatory framework in which the Ministry of Finance handles the national budget.
 - f. The Private Reserves Network lacked participation in the project actions. As a source of verification, it does not apply because the agreements with the appropriate players are outside their jurisdiction.
 - g. The assumed link with the Araucaria XXI Program of the Spanish Cooperation was not achieved, which would have assisted in the Frio River Basin initiative.
- Indicators present problems of relevance, definition, and estimation. We highlight at least the following situations:
 - a. There is no definition of the goal, in terms of the amount (in hectares) of protected areas that must be legally incorporated into the SINAC PA system in 2023 (15 years after having begun the execution of the project). For assessing the indicator, an area of 1,840,448 hectares should be taken into account, which is not the compliance goal at 15 years but the baseline data.⁷ See Table 1 of the PRODOC, p. 8.
 - b. The indicator "*Amount of unresolved land tenure conflicts within the PA system*" presents problems of relevance in relation to the result to be measured "Result 4: SINAC tries different and innovative conservation approaches in conservation areas and in PAs." As in other indicators, the indicator design matrix is not included stating how this indicator is measured. In addition, the baseline does not quantify the amount in conflict. It is important to recognize that there may be conflicts that require indemnifying owners who have rights within the PAs. This is something that the project did not consider, in addition to being a legal process that is partly the responsibility of the Attorney General's Office.
 - c. The indicator "*Level of service provided to tourists, condition of infrastructure and accessibility in the 10 most visited PAs of the PA system*" presents realistic problems, since the result of the project depends largely on the effectiveness of the management of the IDB Tourism program, a situation that is beyond control. IDB Tourism has significant sub execution (around 6%) of resources, which is a situation that affects the outcomes "Outcome 4: SINAC tries different and innovative conservation approaches in conservation areas and in PAs."
 - d. The project did not provide follow-up on the indicator "*Percentage increase in the UNDP-GEF financial scorecard*"; there is very little information, so evaluation is not possible.

⁷ See Table 1 of the PRODOC, p. 8.

2.3.3 Project Implementation

The need to try to generate elements of change for the existing legislation, to develop and to strengthen SINAC institutionally and financially, and to incorporate into current management practices of SINAC the test of new action models that will address the management of conservation areas in articulation with the local private sector within the barriers to be overcome, remain fully in force since the beginning of the project; and even today, there are very important products derived from the project that allow advancing in this challenge.

The inconsistency in the PRODOC regarding various aspects of the problems to be faced and how to solve them, as mentioned in paragraph 2.3.2, promoted the occurrence of problems in the implementation process, which added to the inefficiency of the early years by the Coordination of the PMU, thus explaining an important part of the problems faced by the Project. Ensuring the change process meant to have a clearer roadmap and agreed strategic thinking. This is achieved through shared work with the Steering Committee that begins by the interpretation of the PRODOC and requires an accurate version of indicator objectives and goals from the level of the Outcomes (in the PRODOC) to the level of the products and main activities (which is not clear). This work began partly in February 26, 2010, and subsequently, meetings became more operative without achieving accuracy of the work or a revised proposal of the PRODOC. Subsequently, in mid-2012, the TAC resumed its role, but did not question the consistency of the LFM and the products requested in the PRODOC, and the new coordinator focused on the work to revitalize the execution.

The project is designed in a long discussion process,⁸ generating substantial budget cuts. Expectations at the beginning were that the PMU would be responsible for the efficient management of the project. A former SINAC director was hired for this purpose, and as part of SINAC requirements, an officer (also a former director of SINAC) was appointed as institutional coordinator; his primary function was being the bond between the project and SINAC. Therefore, the strategic political issues should not have been a problem. Unfortunately there was a divorce between the two former directors, which was reflected between them and SINAC staff, and as a result, the Project execution had very low performance. The problems that existed with UNDP representatives at the time further hindered execution. The Steering Committee worked very little and did not provide any strategic guidance, and much less mediated between the existing problems. Later, the UNDP counterpart with SINAC was changed, and the project improved some operational management issues, emphasizing on implementation. The Mid-term Review conducted in 2012, exposed the problems to the different parties and recommended, among other things, that the Steering Committee should work and have a more strategic function, and that it was necessary to change the PMU so as to give a boost to the execution of important tasks. In the Mid-term Review process, the Executive Director of SINAC was changed, who directly assumed the mission of carrying forward the project by making the recommended changes and seeking to reap the benefits of the project.

Changing the coordination of the PMU took between August 2012 and May 2013.⁹ For this period, with appointment of the a.i. Coordinator, and by assigning extra work to SINAC officers, many terms of reference for consulting contracts began to be activated, thus enabling the project to continue without interruption and to increase its level of execution. Later with the new coordinator hired in 2012, as can be seen in the budgetary execution charts in point 2.3.11,

⁸According to several interviewees, the process for the original design of the project involved more than 20 versions during nearly four years before the final version.

⁹In April, the new contract coordinator was hired, but he became ill and therefore did not begin working until May 2013.

there was a better budgetary execution which allowed envisaging an achievement close to 100% in March 2015.

While it is true that the change of coordination of the PMU allowed budget execution and control over the quality of the outcomes of the contracted consulting services, there was a rift between the PMU and the focal points in SE that unfortunately caused mistrust and many problems for both parties¹⁰. The PMU apparently failed to gain the trust of several of the officers of the SE and concentrated on improving execution, especially relying on CA¹¹ and controlling consultants in the delivery of their products in accordance with the Terms of Reference. Even though institutional coordination worked for several sessions between mid-2013 and early 2014, at SINAC all interviewees indicated that at the Project Coordinator level, information delivered in TAC meetings was very general and did not allow to really understand what was happening with the project. At this stage¹², the exchange of information was lost between the parties, which worsened in May 2014, when the Executive Director of SINAC was changed, and the PMU was more concerned by the financial execution, drifting away from the function of informing and agreeing on decisions with SINAC representatives. The Program Officer of the UNDP Costa Rica Office permanently supported the new PMU coordinator so that financial executions would materialize, but the impression was generated in SINAC representatives that there was no interest in SINAC of being a part of the decision-makers of the project. The point that we want to highlight is that towards the end of the project there was a significant degree of distrust between representatives of SINAC, UNDP, and PMU, who were directly involved in the project. It was necessary to take charge to avoid problems in future interagency work. This was not only mere friction between people working together, we believe that the problem is far more serious and was even clear up to the moment of reviewing the final evaluation report and during the project closing process.

Therefore, in such a complex and important project, for various reasons the key stakeholders, practically for the entire duration¹³ were not able to coordinate and work as a team, which resulted in long delays works and products, frustration, lack of trust, accelerated realization of products, and a high percentage of products that were completed in the last 4 to 6 months of the project.¹⁴ All this created a very complicated situation since it would have been much more useful and advisable that many products had been completed in the second or third year of execution, so a process of internal maturity could be generated within SINAC through the use,

¹⁰The problems of lack of trust between the PMU and the focal points of SINAC occurred since the beginning of the Project with the first coordinator of the PMU, as several of the focal points felt that the project was more a burden than a help to their work. The PMU tasks required the work of the focal points as noted earlier, and therefore this attitude complicated the execution. The new director of SINAC assumed the recommendations of mid-2012, regarding the fact that it was urgent and necessary to enable the project execution which was transmitted to the focal points. The new coordinator took office in May 2013 but according to interviews with relevant officers in SINAC, he failed to win trust within the institution and particularly within the focal points. Repeated criticism is that he did not adequately inform of his work and the progress of the project. On the other hand, the new coordinator also expressed problems to work with the various heads in SINAC and with the lack of ownership they had with the project.

¹¹ Following the execution of Outcome 4, the Executive Secretariat was not involved.

¹² In the first part of the project up to the Mid-term Review, the information between the PMU and SINAC was scarce and of very bad quality between both sides, which was verified in the Mid-term Review.

¹³ An indicator that specifically shows the above is taken as a reference for coordinating the meetings of the Steering Committee. It was found that throughout the project there have been only two periods in which it has worked on a permanent basis: a) 7 meetings between February 2010 and October 2011, b) 6 meetings between May 2013 and May 2014.

¹⁴ It is also true that SINAC officers have many duties, and that they felt from the beginning that the project was more a burden than a contribution to improving the institution; so fulfillment of PMU requests was delayed. This was verified in the Mid-term Review and included as task number 1 "That the PMU Project makes every effort to improve the ranking level of the program at SINAC by placing at its disposition the necessary information so that the Director of SINAC, Coordinators, Managers and Directors are committed to the program and become partakers of advances in execution of actions." The Executive Director of SINAC at that time put a major effort into this, but the new coordinator of the PMU failed to generate sufficient trust to overcome it.

dissemination, and ownership thereof. As noted in section 2.3.13 of the outcomes by component, important products were achieved, but many of them were delivered between November 2014 and February 2015, in an accelerated process for finishing the project.

In the Mid-term Review, it is very clearly stated that:

"It is essential in our view to generate unity among project stakeholders and to overcome the lack of trust and mutual criticisms to tackle the remaining time of the project, with real chances of attaining objectives and concrete outcomes as a result of this. As was pointed out to the various representatives of these institutions in the presentation of the first findings of this consultation, it is essential in these times of the project to have clarity in its strategic direction, to forge a unity of the different participants, and to cause a great "sense of urgency": time is running short. It is a great opportunity to have this project and if outcomes are not properly reached, it will be a loss for the country and all the institutions involved. Everyone will look badly, and they will all be blamed, without exception."

Unfortunately, as it was not possible to achieve that unity and even though, products in many cases were achieved, the ownership thereof, the quality, and the generation of cultural and institutional change will require activities in the future to give continuity to this process.

The decisions taken by the Direction of SINAC to own and to provide continuity to the products obtained, and the process of change initiated will be critical in the future impact of the actions of the Project. This means that if there is no clear leadership from the current or future Director of SINAC, there is a risk that many products are turned into documents for decorating some shelves. Among the most important decisions are assigning financial and human resources to achieve the following:

- a) Finance: To implement the action plan drawn up as part of the Financial Strategy for collection, to improve revenue and to strengthen the financial sector in the Executive Secretariat of SINAC so that the automation of the financial accounting system processes is performed.
- b) To finalize the internal management process by automating the various needs and internal communications.
- c) To carry out at least one simple and initial knowledge management system for SINAC that allows socializing and promoting learning.
- d) To carry out a communications plan to deliver to the public a transparent, useful, and necessary SINAC.
- e) To expand on case studies and successful experiences in the areas of NES, indigenous territories, volunteering, etc.
- f) To continue promoting and strengthening the CONAC, the CORAC's and the COLACs.

2.3.3 Implementation approach

The problems identified in relation to the Mid-term Review based on the hiring system for multiple external consultants were overcome largely due to the management of the PMU after the change of coordination. Direct support to the elaboration of the Terms of Reference and the solution for the bureaucratic arrangements required for disbursements by using more appropriate criteria, allowed a more smooth and agile execution process, as has been previously noted.

Although the execution process was expedited, it was not possible to detect deterioration in the quality of many of the products delivered, in some cases within a few months of work. PMU management gets the credit for this, particularly in CAs due to the great commitment to work shown by officials and several of the consultants, despite their heavy workload.

The problems of chaining of products listed in the Mid-term Review could be solved to the extent that they are able to push through major products first and also thanks to the efforts made by the different parties involved.

However, as has been pointed out repeatedly, many products are being achieved only in late 2014 and early 2015, which in hindsight is a serious problem in the implementation approach. The reasons are explained above. Nevertheless, the result is that there has not been adequate time to set ownership of the products achieved at the end of the project, and that is another serious problem in the implementation approach.

To activate the project, initially there was direct support from the Director of SINAC, who began in mid-2012. He reactivated the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of the project until mid-2014. However, this effort was diluted during the change of Government, which also led to a change of CEO in SINAC. The weak performance of the TAC since mid-2014 led to a climate of distrust between the SINAC staff and the PMU Coordinator. On the occasion of the first mission of this evaluation in December 2014, this issue was raised before the Executive Director of SINAC, who reactivated the TAC, to ensure that the closure of the Project is properly done.

Therefore, in a big project, with major political and strategic activities, the relationship between the parties was neglected. The PMU focused on executing the budget. The Implementation Agency, as will be discussed in the following section, also contributed to a change in this regard.

2.3.4 Support and Monitoring of the Implementation Agency

Shortly before the Mid-term Review, the UNDP office in Costa Rica replaced its Projects Officer and thus the interaction between SINAC and the PMU greatly improved. Subsequently, the work of UNDP has been very close to the PMU coordinator providing support and collaboration, which also allowed for improvement in the execution as required by the project. Nevertheless, it was reported by representatives of the focal points of SINAC and other members of the Executive Secretariat, as well as by the UNDP Projects Officer, that there was mutual distrust regarding the role that both parties should have played. Criticism, well founded or not, obviously affected the implementation process of the project as there was no transparency and proper transfer of information between both parties¹⁵. The change of the Director of SINAC and the proximity of the end of the project increased this estrangement up to the date of this evaluation.

As SINAC is the beneficiary and main object of the Project changes, the UNDP Project Officer should have been more careful with the relationships with SINAC professionals and should not have let this climate of distrust to be generated in such a serious way between the parties.¹⁶ In this sense, from instances that are at a higher level than the Project Officer, actions should have been taken in an attempt to improve the climate of mutual distrust and not let it escalate at interagency level¹⁷. Regarding sustainability of CAs in Costa Rica, SINAC and MINAE are key and strategic actors, and if UNDP wishes to play an important role in the medium and long term,

¹⁵ Complementing the above, the MINAE representative and the GEF Focal Point for Costa Rica said that he had not been properly informed of the progress of the project throughout its history.

¹⁶ In all interviews held with him, he clearly stated these problems and qualms with regards to working with SINAC

¹⁷ It is unclear to us whether this is a more widespread problem, but in the interview to the GEF focal point for Costa Rica and MINAE Representative, he stated very clearly the distrust problems with UNDP regarding this project and even in the matter of environmental issues.

it is very important not only to care about operational issues but also to permanently promote actions in the network of public and private stakeholders related to these issues in Costa Rica. It is possible that the criticism from SINAC concerning the Project Officer on his excessive involvement in operational issues is subjective, but nevertheless, we believe this also improved the performance of the PMU with closer monitoring. However, UNDP and its role in projects administration is not only the responsibility of the Projects Officer, but it also entails taking care of the environmental aspects of projects and ensuring not only efficiency but also effectiveness. A project on the scale of "Removing Barriers", especially in relation to the transformation process it brought upon with respect to environmental legislation and a cultural change in the main operating institution, should have a follow-up of the operation in careful strategic terms, to avoid interagency problems that exist today and seriously affect the image of the work of UNDP in these areas.

The outcomes observed to date in the evaluation show that there may be liability from the Project Officer as to these interagency problems, especially because of his zeal for unlocking the execution of the project, focusing more on the PMU coordinator than on improving the communication with TAC members and other SINAC senior officers. However, our view is that the vast responsibility comes from a higher UNDP monitoring level in the country, that not only should have been more careful, but also should have taken charge of strengthening and developing ties and overcoming distrust, promoting the exchange of information so as to effectively assist the process of change expected by SINAC and by environmental institutions in Costa Rica.

2.3.5 Planning and Financial Management

Financial execution problems identified in the Mid-term Review were resolved, in principle, under the management of the interim coordinator who replaced the first coordinator. She accompanied various focal points so that pending terms of reference were completed, finalizing more than 15 in total, which allowed reactivating the project as of September 2012. Subsequently, the current Project Coordinator took office, who since May 2013 managed to accelerate execution, especially through work in 2014 directly with the CAs. The primary orientation observed in the documents and in the actions by PMU was to activate contracts and then verify compliance with them, so under his financial management, there was an effective leap in execution as shown in point 2.3.10 Budget and Financial Execution, largely recovering lost time up to the Mid-term Review.

There is no evidence that there has been a strategically planned activity. However, good management could ensure budgetary execution, detecting, within the project's framework, who could run activities in a fast and efficient manner.

Unfortunately, actions undertaken by the PMU caused estrangement from SINAC representatives in the TAC and from other important SINAC representatives related to the Project in the Executive Secretariat of SINAC. This way, the transfer of information began decreasing over time. It came to the point of loss of trust. There was a high level of distrust between the PMU Coordinator and SINAC representatives related to the Project.

No evidence of financial mismanagement was detected from the probity standpoint.

2.3.6 Monitoring and Evaluation

After the Mid-Term Evaluation, there is clear evidence of a very specific monitoring of the execution of consultancies promoting timely and high quality execution, pursuant to the Terms of Reference. Overcoming the low execution is a clear example of this monitoring. In addition, it was verified during this evaluation that products fulfilled the terms of reference, and in many of the cases, the standards have been very good, even beyond initial expectations.

There is no evidence of problems regarding the probity of the Project management, and this has continued to be part of a very close monitoring by UNDP to ensure that resources are well used.

A more accurate formal monitoring system was not implemented, as recommended in the Mid-term Review. Nevertheless, the capacity of the PMU to monitor the activities was adequate enough for the required execution, given the delays that had to be taken care of.

2.3.7 National Ownership

National ownership of the products and activities of the project in the CAs and in the various areas of SINAC is **Highly Satisfactory (HS)**. Several strategic products were institutionalized, guiding planning processes, budgeting and strategic planning on topics such as: PA management, control of illegal felling, biodiversity conservation, forest fire control, and forest production. Furthermore, as part of the process for strengthening SINAC, project products offer inputs that are used for decision making at the central level.

As products meet the needs of CAs, PASs, and sub regional offices, the adoption of the outcomes and working methods implemented by staff located in the region has been favored. This will allow adapting a management model that besides complying with the conservation of biodiversity and PASs, could lead to socioeconomic benefits for people of the communities located in the buffer zones of the PASs.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, no doubt that if the project had achieved the products well before the end, as originally designed, the degree of internalization and domestic practice with these products would have ensured ownership and would have definitely overcome the barriers as it was meant since the beginning.

2.3.8 Probability of replication

SINAC is a *sui generis* agency at international level. As was mentioned in the Mid-term Review, "internationally, there are very few management experiences of agencies like SINAC"; hence, the success of the project itself is very interesting and highly expected, especially in Latin America. The experience on the Integration of Protected Areas Systems by SINAC in Costa Rica is placed next to that of Mexico, Canada, and New Zealand as the most advanced in the world. The way in which issues such as planning, governance, management, and financing of protected areas is handled, is closely observed. These are the major expected outcomes of the "Removing Barriers" project. Therefore, the experience generated within the project has strengthened management, providing valuable experiences that deserve to be replicated elsewhere, especially with the outcomes generated at the level of policy instruments and management tools.

In terms of internal replication in SINAC, it is key for the Direction at SINAC to devise a work plan to replicate the experiences generated from pilot projects, training, work with indigenous territories, promotion of participation, and co-management processes with CONAC, CORAC,

and COLACS, and the experiences of volunteers and non-essential services are among the most important. The Project allowed collecting and systematizing experiences in the CAs. However it is necessary to incorporate them into a plan for the promotion of internal knowledge, disseminating good practices carried out in all CAs, so as to "enrich as a system" the system management of protected areas and SINAC as an agency.

2.3.9 Participation of Stakeholders

One can say that this project has been characterized by having an extensive participation of multiple stakeholders. In particular, what has been done in the last two years in the works executed with the CAs is very important. The raising and systematization of experiences was held in an especially participatory way, and the election of consultants was a great success through the methodology implemented in which the various participants were actively involved in the construction of products. The participation was increased with the work of NGOs, community groups, municipalities, grassroots organizations, indigenous people, local entrepreneurs, and farmers, in the different products promoted by the project.

Meetings, workshops, and training of CORAC, COLAC, and CONAC have had an effective start-up of the operation of these bodies in making decisions on the CAs and within SINAC as a whole. This work needs to be deepened, but it has been carried out carefully, stimulating the functioning and empowerment of the members involved.

At the SINAC level, all levels of the organizational structure played an important role: CONAC, the Executive Secretariat, CORAC, COLAC, the CAs, the PASs, and the sub regional offices. However, this was not done without problems, particularly in the focal points, which should work directly with the PMU. During the first two years of the project, it was an additional burden to their already bulging responsibilities; so, they tended not to prioritize this work. Subsequently, the TAC, with the new Director, at the end of 2012, managed to give a boost to this and prioritized the work, although SINAC officers were quite overloaded with multiple other tasks. Unfortunately, as we noted earlier, a rift occurred later between the PMU coordinator and SINAC representatives, which was especially aggravated in 2014 up to the date of the evaluation.

Nevertheless, the participation of actors is seen as a network or as the existence of strategic partnerships between stakeholders who are within or surrounding the CAs, and the system as such shall be stimulated at the national level. This requires more practice in the CAs, and more interaction and knowledge of what other CAs do, as well as a greater decentralization of SINAC, so that the CAs actually feel that the Executive Secretariat coordinates and supports their work.

2.3.10 Budgetary and Finance Execution

The financial execution of the Project took a big leap after the Mid-term Review, effectively projecting that as of March 2015, 100% of the resources provided by the GEF would have been executed.

As had been reported in the Mid-term Review, in May 2012, only 20.88% had been executed, over a 41-month period. Today, 32 months after that measurement, the execution level of GEF funds as of January 2015 is 95.5% of the total budget.

Table No. 6 follows, which shows the evolution of the annual execution with the rapid growth achieved in recent years:

Table N° 6
Annual Execution
Removing Barriers Project
(US\$ Dollars)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015 (January)
Expenses for the period	48,202.60	224,828.24	458,642.10	646,906.09	1,086,482.43	1,551,873.82	146,090.60
% of Annual Execution	1,1 %	5,1 %	10,5 %	14,8 %	25,1 %	35,5 %	3,3 %
Accumulated Expenses	48,202.60	273,030.84	731,672.94	1,378,579.03	2,475,061.46	4,026,935.28	4,172,025.88
% over the Total Accrued Expenses	1,1 %	6,3 %	16,8 %	31,6 %	56,7 %	92,2 %	96,5 %

Source: Prepared based on CDR 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, and expenses as of January 31, 2015

Table N° 7 follows, which shows a breakdown of the management expenses by PMU Coordinators, including temporary management by Mrs. Kathia González, after Mr. Raúl Solórzano left.

Table N° 7
Execution by Coordination Period
Removing Barriers Project
(US\$ Dollars)

	Period w/o Coordination January 2009 – August 2009	Coordination Raúl Solórzano September 2009 – August 2012	Temporary Coordination Kathia González September 2012 - April 2013	Coordination Charles Dixon May 2013 – January 2015	Total Budget Execution January 2009 to January 2015
Execution	12,483.71	1,050,324.17	510,116.16	2,599,101.84	4,172,025.88
Months	8	36	8	21	73
Monthly Average	1,560.43	29,175.67	63,764.52	123,766.75	57,151.04

Source: Prepared based on CDR 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, and expenses as of January 31, 2015

Table N° 7, also shows the important progress in execution produced by the change in PMU coordination, in which, as of August 2012, execution levels were too low and the project was almost paralyzed. The monthly average for execution shows the degree of effectiveness that took a leap when Mr. Solórzano left, and under the temporary management of Mrs. Kathia González. Later on, it increased noticeably with Mr. Charles Dixon.

Another interesting analysis can be observed in Table N° 8, which follows. It shows the relative weight of administrative expenses and monitoring¹⁸ under each administration, in such a way so as to understand if the increase in execution also implied an increase in administrative and monitoring expenses. This was a question posed by some SINAC representatives during the interviews.

¹⁸ Administrative and Monitoring expenses are basically the costs of the payroll of PMU staff and the expenses incurred during the performance of their work. This information comes directly from monthly financial reports of the project declared every year, and were elaborated for this evaluation.

Table N° 8
Administrative Expenses by Coordination Period
"Removing Barriers" Project
(US\$ Dollars)

	Period w/o Coordination January 2009 – August 2009	Coordination Raúl Solórzano September 2009 – August 2012	Temporary Coordination Kathia González September 2012 - April 2013	Coordination Charles Dixon May 2013 – January 2015 ¹⁰	Total Budget Execution January 2009 to January 2015
Administrative and Monitoring Expenses	1429,92	319.390,52	69.740,92	246.181,36	636.742,72
Months	8	36	8	21	73
Monthly Average	178,74	8.871,96	8.717,615	11.722,92	8.722,50
% of administrative expenses regarding execution	11,45 %	30,41 %	13,67 %	9,47 %	15,26 %

Source: Prepared based on CDR 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, and expenses as of January 31, 2015

Outcomes shown in this table are very interesting, as they point out that the large increase in the level of operation, increased administration costs by a small percentage monthly, thus helping to reduce the burden of administration very significantly to just below 10% in Mr. Dixon's last period.

The overall percentage achieved during the entire period of the Project, between January 2009 and January 2015, shows that administrative expenses were just over 15%, which is very commendable and shows great efficiency in the execution of the Project, especially considering the long delays that occurred during the first years. In practice, in the past two years, the bad execution was completely reversed over the previous three years, and a quite normal level of expenditures was achieved, in comparison with other cooperation projects.

As for the co-financing funds, the problems identified in the Mid-term Review showed achievement of just over 14%. We can see in Table No. 9 that to date, at least 63.4 % of the committed amount has been reached. This figure is quite underestimated in terms of contribution to SINAC, as it is only considered until June 2014. SINAC must update its counterpart entries, so that it can realistically reflect its contribution to the project.

Co-financing contributions did not match proportionally, highlighting that IDB/Cadaster, Private Sector contributions, and to a lesser extent Proparquas, and other contributors, would have contributed far less, as shown in Table No. 9.

A special case is the IDB/Tourism Project, from which the biggest contribution was expected, and which appears with only 14.7% of what was promised. This Project was delayed, and it is currently exploiting the "Removing Barriers" Project products. It is in full execution process, so its contribution to the Project will become a reality after the finalization of the "Removing Barriers" Project.

¹⁰ There are slight accounting differences that to date are not yet clear, and which might increase total administrative expenses for this period by approximately US\$10,000. However, the modification in the figures is marginal, and administrative expenses would not reach 10% in this period in relation to execution. This does not significantly change the analysis of this table.

Table No. 9
Counterpart Contributions²⁰ "Removing Barriers" Project
(US\$ Dollars)

INSTITUTION	Determined as of January 2015	Committed in PRODOC	% of Achievement January 2015
PROPARQUES	137,800.00	92,000.00	149.8%
Private Sector Contributions (FUNDECODES)	1,992,976.00	193,000.00	1032.6%
TNC (The Nature Conservancy)	900,000.00	1,861,800.00	48.3%
AECID (Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional)	133,323.00	133,323.00	100.0%
IDB/Tourism	1,949,818.49	13,253,900.00	14.7%
IDB /Cadastral	5,392,514.95	1,191,112.50	452.7%
SINAC	2,843,529.89	4,334,536.00	65.6%
TOTAL	13,349,962.33	21,059,671.50	63.4%

Source: PIR 2014, PMU January 2015

We would like to emphasize the importance of certifying and documenting all co-financing contributions in such a way that the project shows achievements in its management.

2.3.11 Incremental Costs

Changes obtained by applying the GEF alternative, on which the project execution is based have had a rating of **Highly Satisfactory**. An incremental cost analysis is presented as follows:

- The SINAC institutional framework was strengthened.
- Acquired tools and technologies strengthen governance.
- The quality of the outcomes is highly satisfactory
- It is estimated that the project contributed to at least partly overcome the various barriers identified as outcomes and products to be achieved, with the exception of those related to knowledge and to the automated billing system, which, even though they did not progress as desired, generated the basic information and the requirements that are necessary for future development.
- SINAC has several instruments to be adequately managed and institutionalized, which can contribute with the potential result so that in the medium term the 5 major barriers can be removed.

2.3.12 Outcomes by Component

The expected outcomes are defined on pages 26 to 45 of the PRODOC, and the strategy is summarized in the table in Annex number (insert number). The **overall outcomes** are rated by this evaluation as **Satisfactory**. Following are detailed outcomes for each of the components.

²⁰The contributions determined in January 2015 are largely certified. However, the Project Coordinator must ensure that they are properly formalized during the months of February and March before completely closing the Project.

COMPONENT 1. STRENGTHENING OF THE LEGAL AND POLITICAL FRAMEWORK FOR A BETTER PA SYSTEM

OUTCOME 1: The legal and political framework of Costa Rica has been renovated and improved to ensure long-term effective management and financial and ecological sustainability of the PA system (PAS)".

This result considered as targets for the indicators: the entry into force of the national PAS policy, both terrestrial and marine, legal reforms and reclassification of the PAs, the Strategic Plan and Strategic Action Plan for PA Systems (National Master Plan), and of SINAC for its operation. The outcomes at the level of this component are classified by this evaluation as Highly Satisfactory. The main achievements of the execution of this component were:

- Policies for "Protected Areas of the National System of Conservation Areas (PAS)" were formalized.²¹ Public policy instruments were made official by CONAC. Its objective is in agreement with the purposes of the project presented. *"To consolidate a long-term system of Wild Protected Areas for in situ conservation, that is comprehensive, effectively managed, and ecologically representative of the biodiversity of the country, through the recognition, promotion, and strengthening of the different governance models to ensure the provision of ecosystem goods and services".* Currently, these policies guide decision-making on the protected areas of the country, on nine topics²²: 1) Ecological representativeness; 2) Public participation; 3) Sustainable tourism; 4) State Natural Heritage (SNH) in PAS; 5) Management, control, and protection of PAS; 6) Knowledge management; 7) Land and marine management; 8) Response to global and local threats; and 9) Institutional capacity. Thus, proposed actions are also institutionalized in the project, as are the preparation and implementation of other tools²³ that strengthen the management of PAs, besides being a point of reference for monitoring and evaluation of outcomes²⁴. Policies for Protected Areas provide an important reference framework for the master plan. In fact, 7 of the 9 policies are represented in the thematic areas and guidelines generated by this master plan. The remaining 2 policies cover all the components and their guidelines.
- The Strategic Plan²⁵ of the National Conservation Areas System-SINAC 2010-2015 was institutionalized, and it works as a harmonizing instrument and institutional planning synchronizer of SINAC and of the national planning system. It has its own action plan. This plan seeks to strengthen institutional capacities, which will lead to decision making and to develop assertive, effective, efficient, and sustainable features for reaching its objectives and powers. All CAs and the Executive Secretariat internalized it at SINAC

SINAC Policies for Protected Areas of the National System of Conservation Areas (PAS) SINAC 2011-2015. Costa Rica: National System of Conservation Areas San José-Costa Rica, 2014 44 pp.

²² See Annex B: Description of the new categories proposed for PAS by SINAC

SINAC Tool for Evaluation of Management Effectiveness of Protected Wildlife Areas of Costa Rica: National System of Conservation Areas San José-Costa Rica, 2014 48 pp.

SINAC Action Plan for the Implementation of the Working Program on Protected Areas of the Convention on Biological Diversity, Costa Rica. Costa Rica: National System of Conservation Areas San José-Costa Rica, 2012. 37 pp.

²⁴Point 6.1. General management tools for policies

²⁵National Conservation Areas System-SINAC of the Ministry of Environment, Energy, and Telecommunications-MINAET 2010. Strategic Plan of the National of Conservation Areas System, SINAC 2010-2015. San José CR p 64

with participation in workshops²⁶. The protected areas component of the SINAC Strategic Plan served as a reference for the generation of the master plan. The policy instruments and the SINAC strategic plan are used throughout the system. Both have improved alignment with the budget plan, as it allows planning and recording the executed budget. Participatory planning was strengthened. Unfortunately, it was not possible to achieve process automation of the Budget Plan as it was considered that the issue of ICTs had not advanced in SINAC yet, and there was no capacity to manage it. The challenge of harmonizing the budget plan with financial accounting records still stands.

- The Master Plan for Wild Protected Areas of SINAC is the first one developed in Costa Rica. With this master plan, the national protected areas policy is operationalized together with other SINAC policies, and processes for planning, management, and analysis, which are underway in the system are articulated. It allows providing future continuity to actions undertaken by the project. It was developed through a participatory process involving 8 regional workshops with officers of SINAC protected areas. Along with the Master Plan, there is also an Action Plan that identifies the most important actions to be implemented over the next five years for each thematic area. Seven thematic areas that are each grouped as a set of guidelines, as categories were included. The areas are: Legal, Biodiversity Management, Economic Management, Governance, Knowledge Management, Organizational Structure and Human Resources, and Projection and Image.

It is a tool for articulating the different processes of the wild protected areas system, managed by the Costa Rican government through the National Conservation Areas System (SINAC). It allows improving communication between the Executive Secretariat, Conservation Areas, and the PAS. It proposes the establishment of an effective and efficient organizational structure, with roles and responsibilities, and alternative models of governance and participation, with the successful management of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the face of climate change scenarios. It proposes the achievement of financial sustainability of PAS, and through knowledge management to become a learning organization that values human resources as capital. Some adjustments to the document are still pending, as well as its socialization within SINAC so that it can later be formalized by CONAC.

- The Cooperation Strategy was formulated based on the SINAC Strategic Plan 2010-2015. It includes the strategic actions considered as more urgent and more important to strengthen the cooperation process management in SINAC: 1) Institutional Positioning; 2) Institutional Cooperation Management; and 3) Partnership and Cooperation Relations. This instrument seeks to enhance the cooperation management process at SINAC and to support the implementation of the strategic objectives of the institution and the optimal exercise of its competencies. To allow SINAC to take advantage of the most appropriate form of cooperation (financial and material resources, but also knowledge, expertise, and capacity building), there was a participatory preparation by interviewing approximately 100 people. It covers four main aspects: 1) A diagnosis of cooperation within SINAC; 2) The identification of cooperation priorities; 3) The preparation and validation of the Cooperation Strategy; 4) The preparation and validation of the Action Plan; and 4) the preparation of the Monitoring and Evaluation System. It also includes four priority recommendations: 1) Strengthening of human resources devoted to cooperation, both in the Cooperation Office (CO) and in Conservation Areas,

²⁶The document is already posted in different websites. As: <http://www.acguanacaste.ac.cr/sinac/PlanEstrategico-SINAC-2010-2015.pdf>. In elaboration of the TOR "Strategic Action Plan for PA Systems" (National Master Plan).

2) Strengthening of non-traditional forms of cooperation, including South-South cooperation, exchanges of experience, or twinning; 3) Strengthening of ownership and institutionalization of cooperation actions; and 4) Strengthening processes for Monitoring and Evaluation of cooperation actions.

The cooperation strategy includes the action plan, and since 2014, it is being implemented. As a next task, institutional and budgetary resources that are necessary for implementation must be ensured. It certainly will require an effective and consistent leadership with the process from the Executive Direction of SINAC and the PAS Management.

- The monitoring and evaluation system was designed to measure the degree of implementation and effectiveness of the SINAC PAS policies in Costa Rica-2011 as well as other SINAC policies. The system has an Excel tool and a user guide, which facilitates the monitoring of policies.

The system allows maintaining a monitoring model capable of generating learning in a friendly manner, and to significantly contribute to the implementation of a key part of the system of knowledge management and policy management of PAS.

This product has not yet been implemented because it was obtained upon completion of the project; and therefore, it requires the path set for institutionalization.

- It has a proposal for Reclassification of the Protected Areas of Costa Rica based on international standards, developed in a participatory manner. In total, four (4) regional workshops were held in this first round, two days per workshop, for approximately 30 people. Regional workshops were held in the following locations: ACT-ACG (Nicoya); ACTO-ACLA-C (Guapiles); ACLAP- ACOPAC-ACOSA (Dominical); Secretariat-ACCVC-ACMIC (INBIO Parque). A national workshop for 50 people was held in San Jose, for validation of the Protected Areas Management Classification System, and of the proposals resulting from the analysis for mapping the categories of 5 pilot sites.

The proposal for the Classification of Protected Areas will strengthen the orientation of PAS management, allowing to establish the types of governance and management model suitable for each of the different protected areas of the country, the preparation of general management plans and other land management plans, such as municipal zoning plans, as well as the appropriate definition of protected areas, which are suitable for sustainable tourism. The study contains: 1) The methodological tool for the classification system generated from consultancy processes; 2) The methodological and pragmatic proposal for the revision and redefinition of current management categories of protected areas in Costa Rica, including management objectives and nomenclature system used; 3) A SINAC proposal, validated internally and externally, for national guidelines for the establishment of a national management classification system for protected areas, to be made official; 4) A proposal for guidelines for a national management classification system for protected areas; and 5) The analysis of the correspondence between each of the management categories for protected areas in Costa Rica, and those management categories covered by the classification system promoted by IUCN and the description of the proposed management categories²⁷ for SINAC PAS in its primary and secondary objectives.

This product was still under review by the Project Management Unit (PMU). It has not been implemented because it was obtained upon completion of the project. Once approved, it requires a route for institutionalization. This must be addressed and timely prepared by the PMU ²⁸as part of the project exit strategy.

²⁷ See Annex 8: Description of the Proposed new categories for SINAC PAS

²⁸ The exit strategy for the project is absent from the "final report" of the Project Management Unit (PMU).

- The procedure and the requirements, as well as the draft regulation for the application of administrative sanctions for unauthorized access to genetic and biochemical elements and resources of biodiversity established by Law No. 7788 biodiversity, were prepared.

When this regulation is made official, the country will have a duly regulated procedure to provide legal certainty to the competent authorities and stakeholders about the process and to resolve any cases of unauthorized access to genetic and biochemical resources, complemented also by relevant provisions of the General Public Administration Law.

This regulation aims at establishing the sanctioning administrative procedure for the application of the provisions of Article 112 of the Law on Biodiversity and to provide other administrative measures in the case of unauthorized access to genetic and biochemical resources, carried out in Costa Rican territory. It also includes the application in the case of payment of access rights granted by the Technical Office pursuant to Article 27 of MINAE Decree No. 31514, called General Standards for Access to Genetic and Biochemical Elements and Resources of Biodiversity.

So far, progress has been made in the preparation of a draft Executive Order, which is under review and pending publication. Once published, the decree will allow solving a major gap around the sanction process regarding cases of unauthorized access to genetic and biochemical resources.

COMPONENT 2. STRENGTHENING OF THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK AND CAPACITY BUILDING

OUTCOME 2: Improvement of the institutional framework and of the capacities of SINAC protected areas for optimal eco-regional planning and effective management.

This result considers as products: improving the structure and the institutional and administrative organization, intra-institutional coordination mechanisms, development of staff profiles, responsibilities and working standards, training program for practitioners and management systems, knowledge evaluation and adaptation, both for the PA system and for the project. The outcomes at the level of this component are classified by this evaluation as Highly Satisfactory. The main achievements of the execution of this component were:²⁹

- Support was provided for the "Structure Institutional Committee", in the analysis and distribution of SINAC human resources, under the new structure approved by CONAC.
- An institutional manual was prepared with the skill profiles and competencies required for each position in the National Conservation Areas System. The proposal responds to the guidelines issued in resolutions DG 304-2009 of October 23, 2009, and DG-133-2010 of April 26, 2010, and issued by the General Civil Service Direction regarding Performance Appraisal. It includes the Competency Dictionary of the National Conservation Areas System.
- Along with the previous manual, a model of performance appraisal with the primary purpose to achieve continuous improvement and development of people serving an

²⁹ The details of the evaluation of achievements of the products are presented in Annex No. 10

institution was proposed, in a clear manner for all. It incorporates appraisal of goals achieved by the officer and the evaluation of competencies required for the job. Both the profile manual and the appraisal model are being considered in the improvement plans for SINAC. However, it requires greater leadership for implementation, and also it can be used to support the SINAC restructuring process, which will bring an improved way of working.

- Supported by the SINAC Strategic Plan, a Specialized Institutional Training Plan for the National Conservation Areas System was designed. This plan is being executed and guides the training of SINAC staff. It has allowed SINAC to: 1) have a trainers platform; 2) allow staff to perceive a high degree of satisfaction with the training received; 3) homologate the execution of the operations staff; 4) manage the staff capabilities in order to achieve better professional performance; 5) strengthen the training area as a platform with integrated vision and budgetary support; 6) improve management of the budget allocated for training; 7) create training regulations; 8) structure supply according to demand; 9) get the equipment for training.

With this plan, the SINAC training area was strengthened by the creation of a platform, which now has comprehensive vision, with budget support and a planning model, including the determination of supply through demand, which is established from the needs of CAs. The plan is being used to guide the SINAC training process. In addition, the plan allows managing staff by competencies and not by activities, which will lead to a higher level of institutional performance. In the case of the formation of park rangers, there is already a platform of trainers and training equipment, representing an investment of \$52,000.00, including guides and course materials. Another successful experience is the one with ACOSA staff, which received training and now develops activities to strengthen CORACs and COLACs. With relation to training, it is important to mention that through the project:

- a) Training was given to 20 CAs and Secretariat officers regarding planning issues related to the construction of indicators and the Balanced Scorecard.
- b) Training was held for members of the Collegiate SINAC Councils; SINAC National Council (CONAC), Regional Councils (CORACs), and Local Councils (COLACs) on legal and technical topics for them to have the basic knowledge and tools to achieve the objectives of Biodiversity Law No. 7788 and the optimal performance of the corresponding functions in each council. This training was implemented in accordance with the principles and requirements set out in the policy document and in the strategic plan of SINAC protected areas.
- c) Training based on "train the trainers", allowed training about 25 officers, who are currently able to continue training the new members of CORAC and COLAC. SINAC staff trained 157 people from CORAC and COLAC. This number can be potentially increased to 80 additional people, since there were still pending workshops for ACG, ACHN, ACLAC, and ACMIC. This action leaves installed capacity in CAs, which include: 1) at least two CA trainers; 2) a module validated for training CORAC and COLAC; 3) educational materials tested in all CAs. This way each CA training team has ownership and is empowered to continue developing all educational units, at greater depth.
- d) Besides the trainer course for CORACs and COLACs, training was also provided to the following staff from 11 CAs and the Executive Secretariat: 1) Administrative and technical skills to 478 SINAC officers; 2) Office 2010 and intermediate and advanced

Excel through three online courses for 250 SINAC officers; 4 Operations courses for 204 park rangers.

- e) The project also facilitated the development of coordination mechanisms, through support for carrying out fora and training activities on this subject. It supported processes that allowed planning and management within SINAC and specifically in the PAS, in addition to the management of the work done with indigenous communities, COLACs and CORACs, and local governments, private groups, and civil society, which supports the management of PAs.
- The proposal of a new organizational structure built in a participatory manner, includes a basic outline of the operation of the organization. It consists of the definition of special and internal relationships that are necessary to generate strategic outcomes. It presents a proposal for basic communication mechanisms and characteristics to facilitate the integration of the System and the basic classification of units that comprise the structure, both for the Executive Secretariat and for the Conservation Areas. This includes the description of units and functions, and most importantly, of the outcomes to be generated. It sets the strategic recommendations for the implementation process of this new organizational structure. This result is especially relevant at a time when the present administration (2014-2017) is considering that the development of a new organizational structure is a priority, for it must solve first and foremost, the need for political support from CONAC.
- Investments totaling \$772,300 ³⁰ were made on Information and Communication Technology (ICT): consultancies, technical support, Intranet (the architecture of information and services portal was designed), Website (including functions for reports, surveys, publications, interaction blog, visualization of ARCGIS, and virtual tour), training on Web features, automation, MASTERLEX and equipment, licenses and software.

The Strategic Plan for Information and Communication Technologies (PICTs) from 2014 to 2019 is based on the institutional framework and the guidelines established in the Strategic Plan of the National Conservation Areas System SINAC-2010-2015. It sets the alignment of information technology with the SINAC institutional framework, its objectives and strategic areas and describes the solutions required for the automation and for obtaining information in digital and printed format for institutional decision making and management modernization of red tape and supporting SINAC institutional technical processes that the Institution should push forward for support in achieving its mission, the promotion of its corporate image, and for strengthening the managerial, administrative, and financial SINAC platform.

In addition, SINAC is strengthened to the extent that investments in information technology are made through a coordinated and concerted effort, aligned with corporate goals and in accordance with the mechanisms and means of work established by SINAC in its strategic institutional plan.

It includes a strategic framework for information technologies in the field of IT so that these strategies are easily executed. As for management systems, knowledge assessment and adaptation for the PA system and for the project, a system of information on cooperation (SIC) was designed and is being executed, which handles all

³⁰ Calculation made by the Coordinator of the PMU that considers the acquisition of electronic equipment of all kinds including GPS, laptops, etc.

the information about the cooperation that SINAC receives, from agreements, as well as from cooperation projects within the system.

- With "Removing Barriers" resources, a consultancy is being developed for the design and identification of requirements for the development of a financial accounting system. Additionally the online collection system was designed. Its implementation will be financed with resources from Tourism Programs in Wild Protected Areas. However, we must consider that this project has presented a low budgetary execution, and it requires appropriate actions from SINAC to achieve products that are complementary to the "Removing Barriers" Project.

COMPONENT 3. INTRODUCTION OF INNOVATIVE AND SUSTAINABLE FINANCIAL MECHANISMS

OUTCOME 3: SINAC has financial sustainability for the effective achievement of its strategic objectives and to provide long-term resources for the management needs of the PA system.

This outcome considered as products: the adoption of a financing strategy, an operating business financing plan, retention of new sources of income for PAs, implementation of financing mechanisms in the PA system, implementation of a financial information system and mechanisms for collecting the PA system online, and a training program for financial managers. Outcomes at the level of this component³¹ are classified by this evaluation as Moderately Unsatisfactory. The main achievements of the execution of this component were:³²

- Despite six products of the "strategy of PA financing" were introduced by the consultant firm, the work was not approved by SINAC and PMU of project. Later, another consultant was hired to complete missing Product 7, but the elaboration of the roadmap for the implementation of the Financial Strategy was pending. Currently, internal work is being done in SINAC, and it is in the process of completion by the Financial Development Unit of SINAC. To date, progress has been made in: 1) Current cost of SINAC, 2) Diagnosis of income; 3) plan for the transportation of equipment and computer costing plan; 4) identification of innovative financing mechanisms; analysis of the different SINAC funds (Wildlife, Forestry, National Parks), and recommendations for improving collection. All the above outcomes have contributed to the process currently developed by the SINAC Financial Development Unit through direct consultation in the CAs, to formulate the strategy with a "bottoms up" approach to have a more realistic proposal. With the support of the Project, the Roadmap for the Implementation of the Financial Strategy is being prepared. The product is scheduled to finalize on March 31.
- The "PA System Business Financing Plan" was prepared. It began with the definition of the structure and the quantification of costs for services provided by SINAC through the General Wildlife Direction (DGVS) and defined an economic instrument to assess the institutional costs of the services. Even now, SINAC has proposed a decree, which adjusts and updates the fee amounts for permits and licenses that are covered by the Wildlife Act. From these outcomes, it could be expected that approximately 242 million colones would be generated

³¹ The details of the evaluation of achievements of the products is presented in Annex No. 10

³² It is important to indicate that several consultancies of this component were running at the time of the evaluation, and its finalization was scheduled for March 31. As an example, we can mention that one of the consultancies on the design and identification of requirements for the financial accounting information system ends on March 31. Due to delays in the approval of the TOR, there was a delay in hiring of more than three months.

per year, which would strengthen the financial capacity of SINAC, and in the future would allow increasing management capacity and implementation of programs for wildlife conservation.

- The Visitation Flow Management tool for SINAC Protected Areas was developed. It allows SINAC to have an instrument and trained staff to enable it to effectively monitor and manage the visitation flow to the PAS.
- In relation to the design³³ and establishment of "a financial information system and mechanisms for collection of PA system online," computers were purchased to reinforce servers and to establish a suitable platform. Explanations from the Chief of Information Technology of SINAC on the IT Strategic Plan 2014 - 2019, security issues, and the great work of normalization of processes, seem very valid. However, the fact that large investments in computers are not yet providing an important service within SINAC, deserves a detailed review of what is happening regarding an independent technical support to deliver a confirmation or alternatives to this process which seems too slow from a management viewpoint.
- The proposal for the design and normalization of institutional processes and subprocesses, as well as priority procedures executed by SINAC, were developed. This proposal has three solutions to take over the two different strategic layers of automation: Financial Layer and Management Layer. For the Financial Layer, the implementation of an ERP is proposed³⁴, which includes the minimum requirements for hardware and software as well as the hours required for implementation. For the Management Layer, a section of development of BI or Business Intelligence, which together with the reports already includes the proposed ERP, will provide the creation of boards, indicators, or customized reports as needed for SINAC management. Finally, the third solution is the development of specific solutions on the existing SharePoint 2010 platform, through the development of forms to automate the different kinds of management processes. The Microsoft Dynamics AX 2012 solution (the platform SINAC has) is proposed. This tool will facilitate employees to be more productive and to increase the value of data, providing employees involved in the organization, continuous access to critical information of the business and its processes in a much more agile manner. In addition, technologies such as SharePoint Server, that SINAC already has, are products that could be benefited and potentiated thanks to their native development.
- A process for systematizing the technical and legal experience in integrated water resource management (IWRM) was developed. It was acquired in the Central Volcanic Range Conservation Area (ACCVC) to share with other developed Conservation Areas. It allowed the participatory adjustment to guides used by the ACCVC, on Integrated Water Resource Management: 1) Guide for classification and location of water springs; 2) Guide for Hiring Companies to Carry out Hydrogeological Studies; 3) Guidelines for the Participation of Officers and Civil Society in Interagency and Cross-functional Commissions; 4) Guidance for identification, regulation, and protection of wetlands; 5) Guidelines for the regulation of pollution generated by industries by discharges into water bodies; 6) Set guidelines for the implementation of the Manual Guide to replicate the ACCVC methodology in Conservation Areas that make up SINAC.

³³The design for online collection is ready. Training is being provided to PAS managers, scheduled to end in March. Implementation is scheduled for July 2015. The implementation process will be slow because the geographical conditions where the PAS are located hinders the required connections.

³⁴Enterprise resource planning (ERP) software is a business administration software that typically integrates various applications that allow monitoring the progress of the institution in financial and management decision making.

The proposal referred to in the six guides employed by the ACCVC facilitates the standardization of a single institutional technical language, as well as a participatory and transparent IWRM. All of the above can strengthen the collection of the water canon that each day becomes more important source of income for SINAC.

In addition, in the future this result has the potential to contribute to the definition of a water resource policy for SINAC.

COMPONENT 4. PILOT INITIATIVES FOR DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO CONSERVATION

OUTCOME 4: SINAC tries different and innovative conservation approaches in conservation areas and PAs.

This result considered as products: the registration and demarcation of the boundaries of the PAS for a representative sample of PA units within the PA system, improving infrastructure and accessibility of 10 PAs; support for community enterprises to manage the PAs; partnerships between a conservation area and the tourism industry; new management approaches and tools for local land use planning with local governments and grassroots organizations and new approaches to ecoregional planning and management of PAs. The outcomes at the level of this component are classified by this evaluation as Highly Satisfactory. The main achievements of the execution of this component were:³⁵

- The Tourism Program in Protected Areas, also executed by SINAC, started with a significant delay in relation to what was originally expected in the PRODOC. It represents a significant amount of co-financing and is now moving forward in the execution actions that support PA management. Its general objective is to strengthen tourism in the national protected areas in Costa Rica, as a tool to strengthen sustainable management, directly contributing to local economic development and to conservation of natural resources. In late November, the project had advanced to outcomes related to the "Removing Barriers" project: 1) defined infrastructure in 9 PAS (from the 10 originally considered); 2) developed tools to improve tourism management in PAS; 3) signed 6 agreements with municipalities and approached the tourism sector (ICT-CANATUR); and 4) formed the national SINAC tourism team.

Coordination and cooperation allowed addressing different common issues. The project took charge of electronic collection and non-essential services, as well as of the purchase of computers for the Tourism Program Project. Both shared the topic of the SINAC website. The project supported the IDB Tourism Program, through short-term hiring (1.5 years) of an architect, so that she could strengthen the processes for hiring and contracting surveillance of infrastructure and record follow-up.

- The ABRE Cadaster is available for Wildlife Protected Areas³⁶ included in Component 2 of the Program Regulation of the Cadaster and Registry. In the Maritime-Terrestrial Zone, the ABRE Cadaster was developed by Conservation Area. 42 protected areas were demarcated, representing 731,655.7 hectares (see Table No. 10). Proposals for modification of the decree were prepared for six protected areas (see Table No. 11).

³⁵ The details of the evaluation of achievements of the products are presented in Annex No. 10.

³⁶ Also, INDER indigenous territories and settlements

For management of the ABRE Cadaster, training was implemented on³⁷ its operation, aimed at Conservation Areas of the National Conservation Areas System. Officers were instructed in the use of the ABRE Cadaster tool, and on the construction, concepts, and technical criteria for setting of boundaries of Protected Areas, conformation of cadastral mosaics, cadastral maps, land tenure, and delimitation of the Maritime Region, mainly. Also, training was given in the creation of the geographic database of the ABRE Cadaster, which will require standardizing of the information and applying the various links between data and on how to generate new information in areas not prioritized by the Executive Unit.

SINAC was transferred to the ABRE database data, which contains the information of land tenure of the occupants of Areas under Special Regimes under the ABRE component. The following was also transferred: 1) The entire support material, as well as manuals, videos, structure, and other documents related to the ABRE database. Though presented in digital format, manuals are attached in analog format; 2) A tool used to update the links in the ABRE Cadaster concerning the ABRE occupants database; 3) Currently, the equipment³⁸ (12 PCs) and ArcGis licenses (11 ArcGis Server licenses), are in the custody of SINAC.

Table N° 10
Protected Areas, delimited per each Conservation Area:

CONSERVATION AREA	NAME OF PROTECTED AREA	AREA (m2)
ACAT	Palo Verde National Park	182971635.16
	Tenorio Volcano National Park	129078189.02
	Lomas de Barbudal Biological Reserve	31070853.59
	Abangares Protected Area	43600186.95
	Arenal-Monte Verde	355847148.83
ACCV	Braulio Carrillo National Park	135711352.27
ACT	Barra Honda National Park	22963415.69
	Diria National Park	55489422.96
	Cabo Blanco Absolute Natural Reserve	30417761.15
	Mata Redonda Lagoon	3721953.50
	Cipanci National Wildlife Refuge	33753915.82
	Culebras Ario National Wildlife Refuge	202983243.62
	Las Baulas National Marine Park	502748388.73
	Curu National Wildlife Refuge	851014.73
	Iguanita National Wildlife Refuge	1201089.68
	Bahia Junquillal National Wildlife Refuge	4378014.44
	Corral de Piedra Palustrine Wetland	23852349.43
	Ostional National Wildlife Refuge	5468249.23
ACLAP	La Amistad Pacifico International Park	2101742889.56
ACG	Santa Rosa National Park	388813886.38
ACOPAC	Manuel Antonio National Park	274371989.80
	Estero Puntarenas Wetland	52411639.25
	Paramo National Wildlife Refuge	5808729.17
	Hermosa Punta Mala National Wildlife Refuge	28102406.82
	Los Robledales National Park	69387514.52
	Los Quetzales National Park	41158072.82
	La Cangreja National Park	27007812.58
	Carara National Park	53292085.43
	Ara Macao Private Refuge	381855.33
	Cerro Vueltas Biological Reserve	7932720.49

³⁷CA staff received training on the operation of the Geographic Information System for the consolidation of legally constituted protected areas prepared by the IDB CASTER project. Training was given by the IDB cadaster, with co-financing resources. CA staff was also trained to improve their institutional performance in the delimitation and legal registration of Protected Areas.

³⁸Conservation Areas were equipped (12 computers with their respective licenses, one for each Conservation Area and one for the Executive Secretariat, and 12 servers with their licenses).

	Los Santos Forest Reserve	613975987.50
	Cerro Nara Protected Area	23281672.86
	El Rodeo Protected Area	25390627.00
	Tivives Protected Area	24894332.01
	Cerro de Escazú Protected Area	71651388.16
ACOSA	Golfo Dulce Forest Reserve	702703397.13
	Ballena National Marine Park	53760091.96
	Corcovado National Park	419256776.28
	Piedras Blancas National Park	141373585.84
	Golfito National Wildlife Refuge	57841126.55
	Terraba Sierpe National Wetland	270383097.45
ACLAC	Gandoca Manzanillo National Wildlife Refuge	95525946.69

Source: Cadaster and National Registry. Final report of Component 2, Cadaster and Registry Regulation Program, Loan Contract, IDB 1284/OC-CR SINAC funds. Costa Rica: Cadaster and National Registry, 2013.

Table N° 11
Modification Propuestas for the Decree on six Protected Areas.

- Cabo Blanco Absolute Natural Reserve
- La Cangreja National Park
- Lomas de Barbudal Biological Reserve
- Mata Redonda National Wildlife Refuge
- Cipanci National Wildlife Refuge
- Diria National Park

Source: Cadaster and National Registry. Final Report of Component 2, Cadaster and Registry Regulation Program, Loan Contract, IDB 1284/OC-CR SINAC funds. Costa Rica: Cadaster and National Registry, 2013.

Feasibility studies were carried out in six PAS (see Table N° 12). These studies allow determining the profitability of tourism investments for the 6 PAS, which must contribute to increasing visitation into the wild protected areas and thus their revenue. According to outcomes of the study and of the financial analysis, investment is recommended for PNC.

Table N° 12
Protected Areas in which feasibility studies took place

- Cahuita National Park (PNC)
- Carara National Park (PNC)
- Ballena National Marine Park (PNMB).
- Santa Rosa National Park (PNSR)
- Tenorio Volcano National Park.
- Santa Rosa National Park (PNSR).

Technical profiles were made for the three biological corridors: 1) From mountain range to mountain range: La Amistad Caribe Conservation Area (2012), 2) Río Naranjo (2012), and 3) Quetzal Tres Colinas (2013). Action strategies are defined by these profiles and are to be carried out by the manager of the corridor (local committee) within a five-year period.

Pilot projects were executed in four CAs: ACCVC, ACTO, ACOSA, and ACT. These projects contributed to achieve the project's outcomes. Ownership of these initiatives at the local level is highly valued. The challenge faced by SINAC is that of incorporating the outcomes obtained in these pilot projects to a knowledge management mechanism and to facilitate its use to improve management of PAS.

- Projects executed in ACT allow: 1) Having the tools with which SINAC will be able to manage non-essential services (NES) in four PAS, 2) Managing more effective public-private partnerships for the conservation of biodiversity; 3) Becoming a model for a successful volunteer service in the PAS; 4) Having the architectural design of the site and construction plans for the development of infrastructure of the National Wildlife Refuge at Camaronal (RNVSC).
- From the gathering of information and analysis of lessons learned from experiences in hiring non-essential services (NES) in four PAS (Barra Honda National Park, Las Baulas National Marine Park, Camaronal National Wildlife Refuge and Cabo Blanco National Refuge), the potential costs of non-essential and potentially non-essential services in the four protected areas within the ACT were classified and defined. The methodology was defined for evaluation of bids and for preparing for different NES in the request for proposal for each PAS, which will enable to process the hiring of NES. The outcomes are extremely important for ACT, so the hiring phase should be a priority in the coming months.
- The systematization of private-private-public experiences allowed knowing and proposing various initiatives that have been done hand in hand with organizations and private sector companies and analyzing the best chance of management cooperation, involving stakeholders from different sectors. There is an inventory of all strategic partnerships that have taken place in the last 10 years in ACT. Experiences from UNAFOR, CATIE, FUNDECODES, SINAC-ACT and Swiss Capital Hotel were systematized. It was possible to define the criteria that strategic partnerships must meet to be effective. We have also proposed certain mechanisms and procedures to facilitate the establishment of strategic partnerships and hence cooperation between different stakeholders. Diagnosis, systematization, and proposal of a voluntary model of operation in wild protected areas of the Tempisque Conservation Area were carried out. A description of the current operation and evaluation of the major barriers to the development of volunteering was conducted. The most successful experiences and lessons learned were identified. 10 success factors of volunteering in PAS were identified, geared mainly to logistics management, work planning, participation in environmental and social interest projects, and sustainability, among others, for defining the levels of success of the actions identified from volunteering. Systematization revealed that this is a valuable experience for the region and SINAC, and it has the potential to be replicated in other protected areas. To do this, it will be necessary to clarify the issue concerning the legal feasibility of this scheme.

By analyzing the lessons and success factors of volunteer experiences in ACT, the proposed model consists of a set of twelve components, covering all operational and logistics aspects for a successful volunteer service, including a database and a log to register and quantify the work. The model includes an action plan in the short, medium, and long terms, which for implementation requires that ACT resolves some legal inconsistencies raised by the Management of Wildlife Areas.

- With the architectural design of the site and infrastructure construction plans approved for the Camaronal National Wildlife Refuge (RNVSC), the description of works and the architectural design were obtained, which considers: preliminary studies, preliminary design, construction plans, and budget, in addition to the environmental impact study and clearances required to conduct the work.

Through the projects executed in ACTo, the project contributed with the following: 1) Systematized knowledge for decision-making and guidance of local management processes; 2) Inputs for participatory management in the Colorado-Tortuguero Biological Corridor; 3) Strengthening of land management participation and intersectorial coordination between local actors and Action Plans for three Local Councils:

- Five experiences of the local management processes developed in the Tortuguero-Colorado Biological Corridor were systematized, with lessons learned that allow decision-making and orientation of similar processes. The experiences analyzed are: 1) Local Management Program in a Biological Corridor; 2) the process of observation of marine turtle nesting in Tortuguero National Park-POT/PNT; 3) the process of Local Management for the development of an Education Program on Organic Agriculture of the Costa Rica North Caribbean Green Classroom Program; and 4) the process for Participatory Local Solid Waste Management - MPRS.
- There is the biophysical and socio-economic information with the use of Geographic Information Systems in the Colorado-Tortuguero Biological Corridor and in a pilot area. Includes recommendations on: 1) Strengthening and consolidation of the biological corridor; 2) Working Commissions, local councils and grassroots committees; and 3) Recommendation on future studies.
- Between 2010 and 2011, three Local Councils of ACTo (COLAC-RNVS-BC, COLAGUA, and COLOPTO) were comprised to be strengthened through the project. Diagnoses and Action Plans were conducted, resulting in Development Programs. The experience was valuable, because progress was made with: 1) involvement of the local councils and the municipalities of Guácimo, Pococí, and Sarapiquí; 2) local councils were strengthened by positioning the issues they were interested in, on the ACTo agenda; 3) intersectorial part of the agenda was consolidated; 4) capacity building was strengthened to facilitate staff participation in the CA.
- Since the beginning of the process, four ACTo officials were involved. They participated in the methodological development, and will be able to provide continuity to the citizen participation processes in the management of the PAS.

With actions undertaken in ACOSA, the project also contributed with: 1) Technical instruments that estimate the capacity of the Térraba-Sierpe National Wetlands and the Land Sector of the Ballena National Marine Park, allowing the establishment of visitation, financial management, and environmental risk policies of PAS; 2) The Eco-regional Master Plan for ACOSA; 3) The draft regulation for Public Use of the Térraba-Sierpe National Wetlands:

- ACOSA has the technical tools to estimate the carrying capacity of the Térraba-Sierpe National Wetland and the Land Sector of the Ballena National Marine Park, to establish visitation, financial management, and environmental risk policies of the PAS.
- With the realization of the ACOSA Eco-regional Master Plan, it was possible to solve the gap caused by the absence of the municipalities of the Cantonal Plans. It guides the management policies of the territory of the cantons of Corredores, Osa, and Golfito, which also included the marine part. It included the diagnosis of PAS, and the management guidelines within the territory. Now, there is a reference to a guideline of compulsory application for all institutions, where criteria and the Geographic Information System are established for the delimitation of use and development of activities in ACOSA, for which it is required to purchase a server.



- There is a regulation for Public Use of the Térraba-Sierpe National Wetland (HTS), which allows regulating the actions allowed, toll collection, restoration of use, and regulation of the speed in the channels. It is pending publication.
- Through a course designed and executed by ACOSA staff, 22 people of the COLAC of the Golfito National Refuge (RNG), of the HTS, and of the Piedras Blancas National Park (PNPB), were trained on biodiversity conservation, legal issues and governance, and association and cooperation. This initiative managed to revitalize and strengthen the participation of the COLAC, incorporating a responsibilities approach into the CORAC, which has raised a number of needs within the CONAC.
- This training is specially important since work is being done on the creation of the COLAC of the Ballena National Marine Park (PNMB) as support for the provision of NES, and the COLAC of Corcovado National Park (PNC), Golfo Dulce Forest Reserve (RFGD), and Caño Island Biological Reserve (RBIC) are about to be comprised.

Through various actions executed by the ACCVC, the project contributed a number of capacities to SINAC: 1) skills of partner organizations were strengthened to improve the management of buffer zones; 2) through the projects implemented in the core zone of the PAS of the ACCVC area, the social capital, the capacity of organizations for participatory management, models for sustainable production, and relations with groups for better governance, integration of women, seniors, youth, and children were strengthened; 3) through participatory construction, a methodology for the systematization of SINAC experiences and production of the Manual for its realization was achieved.

- Training for Strengthening Skills was made to strengthen the management skills of 16 community organizations, in which 80 people from the following organizations participated: Escuela San Ramón, ASADA Sabanita de Alajuela, ASOTURCOSAR, ASADA San Bernardino, Bosque Eterno de los Niños, Liceo Rural de Cedral, Gufas USERE Guayabo, ASADA Santa Cristina de Turrialba, Asociación de Productores de Cacho Negro, ASADA Paso Ancho Norte de Pacayas, Turi-arva, Potrero Cerrado, ASADA San Roque, Asociación Provienda, and Ayuda Adulto Mayor Duchi, Asociación Ecológica La Pastora. A manual was produced for its implementation: "Training for Strengthening Management Skills of 16 Grassroots Organizations". It contains two modules: 1) Module I. Development of social skills for strengthening community organizations (Leadership, Teamwork, Planning, Assertive Communication, Alternative Dispute Resolution, and Negotiation); 2) Module II. Administrative technical management (Word, Excel, and Power Point basics, Preparation of Documents, Accounting)
- With the execution of projects in 16 communities around the PAS core area of the ACCVC, see outcomes of the visited projects in Annex 9 "Outcomes of Project Execution in ACCVC". In short, it can be said that the following accomplishments were achieved: 1) Strengthening the capacity of organizations in areas that support the management of PAS: environmental education, waste management, sustainable production, service quality, water management for communities; 2) sustainable productive activities carried out by local groups in the BZ of the PAS, which are supported by SINAC, are strengthened; 3) the relationship of the SINAC is strengthened with local groups, thus favoring management of buffer zones and promoting governance of PAS from the buffer zones (BZ); 4) Increased approach and relationship with ACCVC/SINAC encourages future support; 5) Integration of women, senior citizens, youth, and children in PAS management actions developed by the CA; and 6) the capital

for integration processes, cooperation or association for the conservation between these organizations and the CAs are strengthened.

- A methodology for the Systematization of the SINAC Experience was developed and produced, together with the manual "Our Footprints through Systematization: Pedagogical notes."

COMPONENT 5. MANAGEMENT MODELS SYSTEM OF THE PA, INCREASED AND REPLICATED

OUTCOME 5: Successful management models of the PA system increased and replicated at systemic level through strategic partnerships with key stakeholders.

This outcome considered as products: local and regional councils in operation and development of the institutional capacity to work with indigenous communities and communities surrounding the PA, mechanisms for quoting and bids, use permits and other opportunities for local entrepreneurs, models for PA management boards, PA system connected by biological corridors operating under innovative models of public-private partnerships, as well as the marketing strategy and communication on values, vulnerabilities and mechanisms for entry into the PAs. The outcomes at the level of this component are classified by this evaluation as Satisfactory. The main achievements of the execution of this component were:³⁹

Non-essential services for the following protected areas were identified and classified: a) Playa Hermosa Wildlife Refuge (RNVSPH); b) Carara National Park (PNC); c) Manuel Antonio National Park ((PNMA, Playa Rey Sector); d) Santa Rosa National Park (PNSR); e) Rincon de la Vieja National Park (PNRV). The profile for the awardee was identified and the request for proposal was prepared.

This tool facilitates that SINAC can analyze the feasibility of starting or continuing a successful contracting process of non-essential services and technical parameters for a better reading on the applicability of the model and assess the application of the NES or as a strategy for management of the PAS. This can strengthen SINAC through the services provision by local organizations preferably, the attention required by visitors and researchers is improved, contributing to reducing the load in the management structure of the PAS, and thus promoting the participation of communities, as well as a stimulus to the local economy, which strengthens the idea that the PAS also entails benefits for local populations. Except in the Playa Hermosa Wildlife Refuge (RNVSPH) and in the Carara National Park (PNC), which presents some limitations, SINAC should prioritize budget to provide continuity to the project outcomes aimed at improving infrastructure where services will be provided to visitors.

A methodology and process within SINAC to agree upon an indigenous agenda, allowed guiding the work with indigenous communities. The attached indigenous agenda was defined in a participatory manner (Caribbean CA, Amistad Pacifico CA). It takes into account 7 thematic areas: 1) Environmental Policy of Indigenous Territories; 2) Use of Natural Resources; 3) Permanent Communications Mechanism; 4) Awareness and training; 5) Deterioration of Soil and Water Resources; 6) Land Tenure; and 7) Tourism. Pilot projects were executed in indigenous territories located in the buffer area of PILA, in La Amistad Caribe Pacifico Conservation Area (ACLA-P), in the communities of Cabagra, Salitre, Ujarrás, and in the La Amistad Caribe Conservation Area (ACLA-C) in Talamanca Bribri and Talamanca Cabecar.

³⁹ The details of the evaluation of achievements of the products are presented in Annex No. 10

In ACLAP, the work with indigenous populations is displayed as part of the implementation of the La Amistad International Park (PILA). An approach of SINAC as an ally of the indigenous populations has been facilitated. The work included hiring promoters, who developed an important role for the achievement of outcomes. The CA has strengthened its capacity to work with indigenous territories through direct participation of eight CA officers, establishing trust relationships, and forms of communication and coordination. Communities perceive SINAC as a facilitator, coordinator, and an entity of accompaniment and support for land management.

- 10 demonstration projects were developed with the integration of the participation of population: 3 in Salitre, 3 in Ujarrás, and 4 in Cabagra, in four priority areas: 1) Food security; 2) Biodigestors; 3) Integral Farms; 4) Environmental education and training for the control of forest fires, felling, and hunting.
- 2,500 students have been trained on environmental education, and environmental festivals are held; 9000 trees have been planted for the protection of water sources; there was an exchange with communities of Talamanca, comprising a team for environmental monitoring.
- Work was conducted towards the conservation of ancestral seeds and sustainable agricultural production systems. The installation of a biodigestor is pending.
- There is a perception that the incidence of fires has been reduced due to fire management, which in previous years was a big problem in the indigenous communities of the Pacific side of the PILA buffer zone. After accompaniment by SINAC and training of 45 members of the indigenous community, the activation of the fire commission within the territory, placement of fixed observation posts, construction of firewalls, carrying out joint patrols, development of a community fire control plan, granting of equipment, and operation of 20 brigades (8 furnished) for fire control and contribution of the Instituto Mixto de Ayuda Social for the payment of stipends to forest firefighters.
- There has also been progress in ecological monitoring within these territories. There is already a methodology, and the indigenous staff is already trained to carry it out.
- In ACLAP, through the indigenous committee, representation is achieved in the CORAC and COLAC, which are the bodies to strengthen participatory management in CAs. With the project actions, the conformation of an indigenous COLAC linked to PILA is favored.
- The staff already has a methodology to work in indigenous communities. Now, experiences are systematized so that learning can be disseminated to other CAs and as a basis for developing policies aimed at indigenous territories and decision-making, especially at the regional and local levels.

In ACLAP-C, it is perceived that the actions of SINAC and ADI in the Bribri and Cabecar territories have had very positive outcomes in relation to coordination and respectful and permanent negotiation and in training processes in environmental issues for the local population, especially for young resource keepers. The main actions relate to:

- The publication of the Management Plan of the La Amistad Talamanca International Park.

- The conformation of the Local Council with representatives from SINAC, local government, and Bribri and Cabecar communities. This instrument has allowed an ongoing dialogue through the representatives of the boards.
- Support to productive economic activities and support to the forest entrepreneurship with the participation of 23 fine carpenters and craftsmen.
- Training and supplying equipment to rangers
- Training of tour guides.
- With support from the Association of the Talamanca Biological Corridor, a program of environmental education in schools in the two indigenous communities was developed.

There is a Training Plan for Regional Councils and an agreement with the Universidad Estatal a Distancia (UNED), to develop it. Fora were held to support CORAC and COLAC, and training was provided to members of the Collegiate SINAC Councils; National Council (CONAC), Regional Councils (CORACs), and Local Councils (COLACs) on legal and technical issues necessary to have the basic knowledge and tools to achieve the objectives of Biodiversity Law No. 7788 and the optimal performance of the corresponding functions in each council. This training was implemented in accordance with the principles and requirements set out in the policy document and in the strategic plan of SINAC protected areas.

Training based on "train the trainers", allowed training about 25 officers, who are currently able to continue training the new members of the CORAC and COLAC.

SINAC staff trained 157 people from CORAC and COLAC. This number can be potentially increased to 80 additional people, since there were still pending workshops for ACG, ACHN, ACLAC, and ACMIC.

This action leaves installed capacity in CAs, which include: 1) at least two CA trainers; 2) a module validated for training CORAC and COLAC; 3) with educational materials tested in all CAs. This way each CA training team has ownership and is empowered to continue developing all educational units, at greater depth.

In addition to the training, three CORAC meetings were held between 2012 and 2014, to share experiences and discuss issues on governance of the PA and the role of CORACs and COLACs.

Technical profiles of three biological corridors were made: 1) La Amistad Caribe Conservation Area, 2) Río Naranjo, and 3) Quetzal Tres Colinas. Through these profiles, action strategies that must be performed by the corridor managers (local committee) over a five-year period and fora were conducted in support of Biological Corridors. The coordination of the Biological Corridors Program was strengthened with computer equipment and training.

The potential of MSMEs and identification of sustainable production initiatives in biological corridors is known. Some general guidelines are proposed for local councils and the National Network of Biological Corridors in relation to the possible actions to stimulate sustainable economic development in communities located within these biological corridors, so that it can promote the alignment of the various productive projects with environmental and conservation objectives of these initiatives. Identifies viable productive activities in the biological corridors and networks to determine potential productive organizations in these areas.

The marketing and communication strategy was developed and validated in a participatory manner. This represents an instrument that will allow in the future the strengthening of financial sustainability and improved communication inside and outside the SINAC structure. The SINAC

Brand Book was published. The Marketing and Communication office was strengthened with equipment.

2.3.14 Project Effectiveness

The initial outcomes were clearly unsatisfactory up to the change in Coordination in the PMU, as it had only reached just over 20% of execution in more than three years from the approval of the Project. Later, in just over two years, more than three quarters of the project were executed, with a higher cost of administration and monitoring close to 10%.

Therefore, as noted in section 2.3.10 on the budget execution analysis, the situation is radically different. On average, the level of effectiveness is described as **Satisfactory**.

2.3.15 Project Effectiveness.

Products achieved (see point 2.3.13 Outcomes by Component) clearly contribute to achieving the overall objective. The project Effectiveness analyzed at the end-of the execution has a satisfactory result. According to analysis (see Annex 10) of the outcomes obtained with respect to the statement of the LFM, the project has successfully complied the Purpose level and 4 of the 5 expected outcomes. Only in Result 2, the rating was Moderately Satisfactory mainly because the Integrated Knowledge Management System was not achieved. According to the analysis of the achievements of the Project on the basis of product compliance (see Annex 11), the weighted rating of the five outcomes is satisfactory. The following table summarizes the outcomes of the evaluation:

Table N° 13
Summary of the Analysis of the Achievement of Outcomes

Level of outcomes	Rating
Outcome 1: The legal and political framework of Costa Rica has been renovated and improved to ensure long-term effective management and financial and ecological sustainability of the PA system	Highly Satisfactory
Outcome 2: Improvement of the institutional framework and of the capacities of SINAC protected areas for optimal eco-regional planning and effective management.	Moderately Satisfactory
Outcome 3: SINAC has the financial sustainability for the effective achievement of its strategic objectives and to provide long-term resources for the management needs of the PA system.	Moderately Unsatisfactory
Outcome 4: SINAC tries different and innovative conservation approaches in conservation areas and PAs.	Highly Satisfactory
Outcome 5: Successful management models of the PA system increased and replicated at systemic level through strategic partnerships with key stakeholders.	Satisfactory
Weighted rating of the 5 outcomes	Satisfactory

Source: Prepared internally, see details in Annex 10.

SINAC now has various instruments that if adequately managed and institutionalized, in the medium term will have a high impact and will effectively meet the goal of contributing to remove the 5 big barriers diagnosed in the Project.

The achievement of the products was not possible within the expected time due to delays mentioned in the Mid-term Review and to the barriers within SINAC itself. They followed the logical sequence in which they were designed. The products were obtained with a high standard of quality and are relevant to the needs of SINAC to strengthen the management of PAS.

Products related to knowledge management and IT system design for collections in the PA system were not achieved and products remain to be developed. However, it is important to mention that the strengthening of ICTs that the PRODOC had not considered was made possible through this project. Thus, products reached satisfactorily contribute with the expected outcomes within the project period, and it is expected to give them continuity in the medium term to effectively remove the barriers.

First, strategic products such as PAS policy and the SINAC strategic plan had to be achieved. This fact affected the pace of the project execution, and the time to achieve the products according to the design depended on a linked form of these macro instruments. However, if clarification is due, we must say that this was a necessary evil so that the products were oriented towards a more realistic and updated situation regarding SINAC needs.

There is a high chance of achieving the specific objectives of the project, and this will require developing an action plan, which must be followed by the technical commission formed during the execution of the project. This will require the wholehearted support of CONAC and of the Executive Secretariat.

2.3.16 Project efficiency.

The efficiency of the project has proven to be **Satisfactory**. Even though in the first three years the project showed very poor outcomes, the level of execution and achievement of products of unquestionable benefit to SINAC in the last two years, deserve to be highlighted. The importance of product development in the CA is undeniable and there remains only the question whether SINAC may take charge to move forward and address the internal efficiency issues, the ability to design and ensure long-term financial strategy, the promotion of some important laws, and the provision of continuity to the cultural change process in which it is immersed. All this implies overcoming institutional image problems before the government and within the Costa Rican community that can play against their change processes.

With the foregoing and under the framework of a challenge that by far exceeded the capacity of a five-year project, we estimate that the efficiency of the Project has been satisfactory and is expected to boost the consolidation of the process of change proposed by the "Removing Barriers" Project.

2.3.17 Catalytic effect

The catalytic effect of the project is potentially very high. Measures to favor the public wellbeing were taken through the development of demonstration sites through the "demonstration projects". There was a successful spreading of information through the systematization of experiences and training in various areas to strengthen the staff's skills and abilities, CORACs and COLACs. The pilot project and demonstration projects have a high potential for replication at the national or international level. Instruments were created that allow SINAC a better development of actions. As an example of some of them, the following may be mentioned: strengthening of the budget plan developing process, legal reform proposals for legalization of PAs, sanctions framework of unauthorized use of biodiversity resources, financial instruments that improve financial sustainability through the water canon, and updating of the entrance fee for PAs, and a platform that was created for the implementation of training, among others. Approaches and working methodologies developed by the project were built in a participatory way. These are used or have a high potential to be used at a national scale (strategic products), and at the regional level (indigenous territories, CORACs, COLACs). Their potential at national level is high because they have been widely accepted and are institutionalized.

2.3.18 Crosscutting nature

For UNDP, the project was included in the portfolio of environmental projects that aim at consolidating the contribution of Costa Rica to the global environment public assets, and also to CPAP, environment, energy and risk management, institutional strengthening and capacity building of the relevant stakeholders, while promoting management, conservation, and sustainable and equitable use of the natural heritage.

It was linked to the "United Nations Development Assistance Framework" (UNDAF, 2007), on its environmental section on the thematic area "economic and socio-cultural practices in priority groups, in favor of environmental sustainability."

Currently, it is linked to the area on "Environmental sustainability and risk management" of UNDAF and to the 2013-2017 Action Plan, the national priority is defined as: "National Priority: To empower the country as a global environmental leader, that articulates harmoniously the safeguarding of the environmental heritage with economic growth. To systematically promote carbon neutrality, use of clean energy and in general, the rational use of resources, commitment to the territorial system that effectively incorporates the environmental variable, and the protection of vulnerable ecosystems and water resources "

Human rights, gender equality, and social inclusion were not considered from the beginning. However, they were considered in the implementation and execution phases.

2.3.19 Sustainability ⁴⁰

Sustainability is assessed as Likely (L). There is a good level of ownership in different SINAC managers regarding the outcomes and benefits of the project. SINAC managers are aware of the outcomes of the project; several of these have been institutionalized through its incorporation in the structure, policies, and strategic processes. At the level of the Executive Direction of SINAC, we have interest in the outcome in order to obtain inputs to guide the reforms that the present administration has set. At CAs and at the direction level of participant subregional offices, there was a high level of commitment and effectiveness during the execution and with relation to the level of ownership, there is special interest in instruments related to ecoregional planning, local administration, non-essential services, volunteer services, and infrastructure and governance of the PAS. As for the managers involved, these had a key role achieving strategic outcomes. Currently, this essential function for the maintenance of outcomes is maintained.

For the many outcomes at the end of project, the prospect of becoming institutionalized is high. Also, a responsibility is perceived for officers to provide an institutional response to the diffusion beyond the beneficiaries or the project. There is great institutional capacity at SINAC to address challenges, which allows expecting that the flow of benefits once the project is completed will be integrated. The products generated by the project are integrated in the institutional structure, and for each one of them, there is a team or a responsible person who can track this down until the final outcomes are achieved. Depending on the nature or subject that the product is about, the person or team with the necessary skills in that subject were assigned. For this, SINAC has adequate and trained staff with capacity to assume the technical, financial, and managerial aspects of the products. There is also enough equipment and a technological platform.

⁴⁰Ratings on sustainability follow GEF guidelines for Mid-term Reviews, which are: Likely (L) negligible risks to sustainability, with key outcomes expected to continue into the foreseeable future; Moderately Likely (ML) moderate risks, but expectations that at least some outcomes will be sustained; Moderately Unlikely (MU) substantial risk that key outcomes will not carry on after project closure, although some outputs and activities should carry on; Unlikely (UL) severe risk that project outcomes as well as key outputs will not be sustained.

Technology, knowledge, tools, and methodologies introduced were adapted or are in the process of incorporation to the institutional context and can enhance the capabilities of adaptation within SINAC staff. The products achieved increased existing knowledge. They correspond to the needs of SINAC and contribute positively to develop the functions pertaining to its area of competence.

The project contributes to the sustainable management of natural resources with regard to the maintenance and/or regeneration of the natural resource base through a PA system that effectively manages with few resources to preserve a representative sample of the biodiversity of Costa Rica.

Following is the evaluation of risk for financial, environmental, institutional, and governance resources and socio-political aspects:

Financial Resources: The risk to sustainability is rated as negligible. SINAC has sources for financial resources to manage the required actions to implement the tools, mechanisms, and methodologies achieved by the project. This is done through the national budget, which for 2015 is about 35 billion colones and with what can be provided by other initiatives such as "Costa Rica por Siempre" IDB-Tourism, "Barreritas", and projects that are managed by the international cooperation office, which was strengthened through the computer system for tracking the project. On the other hand, even though the product on the financial strategy was not achieved in the period analyzed, it is expected that SINAC resources and remnants of the project are finalized and mark a clear direction to improve the financial sustainability of the system.

Socio-Political: The risk to sustainability is rated as negligible. The framework of national environmental policies and political interest at MINAET and SINAC remains stable to promote the strengthening of SINAC and PAs.

Technologies and tools derived favor a framework of adaptation and innovation opportunities for participatory management models which in turn favor the governance of the PAS. However, recommendation is to improve the external institutional image of SINAC through a communications plan as well as the ability to establish better ties and coordination with MINAE and other state institutions involved.

Institutional and governance: The risk to sustainability is rated as negligible. With the change of government, different stakeholders perceive an atmosphere of uncertainty at SINAC. However, it is important to note that the authorities and managers have maintained or increased their commitment to achieving the proposed changes from the outputs achieved by the project. The SINAC institutional framework was strengthened. Technologies and tools derived favor a framework of adaptation and innovation opportunities for participatory management models which in turn favor the governance of the PAS. Internally and externally of SINAC, there is uncertainty on the policies for SINAC by this government. It is a matter of internal work from SINAC Director so that communication goes to officers about the goals of the new administration and to provide leadership to achieve clear signs of governance. This last point is the weakest and critical in the short term, for sustainability and for sustainability of the effects and impacts of the Project.

Environmental: The risk to sustainability is rated as negligible. According to the risk evaluation made to each of the following factors:

- **Biodiversity conservation programs and actions implemented.** The risk is negligible, considering that the project has political support at the level of SINAC Executive Direction. In other instances of the central and regional level, there has been a very high sense of ownership.
- **Official approval of the strategic, legal, and regulatory framework.** The risk is negligible because the strategic products have been institutionalized, and the various products obtained upon completion of the project are on the right track to become institutionalized.
- **Moderate economic growth and social stability.** The risk is negligible. The country has increased tourism and visitation to the PAS and also the potential offered by the application of experiences in the management of the core areas for the implementation of socio-productive projects targeted by objectives with the PAS.
- **Interest of Stakeholders.** There is an interest of stakeholders for participating in actions involving maintenance of the project outcomes. In this case the risk is negligible.
- **Threats to protected areas.** No threats are identified for CAs or protected areas selected for the three pilot projects. In relation to this issue, risk remains negligible.
- **SINAC.** The project execution by SINAC greatly exceeded gaps in coordination and leadership of the executive direction, identified in the Mid-term Review. In addition, ownership level in the central, regional, and local levels is important. Thus, level of risk is assessed as negligible.
- **SINAC-IDB Tourism Program.** It is running with a low level of execution, which barely reaches 6%, so that the Comptroller General of the Republic issued a series of provisions to SINAC. In this case the risk is serious, until the level of subexecution is corrected. In this regard, it should be noted that some changes were requested in the Project Implementation Unit, and it is already moving forward in the execution.
- We cannot fail to mention the initiative "Costa Rica por Siempre", which seeks to "consolidate a system of land and marine protected areas that is ecologically representative and effectively managed." This may represent the consolidation of a permanent source of funding of about US\$56 million.

2.3.20 Project Performance Rating

Three complementary instruments will deliver the rating level of the Project performance:

a) Achievements of the Project based on compliance indicators of Project Objectives regarding Purpose and outcomes.

Objectives of the LFM were contrasted with the achievements for each of the indicators identified. For each of the indicators and targets, following is an outline of the most important achievements made during the course of the Project, and a judgment is issued per achievement after analyzing assumptions and targets set for each indicator. The detail is in Annex 10.

A summary of this work can be found in Table No. 14, where we can see that the Project has successfully met the purpose and 4 of the 5 expected outcomes. Only in Outcome 2, the rating was Moderately Satisfactory mainly because the Integrated Knowledge Management System was not achieved, and there is only important experience systematization, but the system as such is at a very early stage of progress.

b) Performance rating according to the criteria requested by GEF and UNDP Manual.

Table 15 shows the rating obtained from the analysis of the various approaches that have been discussed in Point 2.3 of this report relating to efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, etc. Each point is assessed according to the criteria of the UNDP Evaluation Manual.

Table N° 14
Summary of Judgments Issued per Objective

Objective of the project	Indicator	Indicator Rating	Global Objective Rating	Summary of Evaluation Judgment
Purpose (objective): To eliminate the major systemic and institutional barriers to sustainability of the system of protected areas of Costa Rica.	1. Area (in hectares) of protected areas that are legally incorporated into the PA system of SINAC.	S (Satisfactory)	S (Satisfactory)	During the execution period, 731,655 ha were demarcated and proposals for decree modification were made for 6 ASP. Operational level and efficient management of protected areas increased. The ACOSA Ecoregional Master Plan was prepared as a reference for other CAs to advance in the development of their own plans. The Ecoregional approach suggested by Guas II (see "Ecoregional Focus in PRODOC, p. 4). Various strategic tools were incorporated, already institutionalized and implemented: 1) PAS policy; 2) SINAC Strategic Plan, and 3) the Master Plan. Also, the product rating of the PAS is under review.
	2. SINAC efficient operating and management level	HS (Highly Satisfactory)		
	3. Adoption of instruments that allow the incorporation of an eco-regional approach in planning the PA system, particularly through the existing legal framework provided by the legal framework on environment, the Biodiversity Law, the National Parks Act, and the Forestry Act.	MS (Moderately Satisfactory)		
OUTCOME 1: The legal and political framework of Costa Rica has been renovated and improved to ensure long-term effective management and financial and ecological sustainability of the PA system	1. Degree of adoption of PA by the national political system in order to: 1) define the PA system; 2) become the basis on the regional eco approach of GRUAS II; 3) define a new marine and coastal areas sub-system, and 4) define how to integrate ecosystem functions in the territorial planning of Costa Rica.	S (Satisfactory)	HS (Highly Satisfactory)	SINAC has a national policy for the PA system, the identification of priorities reclassification and concrete proposals based on GRUAS II, the SINAC strategic plan, with its action plan of the PA system in the short term, and advanced experiences for the preparation of the action plan of the PA system in the long term (15 years). These outcomes have contributed to renovate and improve the legal and political framework of Costa Rica to ensure long-term effective management and financial and ecological sustainability of the PA system (PAS).

Objective of the project	Indicator	Indicator Rating	Global Objective Rating	Summary of Evaluation Judgment
	2. Degree of adoption of the priority sites for reclassification and demarcation to achieve 10% coverage of each type of ecosystem/vegetation to ensure the conservation of the biodiversity of ecosystems of global importance.	S (Satisfactory)		
	3. Degree of preparation and implementation of SINAC strategic planning tools, with the support of the project (SINAC strategic plan and action plan of the corresponding PA system).	S (Satisfactory)		
OUTCOME 2: Improvement of the institutional framework and of the capacities of SINAC protected areas for optimal ecoregional planning and effective management.	1. Degree of redesign of institutional SINAC staff profiles at central and regional levels pursuant to the new SINAC strategic plan and the Action Plan of the PA system.	S (Satisfactory)	MS (Moderately Satisfactory)	SINAC has policy instruments for a new organizational structure and the redesign of staff profiles requires the approval of MIDEPLAN for implementation. However, the Integrated Knowledge Management System does not exist. Despite of this, there is the foundation and commitment in the Master Plan of PAS to assume it.
	2. Degree of implementation of the Knowledge Management Integrated System (KMIS) and level of integration of financial, ecological, and sustainable tourism data.	MU (Moderately Unsatisfactory)		

Objective of the project	Indicator	Indicator Rating	Global Objective Rating	Summary of Evaluation Judgment
OUTCOME 3: SINAC has the financial sustainability for the effective achievement of its strategic objectives and to provide long-term resources for the management needs of the PA system.	1. An optimal fee policy for visitors, which introduced a sliding scale for admission fees to parks with differentiated prices for domestic and foreign visitors.	HS (Highly Satisfactory)	MU (Moderately Unsatisfactory)	The impact study on the changes in the fee system is done, but the CAs need to take advantage of the various mechanisms that the law allows them to directly improve the resources available to each.
	2. Percentage increase in the financial score card of UNDP-GEF (see below).	MS (Moderately Satisfactory)		
OUTCOME 4: SINAC tries different and innovative conservation approaches in conservation areas and PAs.	1. Amount of unresolved land tenure conflicts within the PA system.	S (Satisfactory)	HS (Highly Satisfactory)	With the support of ABRE Cadaster System, computer equipment, and trained SINAC staff, SINAC has the ABRE Cadaster system, which will contribute to the reduction of conflicts with owners in and out of the PAS; governance can be improved for the 42 PAS and specific plans can be developed for it. After correcting the execution level of IDB Tourism Program, the service to tourists can be improved through improvements to infrastructure and accessibility of PAs; as well as the optimization of the Management of Visitation Flows. The systematization of successful NES experiences in ACT, allow potentiating the model to other CAs. For four PAS and more than 20 non-essential services, there are requests for proposals being still to be developed and implemented. More than 10 collaboration agreements have been achieved, where SINAC developed official co-management coordination with local groups in combating illegal felling and forest fires, hunting control, guided tourism, and ecological monitoring. Through the project, support was provided to the establishment of collaborative management plans, mainly through pilot projects at Tempiques, Cordillera and Tortuguero, and specific indigenous territories like Salitre, Cabagra, and Ujarras (Pacific region) and La Amistad Ceribe Conservation Area.
	2. Level of service provided to tourists, condition of infrastructure and accessibility to the 10 most visited PAS of the PA system.	S (Satisfactory)		
	3. A number of public-private concession agreements for provision of non-essential services in the pilot PA and buffer zones in priority areas of conservation of the biodiversity, developed and running.	S (Satisfactory)		
	4. A number of co-management agreements operating effectively and greater capacities of PA staff to get involved and to work with local stakeholders such as local businesses, municipalities, and indigenous organizations.	S (Satisfactory)		

Objective of the project	Indicator	Indicator Rating	Global Objective Rating	Summary of Evaluation Judgment
OUTCOME 5: Successful management models of the PA system increased and replicated at systemic level through strategic partnerships with key stakeholders.	1. Consultation and coordination have been carried out with multiple stakeholders through agencies of the PA system in the 11 conservation areas (CA).	S (Satisfactory)	S (Satisfactory)	Operating and with capacities: 24 Local Councils (COLAC) and 11 CORAC. SINAC is strengthened to facilitate the process of conformation and capacity building of COLACs. There is a model to carry out the concession for public-private rendering of non-essential services in PAs. There is an approval for the hiring procedure for non-essential services, which allows for its expansion throughout the PA system. In addition, a draft decree has been prepared and is pending approval. There are innovative financing instruments that allow the strengthening and greater effectiveness of PA management through financial resources, collaborative arrangements, human resources, training, and assistance. Furthermore, there is a methodology to work in indigenous communities and the definition of technical profiles of three biological corridors. These three aspects also allow the development of a model of public-private partnerships established between municipalities and ecotourism operators.
	2. Development of a model for public-private agreements for the provision of non-essential services and for the degree of expansion across the PA system in priority areas for biodiversity conservation.	S (Satisfactory)		
	3. Development of a model of public-private partnerships established between municipalities and ecotourism operators to develop and to maintain biological corridors, and degree up to which it is escalated across the PA system in priority areas for biodiversity conservation.	S (Satisfactory)		

The level of performance of Project is Satisfactory (S). The overall quality of the implementation /execution of the project and the overall quality of the outcomes of the project had a Satisfactory (S) rating. The risks to sustainability are moderately unlikely; for further details see the following table:

Table N° 15
Project Performance Rating

	Mid-term Review Rating	Final Evaluation⁴¹ Rating	Comments
Monitoring and Evaluation			
<i>The overall quality of M & E</i>	MS	MS	While M & E allowed making decisions to favor good operational management, the project shelved strategic issues.
<i>"Outline/design M & E at the beginning of the project"</i>	U	U	At the level of the PMU, it lacked a formal instrument. An M & E Plan as such was not defined since the beginning. The instrument that was created for SINAC lacked the information to carry out an M & E of what was happening in the Project.
<i>"Implementation of the M & E Plan"</i>	MS	S	An M & E specialist participated in the project, who also was in charge of the coordination of functions. In addition, the PMU coordinator had great knowledge on this regard. However, despite not having a developed and elaborated instrument in accordance with the provisions of the project and the recommendations of the Mid-term Review, management of the operation was very good. During the implementation phase, monitoring is handled by means of an Excel spreadsheet. This system, while simple, has proven efficient as a support tool for PMU management. It featured UNDP and GEF tools: Atlas, PIR, CDR There are no PMU semi-annual reports. UNDP procedures were rigorously maintained. The Mid-term Review also provided inputs for decision-making aimed at improving project management decisions.

⁴¹Rating will be awarded according to the following scale:

- Highly Satisfactory (HS):** The project had no shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness, or efficiency.
- Satisfactory (S):** The project had minor shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness, or efficiency.
- Moderately Satisfactory (MS):** The project had moderate shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness, or efficiency.
- Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU):** The project had significant shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency.
- Unsatisfactory (U):** The project had major shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency.
- Highly Unsatisfactory (HU):** The project had serious shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency.

			It is estimated as being at negligible risk so that (L) SINAC cannot act against threats in protected areas in defense of sustainability of PAS.
<i>Financial resources</i>	ML	L	SINAC has the resources to manage outcomes and substantially improve its financial capacity. This task should definitely be approached as a high priority so as to overcome economic suffocation often caused by CAs. Therefore, it is classified as negligible risk (L).
<i>Socio-political</i>	ML	L	There are national environmental policies and greater political interest in the various institutions involved, thus favoring the governance of PAS. Therefore, it is classified as negligible risk (L).
<i>Institutional framework and governance</i>	ML	L	SINAC institutional framework was strengthened. Acquired tools and technologies strengthen governance but require an internal maturation process. Hence, it is classified as negligible risk (L).
<i>Environmental Risks</i>	HU	L	There are no environmental risks that may affect the outcomes.
<i>Overall outcomes of the project</i>	MU	L	Unless the Executive Direction of SINAC, CONAC and the directions of the CAs do not take the lead to provide continuity, no factors that could jeopardize the outcomes of the project are identified, so it is classified as a negligible risk (L)

Source: Prepared internally

3. Conclusions

3.1. Design

- The "Theory of Change" project does not clearly pose the way in which the five identified barriers would be removed through the big 5 outcomes. The projections were unrealistic, the working methodology presented difficulty of application.
- The management model provided for in the design of the project did not have sufficient capacity to address the issues adequately with the institutional framework of SINAC.
- A monitoring and evaluation plan of the achievement of the impact indicators at the outcome level was not defined. Despite this, the unit did a good tracking of outcome indicators. However, the functions overload of the person in charge of monitoring issues concerning the administration of the project and of supporting the coordination, limited the capacity of the PMU to provide adequate follow up to the project outcomes.
- The project design did not consider the institutional context of SINAC at the end of the project in order to provide measures for the sustainability of the outcomes, in other words, to explain in a project as complex as this one, how important it was to have contemplated the project exit strategy as a task.
- The purpose of the project as it was written was not consistent with the context that existed at the time of preparation of the PRODOC. Most of the assumptions were realistic and consistent; others were not relevant or real. However, some relevant aspects for the project were not considered. Some were fully met, while others were only partially met.
- Since there were context changes, problems with the assumptions, and even new needs and priorities, the logical thing to do would have been to analyze the original LFM and propose the necessary changes. The LFM of any project can be adjusted and adapted according to the methodological criteria of GEF. However, in this project, despite the problems, none of the parties ever suggested a change, and as a result, LFM kept the original design until the completion date.
- Some of the indicators have problems of relevance, definition, and estimation, so tracking the outcomes included in the LFM and the strategy of the project was difficult.
- The design of the project involved many environmental prospection elements, and also, too many elements concerning the protection of protected areas and mechanisms to facilitate the process of implementation of public policies were involved. While it is true that at the time of this project it was one of the highest in terms of the amount contributed by GEF, it also considered a very high counterpart. The complexity of the project tested not only the management ability of SINAC, but also of the State of Costa Rica, and of UNDP itself as Project administrator. All the parties involved contributed to the current outcomes, especially to the frustration of failing to reach better standards, and they all require observing with attention its history, especially to understand that this process does not end today with the closing of the project, but rather that it is necessary to take measures so that the future impact of changes and emerging products actually allows achieving the expected accomplishments. Failure to act in a positive way will cause that in a few years all progress may be lost.
- The margin of adaptability in a project like "Removing Barriers" was limited because at first much time was lost in management problems and in the second period, PMU focused on correcting execution requirements, the operation was amended, and there were not many opportunities. Nevertheless, strengthening of ICTs and of the Cooperation Unit was achieved; these areas were not contemplated in the original design, with which SINAC capabilities were increased.

3.2. Project management

- The UNDP Program Officer for the Project, just as outlined in the Mid-term Review, did not facilitate the process and even helped generating complex problems and obstacles during implementation. Before the Mid-term Review, a change was made in the UNDP counterparty. A new Program Officer was appointed who shall remain until the present day as manager in charge of the project. This Program Officer acted very pragmatically, promoting activities and helping the PMU push consultancies forward. In spite of this, care was not exerted in improving relations with the Direction of SINAC, especially represented by its focal points. TAC was not utilized to strengthen ties with SINAC representatives. It is clear, however, that this UNDP officer established a good communication with the PMU direction, especially since 2012, and that largely allowed for the big jump in the execution of activities in the past two years.
- Undoubtedly, projects of the scale of "Removing Barriers" should draw attention to the fact that there is a technical, a managerial, and a political component for articulation between the parties. In particular, UNDP has not worked well on this political component, which is significant, especially in a project that involves strengthening of a public institution as important as SINAC. This weakness has led to mutual distrust not only between SINAC direction and UNDP, but also between MINAE and UNDP. These three actors need each other and are relevant not only to the objectives proposed in the "Removing Barriers" Project but also to improve the environmental public policy in Costa Rica. A strategic long-term partnership is required; hence, UNDP should review its management performance.
- The project had a slow process of design between 2004 and 2008, a slow process of execution up to the Mid-term Review in 2012, and then there was an accelerated execution between the second half of 2012 and January 2015.
- The slow design process and the subsequent slow start-up, caused focal points within SINAC to provide less importance to the Project, feeling that it was foreign to the progress of SINAC.
- The proposal for having TAC strategically guiding the PMU was partially achieved since late 2012 and in 2013.
- It was only from mid 2012 to mid-2014 that the SINAC Direction owned and properly directed the project to strengthen the institution in all its capacities. To date, there is still no clarity about the direction that should be taken to provide continuity and to build upon the project contributions. There is no exit strategy.

3.3. Outcomes

- The project at this level would have an overall rating of **Satisfactory (S)**, i.e. the explicit indicators meeting the expected outcomes of the project were satisfied with minor deficiencies. This judgment is taken into account by making the correction in the LFM that several of the indicators were not SMART and that several of the assumptions and targets were unrealistic for this project. Then, at the time of the final evaluation outcomes of various consultancies were still being obtained, which could improve the overall rating.
- The diagnosis made in the PRODOC was very adequate, relevant, and is still very valid regarding:
 - The threats to biodiversity in the protected areas system
 - The need for consolidation of the protected areas system in Costa Rica
 - The urgency to overcome the five major barriers identified in SINAC:

1. The complex and incomplete current legal and regulatory framework of Costa Rica limits the operational capacity of SINAC
 2. The inadequate financing system of protected areas and the lack of institutional capacity limits SINAC's ability to capture revenue and to invest in a cost-effective management of protected areas.
 3. Deficiencies in the individual capacity of SINAC field staff limit the effectiveness of management of protected areas.
 4. Little awareness of the role and importance of protected areas for the national economic development and lack of integration of protected areas in the growing tourism industry in Costa Rica.
 5. Deficiencies in the integrity, connectivity, and representativeness of ecosystems.
- It can be said that from the beginning the historical level of performance of the Project was unsatisfactory, but it is passing through a moderately unsatisfactory situation in the Mid-term Review, achieving an accelerated execution in the last two years which accounts for greater efficiency in spending, but that does not mean that all products have been obtained.
 - After the Mid-term Review, there is clear evidence of a very specific monitoring of the execution of consultancies promoting timely and high quality execution, pursuant to the Terms of Reference. Overcoming the low execution is a clear example of this monitoring. In addition, it was verified during this evaluation that products fulfilled the terms of reference, and in many of the cases, the standards have been very good, even beyond initial expectations.
 - UNDP, as noted in the Mid-term Review, did not facilitate the process and even helped generating complex problems and obstacles in the implementation process. Before the Mid-term Review, a change was made in the UNDP counterpart, which acted with a very pragmatic sense, promoting the execution of activities and helping the PMU to push consultancies forward. However, care was not exerted on improving relations with the SINAC Direction, and the conformation of TAC was not utilized to strengthen the ties.

3.4. Efficiency

- The efficiency of the project has proven to be **Satisfactory**, even though in the first three years the project showed very poor outcomes, the level of execution and achievement of products of unquestionable benefit to SINAC in the last two years, deserve to be highlighted. The importance of product development in the CA is undeniable, and there remains only the question whether SINAC may take charge to move forward and address the internal efficiency issues, the ability to design and ensure long-term financial strategy, the promotion of some important laws, and the provision of continuity to the cultural change process in which it is immersed. All this implies overcoming institutional image problems before the government and within the Costa Rican community that can play against their change processes.
- With the foregoing and under the framework of a challenge that by far exceeded the capacity of a five-year project, we estimate that the efficiency of the Project has been satisfactory and is expected to boost the consolidation of the process of change proposed by the "Removing Barriers" Project.
- The initial outcomes were clearly unsatisfactory up to the change in Coordination in the PMU, as it had only reached just over 20% of execution in more than three years from the approval of the Project. Later, in just over two years, more than three quarters of the project were executed, with a higher cost of administration and monitoring close to 10%.

- Therefore, as noted in section 2.3.10 on the budget execution analysis, the situation is radically different. On average then, the level of effectiveness is described as Satisfactory.

3.5. Effectiveness

- Products achieved (see point 2.3.13 Outcomes by Component) clearly contribute to achieving the overall objective. The project efficacy analyzed at the end of the execution has a satisfactory result. According to the analysis (see Table 8, Annex 10) of the outcomes obtained with respect to the statement of the LFM, the project has successfully complied the Purpose level and 4 of the 5 expected outcomes. Only in Outcome 2, the rating was Moderately Satisfactory mainly because the Integrated Knowledge Management System was not achieved. According to the analysis of the achievements of the Project on the basis of product compliance (see Table 9, Annex 11), the weighted rating of the five outcomes is satisfactory.
- SINAC now has various instruments that if adequately managed and institutionalized, in the medium term will have a high impact and will effectively meet the goal of contributing to remove the 5 big barriers diagnosed in the Project. The achievement of the products was not possible within the expected time due to delays mentioned in the Mid-term Review and to the barriers within SINAC itself. They followed the logical sequence in which they were designed. The products were obtained with a high standard of quality and are relevant to the needs of SINAC to strengthen the management of PAS. Products related to knowledge management and IT system design for collections in the PA system were not achieved and products remain to be developed. However, it is important to mention that the strengthening of ICTs that the PRODOC had not considered was made possible through this project. Thus, products reached satisfactorily contribute with the expected outcomes within the project period, and it is expected to give them continuity in the medium term to effectively remove the barriers.
- First, strategic products such as PAS policy and the SINAC strategic plan had to be achieved. This fact affected the pace of the project execution, and the time to achieve the products according to the design depended on a linked form of these macro instruments. However, if clarification is due, we must say that this was a necessary evil so that the products were oriented towards a more realistic and updated situation regarding SINAC needs. There is a high chance of achieving the specific objectives of the project, and this will require developing an action plan, which the technical commission formed during the execution the project must follow. This will require the wholehearted support of CONAC and of the Executive Secretariat.

3.6. Sustainability

- There are environmental factors such as problems in the official approval of the strategic, legal, and regulatory framework, issues of moderate economic growth and social stability that could generate risks to the sustainability of the outcomes to the extent that they are translated into budget cuts, and SINAC has not undertaken further actions for improvements in its funding.
- Currently, sustainability can be classified as likely with a negligible risk level (L).
- There is a good level of ownership in different SINAC managers regarding the outcomes and benefits of the project. SINAC managers are aware of the outcomes of the project; several of these have been institutionalized through its incorporation in the structure,

policies, and strategic processes. At the level of the SINAC Executive Direction, there is interest in the outcome in order to obtain inputs to guide the reforms that the present administration has set. At CAs and at the direction level of participant subregional offices, there was a high level of commitment and effectiveness during the execution and with relation to the level of ownership, there is special interest in instruments related to ecoregional planning, local administration, non-essential services, volunteer services, and infrastructure and governance of the PAS. As for the managers involved, these had a key role achieving strategic outcomes. Currently, this essential function for the maintenance of outcomes is maintained.

- For the many outcomes that were obtained at the end of project, the prospect of being institutionalized is high. Also, a responsibility is perceived for officers to provide an institutional response to the diffusion beyond the beneficiaries or the project. There is great institutional capacity at SINAC to address challenges, which allows expecting that the flow of benefits once the project is completed will be integrated. The products generated by the project are integrated in the institutional structure, and for each one of them, there is a team or a responsible person who can track this down until the final outcomes are achieved. Depending on the nature or subject that the product is about, the person or team with the necessary skills in that subject was assigned. For this, SINAC has adequate and trained staff with capacity to assume the technical, financial, and managerial aspects of the products. There is also enough equipment and the technological platform.
- Technology, knowledge, tools, and methodologies introduced were adapted or are in the process of incorporation to the institutional context and can enhance the capabilities of adaptation within SINAC staff. The products achieved increased existing knowledge. They correspond to the needs of SINAC and contribute positively to develop the functions pertaining to its area of competence.
- The project contributes to the sustainable management of natural resources with regard to the maintenance and/or regeneration of the natural resource base through a PA system that effectively manages with few resources to preserve a representative sample of the biodiversity of Costa Rica.

4. Recommendations

4.1. Design

- In the preparation of new projects, it is recommended to improve the accuracy when presenting the way in which outcomes will be obtained, since projections for getting outcomes and working methods present difficulty in its implementation.
- Although the project had a system for monitoring and evaluation, which is the standard for all UNDP-GEF projects, it is very important that in terms of design, a monitoring and evaluation plan for the achievement of project goals is established. Without these proper tools during the design phase, the proposed change can be felt as lacking clarity, confusing, and inaccurate.
- Using the "logic models", you can support the improvement of the preparation of the "Theory of Change" of the projects. Topics not included in the original design may be important to increase institutional capacities so that an accurate adaptation of the project may be timely.
- Adequate project management shall provide within enough time in advance the definition of the project exit strategy. The project review or adjustment during the different moments of this execution can facilitate interpretation and management.
- Projects with objectives entailing deep institutional changes, when presenting the purpose, must consider whether during the foreseen time this change can be achieved. With it comes better understanding of the scope and of the proper way to interpret the final outcomes.
- The design of the project involved many environmental prospection elements, and also, too many elements concerning the protection of protected areas and mechanisms to facilitate the process of implementation of public policies were involved. While it is true that at the time of this project it was one of the highest in terms of the amount contributed by GEF, it also considered a very high counterpart. The complexity of the project tested not only the management ability of SINAC, but also that of the State of Costa Rica, and of UNDP itself as Project administrator. All the parties involved contributed to the current outcomes, especially to the frustration of failing to reach better standards, and they all require observing with attention its history, especially to understand that this process does not end today with the closing of the project, but rather that it is necessary to take measures so that the future impact of changes and emerging products actually allows achieving the expected accomplishments. Failure to act in a positive way will cause that in a few years all progress may be lost.

4.2. Project management

- The outcomes of the interviews show that stakeholders are required to overcome the lack of trust among members of the CAT, other SINAC senior officers, and the UNDP Program Officer in the country, which is not beneficial to either party. So, a plan is recommended to strengthen and develop interagency ties to overcome the distrust by promoting the exchange of information in order to actually help the process of change expected in SINAC and the environmental institutions in Costa Rica.
- The TAC should have at least weekly monitoring of the closing of the Project in order to support the work of the PMU with criteria and recommendations that allow an effective

- advance on this goal and in turn improve the situation of internal distrust. The PMU Project Coordinator must ensure closure of the project ⁴³ with finished funded products.
- The PMU should match with TAC an internal diffusion plan of the products obtained by the Project in SINAC Central and in the CAs to promote their knowledge, likelihood of using them as tools. Further work needs to be done to advance in the process of removing barriers. The Project was created to substantially improve the capacity of action of SINAC and therefore the products generated by the Project, which must be known and understood internally in their full scope.
 - The PMU must submit a comprehensive report of the Project at least containing an analysis of the quality of products, a report by close of business that shows that activities required by UNDP were completed, confirmation of acceptance of the counterparts by UNDP, reception of the project's physical assets by SINAC, financial closing, operative closing according to the legal provisions for staff and all contracts and commitments generated by the project, and a reflection on Recommendations and Lessons learned from management.
 - We believe that currently SINAC is at a very important inflection point as there are some products developed by the project to improve the basis for development of SINAC, which add up to a process of internal cultural change that is favorable for change as a whole and for urgent needs for actions requested by the PAs. This scenario indicates that active leadership needs to be taken in the change process internally and externally showing the value of SINAC activities and actions. SINAC is not clear that there is recognition of its work among government institutions and the private sector in the capital city, but in the environment of CAs and at the local level especially, SINAC is a recognized and fundamental actor that inspires trust, respect, and pride. Therefore, it is imperative that SINAC Direction constitutes an operational team for Change Management that can be comprised by SINAC members who participated in the UCT and other relevant officers, who take advantage of the great commitment that exists within SINAC staff with their institution and to generate the required changes. As of April, SINAC will not have the Project products and resources, and needs are growing, so we cannot wait another five years before advancing dramatically in the process of change.
 - The SINAC IT platform is of a high level. However, not enough advantage has been obtained so that it will serve officers and also so that it can serve for promotion and dissemination of SINAC activities. We recommend a specific evaluation of software development plan to make it more functional for SINAC's needs. This area in any organization not dedicated to IT is a support area, which should be functional to the strategic plans and to potentiate the institutional development. The large investment in hardware is not consistent with the limited services provided. The arguments for ensuring security are valid, but it is unclear whether they are relevant when the institution just saves files and is in charge of bookkeeping as the most important tasks of the area.
 - The implementation of a performance evaluation model that will allow the institution to determine the evolution and personal development of officers in order to establish viable action plans given the officers' capabilities and corporate goals.
 - Regarding capacity building for staff, SINAC shall:
 - i. See training from the perspective of the problem caused by officer replacement, mobilized by retirement processes

⁴³ During the final review of this final evaluation report, the PMU Coordinator resigned without ensuring the end of this process, which caused a complex problem for a right end of project.

- ii. To materialize the park ranger program;
- iii. To continue with fora to strengthen citizen participation in decision making policies of the PAS;
- iv. To reinforce the wildlife and marine life in the PAS;
- v. Renewal of equipment and teaching resources;
- vi. To involve other sectors besides the officers working in the PAS;
- vii. To ensure financial sustainability of the plan.
- Organizational structure reform requires greater incidence internally within SINAC through management that would allow conviction and agreement among officers on the importance of this subject.

4.3. Outcomes

- To promote replication of the experiences generated (Public Private initiatives, environmental education, models of sustainable living in the buffer zones, participation and local inclusion, indigenous agenda, etc.) by the project, the knowledge management issue is still pending. This should be institutionalized and operationalized in the structure and management processes of the different SINAC levels, projecting beyond the outcomes of the project.
- There must be concrete actions and budget for monitoring and evaluation of policies for Protected Areas (PAs) besides giving attention to the remaining elements identified in 6.1. of the general management tools for policies.
- Since the Strategic Plan of the National Conservation Areas System, SINAC, was designed for 2010-2015, it shall be reviewed and adjusted for the next five years.
- Since the monitoring and evaluation system to measure the degree of implementation and effectiveness of the policies for PAS is a recently achieved product, necessary actions should be taken for institutionalization and implementation, so that its utilization becomes operative for strengthening the management and decision making in the management of PAS.
- The reclassification of PAs must be socialized among stakeholders and institutionalized in SINAC. The legal framework must also be developed and implemented to strengthen PA management.
- MINAE must to formalize and institutionalize the rules to process and resolve possible cases and application of administrative sanctions for unauthorized access to the biodiversity elements and genetic and biochemical resources established in Biodiversity Law No. 7788.
- The systematization of experiences regarding water resources of ACCVC, identified a number of elements related to the CAs and to the executive secretary of SINAC, which in the future deserve attention:
 - i. A lack of communication and coordination of SINAC Executive Secretariat;
 - ii. Lack of knowledge of CAs of the amount of resources proceeding from the water canon and institutional budgets; and
 - iii. Lack of a leading and participatory role by the Executive Secretariat of SINAC to standardize processes in the CAs on the issue of water canon.
- Once defined the 42 PAS are defined with the work of IDB Cadaster, the national PAS inventory can be adjusted, and the management plans and management strategies of each PA can be reviewed and updated.

- SINAC should formalize the 6 PAS, for which decree modification proposals were prepared.

4.4. Efficiency

- It is necessary to incorporate more control from SINAC to projects executed under their institution. It was absolutely proven that the strategic and operational progress of the project cannot be left to coordinators and PMUs. The fact also that there is no proper project control by SINAC can cause PMUs to feel that they must respond mainly to UNDP because it is the authorizing party of disbursements and permanently requests information. Nowadays, Projects Monitoring is possible through instructions given to the PMU Coordinators or equivalent to periodically inform the tracking system about follow up projects implemented by International Cooperation with support for this project. Nevertheless, it is required to make someone from SINAC accountable for analyzing this information and reporting it to the Executive Direction of SINAC and to staff that is responsible of the relevant functions. It would also be convenient to study and to negotiate with counterparts (in this case, UNDP) the possibility that assurance measures are taken for monitoring that tasks are carried out by PMU staff as it is usually done with consultants (e.g. retention of a percentage of income due to satisfactory outcomes accomplished) so as to avoid their leaving at any time without fulfilling important requirements as was the case with the last coordinator. The acceptance of outcomes as satisfactory just cannot be approved by the financial institution that administers the finances of the project, and it cannot be at zero cost as these are such important responsibilities for the professionals who take these positions with salaries that are quite favorable. For the first coordinator of this project, levels of inefficiency were very serious and affected the entire development of the project without major consequences for him. And, in the case of the second coordinator, he retired shortly after going on vacation, without ensuring the closing and business continuity plan. This was not serious, responsible, or professional behavior, and had no economic consequences for him.

4.5. Effectiveness

- The project design should provide a clear alignment and harmonization of expected outcomes with the identified barriers. The PRODOC is the main document and guide for the action of the Project, which poses a very important and interesting diagnosis of the problems to be faced and how to solve them. Nevertheless, it is inconsistent on several points including:
- Ensuring the effectiveness of the project in general and of the associated achievements. The LFM was due to update its original design, but it was not adjusted or modified in a timely manner.
- The inconsistency in the PRODOC in various aspects regarding the problems to be faced and how to solve them as mentioned in previous paragraph 2.3.2 caused problems in the implementation process, which added to the inefficiency of the early years by the PMU Coordination, explain a great deal of the problems faced by the Project. The change process should have been ensured with a clearer road map and an agreed upon strategic thinking.

- Effectiveness depends heavily on strategic management that allows timely maneuvering to get resources in better shape to ensure the effective achievement of outcomes. Tools like the PRODOC and PIR are very important and necessary. However, coordination could not detect the problems and distrust level between SINAC representatives and the UNDP Programme Officer, so it is recommended for the Executive Direction to act more proactively ensuring institutional interests and that at higher UNDP levels, sporadic direct consultations are conducted with the Executive Direction of the beneficiary institution (in this case, SINAC) on the strategic directions, the progress of the project, and in particular, the strengthening of inter-institutional relations.

4.6. Sustainability

- Key aspects that deserve special attention are: to exercise leadership from SINAC Executive Direction and significant improvement of the project execution of IDB Tourism, especially in items related to the achievement of the expected project outcomes.
- It is recommended to carry out a plan for dissemination of experiences within SINAC, which disclosed in a pedagogical and guided manner the management of experiences and lessons learned. It is important that this effort is complemented with direct visits to officers or people from the CAs who are not interested in learning from them.
- Following the same rationale, public-private initiatives, environmental education, models for sustainable living in the buffer zones, participation and local inclusion, the indigenous agenda, etc., should be retrieved. It is necessary to define a plan to massively replicate these so that there is a proudly displayed institutional stamp.
- In the financial field, it is important to ensure that all CAs effectively use the different financial tools available to improve their revenue so as to reduce requirements, specifically at the central level, and can expand their work with fresh resources.
- It is expected that from the analysis of the Financial Plan that is currently being conducted at SINAC, activities and a specific roadmap of actions is to be conducted to expand the resources of the entire system arise. As noted in the respective analysis, we believe that despite it is true that this issue was not managed properly in the project, SINAC has the capacity to address this issue and should try to carry it out at the central level and at CAs level, taking specific measures beginning this year. The Executive Direction should closely track them.
- SINAC must achieve the concrete development of knowledge management. As noted in various parts of this document, knowledge management must be institutionalized and operationalized in the structure and management processes of different SINAC levels.
- UNDP should assume a policy of rapprochement and improvement of high-level relations with SINAC to overcome prejudices and lack of trust. This task can allow making it possible to provide follow-up after the end of the project and to carry out many future projects for two strategic partners related to the environmental field in Costa Rica.
- It is recommended to hire an independent IT evaluation for the process and future prospects of IT support services in SINAC. This is beyond the scope of the project but it would be advisable to do this with SINAC's own resources so to have an independent technical support to deliver a confirmation or to show alternatives to this process that appears as too slow from a management perspective.

5. Lessons learned

5.1. Design

- Topics not included in the original design may be important to increase institutional capacities; so, an accurate adaptation of the project may be timely. Bearing in mind that the LFM is a tool that can be changed is very important to avoid problems in the achievement of goals.
- If the LFM design is not necessary, it is important to exercise as early as possible the definition, not only of the objectives but also of SMART indicators and goals.
- The design of a plan for monitoring and evaluation of the project, from the project inception, will support the allocation of staff to manage exclusively the system of M & E, in order to ensure adequate monitoring and evaluation of the project.
- An adequate project management shall provide within enough time in advance (at least 6 months) the definition of the project exit strategy. Projects with objectives entailing deep institutional changes, when presenting the purpose, must consider whether during the foreseen time this change can be achieved. With it comes better understanding of the scope and of the proper way to interpret the final outcomes.
- Measures must be taken so that the future impact of products and emerging changes allows achieving expected outcomes by strengthening cultural and institutional changes. Failure to act in a positive way will cause that in a few years all progress may be lost.

5.2. Project management

- It can be said that this project has been characterized by having a broad participation of multiple stakeholders. In particular, what has been done in the last two years is very important, especially in the work directly CAs involving strengthening, systematization of experiences, work on indigenous issues and boosting the CORAC and COLACS.
- The raising and systematization of experiences was held in an especially participatory way, and the election of consultants was a great success through the methodology implemented in which the various participants were actively involved in the construction of products. Participation was increased with the work of NGOs, community groups, municipalities, grassroots organizations, indigenous people, local entrepreneurs, and farmers in the different products promoted by the project.
- Experiences using participatory methodologies and techniques and incorporating other actors in the definition of participatory activities show not only that this is possible, but also the benefits of incorporating these techniques and ways of acting into the networks, as part of the daily work in an institution that as part of its structure works in a participatory manner. Therefore, it is possible and necessary to expand and replicate participation as part of the "institutional DNA."
- For proper functioning of a project of the scale of "Removing Barriers", the administrator authority must balance its attention on the technical component, the management component, and the political component of articulation between the parties.
- The complexity of the project tested not only SINAC's management capacity but also UNDP as Project administrator, making it clear how important it is to invest in establishing a good communication to avoid problems and achieve excellence in the development of the project.

5.3. Outcomes

- The importance and complexity of the internalization of the cultural change: High levels of execution made in just over two years at the end of the project showed that it was possible to decidedly advance in the elimination of barriers diagnosed by the project. If that high level of execution had taken place throughout the life of the project and in a more concerted way from with the leaders of SINAC central, it would have been an excellent project and with much better outcomes than what we actually had. Ideally, however hardly it achieved as Lessons learned in complex projects can rescue there will always be problems but to the extent that stakeholders are committed to responsibly teamwork can overcome the problems in less time and with greater care by the other actor with their different visions and leadership.
- From the analysis of the most recent interviews with the different stakeholders, it can be seen that despite all the problems and existing reviews, there is a change of attitude within staff in direction positions at SINAC. This can be interpreted as an effective culture change process within SINAC. Today, a higher level of empowerment is observed in the sense of wanting to be more active subjects and making decisions about what happens with the projects.
- Obviously, many of the structures and activities of SINAC have remained for many years to this date. Nevertheless, integration into the staff of the diagnosis of a decade ago regarding the problems and responsibilities they have and the urgent need to undertake improvements in their tasks, such as the urgency to modernize, to incorporate technology, to undertake the challenge of complex issues such as the indigenous agenda, the functioning of CORAC and COLACS, etc., and taking measures in view of the retirement of a high percentage of staff has become evident both in Conservation Areas and in the Executive Secretariat of SINAC. This point is especially relevant in the analysis of the achievements and their sustainability within the project. In many cases, this cultural change cannot be directly attributed to the actions of the project. Even so, it is very relevant as process analysis and delivers greater certainty about the possibility that these changes will continue to develop and especially many of the products of the Project are used effectively as tools for change to definitely make them a reality as dreamed by SINAC and to further guarantee the protection of biodiversity and to ensure the system of conservation areas in Costa Rica.

5.4. Efficiency

- The evolution of the project execution was very positive after almost three lost years, but achieving two years of high efficiency and with low administrative costs. It was finally rated as Satisfactory at this level. As a lesson learned, there is a good management which allows reverting processes that have serious problems, with a good maneuverability to ensure budgetary execution, detecting under the project framework with whom could activities be run quickly and efficiently.

5.5. Effectiveness

- The proposed cultural and institutional changes in SINAC in the "Removing Barriers" Project exceeded the time of execution of the project; therefore, the realization of

products and outcomes must still be worked by SINAC, thus permanently securing change. SINAC has several instruments that if adequately managed and institutionalized, can contribute with the potential result that in the medium term the 5 major barriers can be removed. It is required though, that if the Executive Direction strengthens the process by designating human and financial resources to this task, thus showing the staff that it is committed to this idea of change.

5.6. Sustainability

- The institutionalization products and approval by institutional managers at all SINAC levels, as applicable, are factors that will promote sustainability of the outcomes obtained to date and of the potentially derived products obtained recently.
- National ownership of the products and activities of the project in the CAs and in the various SINAC areas is Highly Satisfactory. Several strategic products were institutionalized, guiding planning processes, budgeting, and strategic planning on topics such as: PA management, control of illegal felling, biodiversity conservation, forest fire control, and forest production. Furthermore, as part of the SINAC strengthening process, project products offer inputs that are used for decision making at the central level.

Annex 1: Terms of Reference of the Evaluation

UNITED NATIONS PROGRAM FOR DEVELOPMENT NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREAS SYSTEM

"Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System of Costa Rica"

TERMS OF REFERENCE

FINAL PROJECT EVALUATION

Project Title	Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System of Costa Rica
Project ID in ATLAS	00056040
PIMS Number	3423
Focal Area	Biodiversity
Strategic Objective	<i>"To overcome the main systemic and institutional barriers to sustainability of the Protected Areas System of Costa Rica"</i>
Project starting date	November 2008
GEF budget (in US\$)	US\$4,368,000
Co-Financing (in US\$)	US\$21,059,671
Project Closing Date	December 2014
Mid-term Review Date	May 2012
Final Evaluation Date	October 2014

A team of consultants (two) was hired for the final Project evaluation. Such consultancy shall take place within the framework of the *"Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System of Costa Rica"* project of the National Conservation Areas System (SINAC). It is executed with funds from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and administered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

1. NAME OF THE CONSULTANCY

Final Evaluation of the *"Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System of Costa Rica"* Project (2008-2014).

2. PROJECT SUMMARY

The *"Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System of Costa Rica"* helps Costa Rica in removing barriers to the consolidation and strengthening of a system of protected areas managed by the National Conservation Areas System (SINAC). The national long-term goal of the project was to "consolidate the Protected Areas System as a key component of sustainable development in Costa Rica", and the objective was to "overcome the major systemic and institutional barriers to sustainability of the Protected Areas System of Costa Rica". The objective is to have a system that effectively conserves a representative sample of the biodiversity of Costa Rica, that advances on national goals, and captures global benefits in a wide range of ecosystems.

However, the Project defines five interrelated outcomes: 1) Legal and political framework of Costa Rica, reformed and improved to ensure effective management and financial and long-term ecological sustainability of Protected Areas System; 2) Institutional Framework and capabilities of the Protected Areas System of SINAC, improved for optimum eco-regional planning and management effectiveness; 3) SINAC has financial sustainability to effectively achieve its strategic objectives and provide resources for the management needs of the PA system in the long term; 4) SINAC tries new and innovative approaches to conservation in Conservation Areas and in Protected Areas; and 5) successful management models of the PA System, scaled and replicated systemically through strategic partnerships with key stakeholders.

Formally, the Project started in November 2008 for a period of five years. However, the Project suffered delays in starting and had low execution levels during the first four years. Given the existing situation by August 2012, a Mid-term Review was conducted, which had as its main recommendation to generate changes in the strategic, operational, institutional, and internally within the management unit. This marked an improvement in the efficiency and effectiveness of the project to the point that expectations of achieving success in financial execution are of about 96 to 98% of the original expectation, thus, meeting the objectives and measurement outcomes established in the indicators referred to in the PRODOC (Project Document).

The Project's main objective is: *"to overcome major systemic and institutional barriers to sustainability of the Protected Areas System in Costa Rica."* For this purpose, the project adopted a systematic approach seeking to remove the main barriers that the National Conservation Areas System has, by nature, at national level. Although it is noteworthy that in terms of products, many processes have focused on different and distinct physical and geographical areas: at the level of the SINAC Executive Secretariat, at the level of four pilot processes in four Conservation Areas (ACOSA, ACT, ACCVC, and ACTo), other processes for system officers, collegiate bodies (CORAC and COLAC), and other stakeholders outside SINAC at the level of the whole system, and finally, actions in specific protected areas.

3. BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

These terms of reference correspond to the Final Evaluation of the "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System of Costa Rica" Project, PIMS number 3423. For issues related to content and methodology of the evaluation, refer to the Guidelines for GEF Project Evaluations (version for external evaluators).

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M & E) Policy of UNDP/GEF projects has four objectives:

1. To conduct monitoring and evaluation of the outcomes and impact of the project;
2. To provide information for decision-making and implementation of any necessary changes or improvements;
3. To promote accountability of resource utilization;
4. To document, provide feedback, and disseminate lessons learned.

According to the above, the M & E policies and procedures of UNDP/GEF and all projects funded by the GEF, medium or large, should conduct a Final Evaluation of the project.

4. OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSES OF THE CONSULTANCY

General Objective:

A final evaluation must be executed for the "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System of Costa Rica" Project, foreseen in the PRODOC and in the framework of the provisions of GEF/UNDP, to provide the relevant, decision-making agencies with enough and relevant information to define future actions for SINAC.

Specific objectives:

- To adequately assess the initial preparation of the project, considering the evolution along its execution and environmental conditions, as well as the implications of national policies and actions and the cyclical impact of cooperation.
- To analyze and assess, in a comprehensive and independent manner, the Project outcomes, devoted specifically to the impact of the actions taken with respect to their objectives and logical framework.
- To extract key lessons learned and to practice and formulate recommendations regarding sustainability and long-term impact for the Protected Areas System of Costa Rica.

Purposes

- To promote accountability and transparency, and to assess and disclose the extent of the achievements of the project.
- To summarize the lessons that can help improve the selection, design, and application of future UNDP activities funded by GEF.
- To providing feedback on issues that are recurrent in the UNDP portfolio and that need attention, and about the improvement of topics identified above.
- To contribute to the overall evaluation of outcomes with respect to achieving the strategic objectives of GEF addressed to the benefit of the global environment.
- To measure the extent of convergence of the project with other UN and UNDP priorities, including harmonization with other outcomes and with the performance of UNDAF, United Nations Development Framework, and the UNDP for the Country Program Action Plan (CPAP).

5. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION AND SERVICES REQUIRED

This section presents the evaluation issues that should be analyzed, structured in accordance with the mandatory criteria. Some of these elements are standard as their analysis is required to be accountable to the Organization and to identify lessons learned through a systematic and harmonized approach with project evaluations. As this is a final evaluation, it is relevant to

extract an evaluation on the achievement of the ultimate goals of the Project as part of the original design, its relevance, and the enabling conditions for execution.

The consultants will verify, analyze, and assess with attention to the five main criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, outcomes, and sustainability, besides the main Conclusions and Recommendations.

Following is the definition of these terms:

Relevance

It is the degree to which the objectives of the intervention correspond to the expectations of the beneficiaries, the country's needs, global priorities, and policies of the donor and of the administrator:

- Solidity and realism of the theory of change that underpins the project;
- Clarity, consistency, and realism of the project logical framework and design, including: The causal relation between inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes (specific objectives), and impacts (development goals); validity of indicators, hypotheses or assumptions, and risks; approach and methodology
- Adaptability of the project design to improve its relevance
- Analysis of the internal consistency of the project and quality of the preparation.
- Analysis of the exit strategy or integral transfer from the original design.
- Level of alignment with national policies and priorities, and needs of the primary beneficiary (SINAC) from its inception to date.
- Adaptability of the project design to improve its relevance.
- Vertical logic analysis: analysis of the contribution of activities to the achievement of each of these expected outcomes and regarding the specific purpose and relation with the overall objective.
- Analysis of the horizontal logic through verification of the relevance and quality of indicators, existing database and access to information through the means and sources of verification. Revision of goals and expected outcomes.
- Analysis of coordination, management, and financing schemes in terms of promoting institutional strengthening and local ownership.
- Proven realism demonstrated in the quantity of inputs (financial, human, and administrative resources).
- Adaptation modalities recommended for monitoring and evaluation.
- Analysis of the exit strategy or integral transfer from the original design.
- Level of complementarity and synergies between this and other cooperation projects executed to support SINAC or other external programs or projects of the System.

Effectiveness

The effectiveness criterion concerns the extent to which the project achieved the expected outcomes and whether their specific objectives were achieved or are expected to be achieved.

- Scope of products in terms of time and in a logical sequence; quality of the product to date, contribution of products achieved and the expected outcomes, focusing on the weakness in the outcomes due to the design. It leads to the description and analysis of the products in terms of quantity, quality, and timeliness (Key products for analysis must be included here. The evaluation team may expand the list accordingly.)
- Description and analysis of outcomes achieved, expected or unexpected, solidity, and expectations of higher acceptance and dissemination;
- Quality of the outcomes/services available;
- What products/services have excelled in terms of relevance, quality, and importance to SINAC;
- Technical assistance: how technical assistance has helped to provide appropriate solutions and build local capacities to define and produce outcomes;
- Do all target groups have access and do they use the outcomes available?
- Are there any factors that prevent access of target groups to the outcomes/services?
- Level of dissemination and replication of the outcomes and products.
- According to execution to date, what is the likelihood of achieving the specific objective?

Efficiency

The efficiency criterion relates to the extent to which the various activities have transformed the available resources into products in terms of quantity, quality, and timeliness. This section will assess how the project was implemented, including overall efficiency and the use and management of available resources.

Comparison must be made with respect to the forecast.

- Evaluation of the project management: Quality, realism, and focus of the work plans; Execution analysis, causes, and consequences of the delays and any corrective action taken, as appropriate; monitoring and feedback to improve management and operations; personnel management;
- Institutional organization: Administrative and technical support from headquarters, regional offices, and SINAC, as appropriate; institutional organization, internal review processes, coordination and governing bodies; contributions and support from government and partners that provide resources (UNDP);
- Quality of daily management, for example with regard to: planning and execution of operational tasks (delivery of inputs, activity management and delivery of outcomes) and budget management (in particular, control of costs and if the failure of a budget has been determinant).
- Evaluation of the management of financial resources, including: adaptation and realism of budget allocations to achieve the expected outcomes; adaptation and realism of budget revisions to adjust execution needs and objectives of the project; execution pace and budget balance at the time of the evaluation and in relation to the work plans.
- Disposition/provision of inputs in time for the execution of activities between all parties involved (including co-financing);
- Disposition/provision of inputs to the planned cost;
- Efficient use of resources in terms of: using logical framework or similar tools as management tools; using a schedule of activities (or work plan) and resources; execution of

activities as scheduled, delays and remedial action; committed and spent funds according to schedule execution; extent to which the project has been flexible to adapt to changing needs.

- The quality of management information and drafting of reports, and the extent to which stakeholders have been kept properly informed of the project activities (including beneficiaries/target groups).
- Contribution and implication of partners: Do interagency structures allow, (for example Steering Committee, Technical Advisory Committee, Institutional Coordinator, SINAC technical links) an efficient execution of the project? Capacity of all partners to make their financial contributions and/or human resources; level of communication among the project management unit (PMU), SINAC, and UNDP at the country level.

Outcomes (Impact)

According to the current execution, the likely contribution of the project to its general objective:

- Overall impact of the project, real and potential, positive and negative, produced directly or indirectly, wanted or unwanted; global contribution of the project and the frames of the UNDP country program, outcomes and strategic objectives of the organization, as well as the execution of basic corporate functions.
- Possibility of contribution to the overall objective of the program and other possible long-term effects, paying particular attention to the identification and actual profit quantification to long-term end beneficiaries;
- What impact, if any, is already evident?
- What impacts seem likely?
- Are current impact indicators realistic and relevant? How likely is it that they will be achieved?
- Are there external factors that endanger the direct impact of the project?
- Level of coherence, complementarity, and coordination between donors and potential indirect impact on the project.
- Contribution to global environmental benefits. The benefits are the sum of the positive impacts, direct and indirect, generated by a project and that relate to international treaties on the environment proposed by GEF.

Sustainability

Sustainability criteria allow determining whether it is likely that the positive outcomes of the project and the flow of benefits are sustained once the external financial or non-financial support measures are over (political dialogue, coordination), in addition to prospects for maintaining and increasing the scale of outcomes of the project by the beneficiaries and host institutions, once the project is completed. Sustainability evaluation includes, as appropriate:

- **Economic viability:** Availability of funds to maintain services or benefits introduced; availability of funds to provide outstanding technical follow up and implementation of pending actions; capacity of SINAC/MINAE to ensure the maintenance or substitution of technologies/services introduced by the project; existence of a strategy of economic and financial output and likelihood that this will take place.
- **Ownership:** level of ownership of the project by SINAC at different levels - Executive Direction, managers, directions of conservation areas, officers, professional bodies; grassroots final beneficiaries;
- **Political support:** degree of political support for the project; degree of interaction between the project and the political level; coherence between donor policy and national policy; potential effects of any change in strategy; how policies and national, sectorial, and budget priorities affect the project positively or negatively, and level of support provided by government organizations, public opinion, private sector, and civil society.
- **Institutional capacity:** Of SINAC, through its strategic and budgetary support and from similar institutions; extent to which the project is integrated into the institutional structure; whether the institution appears able to maintain the flow of benefits after the end of the project (Is it well directed, does it have adequate and properly trained staff; does it have an adequate budget and sufficient equipment?); has SINAC staff been properly prepared to assume the technical, financial, and project management aspects. Expectations of institutional response and incorporation of new capacities, or diffusion beyond the beneficiaries or the project.
- **Technical issues (technological):** technology, knowledge, processes, or services introduced or delivered: Are all these compatible with the needs, culture, traditions, skills, and existing knowledge? To what extent have the beneficiaries been able to adapt to the technology acquired and to keep these with no other assistance?
- **Environmental sustainability:** Contribution of the project to the sustainable management of natural resources with regard to the maintenance and/or regeneration of the natural resource base.

It is also important to take into consideration the following:

Evaluation report

Detailed structure of the overall evaluation must be specified during the evaluation process. The relevant chapter has to integrate all findings, conclusions, and lessons learned to reflect their importance and to facilitate the reading. It is important that the structure should not be based on the evaluation questions, on the logical framework, or on evaluation criteria.

Project description: It is oriented to indicating what the project hoped to achieve, the start up and duration, the problems it seeks to address, the immediate and development objectives, and the key stakeholders.

Findings: Differences between forecasts and actual outcomes should be explained, as well as the factors that influence the desired outcomes.

Outcomes: They should be directed to three overriding principles: The **project design**, which should highlight whether the planned outcomes were "SMART". The **project execution**, which provides the logical framework used during the application as a management tool and M & E, financing details of the project, and the scope of co-financing across the portfolio, execution of the implementation agency, partner inclusion for execution, tracking system and project evaluation, interaction with interested parties. In addition, adaptation management is contemplated, and lastly **project outcomes**, which should include the outcomes measured by broader issues such as national implication, integration, sustainability, catalytic function, and impact.

Conclusions

This section presents the Conclusions relating to each question. They should be grouped to provide an overview of the assessed subject.

It must also contain references to findings (answers to evaluation questions) and show how conclusions are derived from the data and the interpretation and analysis and evaluation criteria.

The report shall include a self-evaluation of the methodological limits that may restrain the scope or application of certain conclusions.

Moreover, conclusions not only expose the progress observed, but also the issues requiring further reflection on the sustainability of the action or complementary options for future actions in the same sector.

However, the evaluation team will present its conclusions in a balanced way, without systematically favoring the conclusions as positive or negative.

In a paragraph or sub-paragraph the three or four main conclusions shall be collected and systematized in order of importance, avoiding repetition. This system allows better communicating the evaluation messages that are transmitted to the concerned parties (MINAE, SINAC, UNDP, GEF).

Recommendations

Recommendations should respond to the conclusions, without actually reproducing them. A recommendation derives directly from one or more conclusions.

The ultimate value of an assessment depends on the quality and credibility of the proposed recommendations. Consequently, recommendations should be as realistic, operational, and pragmatic as possible. They may refer to the strategic, organizational, and operational aspects for both national partners and for GEF/UNDP, preconditions that may be related with decisions on financing of similar projects and general issues arising from the evaluation on policies, technologies, instruments, institutional development, and national, or sectorial strategies.

Recommendations will be prioritized and addressed to the various stakeholders, will be evidence-based, and will be relevant, focused, and formulated in a clear and feasible way at different levels of MINAE/SINAC and UNDP/GEF.

Annexes to the report

The report must include the following Annexes:

- Terms of Reference of the Evaluation;
- Name of evaluators (Curriculum Vitae should be provided, summarized to a maximum of one page per person);
- A detailed description of the evaluation method that includes: choices, difficulties, and constraints encountered; description and analysis tools;
- Logical framework matrices (original);
- List of persons/organizations consulted, institutions, agencies, and others
- Bibliography and documents consulted;
- Other technical Annexes (for example: statistical analysis, data tables, and numbers).
- Pictures.

The structure of the report should consider the sections listed in the Table of Contents (Annex 1) of the document in English: UNDP Evaluation Guidance for GEF-Financed projects.

If the quality of the reports does not meet UNDP/GEF standards or requirements, the evaluator will be asked to rewrite or revise the document (as many times as necessary) before making the last payment.

6. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation methodology to be applied must follow the guidelines set out in the UNDP Evaluation Guidance for GEF-funded projects. The evaluation report should describe procedures used and should clarify any deviation in data gathering and analysis of planned data established in the TOR and in the initial report.

It should also provide for an evaluation criteria matrix, with the (initial and final) reports, to clarify how evaluators perform data collection.

The main written sources of information for this evaluation are:

- (i) **Review and analysis of documents:** All documents will be provided to the Evaluator by the UNDP Country Office and by BUN-CA. The evaluator should consult all relevant sources of information including, among others: the UNDP and GEF evaluation policy, project documents, minutes and decisions of the Steering Committee of the project, project budget, operational work plans, and progress reports, PIRs, project files, documents on UNDP guidelines, national and regional legislation relevant to the Project, and any other material that may be useful. PEER

Regional Coordinator will also provide a report with the main lessons and achievements of the Project.

- a. Project document (PRODOC). Form for project information (PIF) of (GEF) project document and logical framework analysis. AML:
- b. Project reports
- c. Agreements with partners on the application
- d. Contact details and list of project staff, key stakeholders (including Project Boards), and other partners to consult.
- e. Minutes and decisions of the Steering Committee of the project.
- f. Mid-term Review documents and other relevant evaluations.
- g. Project budgets. (Budget of the project, divided into results and performance).
- h. Financial data.
- i. Project work plans (Project application plan)
- j. Project tracking tool.
- k. Progress reports.
- l. Project Implementation Reports (PIR).
- m. Project communication materials: publications, brochures, press releases, etc.
- n. UNDP planning documents (UNDAF, CPD, CPAP).
- o. Documents and reports produced by the project
- p. National legislation that is relevant to the project and any other material that may be considered useful.
- q. Audit reports and project consultancies
- r. Others

UNDP documents

- a. United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)
- b. Country Programme Document (CPD)
- c. Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP)

GEF documents.

- d. Strategic program objectives of GEF focal areas

- (ii) **Stakeholder interviews:** The evaluators shall conduct interviews with the following institutions and persons, at least:

In Panama:

- UNDP-LAC Regional Center
- GEF Focal Point

In Costa Rica:

- Ministry of Environment, Energy, and Telecommunications (MINAET)
- Focal Point of the Global Environment Facility - GEF
- Executive Director of the National Conservation Areas System - SINAC
- Project coordinators
- Members of the Project Technical Committee

- Members of the Project Steering Committee
 - UNDP Resident Representative
 - UNDP Operations Manager
 - UNDP Programme Coordinator
 - UNDP Programme Officer for Environment, Energy, and Risk Management
- (iii) **Field visits:** The evaluators will carry out field visits to relevant areas that are linked to the project (links and social actors in selected communities)
- (iv) **Questionnaires or discussions:** The evaluators will conduct questionnaires or discussions as information gathering mechanisms to substantively address relevant evaluations.

It is recommended that the evaluator presents the proposed methodology for the evaluation in the Initial Report. It will be previously discussed with the UNDP Costa Rica, SINAC, and the Ministry of Environment to create a balance between written information, interviews, and field visits (see details in Annex 1).

7. LOCATION AND DURATION

7.1. Start-up period

Services should begin tentatively on October 13, 2014. The start-up meeting will take place at the offices of SINAC in San Jose.

7.2. Tentative duration/ending period.

The duration of the services shall not exceed 48 calendar days. Once the external evaluation team is hired, the evaluation process will involve three stages: documentary (desk), field and synthesis, described below.

7.3. Documentary phase (desk) (Start-up) -7 days in total

During the first five (5) calendar days of the mission, the experts shall, in their place of origin:

- Carry out a systematic review of relevant program documents that are available;
- Become familiar with the general development level of the country (based on reading the UNDP's Country Evaluation and other reports on the country);
- Initial telephone conversation with the Officer of the Environment and Risk Management Program of UNDP-Costa Rica and the National Project Coordinator;
- To prepare and submit the list of tools to be used at the field;
- To submit a start-up report with the exact guidance method for the overall evaluation of the project/program, and a tentative work plan.

The National Coordinator and the designated commission will issue approval two business days after receipt.

7.4. Field phase - 26 calendar days

The field phase (interviews and visits) will have a duration of twenty-six (26) calendar days.

During this period, experts shall ensure appropriate contacts and consultations with various stakeholders, working closely with authorities and public bodies and dedicating adequate time to find civil society organizations and other observers (academia, media, etc.) in Costa Rica. Likewise, they must use sources of more reliable and convenient information and harmonize data from different sources in order to facilitate immediate interpretation.

Interviews: the evaluators should make all relevant meetings with the project and other stakeholders and gather the necessary information to draft the final report. At this stage, evaluators must move both at the GMA and beyond, to the following Conservation Areas: **ACTo, ACOSA, ACT, and ACCVC, ACLA-P and ACLA-C (Indigenous Agenda).**

The evaluation team will discuss in detail with key project stakeholders, and their views and opinions will be taken into consideration. (See list on methodology)

7.5. Synthesis phase - 14 calendar days.

This phase is mainly engaged in the elaboration of the project's Final Report. Consultants should ensure that their assessments are objective and balanced, their claims accurate and verifiable, and their recommendations, realistic.

The first draft of the final report must be submitted to the National Coordinator of the Project "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of Protected Areas in Costa Rica" five (5) calendar days after completion of the field phase. If this person considers that the report is of sufficient quality, it shall be forwarded for the presentation of observations to the UNDP Environment Officer and to the SINAC Institutional Coordinator. Such persons will have four (4) working days for delivery of comments, questions, or document clarifications.

Based on the observations made and collected by the team that is responsible for the evaluation, the evaluation team will have four (4) calendar days to amend and revise the project report and submit it to the National Coordinator of the project.

Comments requesting methodological quality improvements should be taken into account, except where it is shown that this is impossible, which must be justified by the assessment team. Comments on the substance of the report may be accepted or rejected. In the latter case, the assessment team must justify their position and present their reasons in writing.

8. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The products referred to hereinafter, must be submitted to the National Coordinator of the Project "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of Protected Areas of Costa Rica", in digital form (editable MSWord version, two copies on CD) and in print: an original and two copies, within the deadlines to be designated and using the formats provided for this purpose by the Project Management Unit (PMU) to the consultant. Previously, these products will be reviewed and technically supported by the liaison officer designated by SINAC for this purpose.

The expected outputs of this evaluation are:

- 8.1. **OUTCOME 1.** To submit a start-up report with the guidance method for the overall evaluation of the project/program, and a *tentative work plan*. It shall be delivered within the five calendar days after signing the contract. The document will be reviewed and approved by the National Coordinator and the designated commission, which will issue approval two business days after receipt.
- 8.2. **OUTCOME 2.** The first draft of the final report must be submitted to the National Coordinator of the Project "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of Protected Areas in Costa Rica" five (5) calendar days after completion of the field phase. If this person considers that the report is of sufficient quality, it shall be forwarded for the presentation of observations to the UNDP officer for Environment and the SINAC Institutional Coordinator. These persons will have four (4) working days for delivery of comments, questions, or document clarifications.
- 8.3. **OUTCOME 3.** Final report: Based on the observations made and collected by the team responsible for the evaluation, the evaluation team will have four (4) calendar days to amend and revise the project report and submit it to the National Coordinator of the project. This person will issue the agreement and final acceptance five calendar days after delivery.

In summary, products (documents) indicated, must be submitted as follows:

- Outcome No. 1.** Start-up Report and Work Plan. Within five (5) calendar days after signing the contract.
- Outcome No. 2.** Draft Final Report. Within 40 calendar days after signing the contract.
- Outcome No. 3.** Final Report. 48 calendar days after signing the contract.

9. SUPERVISION

Consultants will work under a flexible schedule and will coordinate as appropriate with the institutional liaison. They should also report both to the Coordination of the Project "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of Protected Areas System of Costa Rica," the UNDP-Costa Rica Officer for Environment and Risk Management Program, and the specialist in tracking and monitoring under the project framework.

10. PROFILE OF THE CONSULTANT TEAM

A national and an international consultant will carry out the Final Evaluation of this project, and it should be clearly indicated who will lead the consultancy. An IC contract will be issued for each consultant.

The Terms of Reference for the Final Evaluation states that the evaluators should have a wide range of skills and knowledge - analytical experience and evaluation of projects, skills in technical aspects related to public and institutional policies, and planning and environmental issues, specifically in conservation areas of Costa Rica with experience in social and economic development, and with everything that is related with the public policy cycle of the Environmental Sector.

To achieve the objectives of the evaluation, the consultant is required to align the work with the existing rules of ethics, to which reference is made in the Guide, and sign the Code of Conduct in the Annex.

International Consultant, Evaluation Expert

This consultant will be responsible for:

- ✓ The evaluation of the project design, its relevance, and progress towards the objectives.
- ✓ The evaluation of the different aspects of the project such as sustainability, ownership, monitoring, and evaluation, efficiency, impacts, financial sustainability, and institutional capacity, among others.
- ✓ The evaluation of the execution capacity of the various instances of the project, carefully reviewing the ability to carry out their specific responsibilities.
- ✓ The evaluation of how the different instances relate with each other, and how they maintained a clear definition of roles and responsibilities.
- ✓ The evaluation of managerial, financial, and administrative aspects of the project.
- ✓ The evaluation of compliance with the rules and procedures of administrative, financial, and reporting system of the project, verifying that they agree with financial rules and regulations of UNDP and GEF, and the rules for public hiring when applicable.
- ✓ Compilation and edition of inputs for the Evaluation team and preparation of the final report.
- ✓ Team coordination.

Required profile:

- ✓ Formal Education with at least a Master's degree, and training in matters related to sustainable development with emphasis on protected area management and environmental sustainability.
- ✓ Extensive experience (at least 10 years) in the design, implementation, and evaluation of environmental projects.
- ✓ At least 5 years of proven international experience in monitoring and evaluation of environmental projects

- ✓ Preference will be given to consultants who are familiar with the monitoring and evaluation of environmental projects, with at least 5 years experience on this subject.
- ✓ Preference will be given to consultants who are familiar with monitoring and evaluation of projects implemented by GEF and/or UNDP, specifically experienced in the execution of projects funded by GEF, internationally, and with deep knowledge of the logical framework methodology, familiar with governmental, private, and non-governmental organizations related to the National Conservation Areas System of Costa Rica.
- ✓ Knowledge of the administrative system, management, and reporting of similar projects in terms of area, scope, and complexity.
- ✓ Proficiency in Spanish and English
- ✓ To have developed similar reports as of this consultancy for at least three (3) projects, internationally.
- ✓ Experience in design, preparation, and/or execution of projects with local and/or international public sector.
- ✓ To ensure the independence of the evaluation. The hired consultant will be free of potential conflicts of interest with the executing institutions and co-executors of the project.
- ✓ Ability to work under pressure and meet tight deadlines.
- ✓ Good interpersonal relations

National technical evaluation consultant on Protected Areas

- ✓ To evaluate the technical part of the project in relation to environmental components, department, conservation areas and protected areas management.
- ✓ To assist in the evaluation of the different aspects of the project such as sustainability, ownership, monitoring and evaluation, efficiency, impact achievement, financial sustainability, and institutional capacity, among others.
- ✓ The evaluation of the execution capacity of the various instances of the project, carefully reviewing the ability to carry out their specific responsibilities.
- ✓ To assist in the evaluation on how the different instances relate to each other and on how they maintain a clear definition of roles and responsibilities.
- ✓ To assist in the evaluation of management, financial, and administrative aspects of the project.
- ✓ To assist in the evaluation of compliance with the rules and procedures of administrative, financial, and reporting system of the project, verifying that they conform to the financial rules and regulations of UNDP and GEF, and the rules of public hiring, when applicable.
- ✓ To compile and edit inputs from the Evaluation Team and support the preparation of the final report.

Required profile:

- ✓ Minimum bachelor's degree in environmental or related sciences.
- ✓ Demonstrated experience in organizational development in public administration and management of protected areas, with over 10 years of experience in related areas.

- ✓ Extensive experience (of at least 7 years) in the design, implementation, and evaluation of environmental projects.
- ✓ Preference will be given to consultants who are familiar with the monitoring and evaluation of environmental projects.
- ✓ Preference will be given to consultants who are familiar with the monitoring and evaluation of projects implemented by GEF and/or UNDP.
- ✓ Deep knowledge of the logical framework methodology, and familiar with governmental, private, and non-governmental organizations linked to the National Conservation Areas System of Costa Rica.
- ✓ Knowledge of the administrative system, management, and reporting of similar projects in terms of area, scope, and complexity.
- ✓ Experience in budget analysis, financial statements, and other instruments related to execution of programs and/or projects.
- ✓ Proficiency in Spanish and English.
- ✓ Guarantee of the independence of the evaluation. The hired consultant shall be free of potential conflicts of interest with the executing institutions and co-executors of the project.
- ✓ Ability to work under pressure and to meet tight deadlines.

The Evaluation Team is responsible for conducting the evaluation, applying the appropriate methodology, and preparing the evaluation report. All team members, including the team leader, will participate in guidance and final mission meetings, discussions, field visits, and will contribute to the evaluation with written inputs for the project report and for the final report.

The team leader guides and coordinates the team members in their specific work, analyzes their findings, conclusions, and recommendations and prepares the final draft report and the final report, consolidating input from team members and his/her own.

The evaluation team may extend the scope, criteria, questions, and issues listed above, in addition to developing their own framework and tools for evaluation, always within the time and resources available.

Applicants must submit a single technical and financial offer, specifying the conditions for each of the members of the consulting team and a detail of the costs associated with international and national consultants, separately. The financial offer must be made in colones for the national consultant, and in US dollars for the international consultant if he/she lives outside of Costa Rica. If not, the financial offer of the international consultant will also be presented in local currency.

11. PERIOD OF THE CONSULTANCY

The consultancy will have a maximum duration of two (2) months, starting with the signing of the contract for professional services; **however, the consultancy must be completed within a period not exceeding 48 calendar days.**

12. GENERAL CONDITIONS OF THE CONTRACT

The consultancy will be financed under the Project "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the System of Protected Areas of Costa Rica", financed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The consultant(s) selected will sign a contract with UNDP. However, their work will be done for SINAC, in the Wild Protected Areas indicated. Consultants will work under a flexible schedule, and will coordinate as appropriate with the institutional liaison. Consultants should also respond to the Coordination of the Project "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System of Costa Rica" and to the UNDP-Costa Rica Officer for Environment and Risk Management Program.

The address for delivery of materials (products) is in the building of the Executive Secretariat of SINAC, located in San Jose, Bo. Tournon, on the south side of ULACIT. The payment will be divided in two (2), once the products are approved as proposed in these TOR. In all cases, the liaison will have a given time for approval, once the Consultant submits the final product:

- a) A first payment for 30% of the agreed amount will be made with the presentation and approval of the Initial Report and Work Plan (OUTCOME No. 1), within 5 calendar days after the signing of the contract and once the document has been approved by the SINAC liaison and by the coordinator of the "Barriers" Project, for which there is a term of 2 working days after the report is received;
- b) A second payment will be made for the delivery and acceptance of the Draft Final Report (OUTCOME No. 2) and the Final Report (OUTCOME No. 3), for 70% of the agreed amount after the presentation and approval of the Final Report, 48 calendar days after signing the contract. This period includes the entire phase of reception, comments, modifications, and acceptance of the Final Report.

It is understood that the total value of the consultancy includes all expenses due to logistics and transfer of the consultant, if required, according to the proposed activities. This breakdown should be included in the financial offer.

To summarize, products shall be delivered as follows:

Payment	Products	Percentage
First Payment	After presenting the Start-up Report and Work Plan (Product 1). The Management Unit will approve it within a maximum of two working days after presenting it.	30%
Second Payment	Presentation of the Draft Final Report and the Final Report. The Management Unit will approve it within a maximum of five calendar days after presenting these documents with the requested changes.	70%

OTHER CONDITIONS

- The job includes fringe benefits, materials, transportation, and all costs associated with consulting, as well as professional services described above in accordance with the minimum rates.
- The Offeror will examine in detail the documents comprising the documentary body of the specifications of this Request for Proposal and cannot plead lack of knowledge of them.
- The offeror must submit the tender in Spanish, in an orderly manner, complete, and duly signed by the person legally empowered to do so.
- The Project "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of Protected Areas System of Costa Rica" may request clarification and additional documents deemed necessary for the evaluation, as these do not change the essence of the offer.
- The unit price must include all the necessary inputs for the development of this agreement.
- The prices contained in the bid must be submitted in matching numbers and letters.
- In case of divergence between the amount allocated in numbers and in letters, the latter shall prevail.
- In case of divergence between unit price and total price, if the sum of unit prices exceeds the total price, the offer will be compared with the highest price.
- The Project "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System of Costa Rica", will analyze the rationality of the price offered; prices that are considered wasteful or excessive will not be accepted. This analysis is intended to eliminate those offers that present an unacceptable price.
- The winner must comply with all the commitments and conditions set out in this Request for Proposal.
- He/she is bound to be discrete regarding information that will be used during the hiring process as well as any information resulting from it. Likewise, discretion and confidentiality shall be maintained on any internal aspects of the Administration.

13. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Persons wishing to apply for this consultancy must necessarily submit the following documents:

- a) Technical offer indicating what the role of each consultant will be and must include the methodology used to carry out the activities and obtaining the expected product, as well as a statement of the proposed approach and work plan, which must be consistent with the methodology, showing understanding of the TOR and ability to translate them into a feasible working plan, adjusted to the proposed times.
- b) **The applicants must apply in groups, clearly indicating who is the lead consultant.**
- c) Detailed financial offer (showing fees, transportation, meals, travel, and logistics expenses) which must be presented in local currency (colones) for national consultants, and in US dollars for international consultants, provided that the latter resides outside Costa Rica, otherwise the bid shall be in colones. The financial offer shall include a description of each activity listed separately, reflecting the breakdown of costs for each consultant, for example, national consultant fees, international consultant fees, national consultant per diem, international consultant per diem, office supplies, travel,

- transportation, and others), and total the amount of the bid by the national consultant and the amount by the international consultant.
- d) Updated résumé of up to four pages, giving special attention and emphasizing the issues that will be evaluated for the selection of each consultant.
 - e) A page with a summary of the most relevant publications or documents prepared by the consultant.
 - f) P-11 Form for each consultant (which can be found at www.cr.undp.org /www.cr.undp.org/Operaciones/Centro de Servicios/Adquisiciones/Formularios) and/or attached to this publication. This is an indispensable requirement for accepting offers.

Failure to present any of the documents requested will be a reason for exclusion of the offer.

Such documentation (separate electronic files) must be sent via email to the following address: recursoshumanos.cr@undp.org under the subject: "Removing Barriers Final Evaluation" .

14. APPLICATION DEADLINE

Technical and financial offers must be submitted in Spanish and be received no later than **Friday, October 3, 2014**.

15. EVALUATION

For evaluation of proposals, a procedure consisting of two stages is used, whereby the evaluation of the technical proposal is conducted prior to the opening and comparison of price proposals. Only the economic proposal of the Tenders scoring at least 700 of the total score of 1000 points in the technical proposals evaluation will be opened.

The technical proposal is evaluated on the basis of its correspondence or suitability regarding the Terms of Reference (TOR's).

In the second stage, the price proposal of all contractors will be compared for those who have attained a minimum score of 700 points in the technical evaluation. The maximum score for price that can be obtained is 300 points. This score will be awarded to the lowest offeror. All other offers will receive a score in inverse proportion to the lowest price.

The financial offer shall include a description of each activity listed separately, reflecting the breakdown of costs for each product and for each consultant, for example, national consultant fees, international consultant fees, national consultant per diem, international consultant per diem, office supplies, travel, transportation, and others).

The Price Factor score (Financial Offer) will be determined by the following formula⁴⁴:

$$PFP = \frac{PO}{LBP} * 300$$

PO
Where:

PFP = Price Factor Percentage
LBP = Lowest Bidding Price
OP = Offeror Price

Point Allocation

EVALUATIONS	WEIGHT OF THE EVALUATION	OFFEROR					
		A	B	C	D	E	n...
Technical Offer	1000						
Economic Offer	300						
TOTAL	1300						

Following is the evaluation of technical proposals. The score that can be assigned and that is specified per each evaluation criterion indicates the relative importance or weight of each item in the general evaluation process.

⁴⁴The financial offer must state the fee per consultant-day. Costs for transfers from the country of origin and return to San Jose, in case of an international consultant. The costs of transportation within the country and travel expenses must be included in the financial offer.

Criteria for the Technical Evaluation

Technical Proposal Evaluation Form 1		Subscore	Maximum Score	Team				
				A	B	C	D	E
Work Team								
International Consultant								
	Academic degree: Formal Education with at least a Master's degree, and training in matters related to sustainable development with emphasis on protected area management and environmental sustainability.	Ph.D. Master's Degree	50 Points 30 Points					
	Proven International experience in monitoring and evaluation of environmental projects	More than 7 years 5 to 7 years At least 5 years	40 Points 30 Points 20 Points					
	Work performed with governmental, private, and non-governmental organizations linked to the National Conservation Areas System of Costa Rica	More than 8 From 5 to 8 From 1 to 5	30 Points 20 Points 10 Points					
	10 years of experience in relevant and proven design, implementation and evaluation of projects in the environmental area, biodiversity, public policy, and/or conservation and protection areas systems.	More than 15 10-15 years 10 years	100 Points 75 Points 50 Points					
	Knowledge on project evaluation, preferably with GEF, internationally. (No. of projects evaluated)	More than 6 From 5 to 6 From 3 to 4 At least 3	80 Points 60 Points 40 Points 20 Points					
	Experience in design, preparation, and/or execution of projects with local and/or international public sector. (Number of projects)	5 or more 3-4 1-2	40 Points 30 Points 20 Points					
	To be familiar with development of projects funded by the GEF in the subject area, as well as with the procedures, preparation, and execution, such as Project Documents, logical framework matrix, annual operating plans and Monitoring and Evaluation (M & E).	3 or more From 2 to 3 From 1 to 2 projects	50 Points 30 Points 20 Points					
	Proficiency in English and Spanish		10 Points					
	Total		400 Points					

Technical Proposal Evaluation Form 2		Subscore	Maximum score	Team				
				A	B	C	D	E
Work team								
National consultant								
	Academic degree: Minimum Licentiate degree in Environmental or related sciences.	• Master's Degree • Licentiate degree	50 Points 30 Points					
	National proven experience in organizational development in public administration and management of protected areas	More than 10 years minimum 10 years	20 Points 10 Points					
	Professional on Environment issues, with experience in the environmental area, biodiversity, public policy and/or conservation systems and protection areas	More than 5 years From 3 to 5 years 1 to 3 years	30 Points 20 Points 10 Points					
	Work performed with governmental, private, and non-governmental organizations linked to the National Conservation Areas System of Costa Rica	More than 8 From 5 to 8 From 1 to 5	30 Points 20 Points 10 Points					
	7 years of experience in relevant and proven design, implementation and evaluation of projects in the environmental area, biodiversity, public policy, and/or conservation and protection areas systems.	More than 10 years From 7 to 10 years At least 7 years	30 Points 20 Points 10 Points					
	Knowledge on project evaluation, preferably with GEF, internationally. (No. of projects evaluated)	More than 8 From 5 to 8 From 3 to 5 1 to 3	50 Points 40 Points 30 Points 20 Points					
	Experience in budget analysis, financial statements, and other instruments related to execution of programs and/or projects (No. of projects done)	More than 10 From 8 to 10 From 5 to 8 1 to 5	30 Points 25 Points 20 Points 10 Points					
	Experience in design, preparation, and/or execution of projects with the national public sector (No. of implemented projects)	More than 8 From 5 to 8 From 3 to 5 1 to 3	50 Points 40 Points 30 Points 20 Points					
	Proficiency in English		10 Points					
	Total		300 Points					

EVALUATION OF THE TECHNICAL OFFER	Maximum 300 Points
The methodology and approach proposed in the Technical Offer for the development of the consultancy is successful. It proves management concepts and appropriate methods to achieve the objective.	60 Points
It considers the correlation between the different components of the consultancy in a suitable form.	30 Points
It has adopted an appropriate conceptual framework for the work to be performed.	30 Points
It extensively develops every product indicating the methodology used.	50 Points
The definition of work to be conducted is clear about its scope, and the proposal is adjusted to the results outlined in the TOR.	50 Points
It contains a work plan according to the planned activities, consistent with the defined times and leads to an efficient implementation of the evaluation	80 Points
Technical Offer Subtotal	300 Points
TOTAL SCORE	1,000 Points

Period of validity of proposals

Proposals shall remain valid for sixty (60) days after the deadline for the presentation of the proposal, as required by the deadline clause. A proposal that is valid for a shorter period may be rejected as it does not meet the requirements.

Under exceptional circumstances, the Offeror may be requested to extend the validity period. The request and the responses thereto shall be made in writing. An offeror may not be requested or permitted to modify the proposal after an extension has been granted.

13. OTHERS

The applicants should not be Costa Rican government officers, whether effective, hired in operation or under license, and should not have served as an effective officer or contractor for the Government in the past six months.

Women are welcome to submit an offer.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: GEF Project Evaluation Guide

<http://www.thegef.org/gef/taxonomy/term/81>

Annex 2: UNDP Evaluation Guidance for GEF-financed projects

http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/guidance/GEF/GEFTE-Guide_SPA.pdf

Annex 3: Form Agreement on the Code of Conduct for Evaluation Consultants (to be signed)

Evaluators:

Evaluators:

1. Evaluators shall accurately represent their level of skills and knowledge and work only within the limits of their professional training and abilities in evaluation, declining assignments for which they do not have the skills and experience to complete successfully, and so that decisions or measures taken have good foundation.
2. Evaluators shall clearly communicate to stakeholders the purpose of the evaluation, the criteria applied and the intended use of findings. Evaluators shall ensure that stakeholders have a say in shaping the evaluation and shall ensure that all documentation is readily available to and understood by stakeholders.
3. Evaluators must protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. Give maximum notice, minimize time demands and respect the right of people to refuse to participate. Evaluators shall respect people's right to provide information in confidence and make participants aware of the scope and limits of confidentiality, while ensuring that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. It is not expected to evaluate individuals and must balance an evaluation of management functions with this general principle.
4. Where evaluators find evidence of wrong-doing or unethical conduct, they are obliged to report it to the proper oversight authority. They must consult with other relevant supervision entities when there is doubt about denouncing certain issues and how.
5. Evaluators shall respect and protect the rights and welfare of human subjects and communities, in accordance with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other human conventions. Evaluators shall respect differences in culture, local customs, religious beliefs and practices, personal interaction, gender roles, disability, age and ethnicity, while using evaluation instruments appropriate to the cultural setting. Evaluators shall ensure prospective participants are treated as autonomous agents, free to choose whether to participate in the evaluation, while ensuring that the relatively powerless are represented. Evaluators shall make themselves aware of and comply with legal codes (whether international or national) governing, for example, interviewing children and young people.
6. Evaluators are responsible for their performance and their products. They are accountable for the completion of the agreed evaluation deliverables within the timeframe and budget agreed, while operating in a cost effective manner. They are responsible for a clear, accurate and fair presentation, written or oral, of limitations, results and recommendations of the study.
7. Evaluators shall show honesty and integrity in their own behavior, negotiating honestly the evaluation costs, tasks, limitations, scope of results likely to be obtained, while accurately presenting their procedures, data and findings and highlighting any limitations or uncertainties of interpretation within the evaluation.

Form according to the consultant being evaluated

Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the United Nations System

Consultant Name: _____

Name of the advisory organization (where applicable): _____

I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation of the United Nations.

Signed In _____ (place) and date

Signature: _____

Annex 2: Evaluators

a) International Consultant and Team Leader

Summarized CV

HERNÁN A. REYES GONZÁLEZ

hernanreyes@asuntosinternacionales.com

Telephone: (562) 22718471, (569) 88196413 cellular

- Commercial Engineer, Minor in Economics and Administration, Diploma in Development, Planning, and Public Policy, Diploma in Evaluation of Social Interventions, Diploma in Preparation and Evaluation of Social Projects, Master in Business Administration (MBA) Direction and Organization, and Diploma in Advanced Studies in Advanced Business Management, Master (c) in Management and Environmental Audit, Minor in Management and Conservation of Natural Areas, PhD (c) in Advanced Organization Management.
- **UNDP Expert Associate** since 2013 in the Area of Evaluation of Programs and Projects for Latin America (LTA 2013-011 / RC LAC)
- Consultant on Elaboration, Design, and Evaluation of Projects and Programs in Latin America for international organizations like the IDB, UNDP, GTZ, and World Bank, since 1991. In Latin America (out of Chile), he has successfully conducted 34 assessments and elaboration of projects for these international organizations, of which 6 were GEF projects.
- 25 years of experience in counseling and strengthening of project management and institutional strengthening and promotion projects. In the short and medium terms of organizations, small businesses, and institutions of various kinds in Chile and Latin America.
- International experience in monitoring and evaluation of environmental projects since 1996.
- 10 years of experience in relevant and proven design, implementation and evaluation of projects in the environmental area, biodiversity, public policy, and/or conservation and protection areas systems.
- Solid 17-year experience using the logical framework in evaluations of institutions and public and private projects in Chile and 9 other countries in Latin America.
- Experience working with UNDP since 1994.
- Evaluator or Coordinator of the Panel of Experts on 17 evaluations of Government Projects for DIPRES in Chile related to MSMEs, Social Innovation, and Public Sector, since 1997.
- University Professor of Project Evaluation, Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, Environmental Economics and Public Management Economics, having worked at undergraduate and graduate levels at the following universities: Universidad Católica, Universidad de Chile, Universidad de Santiago, Universidad de La República, Universidad ARCIS, Universidad de las Américas, Universidad del Mar, UNIACC, Universidad Católica Raúl Silva Enríquez, Universidad Central, and Universidad Nacional Andrés Bello.
- Extensive experience as Facilitator of Participatory workshops (ZOPP, METAPLAN, PES, PEP), graduated in Facilitation Techniques, Negotiation, and Ontological Coach of organizations.
- Results-oriented, hard working under pressure, to achieve goals in the required time.
- Very good disposition and ability to work in multidisciplinary teams; developed a variety of projects evaluated and managed in Chile and Latin America.
- Good proficiency in oral and written English (Intermediate - High)

b) National Consultant

Summarized CV

RONNY RICARDO MUÑOZ CALVO

nazareno@racsa.co.cr, evaluador.costarica@gmail.com

Telephones: (506) 2349870, (506) 8219602 cellular

B.A. in Forest Engineering from the Technological Institute of Costa Rica. Master's Degree on Evaluation of Development Programs and Projects of the University of Costa Rica. Doctoral Candidate in Public Management and Business Administration of the Instituto Centroamericano de Administración Pública (ICAP). With Doctoral Studies in Education with the pedagogical mediation of Universidad La Salle

Associate Professor of the Master's Degree in Evaluation of Programs and Projects of the University of Costa Rica, the Instituto Centroamericano de Administración Pública (ICAP) and Eval Partner (The International Evaluation Partnership Initiative). Director of Project Management and Conservation of Forests. Conte Burica Indigenous Reservation. Integral Development Association ADI of Conte Burica. Costa Rica.

Member of the American Association of Evaluation. ACE, of which he is a former president; Colegio de Ingenieros Agrónomos de Costa Rica, where he also was an Assistant Secretary; Network Monitoring, Evaluation and Systematization of Latin America and the Caribbean RELAC, of which he is a former president, Coordinator of the Executive Committee; Network Monitoring and Evaluation in Latin America and the Caribbean Redlacme, and Community of professionals and experts in Latin America and the Caribbean in Managing for Development Results (MfDR CoPLAC)

Consultant and advisor in preparation, management, monitoring, and evaluation of development programs. International consultant on public policy evaluation. With national and international experience in evaluation of programs and projects for over 29 years. He has developed major evaluations for GEF in Costa Rica, Honduras, Guatemala, Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama, and Paraguay and for other international agencies: GIZ, FAO, IDB, UNDP, AECI, UNICEF, MAG, UCR, USAID, UNOPS, KFW, FONAFIFO, RUTA, BM, with comprehensive knowledge of the regional environmental reality, of Costa Rica and of the National System of Conservation Areas (SINAC) and of work programs on protected areas and national parks. He has produced about 30 publications and/or presentations on environmental and policy and program evaluation issues. Programs and projects related to rural development, poverty alleviation, health, education, institutional development, gender, environment, public policy, and public transportation.

Experience in advisory, coordination, and implementation of interventions in development programs sponsored by public institutions (Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Justice), private entities (companies, cooperatives, associations, and agricultural communities, forestry and environment), and NGOs of social, productive and environmental nature. Experience with grassroots and indigenous associations. Public and private institutions, NGOs.

Keynote speaker, with participation in numerous presentations and documents on development and environment, public policies related to social welfare, and evaluation and monitoring activities.

Annex 3: Evaluation Method

Evaluation Framework

This evaluation was designed to comprehensively evaluate the project objectively, determining the achievements of the strategic objective direction, products, and expected results. This evaluation established the relevance, execution, and success of the project, including analysis of the sustainability of the results. Specific lessons and best practices regarding the strategies used and implementation arrangements that may be relevant to other projects and other countries were collected and analyzed.

Instruments and evaluation activities were developed that allowed:

- Establishing to what extent the Project executed its activities, presented specific products, achieved the results, expected and declared in the PRODOC and specifically in the logical framework.
- Determining substantive empirical knowledge that identified best practices and lessons learned, useful for other development interventions, nationally and internationally.
- Determining how the Project understood and incorporated the regional and local dynamics, and how it has helped to address the needs and problems identified in the initial analysis articulated in the design phase.
- Determining the degree of incidence of the Project at the national, regional, and local levels.
- Establishing the efficiency and quality of products and results from the Project regarding the initially planned and the official revisions made later in the M & E Framework.
- Measuring the extent of the positive effects of the Project on cross-cutting activities in the life of the target population in that of the beneficiaries and on that of expected participants, either individuals, communities, or institutions, according to the purposes of the project.
- Identifying good practices and lessons learned on Project matters in order to help promote sustainability.

The scope of application of the Evaluation consisted on the assessment of the results achieved based on the scope and criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and explicit impact on the Guide to make final evaluations of projects supported by UNDP and funded by GEF, referred to in the terms of reference.

In particular systematized information on the project and its achievements is delivered, based on specific and verifiable facts that allow to objectively assess what has been achieved by the project in function of its objectives, budget, and assumptions behind the theory of change that gave meaning to it.

Methodological Instruments

Information gathering instruments used were:

Observation: utilization of a detailed observation form to record what is detected on the ground. The information refers to ongoing activities, processes, debates, observable results, facilities, etc. Observation is continuously performed during the field visit.

Interview with key sources of information: through a series of open questions made to some key informants. The interviews were qualitative, deep, and semi-structured. They were based on

issues and evaluation questions. These in-depth interviews were conducted mainly at the central level, i.e. representatives/key members of UNDP, Government and strategic partners, holding meetings of between 45 minutes to 2 hours depending on the topics covered in each.

Group interviews: Diverse group interviews were conducted, especially in conservation areas, where many could obtain information directly from the parties in the specific projects.

Units, main dimensions of analysis, and lines of investigation

The unit of analysis or object of study of this final evaluation throughout the project is understood as a set of components, outcomes, outputs, activities, and inputs that were reflected in the project document and in the corresponding changes made during its implementation to the date on which the final evaluation is performed, including the field visit.

Following is a table illustrating the relation between the dimensions of analysis in the evaluation and the evaluation criteria:

Variables/Criteria/Types of analysis

Variables for analysis	Evaluation criteria	Types of Analysis
Design variables	Relevance Participation Consistency Comprehensiveness	a) Analysis of Improvement Processes and exchange generation capacity (Historical Analysis Project).
Process variables	Efficiency Internal and external ownership Information management and communication Adaptive Management	b) Analysis of Consistency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistency of the Logical Framework of the Project Application of the theory of change. Alignment, complementarity, and synergies Analysis management: coordination, management and financing, institutional organization and management quality, disposition/provision of inputs Management of financial resources Efficient use of the media: information management and drafting Contribution and implication of partners
Outcome variables	Effectiveness Quality Progress towards Project effects Achieved impact Expected impact Knowledge Management Sustainability Capacity Building Community Capacity Building Lessons and Recommendations	c) Analysis of consistency between the Project Document and Project documented results. SMART hiring criteria, global impact of the project, contribution to the overall objective of the program, Global Environmental Benefits dissemination and replication d) Economic feasibility, ownership Political support, institutional capacity, technical issues (technological, environmental sustainability). d) Content Analysis e) Field Investigation f) Performance appraisal g) Comprehensive Analysis

The methodology developed enabled supporting the evaluation records with case studies and findings in the field. Field visits and interviews with key players were a reference for (i) crossing the information among the stakeholders in the territories; (ii) complementing the documentary information and secondary sources on the project; (iii) identifying lines of action or places where the project properly operates and sets relating strengths and good practices; (iv) identifying difficulties in operation to identify bottlenecks.

Matrix for Evaluation Criteria

A matrix for evaluation criteria was prepared, which allowed collecting data and systematizing the required information. This matrix outlines evaluation criteria, questions that guide the search for information, indicators to be observed, sources of verification and gathering of information, and methodology for getting it.

Separately, the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact results, and sustainability are detailed.

The details of the matrix are attached in Annex 3.1.

Methodology for analysis and gathering of information

Methodologies and information analysis and gathering criteria used on the Project and its components were:

a) Analysis of Improvement Processes and exchange generation capacity (Historical Analysis Project).

By tracking using a timeline, it was intended to understand the sequence of events for the Project implementation in order to understand its performance and the way in which management was performed. Special emphasis was placed on analyzing the evolution of the project and of the actors against the recommendations of the Mid-term Review to see the degree of ownership and integration of the proposed changes, criticism, and suggestions for improvement of management by the different stakeholders, especially SINAC. The measures taken to adapt the design of the project were evaluated to make them more relevant, and the exit or transfer strategy was analyzed integrally from its original design within SINAC, watching the interaction of the actors outside SINAC that are a constitutive part of the system.

Finally, through this instrument, information was obtained that allowed analyzing the level of alignment of national policies and priorities with the needs of the primary beneficiary (SINAC), from its preparation to date.

b) Consistency Analysis of the Project.

Revision of the Consistency of the Logical Framework of the Project, from the main statements of the project in terms of its objectives, outcomes, outputs, and proposed activities. Evaluation was conducted to determine if the original design presented problems in its preparation, had monitoring indicators, assumptions, baselines, goals, etc.,

A review of the application of theory of change was made. We aimed to observe the alignment, complementarity, and synergies that tracked the analysis in the mid-term review so as to understand the entire process until the end of the project and its potential subsequent evolution.

As an essential part of the work, a comprehensive analysis of the project management was carried out to achieve the proposed objectives: coordination, management, and financing, institutional organization and management quality, disposition/provision of inputs. Special attention was given to the management and disposition of financial resources (efficiency, probity, leverage, availability) and to the efficient use of the media and the relation with a variety of external actors.

c) Analysis of consistency between the Project Document and Project documented results.

Review and systematization of the Annual Operative Plans, Annual Audit Reports, Annual Progress Reports. Products generated by each one of the components and all secondary information were conducted. This was done to contrast with the logical framework of the Original Project in order to detect achievements, effects, and all kinds of expected and unexpected results thereof, based on "SMART" criteria.

d) Content Analysis.

Content Analysis helped find configurations and relationships in reports and texts, bringing in interpretations and establishing a coherent conceptual framework that later allowed to make judgments about the Project in terms of achievement of outputs and outcomes in relation to the objectives under the context of what happened in the Project and its initial design. Achievements, sustainability and lessons learned were the focus of attention of this analysis that takes into account Consistency Analysis and Historical Investigation.

Information on networks and environmental changes as a result of the Project and on changes independently from the Project was gathered to observe the contribution of the Project to environmental improvements that allow, or not, progress in ensuring the conservation of biodiversity in the country.

e) Field Investigation

The investigation for evaluation directly collected the views of over 100 key stakeholders through various qualitative and quantitative techniques that allowed us to know their views on the progress, development, and advance towards the expected impact. Direct field visits to San Jose and Conservation Areas were organized: ACTo ACOSA, ACT, and ACCVC, and ACLA-P and ACLA-C (Indigenous Agenda), for collecting information and to hold meetings, interviews, teleconferences with Non-Resident Agencies, etc., with everyone involved in the Project.

f) Performance appraisal

The Project performance appraisal was conducted under the "Guidelines for Assessing GEF Projects" by using ratings: Highly Satisfactory; Satisfactory; Moderately Satisfactory; Moderately Unsatisfactory; Unsatisfactory, and Highly unsatisfactory

g) Comprehensive analysis.

The final integration of all the analyses and the results of field visits allowed us to deliver a consideration of the 5 criteria expected in the evaluation reports of the Projects of the Global Environment Facility, GEF (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, results, and sustainability) and also of the expected long-term impacts, the catalyst role, and probability of replication of the Project, co-financing and incremental costs, monitoring and evaluation systems, all management considerations discussed by the historical investigation of the Project on

participation of stakeholders, financial planning, and execution and implementation thereof, and, finally, lessons learned, identifying organizational strengths and weaknesses of the Project based on the achievement of goals, providing alternatives, and identifying improvement alternatives during the execution time remaining for the Project, in terms of roles, organizational structure (organization, functions-roles), management of financial resources, granting, strategic products, performance indicators, process implementation, and others consider relevant.

Difficulties and constraints encountered

Once the consultancy started, the timing of the field visits and interviews had to be modified since there would not be the necessary information for the final evaluation or for the appropriate conditions for interviews:

- a) There were 14 on-going consultancies in the process that ended between the end of November and December. Several of them addressed relevant products of the whole Project, affecting products/outcomes 1, 3, 4, and especially outcome 5.
- b) All the Project information was not immediately available to be systematized.
- c) Problems of availability of some relevant people to be interviewed due to a trip to a conference in Australia, holidays, and others.
- d) The proximity of the holidays and year-end did not allow conducting field visits or finding relevant stakeholders to be interviewed.

The definition of the Evaluation Consultancy hired in October to be held from October 27 to December 22 was not correct and did not meet any reasonable standard given the background. Date modification was discussed with UNDP, and there was consensus to postpone the mission in the field and divide it in two days to be held in the first two weeks of December and during the first days of January for another two weeks.

For field missions there was support from the Project coordination after a serious negotiation as the Coordinator did not understand how part of his job consisted in searching for contacts and confirming meetings.

A high percentage of mission meetings were held in December and January according to the needs of the Evaluation. It is important to note that there was success with interviews required for a good performance of the evaluation.

It is necessary to point out the importance of involving the Project coordinator on the success of the Evaluation and of the field mission. It seems that at first there was no clarity from the coordinator. This is reflected in a rather hasty contract of this work and in that he hoped that the evaluators would independently undertake appointments and arrangements thereof. Given the limited time available in accordance with the TOR, the need for logistics support to make and confirm the necessary interviews and address changes in the calendar is very important and cannot be limited to a mere post or follow up via e-mail. The contrast between the programming, planning, and logistical support to the mid-term evaluation conducted by the same evaluation team for this program is notable compared to what happened in this final evaluation mission. During the mid-term evaluation, visits were programmed before the start of the mission, and during that time, all logistical problems were solved very well and all relevant people were interviewed without any problem. In this mission, we could finally solve everything successfully, but not without insecurities and minor problems that could have caused serious problems to the evaluation work had it not been for the good disposition of staff at SINAC central, especially in the areas of conservation, and for the coordinator of the project, who in a slightly belated timing, began to manage contacts directly.

Schedule of Activities

The following Schedule of Activities reflects the evaluation:

		Year 2014												Year 2015											
Weeks		27 Oct	03 Nov	10 Nov	17 Nov	27 Nov	01 Dec	08 Dec	15 Dec	22 Dec	29 Dec	05 Jan	12 Jan	19 Jan	26 Jan	02 Feb	09 Feb	16 Feb	23 Feb						
Activities																									
I	PREPARATION FOR FIELD WORK																								
	Virtual Teleconference with the Regional Technical Advisor of UNDP-GEF and the Official Environment and Risk Management Program of UNDP-Costa Rica																								
1	Virtual Teleconference with the National Project Coordinator and SINAC Team																								
2	Test of available documents for the Program and situation of the Country: Reception and Revision of the Project Information (PIRs, TPR Reports, Country Evaluation, others reports, etc.)																								
3																									
4	Detailed preparation of the Mission (Detailed Work Plan)																								
	OUTCOME 1																								
5	Start-up Report (Work Plan, tools to be used, work guidance, lined-up schedule)					27 Nov																			
6	Systematization of the Secondary Information of the Project																								
II	MISSION ON THE FIELD																								
	Mission 1: On the field in San José and Project Site (Meetings, interviews, visit to the ACCVC, etc.)																								
7	Mission 2: On the field in San José and Project Site (Meetings, interviews, visit to the ACT, ACG, ACOPAC, ACOSA, ACLAC, ACTO, and ACLAP, etc.)																								
8																									
9	Systematization of the information collected on the field																								
III	PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS TO STAKEHOLDERS																								
	Presentation of findings and observations to Project stakeholders														18 Jan										
10																									
IV	REPORTS																								
	OUTCOME 2																								
11	Delivery of Draft Report																			10 Feb					
12	Revision of the evaluation of the project report by UNDP counterparts, Government agencies, SINAC, and GEF.																								
13	Inclusion of comments by the Evaluating Team																								
V	FINAL REPORT																								
	OUTCOME 3																								
14	Delivery of Final Evaluation Report																				27 Feb				

Annex 3.1: Matrix for Evaluation Criteria



Evaluation criteria	Questions	Indicators	Source:	Methodology
<p>Relevance: To what extent the objectives of the project correspond with SINAC expectations, country needs, global priorities and policies of GEF and UNDP?</p> <p>What is the level of alignment with national policies and priorities, and with needs of the primary beneficiary (SINAC) from its inception to date?</p>	<p>At what level was the preparation and execution of the project aligned with national policies and priorities and the needs of SINAC?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistency of national policies and priorities and SINAC needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project document Documents on national policies and priorities Studies on SINAC needs Interested and involved in the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews aimed at key stakeholders Document analysis Triangulation of information
<p>What is the level of alignment of the project to the overall priorities and policies of GEF and UNDP?</p>	<p>How the project corresponds to global priorities and policies of GEF and UNDP?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GEF and UNDP global and political priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project document GEF and UNDP documents on global priorities and policies GEF and UNDP Representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews aimed at key stakeholders Document analysis Triangulation of information
<p>What is the level of complementarity and synergies between this and other cooperation projects executed to support SINAC or other external programs or projects of the System?</p>	<p>How was the Project able to achieve complementarity and synergies between this and other cooperation projects executed to support SINAC or other external programs or projects of the System?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiatives with which the project was able to achieve complementarity and synergies Implemented coordination actions and project resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project file and reports Interested and involved in the project GEF and UNDP Representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews aimed at key stakeholders Document analysis Triangulation of information
<p>How did the "theory of change" implicit in the PRODOC raise the hypothesis to solve the five barriers identified (Problem) for the effective management of Protected Areas in Costa Rica with solidity and realism?</p>	<p>How did the Hypothesis implicit in the "theory of change" of the project raise with solidity and realism the assumptions and projections to solve the five barriers identified by SINAC, through actions, resources, and methodology established in the PRODOC?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expected project results SINAC Barriers identified in the project (issue) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project document Interested and involved in the project GEF and UNDP Representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction of the "logic model" and analysis of the results chain, as to the causal relation between inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes (specific objectives) and expected impact (development objectives) Analysis of the approach and methodology of the project execution. Interviews aimed at key stakeholders Document analysis Triangulation of information
<p>What level of clarity, internal consistency, and realism does the Logical Framework (LF) of the project and its design (preparation) present?</p>	<p>General question Does the LF of the project meet criteria of realism, clarity, and internal consistency?</p> <p>Specific questions. Does the Project establish with proven realism the choice of inputs?</p> <p>How valid were indicators.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes (specific objectives) and impacts (development goals) Targets, indicators, assumptions, and risk factors Logic of linking of results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project document Interested and involved in the project GEF and UNDP Representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of proven realism in the quantity of inputs (financial, human, and administrative resources). Analysis of the validity of the indicators, hypotheses, or assumptions and risks; Vertical logic analysis: analysis of the contribution of activities to the achievement of each of these expected

Evaluation criteria	Questions	Indicators	Source:	Methodology
	<p>hypotheses or assumptions, and risks established in the LF?</p> <p>How realistic was the logical linking of the results established in the LF?</p> <p>How relevant and valid in terms of quality were indicators, targets, and the expected scope of the project?</p> <p>To what extent is the existence of database and access to information through the media and expected sources of verification in the LF satisfied?</p>			<p>results and regarding the specific purpose and relation with the overall objective.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of the horizontal logic through verification of the relevance and quality of indicators, existing database and access to information through the means and sources of verification. Revision of goals and expected outcomes. Interviews aimed at key stakeholders Document analysis Triangulation of information
What was the level of adaptability of the project regarding the PRODOC design?	How was the original project design adapted to the conditions of a changing context to encourage achievement of results?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adaptive management Results Framework Approach Methodology New stakeholders and partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project document Project file and reports Interested and involved in the project GEF and UNDP Representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews aimed at key stakeholders Document analysis Triangulation of information
Were the coordination, management, and financing model design appropriate in terms of promoting institutional strengthening and local ownership?	How was the designed model for coordination, management, and financing of the project oriented to promote institutional strengthening and local ownership?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordination of project Project management Project financing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project document Project file and reports Interested and involved in the project GEF and UNDP Representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of coordination, management, and financing schemes in terms of promoting institutional strengthening and local ownership. Interviews aimed at key stakeholders Document analysis Triangulation of information
What was the degree of suitability of the arrangements for monitoring and evaluation recommended for the project?	Was the mode designed for monitoring and evaluation of the project adequate?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project monitoring and evaluation plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Follow-up tables or matrices Audit reports Interested and involved in the project Monitoring and evaluation reports GEF and UNDP Representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews aimed at key stakeholders Document analysis Triangulation of information
Does the exit strategy of the project foresee a realistic scenario in function of institutionalization, ownership, and improvement of results?	To what extent was the exit strategy or transfer established in the original design able to provide the institutional context of SINAC in order to foresee measures for the sustainability of outcomes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutional context (political, organizational, financial, and technological, and capacities) of SINAC by the end of the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interested and involved in the project GEF and UNDP Representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis Analysis of the exit strategy or integral transfer from the original design. Interviews aimed at key stakeholders Triangulation of information
<p>• Effectiveness: To what extent did the project achieve the expected results and whether their specific objectives were achieved or are expected to achieve?</p> <p>To what extent does the scope Main question.</p>				
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieved, expected, or 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Documents (logical) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description and analysis of

Evaluation criteria	Questions	Indicators	Source:	Methodology
of outcomes contribute to achieving the overall objective?	<p>To what extent were the outcomes achieved and how do they contribute to achieving the objectives of the project?</p> <p>Secondary question.</p> <p>Were the results achieved in a timely manner and in a logical sequence?</p> <p>What was the quality of the products obtained?</p> <p>To what extent do achieved products contribute with the expected outcomes?</p> <p>To what extent are expected outcomes the results limited as an effect caused by the design of the project?</p> <p>What is the probability of achieving the specific objectives?</p>	<p>unexpected results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timing and logic product sequence Product quality User expectations on further and acceptance dissemination of results 	<p>framework)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project file and reports Interested and involved in the project GEF and UNDP Representatives 	<p>results achieved, expected or unexpected, solidity, and higher expectations of acceptance and dissemination;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contrast analysis of the results obtained with relation to the goals and indicators in the logical framework. Contrast analysis of the results obtained in relation to design constraints Contrast analysis of results in relation to the probability of achieving the specific objectives Interviews aimed at key stakeholders Document analysis Field visits to projects Triangulation of information
Are project products relevant to SINAC?	<p>What products/services have excelled in terms of relevance for SINAC?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Importance of products/services for SINAC Expected or unexpected results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project file and reports Interested and involved in the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews aimed at key stakeholders Document analysis Field visits to projects Triangulation of information
What was the contribution of the technical assistance?	<p>Did the technical assistance provided by the project allow achieving the improvement of local skills and appropriate solutions?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement of local capacities to define and produce results Achievement of adequate solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project file and reports Interested and involved in the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews aimed at key stakeholders Document analysis Field visits to projects Triangulation of information
At what level did target groups have access to the results/services of the project?	<p>Are there any factors that prevent access of target groups to the results/services?</p> <p>Did all target groups have access to the results/services of the project?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groups accessing results/services Limiting access factors of target groups to the results/services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project file and reports Interested and involved in the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews aimed at key stakeholders Document analysis Field visits to projects Triangulation of information
What level of dissemination and replication of results and products did the project present?	<p>What level of dissemination and replication of results and products has been achieved?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertising and dissemination of results Use and replication of results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project file and reports Interested and involved in the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews aimed at key stakeholders Document analysis Field visits to projects Triangulation of information
<p>Efficiency. To what extent have the various activities transformed the available resources into products in terms of quantity, quality, and timeliness? How was the project executed, including overall efficiency and use and management of available resources?</p>				

Evaluation criteria	Questions	Indicators	Source:	Methodology
What was the contribution of the Project management model implemented in the efficiency of the results?	To what extent did the project management contribute to the efficiency to achieve results?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality, realism, and focus of work plans Monitoring and feedback for improving management and operations Corrective measures to improve the level of execution Quality of daily management (planning and execution of operational tasks) Management of financial resources Disposition/provision of inputs to time and to the planned cost; Efficient use of planning instruments for project management Quality of information management and drafting of reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project file and reports Interested and involved in the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of management by project results Execution analysis, causes and consequences of delays, and of any corrective action taken Interviews aimed at key stakeholders Document analysis Field visits to projects Triangulation of information
How did institutional organization contribute to the efficient execution and achievement of results?	<p>How did SINAC institutional organization contribute to achieving results?</p> <p>Do interagency project structures (Steering Committee, Technical Advisory Committee, Institutional Coordinator, technical SINAC liaisons) allow an efficient execution of the project?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrative and technical support from headquarters, regional offices, and SINAC Internal review processes for revision, coordination, and governing bodies Contributions of resources and support from the Government and UNDP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project file and reports Interested and involved in the project GEF and UNDP Representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of the effects of institutional organization of SINAC project interagency project structures for achieving the results and efficiency of results Interviews aimed at key stakeholders Field visits to projects Document analysis Triangulation of information
What was the contribution and implication of the partners in the project implementation and execution?	What was the capacity of partners to contribute to the project management?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity and effectiveness of all partners for making their financial and/or human resource contributions Level of implication in project and communication between the Project Management Unit (PMU), SINAC, and UNDP at the country level. Level of coherence, complementarity, and coordination between donors and potential indirect impact on the project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project file and reports Interested and involved in the project GEF and UNDP Representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution and implication of partners Interviews aimed at key stakeholders Field visits to projects Document analysis Triangulation of information
- Outcomes (impact): How did the project contribute to eliminating the major systemic and institutional barriers to sustainability of the system of protected areas of Costa Rica.				

"Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System of Costa Rica"

Evaluation criteria	Questions	Indicators	Source:	Methodology
What was the overall impact of the project (contribution to the general objective of the program)?	<p>To what extent did the project contribute with reforms to the legal and political framework of Costa Rica to ensure long-term effective management and financial and ecological sustainability of the PA system? (BARRIER 1):</p> <p>To what extent did the project contribute with the improvement of the institutional framework and of the capacities of SINAC protected areas for optimal ecoregional planning and effective management? (BARRIER 2):</p> <p>To what extent did the project contribute so that SINAC has the financial sustainability for the effective achievement of its strategic objectives and to provide long-term resources for the management needs of the PA system? (BARRIER 3):</p> <p>To what extent did the project contribute so that SINAC tried different and innovative approaches to conservation at the level of Conservation Areas and the PAs? (BARRIER 4):</p> <p>To what extent did the project contribute so that SINAC implemented successful management models of the PA system, increased and replicated at systemic level through strategic partnerships with key stakeholders? (BARRIER 5):</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reforms and improvements in the legal and political framework Institutional framework and capabilities of the system of protected areas of SINAC Financial sustainability Innovative approaches to conservation at the level of Conservation Areas and PAs Successful management models of the PA system Results and strategic objectives of SINAC Execution of the basic SINAC functions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project file and reports Interested and involved in the project GEF and UNDP Representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews aimed at key stakeholders Document analysis Triangulation of information
What was the overall contribution of the project to programming frameworks of UNDP-country?	To what extent did the project help strengthening the achievement of results and strategic goals of UNDP? To what extent did the project help strengthening the execution of the basic UNDP functions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Results and strategic goals of UNDP Execution of basic UNDP functions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project file and reports Interested and involved in the project UNDP Representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews aimed at key stakeholders Document analysis Triangulation of information
How did the project contribute to the Global Environmental Benefits?	How did the project results contribute to international environmental treaties or environment proposed by GEF and by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)?	Contribution to the Global Environmental Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project file and reports Interested and involved in the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews aimed at key stakeholders Document analysis Triangulation of information
How did the project contribute to the long-term national purpose around the GEF project?	How did the project help consolidating the protected areas system as a key component of sustainable development in Costa Rica?	Consolidation of the Protected Areas System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project file and reports Interested and involved in the project GEF Representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews aimed at key stakeholders Document analysis Triangulation of information
Sustainability: What is the viability of the project and the flow of benefits to be maintained and increased once the project is completed?	What is the financial viability of the project? Are there resources for monitoring and	Availability of financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project file and reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews aimed at key stakeholders

Evaluation criteria	Questions	Indicators	Source:	Methodology
the project results?	operation of the pending actions of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> resources Economic and financial exit strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interested and involved in the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> stakeholders Document analysis Triangulation of information
What level of ownership does SINAC have on the results of the project?	What is the level of ownership in different SINAC managers regarding the results and benefits of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of SINAC managers of project results Perspective of SINAC managers for the institutionalization of project outcomes through its incorporation in the strategic processes of SINAC Expectations for institutional response for the diffusion beyond the beneficiaries or the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project file and reports Interested and involved in the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews aimed at key actors Document analysis Triangulation of information
With are the institutional capacities of SINAC/MINAE to maintain the flow of benefits after the end of the project?	How did the institutional capacity of SINAC/MINAE keep the flow of benefits after the end of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic and budgetary support Support of peer institutions Degree of integration of the project in the institutional structure Availability of adequate personnel, duly trained to assume the technical, financial, and project management aspects Availability of an adequate team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project file and reports Interested and involved in the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews aimed at key stakeholders Document analysis Triangulation of information
Do the results fit into the institutional context and generate capabilities within SINAC staff?	How are technology, knowledge, processes, or services rendered introduced or adapted to the institutional context and have adaptability capabilities resulted in SINAC staff?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compatibility with the needs, culture, traditions, skills, and existing knowledge within SINAC Capacity of beneficiaries to adapt to the technologies acquired and to maintain them without any other assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project file and reports Interested and involved in the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews aimed at key stakeholders Document analysis Triangulation of information
How does the project contribute to environmental sustainability in the management of Protected Areas?	How does the project contribute to the sustainable management of natural resources with regard to the maintenance and/or regeneration of the natural resource base through a system that effectively preserves a representative sample of the biodiversity of Costa Rica?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advance of national goals Capturing benefits globally in a wide range of ecosystems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project file and reports Interested and involved in the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews aimed at key stakeholders Document analysis Triangulation of information



Annex 4: Original Matrix of the Logical Framework

Objectively verifiable indicators													
Strategy of the project	Consolidation of the Protected Areas System (PAS) as a key component of sustainable development in Costa Rica												
Objective of the project	Indicator	Baseline	Goal	Risks and assumptions									
Purpose (objective): To eliminate the main systemic and institutional barriers to sustainability of the Protected Areas System of Costa Rica.	1. Area (in hectares) of protected areas that are legally incorporated in the PA system of SINAC.	Several terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems in Costa Rica are currently under-represented in the existing PA. They include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Under-representation of semi-deciduous forests at lowlands and dry tropical forestsUnder-representation of coastal and marine ecosystems. Final report of GRUAS II available after October 2006 defining conservation priorities for Costa Rica as a basis for a national policy and a strategic plan for PA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">At least, the following hectares will be (a) legally incorporated to the PA system at the end of the project and (b) included in the Action Plan of the system in a <u>long-term</u> period (15 years) with specific implementation strategies. <table><tr><th>Hectares by ecosystem</th><th>Eop*</th><th>15 years plan</th></tr><tr><td>Total of ha for the PA system</td><td>1,840,448</td><td>Tbd*</td></tr><tr><td>Marine and coastal</td><td>500,869</td><td>Tbd*</td></tr></table> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The goal percentage for marine and coastal ecosystems will be determined in the FSP as part of the strategic action plan of the PA system in the long term. <p>*The goal amount of hectares will be determined during the startup phase.</p>	Hectares by ecosystem	Eop*	15 years plan	Total of ha for the PA system	1,840,448	Tbd*	Marine and coastal	500,869	Tbd*	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Other relevant projects BD1 and BD2 GEF in RAFC Costa Rica were successfully implemented.The new governmental authorities support the deconcentration process of SINAC.The key interested parts effectively increase their capacities and use them for a better management of the PA system.SINAC, with the help of CCT, keeps on monitoring effective management of NPAS by the periodic application of MET.The sustainable tourism and land registry programs of IDB and related loans are approved by the Ministry of Finance and confirmed by the Legislative Assembly.
Hectares by ecosystem	Eop*	15 years plan											
Total of ha for the PA system	1,840,448	Tbd*											
Marine and coastal	500,869	Tbd*											

<p>OUTCOME 1: Costa Rican legal and political framework improved to ensure long-term effective management and financial and ecological sustainability of the PA system.</p>	<p>2. Operative and efficient management level of SINAC.</p>	<p>The METT baseline for the 25 sample PAs was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 8 high - 8 medium - 9 low 	<p>By the end of the project: The METT qualifications for the 25 sample PAs will have moved to a higher METT category as follows⁴⁵:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 10 high - 10 medium - 5 low 	<p>The monitoring tools BD-1 based on the periodic application of the monitoring tools for efficient management (METT) according to the project's work plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal policy of SINAC approved and implemented. 	<p>Window of sustainable opportunity and political support to incorporate the eco-regional approach in regional planning of soil use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognition of MINAE as promoter and driving force of the regional territorial planning.
<p>OUTCOME 1: Costa Rican legal and political framework improved to ensure long-term effective management and financial and ecological sustainability of the PA system.</p>	<p>3. Adoption of instruments that allow the incorporation of the eco-regional approach in PA system planning, particularly by means of the existing legal framework provided by the environmental legal framework, Biodiversity Act, National Parks Act, and the Forestry Legislation.</p>	<p>The National Council and the regional councils of conservation areas, the Biological Corridors Network, the Interdisciplinary Commission about the Costa Rican Exclusive Economic Zone are mechanisms already established that could help to implement, in a cross cutting manner, environmental policies in other sectors.</p>	<p>The plans for eco-regional management will be defined in year 2;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - By year 3, they will be incorporated in the other planning processes. 	<p>Official gazette and territorial planning documents.</p>	<p>Window of sustainable opportunity and political support to incorporate the eco-regional approach in regional planning of soil use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognition of MINAE as promoter and driving force of the regional territorial planning.
<p>OUTCOME 1: Costa Rican legal and political framework improved to ensure long-term effective management and financial and ecological sustainability of the PA system.</p>	<p>1. Level of adoption of the national political system of PA: 1) define the PA system; 2) be the basis of the eco-regional approach of GRUAS II; 3) define a new sub-system of marine and coastal areas, and 4) define how to integrate the ecosystem functions in the Costa Rican territorial planning.</p>	<p>At present, there is no official definition of the PA system; There is no national policy system for the PA system; There is only an incipient eco-regional approach; There is no sub-system for marine and coastal areas; The ecosystem functions are not integrated in the Costa Rican territorial planning.</p>	<p>By year 2, a national policy has been prepared for the PA system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approved by year 3. - In force by year 4. 	<p>Official gazette and territorial planning documents.</p>	<p>Window of sustainable opportunity and political support to incorporate the eco-regional approach in regional planning of soil use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognition of MINAE as promoter and driving force of the regional territorial planning.

⁴⁵By the end of the project (EoP) a net growth of distribution of points for effective management:

- 55-96 HIGH
- 45-54 MEDIUM
- Less than 45 LOW

(See Annex X Table X)

<p>OUTCOME 2: Improvement of institutional framework and capacities of SINAC's PA system for an optimal eco-regional planning and effective management.</p>	<p>2. Level of adoption of priority locations for reclassification and demarcation to achieve coverage of 10% of each ecosystem type/vegetation to ensure the conservation of biodiversity of ecosystems of global importance.</p>	<p>From the 52 main types of ecosystems/vegetation, only 12 (20%) are adequately covered by PA of the PA system.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By year 1, reclassification of priorities will be identified and a concrete proposal based on GRUAS II SINAC's strategic plan integrated by year 1. Action plan for PA system integrated by year 2. 	<p>Government official records, Mid-term Review and final assessment of the project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognition by several sectors of the value of marine and coastal resources for the country's development through conservation and sustainable use. Leadership at SINAC to get support from the Legislative Assembly and the Executive Branch.
	<p>3. Level of preparation and implementation of SINAC's strategic planning tools, with the support of the project (SINAC's strategic plan and the corresponding action plan of PA system).</p>	<p>SINAC's strategic plan has been prepared based on an old version of year 2000. There is no strategic action plan for the PA system.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SINAC's strategic plan endorsed and operating by year 2. Preliminary short-term action plan for PA system (will cover an initial period of 5 years) formulated by year 2. Action plan for PA system prepared in the long term (15 years) that will include (i) lessons and experiences of pilot demonstrations (Outcome 4) and (ii) new regulatory and political frameworks (products 1.1 and 3.3) by year 4. Long-term action plan operating by year 5. 	<p>Government official records, Mid-term Review and final assessment of the project.</p>	
	<p>1. Level of redesigning institutional personnel profiles at SINAC at a central and regional level, according to the new SINAC's strategic plan and the action plan of the PA system.</p>	<p>Strategic plan is not finished and there is no action plan for PA system. Existing personnel profiles at SINAC are generally vague, without ToR and do not respond to the decentralization required by law.</p>	<p>By year 3, roles and functions of personnel at SINAC at a central and regional level have been redefined and realigned according to the new SINAC's strategic plan, and the preliminary short term action plan for PA system.</p>	<p>SINAC's official records, progress reports, Mid-term Review and final assessment of the project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key partners of civil society and private sector show continuing interest on <i>in situ</i> conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. IDB's tourism and land registry partner projects have been

"Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System of Costa Rica"



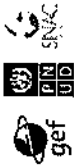
	<p>2. Level of implementation of Knowledge Management Integrated System (KMIS) and level of integration of financial, ecological, and sustainable tourism data.</p>	<p>SINAC's financial strategy is being formulated. There is no Knowledge Management Integration System at SINAC.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KMIS established by year 2. • By year 5, KMIS responds to priorities and needs of PA system based on the new eco-regional approach and gives necessary data for annual operative plans and budget formulation and management. 	<p>SINAC's financial records, mid-term and final assessment of the project.</p>	<p>approved and voted in favor by the Legislative Assembly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal communication strategy successfully deals with resistance to change inside SINAC.
<p>OUTCOME 3: SINAC has financial sustainability for an effective achievement of strategic objectives and supply of resources in the long term for PA system management needs.</p>	<p>1. An optimal policy of visitors fees, that includes admission fees for vehicles to parks with different fees for national and foreign visitors.</p>	<p>At present there is no policy for visitors fees.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By year 1, the new policy is drafted. • By year 2, it is approved and implemented. 	<p>Official documents of Comptroller General.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structural changes have been authorized in SINAC's budget by the Ministry of Finance and supported by a formal agreement with MINAE to strengthen SINAC's financial and fiscal autonomy. • Restructuring of MINAE in the current administration is consistent

<p>OUTCOME 4: SINAC tries with different and innovative conservation approaches for conservation areas and PA.</p>	<p>2. Increased percentage of financial scorecard of UNDP-GEF (see below).</p>	<p>In 2006, SINAC's income was US\$ 21.09 million from regular budget source, having a funding shortfall of US\$ 14.84 million. The Executive decree on the Water Utilization Canon creates a new income source for SINAC. However, in 2006 SINAC did not receive any funds from the Water Canon. The income for visits reported in 2005 was US\$5 million and the average rate of annual income for the last 10 years was 11%. The Incipient Financial Information Management System does not allow appropriate financial coordination and monitoring between the central level, CA and PA.</p>	<p>• By year 1, the tangible % of the project's specific goals for years 3 and 5 has been included in the scorecard. By the end of the project (year 5):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The composition of the SINAC staff has changed to reflect a profile redesigning process. • The financial scorecard will show an improvement of 50%. • SINAC will receive US\$0.91 million/year of new income from the Water Canon and at least US\$6.9 million from visitors' fees (see baseline scenario in annex about Financial Sustainability, Section IV: Part VIII). • By the end of the project, the sub-investment is reduced by 50% to avoid continuing reduction of future annual budget for SINAC. • Transfers from the central government to the annual budget of SINAC will increase in a rate comparable to the income increase of visits, fees and other fiscal incomes. 	<p>Evaluation of capacities supported by the project, official documents from Comptroller General, official financial records of SINAC, the financial scorecard of UNDP-GEF is done as part of mid-term and final assessments.</p> <p>Annual Report of National Parks Foundation and Annual Operative Plans (AOP) about priority PAs.</p>	<p>and compatible with a higher degree of financial autonomy at SINAC.</p>
	<p>1. Amount of unresolved conflicts related to land tenure in the PA system.</p> <p>2. Level of service delivered to tourists, infrastructure condition and accessibility to the 10 most visited PAs of the PA systems.</p>	<p>A high number of unresolved conflicts related to land tenure in the PA system, related mainly to the lack of legal land titling in some PAs.</p> <p>Little or insufficient infrastructure and poor accessibility to the 10 most visited PAs of the PA system. At present, investment in infrastructure and improvement in facilities of PA represent 14% of SINAC's annual budget.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By year 3, 8 PAs of SINAC legally registered and demarcated; by year 5 this process is replicated in at least other 12 PAs. • By the end of the project, all the land tenure conflicts have been resolved in at least 8 of the 12 demarcated PAs. • By year 3, at least 30 works on tourism infrastructure and facilities have improved or developed in at least 6 PAs. • By the end of the project, at least 80 works on tourism infrastructure and facilities have been improved or developed in at least 10 PAs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal documents of PA's land titling • Progress reports of land registry and FSP of IDB. <p>M & E system of the project; Mid-term and final period reports of the project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The environment leads to reforming the legal framework with the aim of allowing collaborative management of PA, by means of partnerships and organized clusters around the PA management in the long term. • New partnerships and collaboration between SINAC and local stakeholders involved in PA management. SINAC's staff works in close collaboration with private reserve networks, NGOs, municipalities, indigenous

<p>3. A number of public-private concession agreements developed and operating to offer non-essential services at the pilot PA and buffer zones in priority areas for biodiversity conservation.</p>	<p>Sporadic, non-systematized experiences of joint work with local stakeholders for the operation of non-essential services and PA management. The majority of PAs at Tempisque conservation area is private property. The Pacific coast of the Nicoya Peninsula is one of the tourist destinations with the highest growth in Costa Rica. Precisely, there is a significant potential not yet explored to promote public-private partnerships for non-essential service delivery in PA among local municipalities, private landowners and the private sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By year 3, three agreements on public-private concessions organized for non-essential service delivery at the Tempisque Conservation Area. By year 5, the approach has been replicated in at least 6 new agreements in other PAs in the conservation area. 	<p>Operative records of SINAC, operative reports for PA. Financial plans and project reports</p>	<p>communities and grassroots organizations to improve effective capacities and management.</p>
<p>4. A number of co-management agreements effectively operating and major capacities of the staff at PA to get involved and work with local stakeholders, like local business people, municipalities, and indigenous organizations.</p>	<p>There is no official coordination of co-management between SINAC and local stakeholders, in topics like joint patrolling. There is a limited capacity at SINAC to collaborate with municipalities and local stakeholders, and especially with indigenous communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By year 3, up to 10 collaborative management agreements of PA with municipalities, NGOs and indigenous communities in pilot areas have been established. By the end of the project a legal framework for collaborative management of PA has been designed and approved. 	<p>Minutes of the Private Reserve Network, assessments and mid-term reports by year 2, and final assessment of the project by year 4.</p>	
<p>33. A number of consultations and coordination with multiple stakeholders have been carried out by means of PA system bodies at the 11 conservation areas (CAs)</p>	<p>Legal mechanism established and 9 regional councils officially formed, but inactive. There are no local councils established yet.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By year 3, 11 Regional Councils (1 per CA) reactivated/established, realigned and operating; By year 3, at least 1 local council of pilot PA in each conservation area (11 in total) formed and operating. By year 5, replicated approach and local council process of PA at least twice in each conservation area (that is, 22 more). 	<p>Decrees and administrative resolutions of SINAC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval and support from political authorities of collaborative management relationships of PAs. Collaborative management relationships of PA between SINAC and social actors established and in progress.

OUTCOME 5:
Successful models of PA system management increment and replicated at a systemic level by means of strategic alliances with key stakeholders.

SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT STRATEGY (OUTCOME AND PRODUCTS)



<p>34. Development of a model of agreements for public-private concession for non-essential service delivery and a level of expansion in the whole PA system in priority areas for biodiversity conservation.</p>	<p>Sporadic, non-systematized joint work experiences with local stakeholders for the operation of non-essential services and PA management. Based on pilot demonstrations from outcome 4, there is a great potential to create a useful model for public-private concession agreements to be promoted in the whole PA system.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By year 3, a model generated based on the 3 initial pilot demonstrations of public-private Concession Agreements for non-essential service delivery to PA at the Tempisque Conservation Area (OUTCOME 4); By year 5, model replicated in at least 15 new agreements on PA from other conservation areas; By the end of the project, the model is fully incorporated in official policies of SINAC. 	<p>SINAC's operative records, operative reports of PA, mid-term and final project assessments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Willingness of social actors and institutions to participate and share management responsibilities of PA.
<p>35. Development of a model of public-private partnerships established between municipalities and eco-tourism operators to develop and maintain biological corridors and level reached in the whole PA system in priority areas for biodiversity conservation.</p>	<p>GRUAS II emphasizes the importance of incorporating key biological corridors in the new eco-regional vision for the PA system. Biological corridors are already part of SINAC in conservation areas. However, more work is needed to appropriately implement the recommendations of GRUAS II. Municipalities are not involved in local soil use plan preparation, which could serve as a basis to link eco-tourism and conservation goals. Programa Aracaria XXI of the Spanish Cooperation will support initiatives at the Frio River basin.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By year 3, at least 4 public-private alliances signed (municipalities, eco-tourism operators) within the pilot conservation areas to coordinate and integrate allocation of resources to local initiatives of biological corridors according to the conservation priorities established by GRUAS II By year 4, a model created based on initial pilot demonstrations and each new alliance has formulated a new local soil use plan for the biological corridor designated. By year 5, these partnerships and soil use plans have been replicated in other places by means of at least 4 additional agreements. 	<p>Public-private agreements signed and new local soil use plans.</p>	



<p>OUTCOME 1: Legal and political framework reformed and improved to ensure in the long-term effective management and financial and ecological sustainability of PA System.</p> <p>Product 1.1: A national policy for a consolidated system of terrestrial and marine PA approved and in force.</p> <p>Product 1.2: Pre-requisite of legal reforms and a re-classification of PA, defined and applied through local and regional planning instruments.</p> <p>Product 1.3: SINAC's Strategic Plan officially approved and in operation.</p> <p>Product 1.4: Strategic Action Plan of PA System (National Master Plan) officially approved and in operation.</p>	<p>OUTCOME 2: Improvement of the institutional framework and capacities of the SINAC's protected areas system for an optimal ecological planning and effective management.</p> <p>Product 2.1: Structure and institutional and administrative organization at SINAC realigned and improved.</p> <p>Product 2.2: SINAC's intra-institutional coordination mechanisms for an effective management of PA system</p> <p>Product 2.3: Staff profiles, responsibilities and labor norms defined and realigned for an improved management of PA system.</p> <p>Product 2.4: Training program for practitioners in all levels of administrative, technical and practical skills needed for an optimal effectiveness of PA management.</p> <p>Product 2.5: Management, evaluation and knowledge adaptation systems developed for the PA system and the project.</p>	<p>OUTCOME 3: SINAC has financial sustainability for an effective achievement of their strategic objectives and supply of resources in the long term for PA system management needs.</p> <p>Product 3.1: Funding strategy for PA adopted and in progress.</p> <p>Product 3.2: Business Funding Plan for the PA system prepared and in progress.</p> <p>Product 3.3: Creation and retention of new income sources for PA, enabled by national policies.</p> <p>Product 3.4: A wide funding mechanism system for PA system and its constituent units developed and implemented.</p> <p>Product 3.5: Online financial information system and recovery mechanism for PA system designed and established at SINAC.</p> <p>Product 3.6: A training program for financial administrators of SINAC in all levels⁴⁶ to establish, consolidate and operate financial, managerial and business planning systems.</p>	<p>OUTCOME 4: SINAC tries different innovative conservation approaches in conservation areas and PA.</p> <p>Product 4.1: PA boundaries registered and demarcated for a representative sample of PA units in the PA system.</p> <p>Product 4.2: Infrastructure and accessibility improved in 10 most visited PAs within the PA system.</p> <p>Product 4.3: Support of PA management authorities to community business approved and institutionalized.</p> <p>Product 4.4: Partnerships between one conservation area and the tourism industry to fund PA management, approved and institutionalized.</p> <p>Product 4.5: New management approaches and local planning tools for soil use, compatible with ecological conservation objectives, proven with local governments and community organizations.</p> <p>Product 4.6: New eco-regional planning approaches and management of PA, proven through a partnership with TNC-Osa conservation area.</p>	<p>OUTCOME 5: Successful management models of PA system increased and replicated at a systemic level by means of strategic partnerships with key stakeholders.</p> <p>Product 5.1: Local and regional councils for PA management in progress, with an integrated and intersectoral vision through flexible and inclusive management.</p> <p>Product 5.2: SINAC has institutional capacity to get involved with indigenous communities and give support with alternative subsistence means for communities located in or around PA.</p> <p>Product 5.3: Institutional mechanisms established with clear rules for quotations and bidding for concessions, other use permits and opportunities for local business people.</p> <p>Product 5.4: Models for PA management boards of multiple interested bodies, institutionalized and replicated in a variety of ecological and socio-economic contexts.</p> <p>Product 5.5: SINAC's PA system is connected with biological corridors that operate with innovative models for public-private partnerships.</p> <p>Product 5.6: Marketing strategy and communication on values, vulnerability and admission mechanisms of PA, formulated and implemented at a national level.</p>
--	--	---	--	--

⁴⁶ The three goal levels are: (i) Central Level; (ii) Regional Level with emphasis on the 11 Conservation Areas; and (iii) Level of Location of PA.

Annex 5: Interviews and Agencies Consulted

Field mission | Assessment of "Removing Barriers" Program of SINAC: December 2014

Day	Canton	Head office / location	Interviewee	Main topics dealt in the interview
12-01-2014		SINAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charles Dixon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General review of the state of the art of the project Programming of mission December
12-01-2014		UNDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kifah Sasa Charles Dixon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General review of the state of the art of the project Projections, expected impact
12-01-2014		SINAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rodrigo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investment in IT systems, HW y SW IT services Information technology support. Information technologies plan 2014 - 2019
12-01-2014		SINAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guiselle Mendez 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationship IDB-Tourism and "Removing Barriers" Project Counterpart resources Projections
12-02-2014		SINAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fernando Briceño 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SINAC Training
12-02-2014		SINAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zaida Trejos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SINAC Planning
12-02-2014		SINAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kathia González 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow up and monitoring Project
12-02-2014		SINAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alvaro Soto 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing and Communication SINAC
12-02-2014		SINAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gustavo Induni 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research on Protected Wildlands - SINAC
12-03-2014		SINAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leonardo Nuñez Montaner. Director SINAC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General review of the project Projections of project activities and impact for SINAC
12-03-2014		SINAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laura Arguedas Consultant UTUR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Characterization of non-essential services
12-03-2014		SINAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesbia Sebilla 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International Cooperation
12-03-2014		SINAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alexis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watershed Water Canon
12-03-2014		SINAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anabelle Montoya Consultant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening Local Councils
12-03-2014		SINAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Miriam Miranda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IDB Cadaster Project

Day	Canton	Head office / location	Interviewee	Main topics dealt in the interview
12-03-2014		SINAC	• Sandra Jiménez	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional coordination Project • Financial strengthening SINAC
12-04-2014		SINAC	• Mario Coto	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biological corridor • Indigenous Agenda • SIG
12-04-2014		SINAC	• Vera Violeta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous Agenda
12-04-2014		FUNDECOR	• Felipe Carazo Director FUNDECOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-essential services
12-04-2014		SINAC	• Carlos Domínguez	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fees Project • Financial strategy
12-04-2014		SINAC	• Charles Dixon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination of project • Outcome • Management analysis
12-04-2014		SINAC	• Milena Obando	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration and finance of project
12-04-2014		SINAC	• Rosny Barquero	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultancy on Map of Processes
12-05-2014		SINAC	• María Gómez	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal topics • Processes • Biodiversity Act • IDB Cadaster • Harmonization of legal framework
12-05-2014		SINAC	• Damián Martínez	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barreritas Project
12-05-2014		IUCN	• José Courrau Alberto Salas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracted services to IUCN • Re-classification • Legislative proposals
12-05-2014		SINAC	• Patricia González	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International cooperation
12-05-2014		SINAC	• Cindy Sanchez	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Software and operation of international cooperation
12-08-2014		ACCVC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miguel Rodríguez • Rafael Rodríguez • Gladis de Mario • Manuel Antonio • Mauricio • Aurelia Viques • Olga Durán 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of products done by ACCVC
12-08-2014		ACCVC	• Rafael Gutiérrez	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integral assessment of project during management as director

Day	Canton	Head office / location	Interviewee	Main topics dealt in the interview
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> of SINAC Specific products of project in ACCVC
12-08-2014		Asada Sabanilla	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hilder Calvo Bolaños Natalia Soto 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community projects Trip for sharing experiences with other Asadas
12-09-2014		Asada Paso Ancho and Boquerón	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Glendy Gomez Karen Esquivel Francini Vargas Beatriz Molina 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water Supply Project with school
12-09-2014		School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water Supply Project with School
12-09-2014			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ana María Ramírez Isabel Araya 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asociación Guías Turrialba Asociación Ecológica La Pastora
12-09-2014			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isabel Corrales Vanessa Zamora Rodolfo Tenorio 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asociación Guías Usurú Simirifac Indigenous Project
12-10-2014			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Olga 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
12-10-2014		Asada San Bernardino	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Projects
12-10-2014			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Juan Vega Gutierrez Efrain Vasquez Rafael Araya 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asociación Productores para el Desarrollo de Cacho Negro Rural tourism
12-11-2014			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kifah Sasa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vision of UNDP and implementation
12-11-2014			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jenny Ash 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wildlife Protected Areas
12-12-2014		ACCVC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation of results and small projects

Field Mission II Assessment of "Removing Barriers" Program of SINAC: January 2015

Day	Canton	Head Office / Location	Interviewees	Main topics dealt in the interview
01-07-2015	Hojancha	Regional office of SINAC-ACT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nelson Espinoza, Administrator at Camaronal Wildlife Refuge Laura Arguedas, Consultant of Non-essential services Minor Díaz, Barra Honda National Park Ademar Rosales, Baulas National Marine Refuge Laura Anderson R., Programa Marino ACT Jorge Vásquez, FUNDECODES Rotney Piedra, Barra Honda National Park Erick Calderón, Tandem Consultant Andrés Montero, Tandem Consultant Alvin Soto, Tandem Consultant Emel Rodríguez, ACT- "Removing Barriers" liaison Gerardo Barboza, volunteer consultant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-essential services Volunteer work
01-08-2015	Nicoya	Barra Honda National Park (PNBH)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dorian Méndez G. Administrator at Barra Honda National Park (PNBH) Oscar Cubillo, volunteer work coordinator, PNBH Norman Mayorga, President Asociación de Guías PNBH, Forest Firefighters PNBH. Laura Arguedas, Consultant Non-essential services Jorge Vásquez, FUNDECODES Gerardo Barboza, consultant of voluntary work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-essential services Volunteer work
01-08-2015	Liberia	Curubandé	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enith Rodríguez Arrieta, President of Asociación 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-essential services

Day	Canton	Head Office / Location	Interviewees	Main topics dealt in the interview
			de Desarrollo de Curubandé • Esteban Matarrita Alvarado, Asociación de Desarrollo de Curubandé, administrator of local Hotel Hacienda Guachipelin • José Aguilar, Tourism Conservation Area of Guanacaste (GCA)	
01-08-2015		Rincón de la Vieja National Park (PNRV)	• Ronald Gutiérrez Villegas, Park Ranger PNRV • Cristian Zúñiga Gutiérrez, Park Ranger PNRV • José Aguilar, Tourism Guanacaste Conservation Area (ACG)	• Non-essential services
01-08-2015		Santa Rosa National Park (PNSR)	• Juan Carlos Carrillo Espinoza, Tourism Coordinator GCA • José Aguilar, Tourism Guanacaste Conservation Area (ACG)	• Non-essential services
01-08-2015	La Cruz	La Cruz	• Juanita Mora Leal, secretary of CORAC at GCA • José Aguilar, Tourism Guanacaste Conservation Area (ACG)	• Non-essential services
01-09-2015	Garabito	Carara National Park (PNC)	• Gabriel Rodríguez, Carara National Park (PNC), Park Ranger RNVSPH	• Non-essential services
01-10-2015	Parrita	Refugio Nacional Vida Silvestre Playa Hermosa (RNVSPH)	• José Bonilla, Park Ranger RNVSPH • Marco Vinicio Garro, Park Ranger RNVSPH	• Non-essential services
01-11-2015	Aguirre	Manuel Antonio National Park (PNMA)	• Álvaro Romero, IDB project liaison • Yareth Daniel Ledezma Gómez, Barreritas Project	• Non-essential services

Day	Canton	Head Office / Location	Interviewees	Main topics dealt in the interview
01/12/2015	Osa	Ballena National Marine Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carlos Rodríguez, PN Piedras Blancas and Refugio Nacional Golfito • Cristian Masis S. Humedal Térraba Sierpe • Evelyn Aguilar M. Legal Department ACOSA • Joel Gracia M., Planning ACOSA, Golfito • Juan Luis Sánchez V., Ballena National Marine Park • Olger Mendez, Ballena National Marine Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot processes COLAC. • Training • Studies: Soil use regulation, boundaries PNMB, Eco-regional Plan ACOSA. • ACOSA
01/12/2015	Perez Zeledón	Regional Office of Conservation Area La Amistad Pacífico (ACLA-P)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ronald Chan, Director ACLA-P 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Removing Barriers" Project • Indigenous Agenda • Pilot projects in indigenous territory Cabagra, Salitre, and Ujarrás.
01/12/2015	Buenos Aires	Subregional Office of Buenos Aires (SINAC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graven Villegas, link indigenous topic ACLA-P • Frank González, Communication Agenda indigenous topic ACLA-P 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous Agenda, • Pilot projects in indigenous territory Cabagra, Salitre, and Ujarrás.
01/13/2015	Buenos Aires	Territorio Cabagra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delfin Figueroa Mayorga, President Asociación de Desarrollo Integral Cabagra • Charles Morales, Fire Brigade, security guard ADI Cabagra • Hernando Delgado, Fire Brigade, security guard ADI Cabagra • Mayela Obando, assistant ADI Cabagra • René Delgado, Elders Council, Cabagra • Denis Granado Mayorga, Fire Brigade, security guard ADI Cabagra • Berley Granado Mayorga, Fire Brigade, security guard ADI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous Agenda • Demonstration projects

Day	Canton	Head Office / Location	Interviewees	Main topics dealt in the interview
			Cabagra <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graven Villegas, indigenous topic ACLA-P liaison Frank Gonzalez, Communication Agenda indigenous topic ACLA-P 	
01/14/2015	Guápiles	Regional Office of Conservation Area Tortuguero-ACTO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laura Rivera, Director ACTO Laura Segura, Responsible for Participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COLAC Systematization
01/15/2015	Talamanca	Municipality of Talamanca	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Melvin Cordero Cordero, Municipal Major Olman Morales, Director La Amistad National Park (LANP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous Agenda COLAC Productive projects
01/15/2015	Talamanca	Asociación de Desarrollo Integral del Territorio Indígena Bribrí de Talamanca ADITIBRI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eugenio Lek Quiros, member of the Board of ADITIBRI. Forestry Division. Olman Morales, Director La Amistad National Park (LANP) Bladimir Morales, cabinet maker ADITIBRI Waldino Gabb Vargas, cabinet maker ADITIBRI Jenny Humphreyys Barboza, craftswoman ADITIBRI Isidro Paéz Hernández, cabinet maker ADITIBRI Arsenio Almengor, builder ADITIBRI Bahid Segura, Head of workshop ADITIBRI Emmanuel Molina Diaz, cabinet maker ADITIBRI Manuel Nuñez Blanco, workshop ADITIBRI Bernarda Morales Marín, member of the Board of ADITIBRI. Crafts and tourism area Demetrio Mayorga, treasurer of ADITIBRI Isidro Hernandez, cabinet maker ADITIBRI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous Agenda COLAC Productive projects, Guides project

Day	Canton	Head Office / Location	Interviewees	Main topics dealt in the interview
01/15/2015	Talamanca	Asociación de desarrollo integral del territorio indígena Cabecar ADITICA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olman Morales , Director La Amistad National Park (LANP) • Cándida Salazar Buitrago, member Board of Directors ADITICA • Yolanda Vasquez, Vice President of ADITICA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous Agenda • COLAC • Productive projects, • Guides project
01/16/2015		SINAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charles Dixon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Mission January and last information requirements
02/02/2015		MINAE (Telephone conference)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rubén Muñoz Robles, Director of International Cooperation, MINAE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of history of project • Analysis of products achieved • Role of focal point of GEF and project

Annex 6: Consulted Documents and Bibliography

1. Catastro y Registro Nacional. Informe Final del Componente 2, Programa de regularización del catastro y registro contrato de préstamo BID 1284/OC-CR fondos SINAC. Componente 2. Regularización de los derechos relacionados con la propiedad inmueble en áreas bajo regímenes especiales (ABRE). Costa Rica: Catastro y Registro Nacional, 2013.
2. Action Plan of the Strategic Plan SINAC 2013-2018
3. SINAC. Tool for the Evaluation of the Effectiveness in the Management of Wild Areas of Costa Rica. "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System in Costa Rica" Project. Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System, 2014.
4. SINAC. Final Consultancy Report. "Actualización de los montos percibidos por servicios establecidas por la Ley de Conservación de la Vida Silvestre 7317". "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System in Costa Rica" Project. Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2013.
5. SINAC. Final Consultancy Report. "Análisis, diseño y normalización de los procesos y subprocesos institucionales así como los procedimientos prioritarios que ejecuta el SINAC con base en sus competencias, de manera que contribuyan a aportar la información sustantiva que alimente el sistema de información gerencial del SINAC". "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System in Costa Rica". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System, San Jose-Costa. Rica, 2010.
6. SINAC. Final Consultancy Report. "Diseñar, implementar y gestionar una metodología que instrumentalice un sistema de monitoreo y evaluación para medir el grado de implementación y la efectividad de las "Políticas para las ASP del SINAC de Costa Rica– 2011 y otras políticas del SINAC". "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System in Costa Rica". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System, San Jose-Costa. Rica, 2014.
7. SINAC. Final Consultancy Report. "Ejecución de diferentes actividades de capacitación para los miembros de los Consejos Colegiados del SINAC; Consejo Nacional (CONAC), Consejos Regionales (CORACs) y Consejos Locales (COLACs) del SINAC, en materia legal y técnica necesarias para que cuenten con el conocimiento y herramientas fundamentales para lograr los objetivos de la Ley de Biodiversidad N° 7788 y la óptima realización de las funciones correspondientes en cada consejo". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa. Rica, 2014.
8. SINAC. Final Consultancy Report. "Elaboración de la estrategia de cooperación para el SINAC que incluya prioridades de cooperación institucionales, su plan de acción y el sistema de seguimiento y evaluación del cumplimiento de la referida estrategia". "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System in Costa Rica". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2013.

9. SINAC. Final Consultancy Report. "Elaboración de un Plan Director y su Plan de Acción para las ASP de Costa Rica". "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System in Costa Rica". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2014.
10. SINAC. Final Consultancy Report. "Establecer un Sistema Nacional de Categorización de las Áreas Silvestres Protegidas de Costa Rica". "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System in Costa Rica". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2014.
11. SINAC. Final Consultancy Report. "Estrategia de Mercadeo y Comunicación del Sistema Nacional de Áreas de Conservación". "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System in Costa Rica". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2013.
12. SINAC. Final Consultancy Report. "Evaluación de la Efectividad de Manejo De 26 Áreas Silvestres Protegidas de Costa Rica". "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System in Costa Rica". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2014.
13. SINAC. Final Consultancy Report. "Herramienta para la evaluación de la efectividad de manejo de las Áreas Silvestres Protegidas de Costa Rica". "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System in Costa Rica". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2014.
14. SINAC. Final Consultancy Report. "Plan de Capacitación Institucional Especializado del Sistema Nacional de Áreas de Conservación". "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System in Costa Rica". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2011.
15. SINAC. Final Consultancy Report. "Propuesta de Estructura Organizacional SINAC". "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System in Costa Rica". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2010.
16. SINAC. Final Consultancy Report. "Rediseño de los Perfiles ocupacionales y normas de competencia (cargos) con base en las funciones de las unidades administrativas establecidas en la nueva estructura así como evaluación laboral de los funcionarios del Sistema Nacional de Áreas de Conservación". "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System in Costa Rica". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2014.
17. SINAC. Final Consultancy Report. "Sistematizar la Experiencia Técnica y Legal en Gestión de Recurso Hídrico adquirida en el Área de Conservación de Cordillera Volcánica Central (ACCV) para compartir con otras Áreas de Conservación". "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System in Costa Rica". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2014.
18. SINAC. Final Consultancy Report. "Plan de Mercadeo y Comunicación del Sistema Nacional de Áreas de Conservación". "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System in Costa Rica". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2014.

Protected Areas System in Costa Rica". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2014.

19. SINAC. Final Consultancy Report. Propuesta de Estructura Organizacional SINAC. "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System in Costa Rica". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2010.
20. SINAC. Final Report. Sobre el procedimiento para la aplicación de las sanciones administrativas ante el acceso no autorizado a los recursos genéticos y bioquímicos realizados en el territorio costarricense. "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System in Costa Rica". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2014.
21. SINAC. Report. Foro de proyectos de cooperación en ejecución del SINAC-MINAE 2014. Costa Rica: SINAC-MINAE, 2013.
22. SINAC. Oficio SINAC-SE-GDRH-1163-2013. Informe de la capacitación en Excel y office 2010, por medio de plataforma en línea a todos los funcionarios de todos los niveles del Sistema Nacional de Áreas de Conservación. Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2010.
23. SINAC. Plan de Acción para la Implementación del Programa de Trabajo sobre Áreas Protegidas de la Convención sobre la Diversidad Biológica, Costa Rica. Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2012. 37 págs.
24. SINAC. Políticas para las Áreas Silvestres Protegidas (ASP) del Sistema Nacional de Áreas de Conservación-SINAC 2011-2015. "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System in Costa Rica". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2014. 44 pp.
25. SINAC. Presentation of the coordinator of the project to the pilot committee. "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System in Costa Rica." December 04, 2014.
26. SINAC. Consultancy Report. "Sistematizar modelos de alianzas de cooperación privado-privado-público y definir modelos y procesos replicables de cooperación en el Área de Conservación de Tempisque". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2014.
27. SINAC. Consultancy Report. "Diseño arquitectónico del sitio y planos constructivos de infraestructura aprobados para el Refugio Nacional de Vida Silvestre Camaronal (RNVSC)". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2014.
28. SINAC. Consultancy Report. "Fortalecer y consolidar la coordinación intersectorial entre actores locales (públicos y privados) en el marco del Programa de Gestión Local y Corredores Biológicos del ACTo que permitan la gestión del territorio, logrando consolidar espacios de concertación en atención a los principios que establece la

- "Estrategia Regional Agro-ambiental y Salud ERAS". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2014
29. SINAC. Consultancy Report. "Diseño y Ejecución de Capacitación para el Fortalecimiento de las Habilidades de Gestión de 16 Organizaciones Comunes". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2014
 30. SINAC. Cuaderno Educativo. Informe de la consultoría "Diseño y Ejecución de Capacitación para el Fortalecimiento de las Habilidades de Gestión de 16 Organizaciones Comunes". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2014.
 31. SINAC. Consultancy Report. Diseño y validación de una metodología para sistematizar experiencias piloto en el marco del sistema nacional de áreas de conservación (SINAC), caso específico proyecto piloto "alianzas e iniciativas locales en la gestión de las zonas de amortiguamiento de las áreas núcleo de la RB CVC". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2013.
 32. SINAC. Consultancy Report. Nuestras Huellas a través de la Sistematización: Apuntes pedagógicos. Manual. Diseño pedagógico para sistematizar experiencias piloto en el marco del Área de Conservación Cordillera Volcánica Central (ACCV) / Reserva de Biosfera Cordillera Volcánica Central (RBCVC). Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2014.
 33. SINAC. Consultancy Report. Elaborar un estudio de viabilidad para turismo rural en la comunidad de Cubujuquí Asociación de Productores Cacho Negro, Cubujuquí. Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2014.
 34. SINAC. Consultancy Report. Manual para la Capacitación para el Fortalecimiento de las Habilidades de Gestión de 16 Organizaciones Comunes". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2014.
 35. SINAC. Consultancy Report. Perfiles de 16 proyectos ejecutados en el Área de Conservación de la Cordillera Volcánica Central (ACCV). Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2014.
 36. SINAC. Consultancy Report. Elaborar y establecer un plan de voluntariado para una organización local que vincule las acciones del Área de Conservación Tempisque, conforme al marco normativo existente siendo así, un modelo de replicación para el SINAC. Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. Costa Rica, 2014.
 37. SINAC. Consultancy Report. Elaboración de Tres Estudios para el Área de Conservación Osa: i) Plan Director Ecoregional de ACOSA; ii) Elaboración del borrador de reglamento de Uso Público del Humedal Nacional Terraba Sierpe HNTS y iii) Elaboración de estudios de capacidad de carga para los sitios con potencial de uso público, incluyendo Isla Garza dentro del Humedal Terraba Sierpe y la parte terrestre del Parque Nacional Marino Ballena PNMB. Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. Costa Rica, 2014.

38. SINAC. Consultancy Report. Estudio Técnico- Científico del Corredor Biológico Colorado-Tortuguero, y de un área piloto, con el uso de Sistemas de Información Geográfica. Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. Costa Rica, 2014.
39. SINAC. Consultancy Report. Sistematización de las actividades de adaptación al cambio climático que favor de la conectividad en los corredores biológicos en Costa Rica. Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2013.
40. SINAC. Consultancy Report. Estudio de Pre-Factibilidad Parque Nacional Cahuita (PNC). Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2013.
41. SINAC. Consultancy Report. Estudio de Pre-Factibilidad Parque Nacional Carara (PNC). Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2013.
42. SINAC. Consultancy Report. Estudio de Pre-Factibilidad Parque Nacional Marino Ballena (PNMB). Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2013.
43. SINAC. Consultancy Report. Estudio de Pre-Factibilidad Parque Nacional Santa Rosa (PNSR) Estudio de Pre-Factibilidad Parque Nacional Santa Rosa (PNSR). Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2013.
44. SINAC. Consultancy Report. Estudio de Pre-Factibilidad Parque Nacional Volcán Tenorio). Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2013.
45. SINAC. Consultancy Report. Estudio de Pre-Factibilidad Reserva Natural Absoluta Cabo Blanco (RNACB). Estudio de Pre-Factibilidad Parque Nacional Santa Rosa (PNSR). Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2013.
46. SINAC. Consultancy Report. Perfil técnico del corredor biológico cordillera a cordillera.
47. Conservación la Amistad Caribe. Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2012
48. SINAC. Consultancy Report. Perfil técnico del corredor biológico del río naranjo. Área de Conservación Pacífico Central. Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2012
49. SINAC. Consultancy Report. Perfil técnico del Corredor Biológico Quetzal Tres Colinas. Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2013
50. SINAC. Consultancy Report. Sistematización Participativa del Programa de Gestión Local y Corredores Biológicos del Área de Conservación Tortuguero-ACTo. Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2012.
51. SINAC. Consultancy Report. Facilitar un proceso de sistematización de experiencias de manejo participativo en la conservación de la biodiversidad en el marco de los siguientes procesos: i) 16 proyectos pilotos con organizaciones comunales del Área de Conservación Cordillera Volcánica Central (ACCV) y; ii) la implementación de la Agenda Indígena en cinco territorios indígenas colindantes al Parque Nacional la

Amistad (PILA) Proyecto "Removiendo Barreras para la Sostenibilidad del Sistema de Áreas Protegidas de Costa Rica". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2014.

52. SINAC. Consultancy Report. Identificación de las actividades ambientalmente mejoradas que se realizan en corredores biológicos que ya se reconocen como Mipymes, y otras que tienen potencial de llegar a serlo. Proyecto "Removiendo Barreras para la Sostenibilidad del Sistema de Áreas Protegidas de Costa Rica". Costa Rica: Sistema Nacional de Áreas de Conservación. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2014.
53. SINAC. Consultancy Report. Caracterizar, realizar estudio de costos, realizar sondeo de mercado y, preparar los carteles para posterior contratación por el SINAC, según normativa vigente, de los servicios no esenciales definidos por el SINAC para las siguientes Áreas Protegidas: a) Refugio de Vida Silvestre Playa Hermosa b) Parque Nacional Carara, c) Parque Nacional Manuel Antonio (Sector Playa Rey), d) Parque Nacional Santa Rosa y e) Parque Nacional Rincón de la Vieja. Proyecto "Removiendo Barreras para la Sostenibilidad del Sistema de Áreas Protegidas de Costa Rica". Costa Rica: Sistema Nacional de Áreas de Conservación. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2014.
54. SINAC. Consultancy Report. Sistematización de las experiencias con los territorios indígenas del PILA Caribe. "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System in Costa Rica". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2014.
55. SINAC. Consultancy Report. Sistematización de las experiencias con los territorios indígenas del PILA Pacífico. "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System in Costa Rica". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2014.
56. SINAC. Management Plan. Parque Internacional La Amistad Talamanca. "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System in Costa Rica". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2012.
57. SINAC. Consultancy Report. Sobre servicios no esenciales de ACT. "i) Caracterizar, ii) realizar estudio de costos, iii) realizar estudio de mercado y, iv) preparar los carteles para posterior contratación por el SINAC, según normativa vigente, de los servicios no esenciales definidos por el SINAC para las siguientes Áreas Protegidas: a) Parque Nacional Barra Honda; b) Parque Nacional Marino Las Baulas; c) Reserva Natural Absoluta Cabo Blanco y d) Refugio Nacional de Vida Silvestre Camaronal. Área de Conservación Tempisque". "Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System in Costa Rica". Costa Rica: National Conservation Areas System. San Jose-Costa Rica, 2012.
58. UN. United Nations Development Assistance Framework, Costa Rica 2013-2017. Costa Rica: United Nations for Development, 2012.
59. UN. Action Plan for the Country Program between the Government of Costa Rica and the United Nations Development Programme for cooperation period 2013-2017. Costa Rica: United Nations for Development, 2012.

"Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System of Costa Rica"



60. UN. Documento Project for the Program for Costa Rica (2013-2017). United Nations for Development, 2012.

Annex 7: Technical Annexes

1. Policies for Wildlife Protected Areas (WPA) of the National Protected Areas System of Costa Rica⁴⁷:
 - POLICY 1. Ecological representativity: The National Protected Areas System should have representative samples of each relevant natural ecosystem that has presence in the country's continental, insular, and marine territory, as well as guaranteeing connectivity that allows maintaining and recovering ecosystems integrity.
 - POLICY 2. Public participation: Management of Wild Protected Areas (WPA) will incorporate instruments and public participation mechanisms which allow applying different governance models for Wild Protected Areas management. Additionally, it will promote in the population the capacity to influence in decision making and public policies and their incorporation as active subjects for conservation and biodiversity protection.
 - POLICY 3. Sustainable tourism: Tourism management in Wild Protected Areas should be developed under a sustainability framework, integrated with its influence area and articulated with policies, plans, and national conservation and tourism programs.
 - POLICY 4. State's Natural Heritage (SNH) in WPA: Consolidate the property and feel dominance over those territories that are part of the State's natural heritage, according to their management category.
 - POLICY 5. Management, control, and protection of WPA: Establish a management system for WPA supported by management scientific criteria, emphasizing on damage prevention and effective and efficient control systems that guarantee conservation of biodiversity.
 - POLICY 6. Knowledge management: Management of WPA is supported by a solid basis of scientific, technical, and traditional knowledge that allows a continuous improvement and higher efficiency and effectiveness levels in biodiversity conservation.
 - POLICY 7. Territorial and spatial marine planning: Territorial planning at national and regional levels and in local regulatory plans should include criteria and environmental indicators that take into account connectivity and conservation elements of WPA.
 - POLICY 8. Response against global and local threats: Climatic change should be a cross cutting axis in all *in situ* conservation actions, taking into account especially the role that WPA play in mitigation and adaptation to climatic change in order to improve management, and in that way reduce vulnerability.
 - POLICY 9. Institutional capacity: The continuous growth of institutional capacity will direct all technical, administrative, and directive processes that guide WPA management and will be supported by permanent training processes and improvement processes of WPA staff conditions.
2. Expense Report and Project Implementation Report Years 2009-2015. Excel Database. PMU Project January 2015.

⁴⁷ SINAC. Políticas para las Áreas Silvestres Protegidas (ASP) del Sistema Nacional de Áreas de Conservación. SINAC 2011-2015. Costa Rica: Sistema Nacional de Áreas de Conservación. San José-Costa. Rica, 2014. 44 pp.

Annex 8: Description of new categories proposed for PAS of SINAC

Category	Primary Objective	Secondary Objective
Category A (Biological Reserve)	To preserve natural ecosystems and their services. They are sites that have suffered a slight or no alteration caused by human activities in which natural processes have been respected. Active management is not allowed. These sites can be used for scientific research and monitoring.	Public use is not allowed but if it occurs, it should be restricted to demarcated short paths, in small areas. (<1%).
Category B NATIONAL PARK (National Park, Wetlands)	To preserve natural ecosystems and their services. They are sites that have suffered a slight or no alteration caused by human activities in which natural processes have been respected. Active management is not allowed. Due to their ecological representativity they contribute to the national conservation goals. These sites can be used for research, tourism and environmental education.	It could be compatible with some types of resource traditional use when they do not mean an impact to ecosystem.
Category C NATURAL MONUMENT (Natural Monument)	To preserve any natural element (species or habitat) or any specific geomorphologic element and any associated biodiversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nature - Preserve cultural elements - Support to socio-economic development activities of local populations.
Category D HABITAT AND SPECIES MANAGEMENT AREA (NWR, Wetlands, Protected Zone, Forest Reserve, Marine Reserves)	To maintain, preserve and restore species and specific habitats. The site could require the intervention of indirect periodic active management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nature - Support to socio-economic development activities of local populations. - Support to public use. - Restoration and recovery actions could be developed.
Category E SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE USE AREA (NWR, Wetland, Forest Reserve, Marine Management Area)	Preserve ecosystems and services that cover most of the site (2/3) and use biodiversity in a sustainable way.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This category allows the practice of productive and extractive activities but not compatible ones. - Restoration and recovery actions could be developed.

Source: Taken from: SINAC. Final Consultancy Report "Establecer un Sistema Nacional de Categorización de las Áreas Silvestres Protegidas de Costa Rica". Costa Rica: Sistema Nacional de Áreas de Conservación. San Jose-Costa. Rica, 2014.

Annex 9: Results of Project Implementation in ACCVC

Name of the project	Actions and goals achieved
Revival of La Montañita spring water with participation of the community at Sabanilla de Alajuela. Asociación Administradora Acueducto de Sabanilla de Alajuela	By means of training and accompaniment from SINAC, the establishment of the perimetral network, equipment (Laptop, projector, screen), 2 local forums on water management and natural resources protection and exchange of other ASADAS (25 people) and talks held at schools; achievements were: 1) protection of spring water where the water intake is located for the Sabanillas Community; 2) community awareness about water management; 3) strengthening of organization capacities in water management; 4) production of audiovisual aids (video, leaflet, brochure) and educational material with the participation of SINAC, GEF, and UNDP; 5) rapprochement of SINAC with communities; 6) creation of a group of young people; 7) involvement of communities of upland areas and coordination with other ASADAS of the zone; 8) inclusion of follow up and maintenance of project actions in work plans of the association; 9) and relationship between ACCVC/SINAC which favors future accompaniment.
Strengthening of management initiatives for the management of the sub-basins of Birris and Paez Rivers in zones of influence to the area of aquifer recharge at Irazu Volcano National Park	ASADA Paso Ancho – Boquerón, by the establishment of a rain water capture system: equipment (laptop and projector), training and accompaniment from SINAC; achievements were: 1) saving and provision of water at educational centers; 2) strengthening of ASADA on water management coming from aqueduct to meet the demand for drinking water; 3) involvement of the community in the project; 4) strengthening of senior citizen group (Espiga de Oro); and 5) strengthening of links with SINAC. The plan is to extend the project to the development of a forest tree nursery. The plans include the creation of an environmental education center. The possibility of the creation of the union between ASADAS at a local level is being considered. They wish to extend to other actions like the incorporation of a tree component in the production system of the zone.
Strengthening of operative capacities of the Asociación TURI-ARVA and GIRS Interinstitutional Commission to promote rural tourism and sustainable development at Santa Cruz de Turrialba.	The association's capacities were strengthened through training and accompaniment from SINAC, with equipment, image legalization and marketing workshops, allowing the creation of educational material, talks held in 6 educational centers of the zone, celebration of the day of the environment, campaign on waste management, a field trip of students from CINDEA Santa Cruz – Turrialba to Poas Volcano National Park.
Strengthening of capacities of Asociación Ecológica La Pastora to generate alternatives oriented to solid waste management and production of	By means of training and accompaniment from SINAC, the equipment, a workshop on entrepreneurship, made possible the organization of days for garbage collection, educational activities at schools, crafts made of waste by senior citizens, chats at schools, fire prevention, delivery of educational material and containers to separate waste according to their type placed in shops of the location. Results were: 1) inclusion of senior citizens and women in the project; 2) incorporation of the community in management and collection (in public spaces, roads

Name of the project	Actions and goals achieved
crafts made from waste at the community of La Pastora, Turrialba	and creeks) and use of waste; 3) community participation in waste separation and waste collection; 4) incipient development of a productive activity for housewives, and 5) the idea of creating a center for waste collection.
Implementation of 2 zoo-nurseries for tepezcuintles (<i>agouti paca</i>) at the indigenous community of Simirínak at Turrialba.	By means of training and accompaniment from SINAC, and resource endowment, the construction of 2 zoo-nurseries was accomplished, and the acquisition of 3 pairs of tepezcuintles for reproduction. By the implementation of zoo-nurseries the following was accomplished: 1) Development of cognitive and methodological capacities in the reproduction <i>ex-situ</i> of endangered species. 2) Organization capacities that allowed the projection of other actions of importance for the community (roads, crafters), entrepreneurship, leadership, self-esteem, seeds management, best agricultural practices, biodiversity, wildlife, environmental legislation and environmental education. Another accomplishment was the production of educational material in Spanish and Cabecar, brochures and posters. Experience with SINAC about a work methodology with indigenous groups. Interinstitutional intervention and support network to the community. Sustainability. There are currently some own resources and there is an ongoing search for funds for future projects. The plan is to improve roads, stands for selling food, and crafts shops by means of the attractiveness of the zoo-nursery and visitation. The action could be replicated in other sectors of the community and other indigenous territories.
Strengthening of Asociación U-SURE by means of training and equipment to benefit the community and the Guayabo National Monument together with local and regional actors.	Through training, leadership, administrative and project management actions, service delivery to tourists, monument protection, relationship with media and accompaniment from SINAC, equipment and 2 workshops held with the community; they improved their organizational and technical capacities to improve the offer of tour guide services at the Guayabo National Monument. They improved their knowledge about the architectonic value and the monument environment. Integration of crafters of SIMIRINAC. As a consequence, visitors receive quality services on the interpretation of the Monument. Facilitation and support to WPA was also achieved, with guided tours for visitors. Approaches were improved to deal with tourists and the support to PA management, which has an increasing importance that this WPA has only 50% of the staff that it really needs at this moment, and that visitation has increased in around 20 to 35 visitors per year, thus it is expected an increase in service demand.
Drinking water supply at the community of San Bernardino Asociación Administradora de Acueducto y Alcantarillado Sanitario de San Bernardino	The ASADA at San Bernardino has a renewed and strengthened leadership, a recent construction of infrastructure to accommodate administration and a storeroom; and community support and institutional recognition. SINAC keeps up raining and accompaniment by furnishing of equipment, material production for two workshops, educational material, activities to share experiences with other ASADAs (Liga de ASADAs Balsar), as well as the Pure Water for All Festival. The project accomplished: promotion of the extension of the aqueduct's supply capacity to benefit the community, through the development of new infrastructure and improvement (water uptake, collection tank, pipes); support efforts of the new administration on water management; strengthening of the relationship between SINAC and ASADA as an ally

Name of the project	Actions and goals achieved
	to strengthen management of the forest reserve of the Central Volcanic Mountain Range and Braulio Carrillo National Park; they keep the commitment of giving continuity to the environmental education project.
Asociación de Productores de Cacho Negro.	<p>The place features forest of great tourism potential. Complementary projects are designed to strengthen the tourism offer that can be funded with the financial services from public entities.</p> <p>Through training on rural tourism, equipment (laptops), and the elaboration of a tourism study (a study of viability for rural tourism in the communities of Cubujuquí Asociación de Productores Cacho Negro, Cubujuquí). The association accomplished the following: 1) clarification and determination of the challenges and of the scope of the project to be effective (cost-effective); 2) strengthening of the relationship between SINAC and the positioning of ASADA as an ally to strengthen the management of the Forest Reserve of the Central Volcanic Mountain Range and Braulio Carrillo National Park. They were also able to get support from COOPELESCA R.L. and Coope Cubujuquí R.L.), to fund project actions and environmental management.</p>

Source: Prepared internally, based on field visits and interviews with key stakeholders.

Strategy of the project		Objectively verifiable indicators					ANALYSIS FROM THE EVALUATION TEAM			
Objective		Contribution of the National Protected Areas System (NPAS) as a key component for sustainable development in Costa Rica								
Indicator	Baseline	Goal	Verification source	Risks and assumptions	Goals	Indicator Analysis, Goal and Assumption	Assessment judgment			
Purpose (objective): To eliminate the main systemic and institutional barriers to sustainability of the Protected Areas System of Costa Rica.	1. Area (in hectares) of protected areas that are legally incorporated in the SINAC PA system.	At least, the following hectares will be (a) legally incorporated to the PA system at the end of the project and (b) included in a long-term period at the system formulated. Report about the analysis of gaps, middle and final period assessments.	A new strategic action plan for the PA system to be formulated. Report about the analysis of gaps, middle and final period assessments.	Other relevant projects BDI and BD2 GFF in BAF Costa Rica were successfully implemented. The new governmental authorities support the deconcentration process of SINAC.	By means of the contribution from the Project to the "IDB Cadenet" Program the demarcation of 42 Protected Areas was accomplished. This area represents 731,655.7 hectares.	Design Observations (DO): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At present LFM has not been modified. There is no definition of the goal, in terms of quantity (in hectares) of protected areas that should be legally incorporated in the SINAC PA system by year 2023 (15 years after the project implementation started). The indicator assessment has to take into account that the area of 1,840,448 hectares is not a goal to be accomplished in 15 years but the base line data. See Table 1 of PRODOC, page 8. It is difficult to achieve the purpose of the project within the period planned for its implementation. Even though all the planned activities could have been 	Through the project the country has an Action Plan of the PA system with specific implementation strategies. Although it did not affect directly economic resources to solve land tenure problems, it influenced the increase on legal coverage of the demarcation of 42 Protected Areas, which represent 731,655.7 hectares. Besides, with "Barrieras" project (which is complementary), it is expected to achieve the consolidation of 1,503,260 hectares of Marine Protected Areas.			
		Hectares by ecosystem Total of ha for the PA system Marine and coastal	15 years 1,840,448 TBD	The key stakeholders effectively increase their capacities and use them for a better management of the PA system.	The Master Plan of the Wild Protected Areas of SINAC is the first one developed in Costa Rica. This plan allows the operationalization of national policies of WPA and the articulation of planning, management, and analysis that are in progress in the system. It allows the continuity of actions undertaken by the project. Some modification proposals are prepared for the decree of 6 WPA, which require to be formalized.	The indicator assessment has to take into account that the area of 1,840,448 hectares is not a goal to be accomplished in 15 years but the base line data. See Table 1 of PRODOC, page 8.	Through the project the country has an Action Plan of the PA system with specific implementation strategies. Although it did not affect directly economic resources to solve land tenure problems, it influenced the increase on legal coverage of the demarcation of 42 Protected Areas, which represent 731,655.7 hectares. Besides, with "Barrieras" project (which is complementary), it is expected to achieve the consolidation of 1,503,260 hectares of Marine Protected Areas.			
		The goal percentage for marine and coastal ecosystems will be determined in the PSP as part of the strategic action plan of the PA system in the long term.	TBD	SINAC, with the help of CCT, keeps on monitoring effective management of NPAS through the periodic application of METT.	There was a delay with IDB Calastro and SINAC, which delayed the approval of legal changes (decrees) of 6 WPA. IDB Tourism started activities with a delay due to the period of approval from the Assembly, the project required more time than it was scheduled and the initial period was slow. "Barrieras" Project is in progress.	The indicator assessment has to take into account that the area of 1,840,448 hectares is not a goal to be accomplished in 15 years but the base line data. See Table 1 of PRODOC, page 8.	Through the project the country has an Action Plan of the PA system with specific implementation strategies. Although it did not affect directly economic resources to solve land tenure problems, it influenced the increase on legal coverage of the demarcation of 42 Protected Areas, which represent 731,655.7 hectares. Besides, with "Barrieras" project (which is complementary), it is expected to achieve the consolidation of 1,503,260 hectares of Marine Protected Areas.			
		The target amount of hectares will be determined during the startup phase for PA.	TBD	The management of NPAS through the periodic application of METT.	There was a delay with IDB Calastro and SINAC, which delayed the approval of legal changes (decrees) of 6 WPA. IDB Tourism started activities with a delay due to the period of approval from the Assembly, the project required more time than it was scheduled and the initial period was slow. "Barrieras" Project is in progress.	The indicator assessment has to take into account that the area of 1,840,448 hectares is not a goal to be accomplished in 15 years but the base line data. See Table 1 of PRODOC, page 8.	Through the project the country has an Action Plan of the PA system with specific implementation strategies. Although it did not affect directly economic resources to solve land tenure problems, it influenced the increase on legal coverage of the demarcation of 42 Protected Areas, which represent 731,655.7 hectares. Besides, with "Barrieras" project (which is complementary), it is expected to achieve the consolidation of 1,503,260 hectares of Marine Protected Areas.			



Strategy of the project					ANALYSIS FROM THE EVALUATION TEAM			
Consolidation of the National Protected Areas System (NPAS) as a key component for sustainable development in Costa Rica								
Objective of the project	Indicator	Baseline	Goal	Verification source	Risks and assumptions	Goals	Indicator, Analysis, Goal and Assumption	Assessment judgment
					sustainable tourism and land registry programs of IDB and related loans are approved by the Ministry of Finance and confirmed by the Legislative Assembly		<p>implemented, the effect (to eliminate barriers) and impact (effective management of WPA) would be feasible in the medium term that could be 10 years in this case after the termination of the project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The assumptions are realistic and consistent and were partially accomplished.• It was not foreseen the low implementation capacity showed in the Eval Intermedia. It was not foreseen also that the three programs did not start and were not implemented in a synchronized way or as it is temporarily expected• The project did not consider products in the topic of Marine Protected Areas, but "Barrierias" project did consider this aspect. (PRODOC signed in 2011 but in force in March	

Strategy of the project	Objectively verifiable indicators					ANALYSIS FROM THE EVALUATION TEAM		
	Consolidation of the National Protected Areas System (NPAS) as a key component for sustainable development in Costa Rica					Goals	Indicator Analysis, Goal and Assumption	Assessment judgment
Objective of the project	Indicator	Baseline	Goal	Verification source	Risks and assumptions	Goals	Indicator Analysis, Goal and Assumption	Assessment judgment
2. Operative and efficient management at level of SINAC.	The METT sample PA was: - 8 high - 8 medium - 9 low Total: 25	For the end of the project: The METT sample PA will have moved to a higher METT category as follows: - 10 high - 10 medium - 5 low Total: 25	The monitoring tools BD-1 based on the periodic application of the monitoring tools for efficient management (METT) according to the project's work plan.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> METT evaluation was applied in 2006 to 26 WPA, in 2011 to 25 WPA, and in 2014 to 26 WPA. METT results in 2014 for 26 WPA were the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 14 High - 8 Medium - 4 Low - Total: 26. According to the METT assessment, the operative level and efficient management of protected areas were increased. The areas under the "low" category were reduced by 5% and under the category "medium" by 9%. WPA under the category "High" increased by 14 %. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The indicator is SMART. However, depends on achievement of several factors. According to the conceptual framework of METT, the appropriate management of protected areas will be the product of six phases or elements: context, planning, input, processes, products, impacts, aspects that the project has not totally influenced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the goal of the corresponding indicator was surpassed, the assessment of these results is HS. However, it has to be noted that the project has not totally influenced the results HS (Highly Satisfactory)
3. Adoption of instrument that allow the incorporation of the	The National Council and the regional councils of conservation areas, the Biological Corridors Network, the	The plans for eco-regional management will be defined in year 2, By year 3 they will be incorporated in the other planning processes	Internal policy of SINAC approved and implemented.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Eco-regional Master Plan of ACOSA was conducted, and it allowed decision making, coordination and implementation of transversal programs of the management plans and planning of sustainable development for the rest of the territory related to the Conservation Area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The indicator cannot be quantified as there would be ambiguity in the text (adoption for 2015 that refers to all of them, or just one 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 6 CAs visited during the mission had several activities to be developed for 2015 that imply to extend or incorporate the

⁴⁹By the end of the project (EoP) a net growth in effectiveness of managing the 25 selected PAs, based on METT results during the preparation phase of PDF B, the distribution of points for effective management:

- 55-96 HIGH
- 45-54 MEDIUM
- Less than 45 LOW

Strategy of the project		Objectively verifiable indicators					ANALYSIS FROM THE EVALUATION TEAM			
Objective of the project		Consolidation of the National Protected Areas System (NPAS) as a key component for sustainable development in Costa Rica								
		Indicator	Baseline	Goal	Verification source	Risks and assumptions	Goals	Indicator Analysis, Goal and Assumption (ones?)	Assessment judgment	
		Eco-regional approach in PA system planning, particularly by means of the existing legal framework provided by the environmental legal framework	Interdisciplinary Commission about the Costa Rican Exclusive Economic Zone are mechanisms already established that can help to implement, in a cross-cutting manner, the environmental policies in other sectors.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation of technical instruments that estimate the endurance capability of Terraba and Sierpe National Wetland and the terrestrial sector of Mario Balleza National Park, allowing the establishment of visitation policies and financial management and environmental risk of WA. Preparation of a draft of the regulations of public use of Terraba Sierpe National Wetland. Policies of WPA, Strategic Plan of SINAC and Master Plan defined and in application. Product about re-qualification of WPA in revision, which will be discussed later. 	CA or several ones?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> eco-regional approach of PA planning At least one CA created and adapted an instrument with eco-regional approach under the framework of the biodiversity law. As a pilot process, adoption or extension is not possible in other CAs. There are other CAs that are developing the basis for participative development of the instrument and empowerment of actors involved The goal is relative and however, there is evidence, at different levels, that this task is being assumed and that it is included in 2015 work plan to continue deepening in this work. 	
OUTCOME 1:		1 Level of adoption	At present there is no official	By year 2 a national policy has been prepared	Official gazette and	Window of sustainable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Policies for Wildlife Protected Areas (WPA) of the National Conservation 	The result measured in this	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The goal has been accomplished 	

Strategy of the project		Objectively verifiable indicators				ANALYSIS FROM THE EVALUATION TEAM		
Objective		Consolidation of the National Protected Areas System (NPAS) as a key component for sustainable development in Costa Rica						
Objective of the project	Indicator	Baseline	Goal	Verification source	Risks and assumptions	Goals	Indicator Analysis, Goal and Assumption	Assessment judgment
Costa Rican legal and political framework improved to ensure long term effective management and financial and ecological sustainability of the PA system.	of the national political system of PA: 1) define the PA system; 2) be the basis of the regional approach; There is no sub-system for marine and coastal areas; The ecosystem functions are not integrated in the Costa Rican territorial planning;	definition of the PA system; There is no national policy system for the AP system; There is only an incipient eco-regional approach; There is no sub-system for marine and coastal areas; The ecosystem functions are not integrated in the Costa Rican territorial planning;	for the PA system • Approved by year 3. • In force by year 4.	territorial planning documents.	opportunity and political support to incorporate the eco-regional approach in regional planning of soil use. • Recognition of MINAE as promoter and driving force of the regional territorial planning. • Recognition by several sectors of the value of marine and coastal resources for the country's development by conservation and sustainable use. • Leadership at SINAC to get support from the Legislative Assembly and the Executive Branch.	Areas System (NCAS) Public policy instrument formalized by CONAC. These policies are currently oriented towards decision making about wildlife protected areas of the country, and the formulation and implementation of other tools to strengthen PA management. Wildlife protected areas policies give an important reference framework for: • Strategic Plan of the National Conservation Areas System-SINAC 2010-2015 o Master Plan of Wildlife Protected Areas of SINAC o Cooperation strategy o Proceedings and requirements, as well as the draft of the regulation to apply administrative sanctions in regards to non authorized access to elements and genetic biochemical resources related to the Biodiversity Law number 7788 and regulation. • The monitoring and evaluation system was designed to measure the level of implementation and effectiveness of the "policies of WPA SINAC 2011 and other policies" to be operationalized in each CA. the level of knowledge of these policies was assessed, gaps and application level of different policies, there is a guide for the proposed methodology, proceedings, tools and an action plan to be used by relevant staff.	indicator makes an emphasis on the eco-regional approach (Grupos II) which started as pilot experiences in ACOSA (see Outcome 4). • An important contribution was achieved by the formalization as an instrument of public policies, policies for WPA delivering a referential framework to the Master Plan of WPA and thus the whole system. • Strengthening of planning capacity and strategic direction of SINAC (see achievements in regards to indicator 3 of this objective) also contributes to the level of adoption of the national PA system. • It incorporates a specific line about territorial and spatial marine planning.	but it is necessary to keep on implementing the eco-regional approach, including the marine topic in the plan of other CAs, so the system can have a continuous improvement. • Additionally, the follow up and assessment system of policies is in progress. S (Satisfactory)
2. Level of adoption of priority locations for reclassification	From the \$2 main types of ecosystems/vegetation, only 12 out of them (20%) are adequately covered	Level of adoption of priority locations for reclassification	By year 1 reclassification of priorities will be identified and a concrete proposal based on GRUAS II	Government official records, Mid-term Review and		• There is a study of re-classification developed by IUCN whose final product is still being reviewed, the national system of management categories for WPA, which contains the technical guidelines, revision and re-classification of current	• The goal has been partially accomplished as it needs a final approval and approval from	• Although there is land registry for 42 protected areas, the classification

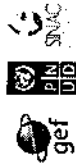
Strategy of the project		Objectively verifiable indicators				ANALYSIS FROM THE EVALUATION TEAM			
Objective of the project		Consolidation of the National Protected Areas System (NPAS) as a key component for sustainable development in Costa Rica							
Indicator		Baseline	Goal	Verification source	Risks and assumptions	Goals	Indicator Analysis, Goal and Assumption	Assessment judgement	
ation and demarcation to achieve coverage of 10% of each ecosystem type / vegetation to ensure the conservation of biodiversity of ecosystems of global importance.		by PA of the PA system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SINAC's strategic plan integrated by year 1. Action plan for PA system integrated by year 2. 	Final assessment of the project.		<p>categories and level of alignment with the system used by IUCN:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Causito ABRE for Wildlife Areas helped to demarcate 42 Protected Areas, which represent 731,655.7 hectares 	<p>CONAC for future institutionalization.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It has the ABRE Cadaster for Wildlife Areas and the study of re-classification "National Classification System of Wildlife Protected Areas of Costa Rica. These are pre-requisites of legal reforms and re-classification of PAs defined and applied through local and regional planning instruments. The National Classification System of Wildlife Protected Areas will help orienting management of PAS allowing the establishment of types of governance and the appropriate management model according to each wildlife protected area of the country, the formulation of general management plans for territorial planning, like the municipality regulatory plan, as well as the appropriate definition of wildlife protected areas that are suitable 	system needs CONAC for future implementation	S (Satisfactory)

Strategy of the project	Objectively verifiable indicators					ANALYSIS FROM THE EVALUATION TEAM		
	Consolidation of the National Protected Areas System (NPAS) as a key component for sustainable development in Costa Rica							
Objective of the project	Indicator	Baseline	Goal	Verification source	Risks and assumptions	Goals	Indicator Analysis, Goal and Assumption for sustainable tourism.	Assessment judgment
3. Level of preparation and implementation of SINAC's strategic planning tools, with the support of the project (SINAC's strategic plan and the corresponding action plan of PA system).	SINAC's strategic plan has been prepared based on an old version of year 2000. There is no strategic action plan for the PA system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">SINAC's strategic plan endorsed and operating by year 2.<u>Preliminary short term</u> action plan for PA system (will cover an initial period of 5 years) formulated by year 2.Action plan for PA system prepared in the long-term (15 years) that will include (i) lessons and experiences of pilot demonstrations (Outcome 4) and (ii) new regulatory and political frameworks (products 1.1 and 3.3) by year 4.Long term action plan operating by year 5.	Government official records, Mid-term Review and final assessment of the project. The Master Plan for WPA was formulated with the support of IUCN.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Strategic Plan of the National Conservation Areas System-SINAC 2010-2015, had a dissemination and socialization process in SINAC. It was institutionalized and functions as a harmonizing and synchronizing instrument of SINAC's institutional planning and the national planning system. There is an action plan. The period in which it is in force is about to end. IDB-Tourism project has planned the funding for the formulation of a new plan.The Master Plan for Wildlife Protected Areas of SINAC is the first one developed in Costa Rica. It contains a number of guidelines, standards, and priorities to which SINAC should address its efforts and resources to strengthen operability, ecological viability and sustainability of the system and its WPA. The Plan includes an Action Plan of the Strategic Plan SINAC 2013-2017, that allows institutional operation of the Strategic Plan 2010 - 2015. This Plan has been disseminated in hard copies and is available on the Web of SINAC.With the Master Plan the national policies for wildlife protected areas are operative and the planning, management, and analysis processes that are in progress are articulated. It allows to give future continuity to actions implemented by the project.Preparation of a Strategy for Cooperation and its articulation with the Action Plan and Annual Planning of SINAC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Goals have been achieved through the formulation and institutionalization of the Strategic Plan for the National Conservation Areas System, the Action Plan of the Strategic Plan SINAC 2013-2017 and the Master Plan of the Wildlife Protected Areas of SINAC.Some actions have been developed aiming at the incorporation of lessons and experiences of the pilot demonstrations, but there is no action plan of PAs in the long term.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">SINAC has been preparing and using tools of the Strategic Plan and preparing conditions for an Action Plan in the long term. <p>S (Satisfactory)</p>	

Strategy of the project	Objectively verifiable indicators					ANALYSIS FROM THE EVALUATION TEAM			
	Consolidation of the National Protected Areas System (NPAS) as a key component for sustainable development in Costa Rica								
Objective	Indicator	Baseline	Goal	Verification source	Risks and assumptions	Goals	Indicator Analysis, Goal and Assumption	Assessment judgment	
OUTCOM E.2: Improvement of institutional framework and capacities of SINAC's PA system for an optimal eco-regional planning and effective management.	1. Level of redesigning institutional profiles at SINAC at a central and regional level, according to the new SINAC's strategic plan and the action plan of the PA system	Strategic plan is not finished and there is no action plan for PA system. Existing personnel profiles at SINAC are generally vague, without ToR and do not respond to the decentralization required by law.	By year 3, roles and functions of personnel at SINAC at a central and regional level have been redefined and realigned according to the new SINAC's strategic plan, and the preliminary short term action plan for PA system	SINAC's official records, progress reports, Mid-term Review, and final assessment of the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Key partners of civil society and private sector show continuing interest on <i>in situ</i> conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.IDB's tourism and land registry partner projects have been approved and voted in favor by the Legislative Assembly.Internal communication strategy successfully deals with resistance to change inside SINAC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">An institutional manual of positions with competency profiles of the National Conservation Areas System was created.The proposal of a new organizational structure, built in a participative way, includes a basic scheme of operation of the organization chart.Revision and structural change at SINAC is in process.A performance evaluation model was proposed with the aim of achieving a continuous improvement and development of staff.There is a political interest to implement proposals for the current administration of SINAC, that analyzes the possibility of the approval with MIDEPLAN and the Oficina de Modernización del Estado.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The indicator is partially achieved; there are political instruments for redesigning staff profiles, facing a new organizational structure that require for its implementation the approval of MIDEPLAN.The assumption of approval of partner projects is not pertinent. The contribution of co-funding was affected by delay from IDB project.No resistance to change has been detected, the problem is that the staff was willing to change but there were no tools. This assumption should have focused on the appropriate support to staff towards change.The assumption about the need for approval of proposals was not considered as well as the approval from MIDEPLAN and the Office for the Modernization of the State.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Result achieved through political instruments for a new organizational structure, and redesign of staff profilesThe approval of MIDEPLAN is required, thus it is necessary the follow up on necessary adjustments according to the priorities of the system. <p>S (Satisfactory)</p>	

Strategy of the project	Objectively verifiable indicators					ANALYSIS FROM THE EVALUATION TEAM		
	Consolidation of the National Protected Areas System (NPAS) as a key component for sustainable development in Costa Rica					Goals	Indicator Analysis, Goal and Assumption	Assessment judgment
Objective of the project	Indicator	Baseline	Goal	Verification source	Risks and assumptions			
	2. Level of implementation of Knowledge Management in Integrated System (KMIS) and level of integration of financial, ecological and sustainable tourism data.	SINAC's financial strategy is being formulated. There is no Knowledge Management Integrated System at SINAC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SINAC's financial strategy is being formulated There is no Knowledge Management Integrated System at SINAC. 	SINAC's financial records, mid-term and final assessment of the project.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Master Plan of WPA proposes in its thematic objects the development of SGDS and a generalized roadmap for its implementation, however, they were not developed in an isolated way, obtaining three related products: 1) "Analysis, design and normalization of processes and sub-processes and prioritized proceedings for the institution to give the required information for the Knowledge Management System"; 2) "Give technical assistance and accompaniment for the definition of requirements, preparation of specific techniques, implantation and supervision of works in relation to contracting a firm to implement several informatics solutions"; and 3) "Design and development of intranet and services offered through the portal web of SINAC". Institutional Specialized Training Plan of the National Conservation Areas System institutionalized and implemented. This plan is being implemented and directs the formative actions of the staff at SINAC. A training regulation was prepared which organizes this function in an institutional way. Training for staff at CAs and the Secretariat and members of the Consejos Colegiados of SINAC; Consejo Nacional (CONAC), Consejos Regionales (CORACs) and Consejos Locales (COLACs) of SINAC. Strategic Plan for Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) 2014-2019. Information System named MASTERLEX institutionalized and implemented. There are other actions to strengthen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The goal was not achieved. The institution did not have among the practices and competences of its staff the knowledge and reflection needed about how to address the topic. It was not considered neither in the goal nor in the indicator that there were no competences to be a counterpart of a consultancy in this regard. The goal appeared to be too complex and the task was postponed until they started an internal discussion and actions that allowed the effective approach of the task. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Knowledge Management Integrated System does not exist, however, they have the basis and commitment to the Master Plan of WPA. SINAC has the opportunity to assume this result with the support of IDB Project, that according to PRODOC would fund the Knowledge Management Integrated System. <p>MU (Moderately Unsatisfactory)</p>

Strategy of the project		Objectively verifiable indicators					ANALYSIS FROM THE EVALUATION TEAM		
Objective	Consolidation of the National Protected Areas System (NPAS) as a key component for sustainable development in Costa Rica	Indicator	Baseline	Goal	Verification source	Risks and assumptions	Goals	Indicator Analysis, Goal and Assumption	Assessment judgment
Objective of the project							ICTs, like the portal and the online charging system. • There are important experiences that have been systematized in relation to work with other actors (indigenous people, private sector, local governments in 5 WPAs) which are an important basis for SGC's design and implementation. • A tool to manage flow of visitors at the Wildlife Protected Areas of SINAC.		
OUTCOMES: E.3: SINAC has financial sustainability for an effective achievement of their strategic objectives and supply of resources in the long term for PA system management needs.		1. An optimal policy of visitors fees, that includes admission fees for vehicles to parks with different fees for national and foreign visitors.	At present there is no policy for visitors fees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By year 1 the new policy is drafted. By year 2 it is approved and implemented. 	Official documents of Comptroller General.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structural changes have been authorized in SINAC's budget by the Ministry of Finance and supported by a formal agreement with MINAE to strengthen SINAC's financial and fiscal autonomy. Restructuring of MINAE in the current administration is consistent and compatible with a higher degree of financial autonomy at SINAC. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICTs, like the portal and the online charging system. There are important experiences that have been systematized in relation to work with other actors (indigenous people, private sector, local governments in 5 WPAs) which are an important basis for SGC's design and implementation. A tool to manage flow of visitors at the Wildlife Protected Areas of SINAC. Several consultancies delivered important elements and findings that have allowed the progress on discarding options as well as a better diagnosis about financial sustainability of SINAC. 1) Update and enrich the financial strategy of SINAC 2004-2006 and formulate the Action Plan. 2) "Design and modeling of a financial strategy for SINAC, based on the existing institutional information; 3) Business Plan of SINAC. SINAC has decided to internally address the search for a solution but they were not able to specify a more solid product with feasible practical considerations. In a wise way SINAC rejected the products that did not satisfy the need of having a practical Funding plan for the PA system. With decree number 38295 MINAE (2014) entrance fees were updated in several Wildlife Protected Areas administered by the National Conservation Areas System-SINAC. It defines that the increment of fees will apply for 46 Wildlife Protected Areas that receive visitors out of the 169 that SINAC administers. At present there are three levels of fees: \$15 for those WPA with the highest amount of visitors; \$12 for those with a regular amount of visitors, and \$10 for lower amounts. The calculated income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The budget autonomy of SINAC was an assumption difficult to achieve within the normative framework, in which the national budget is managed by the Ministry of Finance. The result mentions an optimal policy of visitors fees. 	<p>With the approval of decrees number 38295 MINAE and 38546-MINAE, it was possible to update the policy for visitors fees with different fees for each WPA, for national and foreign visitors, residents, children and students.</p> <p>HS (Highly Satisfactory)</p>



Strategy of the project	Objectively verifiable indicators					ANALYSIS FROM THE EVALUATION TEAM		
	Indicator	Baseline	Goal	Verification source	Risks and assumptions	Goals	Indicator Analysis, Goal and Assumption	Assessment judgment
Objective of the project	Consolidation of the National Protected Areas System (NPAS) as a key component for sustainable development in Costa Rica							
	2. Increase percentage of financial scorecard of UNDP-GEF (see below).	In 2006, SINAC's income was US\$ 21.09 million from regular budget source, having a funding shortfall of US\$ 14.84 million. The Executive decree about the Water Utilization Canon creates a new income source for SINAC. However, in 2006 SINAC did not receive any funds from the Water Canon. The income for visits reported in 2005 was US\$ 5 million and the average rate of annual income for the last 10 years was 11%. The incipient Financial Information.	By year 1 the tangible % of the project's specific goals for years 3 and 5 has been included in the scorecard By the end of the project (year 5): <ul style="list-style-type: none">The composition of the staff at SINAC has changed to reflect a profile redesigning process.The financial scorecard will show an improvement of 50%.SINAC will receive US \$0.91 million/year of new income from the Water Canon and at least US\$ 6.9 million from visitors fees (see baseline scenario in annex about Financial Sustainability, Section IV-Part VIII).By the end of the project, the sub-inversion is reduced by 50% to avoid continuing reduction of future annual budget for	Evaluation of capacities supported by the project; official documents from Comptroller General; official financial records of SINAC; the financial scorecard of UNDP-GEF is done as part of mid-term and final assessments. Annual Report of National Parks Foundation and Annual Operative Plans (AOP)		From these fees is 2000 million colones (\$5,607,467). Later, there was a modification through decree number 38546-MINAE, to adjust the fee for PAs ACLA-A for children taking into account if they were residents or not. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Computer equipment was acquired to reinforce servers and establish an appropriate platform to support online and automated charges for different services.The composition of the staff at SINAC has not changed. However, SINAC has the necessary instruments to do the changes provided by the project: 1) a new organizational structure; 2) the institutional manual of jobs with competences profiles; 3) the Institutional Training Plan; 4) Training Regulations; training received by staff; 6) a model for performance evaluation.The planned income received from visitors fees has been calculated in 2000 million colones or \$5,607,467, an amount lower than what was estimated by PRODOC (US\$6.9 million). Nevertheless, this estimation is low if it is taken into account the fact that in 2005 the amount was US\$ 5 million and there was a slight decrease in 2008 receiving \$4,279,028 and \$4,238,129 in 2012 (the latest amount available).The transfers from the central government increased from \$17,857,637 in 2008 to \$30,941,839 in 2014, this represents an increment of 43%, higher than the visitors fees and other income together.The Action Plan will be implemented through the Budget Plan (BP) to allow formulation and monitoring, which will facilitate the orientation towards a lower under-utilization of budget.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The purpose of this evaluation card is to help governments, donors and NGOs to investigate and register the aspects of a funding system - to accounts and underlying structural basis - to demonstrate the current situation and to indicate if in the long term the system is heading a better financial situation in a holistic way.The project did not provide follow up to these indicatorsWith the information available it is not possible to evaluate the financial scorecard, which was supposed to show an improvement at the end of the project by 50%.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">It is still necessary to do some changes in the staff to strengthen the institution. Revenues from water canon and fees are not enough to reach the established goal, however, revenues from the national budget have increased and it is expected that sources above mentioned increase their contributions in the future with the implementation of a financial strategy for SINAC. The implementation of a Business Plan and an improvement in the financial management through the

155



Strategy of the project		Objectively verifiable indicators					ANALYSIS FROM THE EVALUATION TEAM		
Objective of the project		Consolidation of the National Protected Areas System (NPAS) as a key component for sustainable development in Costa Rica							
Indicator	Baseline	Goal	Verification source	Risks and assumptions	Goals	Indicator Analysis, Goal and Assumption	Assessment judgment		
developed and operating to offer non-essential services at the pilot PA and buffer zones in priority areas for biodiversity conservation	operation of non-essential services and PA management. The majority of PA at Tempisque conservation area is private property. The Pacific coast peninsula is one of the tourist destinations with the highest growth in Costa Rica. Precisely, there is a significant potential not yet explored to promote public-private partnerships for non-essential service delivery in PA among local municipalities, private land owners and the private sector.	at the Tempisque conservation area • By year 5, the approach has been replicated in at least 6 new agreements in other PA in the conservation area.	PA financial plans and project reports		effective public-private partnerships contributing to conservation of biodiversity; 3) model for a successful voluntary service at WPAs • Pilot projects developed and systematized in 4 CAs characterizing NES identified in each of the following CAs: ACCVC, ACTO, ACOSA and ACT. • At the Chirripo National Park the following services start operations: lodging, food service, nature shop, rental of equipment, transportation of equipment and materials. • At the Manuel Antonio National Park preparation of operation contract for the services of snack bar, nature shop, locker service and custody of goods.	they have bid processes prepared and waiting to be implemented for 4 WPAs that have more than 20 individual non-essential services.	WPAs and more than 20 non-essential services there are bid processes prepared and waiting to be implemented. S (Satisfactory)		
4. A number of co-management agreements effectively operating and major capacities of the staff at PA to	There is no official coordination of co-management between SINAC and local stakeholders, in topics like joint patrolling. There is a limited capacity at SINAC to collaborate with	By year 3, up to 10 collaborative management agreements of PA with municipalities, NGOs and indigenous communities in pilot areas have been established. By the end of the project a legal framework for collaborative management of PA has been designed	Minutes of the Private Reserve Network, assessments and mid-term reports by year 2, and final assessment of the project by year 4.		• The collaboration capacity of SINAC to work with municipalities (ACT, ACTO, ACLA-A) and local stakeholders, especially with indigenous communities, has increased. Besides, the engagement of local organizations (indigenous people, women, producers, environmentalists, young people), in some of them through CORACs (ACG) and COLAC (ACTO, ACLA-A), local participation instruments defined in the Biodiversity Act.	• The Private Reserve Network lacks participation in actions of the project. As a source of verification it is not pertinent as agreements with indicated actors are outside of jurisdiction. • At the end of the	• The goal of 10 collaborative agreements was reached. SINAC developed official coordination of co-management with local groups in the fight against illegal logging and forest fires, hunting control,		



Strategy of the project		Objectively verifiable indicators				ANALYSIS FROM THE EVALUATION TEAM			
Objective	Consolidation of the National Protected Areas System (NPAS) as a key component for sustainable development in Costa Rica	Indicator	Baseline	Goal	Verification source	Risks and assumptions	Goals	Indicator Analysis, Goal and Assumption	Assessment judgment
Objective of the project		get involved and work with local stakeholders, like local business people, municipalities, and indigenous organizations	municipalities and local stakeholders, and especially with indigenous communities	and approved			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experiences were systematized with the intention of being adopted in a generalized way by CAs as a methodology to facilitate the collaborative work in the management of CAs. In this field SINAC has the following experiences: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In ACT, as product of pilot: 1) preparation of tools to improve tourism management in WPAs; 2) 6 agreements signed with municipalities and approach with touristic sector (ICT-CANATUR); and 3) national tourism team of SINAC. With actions implemented in ACOSA, the project also contributed with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) technical instruments that estimate the endurance capability of Terribas Sierpe National Wetland and the Terribas Sierpe National Wetland and the National Park allowing the establishment of visitation and financial management policies and environmental risks at WPAs; 2) Eco-regional Master Plan of ACOSA; 3) Draft of Regulation on Public Use of Terribas Sierpe National Wetland. By means of 16 sustainable community projects implemented that are supported in the ACCVC, with innovative management approach that intends to improve in life quality of beneficiary populations located at the core of buffer areas of PAs, the project collaborated with capacities for SINAC in order to improve management of PAs and their environment: 1) through the creation of a course and strengthened management capabilities of ally organizations to improve the management of buffer areas; 2) through implemented projects in the core zone of WPA of ACCVC. Contribution was given to social capital, of the capacity of organizations for 	<p>project the goal of 10 collaboration agreements has been reached.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systematization of experiences has been achieved, the work agreement and a number of successful results product of collaboration with several local actors that comprise this partnership in a strategic way. 	<p>guided tourism, ecological monitoring. This was possible through concrete actions inside and outside the PAs. The project supported the establishment of collaborative management plans, mainly through pilot projects of Terrisique, Cordillera and Tortuguero, plus specific indigenous territories, Salitre, Cabagra and Ujarda (in the Pacific region) and at La Amistad Caribbean CA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantity and quality of experiences are concrete and valuable. <p>S (Satisfactory)</p>



Strategy of the project	Objectively verifiable indicators					ANALYSIS FROM THE EVALUATION TEAM		
	Indicator	Baseline	Goal	Verification source	Risks and assumptions	Goals	Indicator Analysis, Goal and Assumption	Assessment judgment
OUTCOMES: Successful models of PA system management increment and replicated at a systemic level by means of strategic	1. A number of consultation and coordination with multiple stakeholder have been carried out by means of PA system bodies at the 11	Legal mechanism established and 9 regional councils officially formed, but inactive. There are no local councils established yet.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By year 3, 11 Regional Councils (1 per CA) reactivated/established, realigned and operating; By year 3, at least 1 local council of pilot PA in each conservation area (11 in total) formed and operating; By year 5, replicated approach and local council process of PA at least twice in each conservation area (that is, 22 more). 	Decreases and administrative resolutions of SINAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval and support from political authorities of collaborative management relationships of PAs Collaborative management techniques with the purpose of strengthening capabilities to facilitate decision making processes in each conservation area and as a means to exchange experiences and lessons learned among these groups. There is a Training Plan for Regional established and 	<p>participative management, models of sustainable production, relationships with groups to improve governance, integration of women, older adults, young people and children; 3) through participative construction, a methodology for systematization of experiences of SINAC and the production of the Manual for its realization.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through 6 agreements in indigenous territories applied in ACLAP, in the communities of Cabagra, Salitre, Ujarrás, in ACLAC, in Talamanca Bribi and Talamanca Cabecar, in ACCVC with the indigenous community of Siminikak by the Asociación Pro-Vivienda and Ayuda al Adulto Mayor-Ducoli, of the Chirripó Cabecar Indigenous Reserve. SINAC developed a work methodology sensitive to cultural aspects, social and political composition that define the identity of these populations. Technical profiles of the biological corridors were done: 1) Cordillera La Amistad Canbe Conservation Area; 2) Naranjo River and Quezital Tres Colinas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The assumptions were correct, there is willingness from functionaries of SINAC and CORACs and COLACs, to work in a collaborative way. 	<p>24 Local Councils (COLAC) and 11 CORAC, formed and operating, one for each CA. There were training and systematization work that potentiate the contribution that they can give to the strengthening of PAs management. SINAC was</p>

161

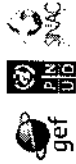


Strategy of the project		Objectively verifiable indicators					ANALYSIS FROM THE EVALUATION TEAM		
Objective of the project		Consolidation of the National Protected Areas System (NPAS) as a key component for sustainable development in Costa Rica					Indicator Analysis, Goal and Assumption	Assessment judgment	
Objective of the project		Indicator	Baseline	Goal	Verification source	Risks and assumptions	Goals		
		system in priority areas for biodiversity conservation.	concession agreements to be promoted in the whole PA system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By the end of the project, the model is fully incorporated in official policies of SINAC. 			<p>National Park (MANP, Playa Rey Sector); d) Santa Rosa National Park (SRNP); and e) Rincon de la Vieja National Park (RVNP) the final product is bid processes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation of operation contract for Manuel Antonio National Park for snack bar, Nature Shop, locker service and custody of goods services. At present, there is a draft of a decree waiting to be approved. Besides, CONAC has approved the proceeding for hiring non essential services. 		\$ (Satisfactory)
		3. Development of a model of public-private partnership established between municipalities and eco-tourism operators to develop and maintain biological corridors and level reached in the whole PA system in priority areas for biodiversity conservation.	GRUAS II emphasizes the importance of incorporating key biological corridors in the new eco-regional vision for the PA system. Biological corridors already part of SINAC in conservation areas. However, more work is needed to appropriately implement the recommendations of GRUAS II. Municipalities are not involved in local soil use plan preparation, which could serve as a basis to link eco-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By year 3, at least 4 public-private alliances signed (municipalities, eco-tourism operators) within the pilot conservation areas, to coordinate and integrate allocation of resources to local initiatives of biological corridors according to the conservation priorities established by GRUAS II. By year 4, a model created based on initial pilot demonstrations and each new alliance has formulated a new local soil use plan for the biological corridor designated. By year 5 these partnerships and soil use plans have been replicated in other places by means of at least 4 additional agreements. 	Public-private agreements signed and new local soil use plans.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costa Rica has 37 formalized Biological Corridors, which cover near the 38% of the national territory. There are 7 proposals for new BCs (1 of them under revision: Bosque de Agua BC). There are 24 Local Councils of BC formalized and 50 partners of the National Biological Corridors Network (SINAC, 2015). With the pilot ACT it was possible to systematize experiences generated from public-private partnerships that made possible the mobilization of financial resources of the sectors of tourism, agriculture, business and academic centers with the aim of supporting and strengthening management and conservation of Protected Areas of ACT. In ACLAP a methodology was developed to work with indigenous communities on topics like environmental education, ancestral seeds conservation, agricultural sustainable production systems, control and monitoring of forest fires and ecological monitoring. In ACLAP work was done with indigenous communities of the territories of Bribri and Cabecar in topics like: training of tour guides, productive economic activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The systematization of experiences from public-private partnerships made possible to register innovative instruments for alternative funding that allowed strengthening and more effective management of PAs through financial resources, collaborative agreements, human resources, training and assistance. Besides, a methodology to work with indigenous communities was developed, together with the definition of 	



“Removing Barriers to Sustainability of the Protected Areas System of Costa Rica”

Strategy of the project		ANALYSIS FROM THE EVALUATION TEAM				
Objective of the project		Objectively verifiable indicators				
Objective of the project		Consolidation of the National Protected Areas System (NPAS) as a key component for sustainable development in Costa Rica				
Indicator		Baseline	Goal	Verification source	Risks and assumptions	Goals
n.		tourism and conservation goals Programa Arqueología XXI of the Spanish Cooperation will support initiatives at the Frio River basin.				and the support of forest entrepreneurship, ranger's training and equipment. • Technical profiles were prepared for three biological corridors which help to incorporate this approach into a new ecological vision for the PA system: 1) Cordillera La Amistad, 2) Naranjo River, and 3) Queztral Tres Colinas.
						technical profiles for the three biological corridors. These three aspects also allow the development of a model for public-private partnerships established between municipalities and tourism operators.
						S (Satisfactory)



SUMMARY OF JUDGMENT BY OBJECTIVES				
Objective of the project	Indicator	Assessment Indicator	Global Assessment of Objective	Summary of assessment judgment
Purpose (objective): To eliminate the main systemic and institutional barriers to sustainability of the Protected Areas System of Costa Rica.	1. Area (in hectares) of protected areas that are legally incorporated in the PA system of SINAC.	S (Satisfactory)	S (Satisfactory)	In the period of implementation 731,655 hectares were demarcated, there was preparation of proposals to modify the decree for 6 WPAs. The operative and efficient management level of the protected areas increased. The Eco-regional Master Plan of ACOSA was prepared, a reference for other CAs to progress in the development of own plans. The Eco-regional approach proposed for Grupos II (about Eco-regional Approach in PRODOC, page 4. It is included in several strategic instruments, institutionalized and implemented: 1) policy of WPAs, 2) Strategic Plan of SINAC and 3) Master Plan. There is also a product under revision about re-classification of WPAs.
	2. Operative and efficient management level of SINAC.	HS (Highly Satisfactory)		
	3. Adoption of instruments that allow the incorporation of the eco-regional approach in PA system planning, particularly by means of the existing legal framework provided by the environmental legal framework, Biodiversity Law, National Parks Act, and the Forestry Legislation.	MS (Moderately Satisfactory)		
OUTCOME 1: Costa Rican legal and political framework improved to ensure long term effective management and financial and ecological sustainability of the PA system.	1. Level of adoption of the national political system of PA: 1) define the PA system; 2) be the basis of the eco-regional approach of GRUAS II; 3) define a new sub-system of marine and coastal areas, and 4) define how to integrate the ecosystem functions in the Costa Rican territorial planning.	S (Satisfactory)	S (Satisfactory)	SINAC has a national policy for the PA system, the identification and re-classification of priorities and a concrete proposal based on GRUAS II. SINAC's strategic plan, with an action plan for PA system in the short term and experiences in an advanced for the formulation of an action plan of the PA system in the long term (15 years). Results that have contributed to reform and improve the legal and political framework of Costa Rica in order to strengthen, in the long term, effective management and financial and ecological sustainability of the PA system (PAS).
	2. Level of adoption of priority locations for reclassification and demarcation to achieve coverage of 10% of each ecosystem type / vegetation to ensure the conservation of biodiversity of ecosystems of global importance.	S (Satisfactory)		
	3. Level of preparation and implementation of SINAC's strategic planning tools, with the support of the project (SINAC's strategic plan and the corresponding action plan of PA system).	S (Satisfactory)		
OUTCOME 2: Improvement of institutional framework and capacities of SINAC's PA system for an optimal eco-regional planning and effective management.	1. Level of redesigning institutional personnel profiles at SINAC at a central and regional level, according to the new SINAC's strategic plan and the action plan of the PA system.	S (Satisfactory)	MS (Moderately Satisfactory)	SINAC has political instruments for a new organizational structure, and the redesigning of staff profiles, it requires for its implementation the approval of MIDEPLAN. However, the Knowledge Management Integrated System does not exist, despite this there is a basis and commitment in the Master Plan of WPAs to assume it.
	2. Level of implementation of Knowledge Management Integrated System (KMIS) and level of integration of financial, ecological and sustainable tourism data.	MI (Moderately Unsatisfactory)		
OUTCOME 3: SINAC has financial sustainability for an	1. An optimal policy of visitors fees, that includes admission fees for vehicles to parks with different fees for national and foreign visitors.	HS (Highly Satisfactory)	S (Satisfactory)	



SUMMARY OF JUDGMENT BY OBJECTIVES				
Objective of the project	Indicator	Assessment Indicator	Global Assessment of Objective	Summary of assessment judgment
<p>effective achievement of their strategic objectives and supply of resources in the long term for PA system management needs</p> <p>OUTCOME 4:</p> <p>SINAC tries with different and innovative conservation approaches for conservation areas and PA.</p>	2. Increased percentage of financial scorecard of UNDP-GEF (see below)	MS (Moderate Satisfactory)		
	1. Amount of unresolved conflicts related to land tenure in the PA system.	S (Satisfactory)	S (Satisfactory)	<p>With the support of the system of Calastro ABRE there will be a reduction of conflicts with owners inside and outside PAS; governance can improve the land tenure of the 42 PAs and development of the IDB for that. After correcting the level of implementation of the IDB Tourism Program, it will be possible to improve service to tourists by improving infrastructure and accessibility of PAs as well as the optimization of the management of flow of visitors. Successful systematization of experiences of NES in ACT allow the potentializing of the model to other CAs. For 4 WPAs and more than 20 non essential services there are bid processes that are prepared and waiting to be implemented. More than 10 collaboration agreements were achieved and SINAC developed official coordination of co-management with local groups in the fight against illegal logging and forest fires, hunting control, guided tourism, ecological monitoring. Through the project there is support to the establishment of collaborative management plans, mainly through pilot projects of Tempisque, Cordillera and Tortuguero, plus specific indigenous territories Salitre, Cabagra and Ujarras (in the Pacific Region) and in the Amistad Caribe CA.</p>
	2. Level of service delivered to tourists, infrastructure condition and accessibility to the 10 most visited PAs of the PA systems.	S (Satisfactory)		
	3. A number of public-private concession agreements developed and opening to offer non-essential services at the pilot PA and buffer zones in priority areas for biodiversity conservation.	S (Satisfactory)		
	4. A number of co-management agreements effectively operating and major capacities of the staff at PA to get involved and work with local stakeholders, like local businesspeople, municipalities, and indigenous organizations.	S (Satisfactory)		
<p>OUTCOME 5:</p> <p>Successful models of PA system management increment and replicated at a systemic level by means of strategic alliances with key stakeholders.</p>	1. A number of consultations and coordination with multiple stakeholders have been carried out by means of PA system bodies at the 11 conservation areas (CAs)	S (Satisfactory)	S (Satisfactory)	<p>24 Local Councils (COLAC) operating and with capacities and 11 CORAC. SINAC has been strengthened to facilitate processes of creation and development of capacities of COLACs. It has a model to carry on public-private concession for the delivery of non essential services in PAs. There is an approval of the proceeding to hire non essential services which allow the extension in the whole PA system. Besides, there is a draft of a decree ready to be approved. There are innovative financing instruments that make possible the strengthening and more effective management of PAs through financial resources, collaborative agreements, training and assistance. There is also a methodology to work in indigenous communities and the definition of technical profiles of three biological corridors. These three aspects also allow the development of a model of public-private partnerships between municipalities and eco-tourism operators.</p>
	2. Development of a model of agreements for public-private concession for non-essential service delivery and a level of expansion in the whole PA system in priority areas for biodiversity conservation.	S (Satisfactory)		
	3. Development of a model of public-private partnerships established between municipalities and eco-tourism operators to develop and maintain biological corridors and level reached in the whole PA system in priority areas for biodiversity conservation.	S (Satisfactory)		

Annex 11: Signature of the Consultants' Code of Conduct Agreement

Evaluators:

1. Evaluators shall accurately represent their level of skills and knowledge and work only within the limits of their professional training and abilities in evaluation, declining assignments for which they do not have the skills and experience to complete successfully, and so that decisions or measures taken have good foundation.
2. Evaluators shall clearly communicate to stakeholders the purpose of the evaluation, the criteria applied and the intended use of findings. Evaluators shall ensure that stakeholders have a say in shaping the evaluation and shall ensure that all documentation is readily available to and understood by stakeholders.
3. Evaluators must protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. Give maximum notice, minimize time demands and respect the right of people to refuse to participate. Evaluators shall respect people's right to provide information in confidence and make participants aware of the scope and limits of confidentiality, while ensuring that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. It is not expected to evaluate individuals and must balance an evaluation of management functions with this general principle.
4. Where evaluators find evidence of wrong-doing or unethical conduct, they are obliged to report it to the proper oversight authority. They must consult with other relevant supervision entities when there is doubt about denouncing certain issues and how.
5. Evaluators shall respect and protect the rights and welfare of human subjects and communities, in accordance with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other human conventions. Evaluators shall respect differences in culture, local customs, religious beliefs and practices, personal interaction, gender roles, disability, age and ethnicity, while using evaluation instruments appropriate to the cultural setting. Evaluators shall ensure prospective participants are treated as autonomous agents, free to choose whether to participate in the evaluation, while ensuring that the relatively powerless are represented. Evaluators shall make themselves aware of and comply with legal codes (whether international or national) governing, for example, interviewing children and young people.
6. Evaluators are responsible for their performance and their products. They are accountable for the completion of the agreed evaluation deliverables within the timeframe and budget agreed, while operating in a cost effective manner. They are responsible for a clear, accurate and fair presentation, written or oral, of limitations, results and recommendations of the study.
7. Evaluators shall show honesty and integrity in their own behavior, negotiating honestly the evaluation costs, tasks, limitations, scope of results likely to be obtained, while accurately presenting their procedures, data and findings and highlighting any limitations or uncertainties of interpretation within the evaluation.

Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the United Nations System

Consultant Name: Hernán Reyes G.

Name of the advisory organization (where applicable): _____

I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation of the United Nations.

Signed In Santiago, Chile, 14 of April, 2015

Signature: _____

