



Guidelines for GEF Agencies in Conducting Terminal Evaluations

**Global Environment Facility
Evaluation Office**

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Evaluation Document No. 3
2008

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Global Environment Facility

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Evaluation Document
2008, No. 3

A FREE PUBLICATION

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

1. The *Instrument for the Establishment of the Restructured Global Environment Facility* requires that the Global Environment Facility (GEF) ensure that its programs and projects are monitored and evaluated regularly.¹ In support of this mandate, the GEF Council approved *The GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy* in February 2006. The policy states that through monitoring and evaluation (M&E) the GEF aims to “promote accountability for the achievement of GEF objectives through the assessment of results, effectiveness, processes, and performance of the partners involved in GEF activities.” It further states that “GEF results will be monitored and evaluated for their contribution to global environmental benefits” (paragraph 1). The policy specifies that the GEF partners, in addition to conducting various other evaluations, will also evaluate projects “at the end of the intervention (terminal evaluation)” (paragraph 13).²
2. This document presents guidelines for conducting terminal evaluations of GEF-supported projects. These guidelines take precedence over any other guidance on terminal evaluations issued by the GEF Evaluation Office and complement the relevant guidance issued by the GEF Agencies. Almost all the GEF partners have well-formulated policies and regulations covering evaluation norms and standards. In conducting terminal evaluations of GEF-supported projects, the GEF Agencies should apply these GEF guidelines as well as their own evaluation norms and standards.

1.2 Purpose of Terminal Evaluations

3. The terminal evaluation must provide a comprehensive and systematic account of the performance of a completed project by assessing its project design, process of implementation, achievements vis-à-vis project objectives endorsed by the GEF including any agreed changes in the objectives during project implementation, and any other results. Terminal evaluations have four complementary purposes:
 - a. To promote accountability and transparency, and to assess and disclose levels of project accomplishment
 - b. To synthesize lessons that may help improve the selection, design, and implementation of future GEF activities

- c. To provide feedback on issues that are recurrent across the portfolio and need attention, and on improvements regarding previously identified issues
 - d. To contribute to the GEF Evaluation Office databases for aggregation, analysis, and reporting on the effectiveness of GEF operations in achieving global environmental benefits and on the quality of M&E across the GEF system
4. Terminal evaluations should not be used as an appraisal, preparation, or justification for a follow-up phase of the evaluated project.

Notes

1. GEF, *Instrument for the Establishment of the Restructured Global Environment Facility* (2004); available at http://thegef.org/GEF_Instrument3.pdf. An additional amendment to this instrument was approved at the Third GEF Assembly held in Cape Town, South Africa, in August 2006. This new amendment became effective September 14, 2007, after adoption by the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme, and the World Bank. The new amended version is available at http://thegef.org/uploadedFiles/GEF_Instrument_March08.pdf.
2. *The GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy*, Evaluation Document No. 1 (GEF Evaluation Office, 2006) is available at http://gefeo.org/uploadedFiles/Policies_and_Guidelines-me_policy-english.pdf.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 GEF Agencies

5. **Projects requiring terminal evaluation reports.** The GEF Agencies are required to prepare, in English, a terminal evaluation report at project completion for all GEF full-size projects and, until further notice, all medium-size projects. Terminal evaluations are also required for enabling activities, excluding those that were approved under expedited procedures. Terminal evaluations are required for canceled projects if the actual GEF expenditure at the point of project cancellation was \$0.5 million or more.
6. **Specific responsibilities.** The GEF Agencies will perform the following:
 - a. Conduct terminal evaluations within six months before or after project completion.
 - b. Develop specific terms of reference for each terminal evaluation.
 - c. Include a provision in the terms of reference that requires the terminal evaluation team to provide information relevant for follow-up studies, including terminal evaluation verification on request to the GEF partnership up to three years after completion of the terminal evaluation.
 - d. Ensure that the terms of reference and its schedule are made known to key stakeholders.
 - e. Ensure that the evaluation team is composed of individuals with appropriate expertise and experience to assess the project, including, when required, the expertise to address social issues.
 - f. Ensure that project evaluation team members are independent, unbiased, and free of conflicts of interest or ensure a quality control review of the terminal evaluation by its independent evaluation office.
 - g. Provide guidance, documentation, and support to evaluation teams.
 - h. Facilitate the engagement of the GEF focal points in terminal evaluations and, as requested by the GEF Council, provide them with a copy of the terminal evaluation report in a timely manner.

- i. Ensure that terminal evaluations take into account the views of all relevant stakeholders.
 - j. Submit the terminal evaluation report to the Director of the GEF Evaluation Office immediately after it is completed and no more than 12 months after project completion.
 - k. Make terminal evaluation reports publicly available and circulate them among the GEF country focal points and relevant government counterparts.
7. **Terminal evaluations for jointly implemented projects.** For GEF full-size and medium-size projects that are jointly implemented by two or more GEF Agencies, the terminal evaluation will be jointly conducted by the relevant partner Agencies. The roles and responsibilities of these Agencies and the overall evaluation process should be specified in the original M&E plan included in the project document submitted for Council approval. The terminal evaluation for jointly implemented projects should reflect the following characteristics:
- a. **Be unified.** The terminal evaluation will include the overall assessment of project performance and cover all project components. In most cases, the project terminal evaluation will be conducted by a single evaluation team. In some circumstances, however, one or more partner Agencies might commission a separate partial evaluation for their project component. Such partial evaluations may be appropriate to gather information in a timely manner when a given component is finished a year or more before other components implemented by other Agencies. In such circumstances, the partial evaluation findings will be an important input to the final terminal evaluation report. The team that prepares the final terminal evaluation will incorporate these partial evaluation findings in a single unified report and provide a single set of project performance ratings.
 - b. **Be jointly owned.** The lead Agency implementing the project is also expected to take the lead in conducting the terminal evaluation. This Agency will develop the M&E plan and conduct the terminal evaluation in collaboration with all partner Agencies; this will include the elaboration of evaluation terms of reference, selection of evaluators, and approval of the final terminal evaluation report. Evaluation offices or offices that perform the independent evaluation function in the various partner Agencies will jointly submit one set of quality of evaluation ratings to the GEF Evaluation Office.

2.2 Independent Evaluation Units of the GEF Agencies

8. The independent evaluation units of the GEF Agencies are encouraged to facilitate the terminal evaluation process for GEF projects in a manner that ensures independence and objectivity.¹ For example, the GEF Evaluation Office encour-

ages the units to review and validate terminal evaluation reports to ensure compliance with GEF and GEF Agency evaluation requirements.

2.3 Governments and GEF Focal Points

9. The GEF Evaluation Office strongly encourages the relevant government officials and GEF focal points to read the terminal evaluation reports and ensure that the lessons identified in them are considered prior to country endorsement of new projects.

2.4 Evaluators

10. The following guidelines shall be observed in selecting evaluators to conduct terminal evaluations:
 - a. Evaluators will be independent of both the policy-making process and the delivery and management of assistance to the project they are evaluating. They will not have been engaged in the activities to be evaluated or responsible in decision-making roles for the design, implementation, or supervision of the project. In cases where a member of an evaluation team has been involved with some aspects of the project, this member should refrain from evaluating those aspects. In cases where project evaluation team members are not independent, are biased, or are not free of conflicts of interest, the independent evaluation unit of the relevant GEF Agency will conduct a quality control review of the resulting terminal evaluation.
 - b. Evaluators will be impartial and will present a comprehensive and balanced appraisal of the strengths and weaknesses of the project being evaluated.
 - c. The evaluation team should be comprised of professionals with strong evaluation experience, requisite expertise in the subject matter of the project, and experience in economic and social development issues.
 - d. Evaluators should be knowledgeable about GEF operational programs and strategies and about relevant GEF policies such as those on project life cycle, M&E, incremental costs, and fiduciary standards.
 - e. Evaluators should take into account the views of all relevant stakeholders in conducting terminal evaluations.
 - f. Evaluators will become familiar with the project document and will use the information generated by the project including, but not limited to, baseline data and information generated by the project M&E system. Evaluators should also seek the necessary contextual information to assess the significance and relevance of results.
 - g. Evaluators will abide by the *GEF Evaluation Office Ethical Guidelines*.²

Notes

1. The independent evaluation units of the GEF Agencies are those groups within the individual Agencies that have an evaluation mandate for the organization and that report to a governing body without interference from those responsible for project implementation. These units include the Independent Evaluation Group of the World Bank, the Evaluation Office of the United Nations Development Programme, and the Evaluation Office of the United Nations Environment Programme.
2. *GEF Evaluation Office Ethical Guidelines*, Evaluation Document No. 2 (1 (GEF Evaluation Office, 2007) is available at [http://gefeo.org/uploadedFiles/Policies_and_Guidelines_Ethical_Guideline-published\(1\).pdf](http://gefeo.org/uploadedFiles/Policies_and_Guidelines_Ethical_Guideline-published(1).pdf).

3. Scope

11. The scope of a terminal evaluation will depend upon project type, size, focal area, and country context. In most cases, terminal evaluations will include field visits to ascertain project accomplishments and interviews with key stakeholders at the national and, where appropriate, local levels. In all cases, terminal evaluations should properly examine and assess the perspectives of the various relevant stakeholders. Relevant stakeholders are all those who have been or are likely to be affected by the project or activity, those who have participated in or contributed to the project, and those who in other ways have a stake in the outcomes of the project or activity. The following should be covered in the terminal evaluation reports.

3.1 General Information about the Evaluation

12. *The GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy*, minimum requirement 3, specifies that a terminal evaluation report will provide information on when the evaluation took place, places visited, who was involved, the key questions, and the methodology. In their terminal evaluation reports, the GEF Agencies will also provide information regarding the composition and expertise of the evaluation team; this can be provided in attachments or annexes to the main report. The reports will also include, as annexes to the main report, the evaluation team's terms of reference and any response from the project management team and/or the country focal point regarding the evaluation findings or conclusions.

3.2 Assessment of Project Results

13. *The GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy*, minimum requirement 3, specifies that terminal evaluations will, at the minimum, assess the achievement of out-

Results

The positive and negative, and foreseen and unforeseen, changes to and effects produced by a development intervention. In GEF terms, results include direct project outputs, short- to medium-term outcomes, and longer term impact including global environmental benefits, replication effects, and other local effects.

Source: *The GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy*, paragraph 57d.

puts and outcomes and provide ratings for targeted objectives and outcomes. The assessment of project results seeks to determine the extent to which the project objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, and determine if the project has led to any other short- or long-term and positive or negative consequences. In assessing project results, terminal evaluations will seek to determine the extent of achievement and shortcomings in reaching project objectives as stated in the project appraisal document, and indicate if there were any changes and whether those changes were approved. If the project did not establish a baseline (initial conditions), the evaluators should seek to estimate the baseline condition so that achievements and results can be properly established.

14. In assessing project performance, evaluators can focus on achievements in terms of outputs, outcomes, or impacts. Although the GEF is more interested in assessing impacts, these may take a long time to manifest. On the other end, output achievement is easy to assess but tells very little about whether GEF investments were effective in delivering global environmental benefits. Focus on outcomes is, therefore, an appropriate compromise.¹ It captures project efficacy in terms of delivering medium-term expected results. Consequently, assessment of project outcomes should be a priority.² In some cases, projects will only be expected to deliver outputs; this would be the case for a project undertaken to organize a workshop or study. The GEF Agencies are also encouraged to address assessment of impacts when appropriate. For projects funded under the fourth GEF replenishment period (GEF-4, 2006–10); evaluators must assess project results using indicators and relevant tracking tools; this approach is encouraged as well for GEF-3 (2003–06) projects.
15. Three criteria will be used in terminal evaluations in assessing level of achievement of project outcomes and objectives:
 - a. **Relevance.** Were the project's outcomes consistent with the focal areas/operational program strategies and country priorities?
 - b. **Effectiveness.** Are the actual project outcomes commensurate with the original or modified project objectives? If the original or modified expected results are merely outputs/inputs, the evaluators should assess if there were any real outcomes of the project and, if there were, determine whether these are commensurate with realistic expectations from such projects.
 - c. **Efficiency.** Was the project cost effective? Was the project the least cost option? Was project implementation delayed, and, if it was, did that affect cost effectiveness? Wherever possible, the evaluator should also compare the costs incurred and the time taken to achieve outcomes with that for similar projects.
16. The evaluation of relevancy, effectiveness, and efficiency will be as objective as possible and will include sufficient and convincing empirical evidence. Ideally, the project monitoring system should deliver quantifiable information that can lead to a

robust assessment of project effectiveness and efficiency. Since projects have different objectives, assessed results are not comparable and cannot be aggregated. Outcomes will be rated as follows for relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency:

- a. **Highly satisfactory (HS).** The project had no shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives in terms of relevance, effectiveness, or efficiency.
 - b. **Satisfactory (S).** The project had minor shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives in terms of relevance, effectiveness, or efficiency.
 - c. **Moderately satisfactory (MS).** The project had moderate shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives in terms of relevance, effectiveness, or efficiency.
 - d. **Moderately unsatisfactory (MU).** The project had significant shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives in terms of relevance, effectiveness, or efficiency.
 - e. **Unsatisfactory (U).** The project had major shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives in terms of relevance, effectiveness, or efficiency.
 - f. **Highly unsatisfactory (HU).** The project had severe shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives in terms of relevance, effectiveness, or efficiency.
17. When rating the project's outcomes, relevance and effectiveness will be considered to be critical criteria. Criticality in this context implies that satisfactory performance on a specific criterion is essential to satisfactory performance overall. Thus, lack of performance on such criteria is not compensated by better performance on other criteria. If Agencies provide separate ratings on relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency, the overall outcomes rating of the project may not be higher than the lowest rating on relevance and effectiveness. Thus, to have an overall satisfactory rating for outcomes, the project must have at least satisfactory ratings on both relevance and effectiveness.
 18. The evaluators will assess other results of the project, including positive and negative actual (or anticipated) impacts or emerging long-term effects. Given the long-term nature of impacts, it might not be possible for the evaluators to identify or fully assess these. Nonetheless, they will indicate the steps taken to assess long-term project impacts,³ especially impacts on local populations, global environment (for example, any increase in the number of individuals of an endangered species, improved water quality, increase in fish stocks, reduced greenhouse gas emissions), replication effects, and other local effects. Wherever possible, evaluators should indicate how findings on impacts will be reported to the GEF in future.

3.3 Assessment of Risks to Sustainability of Project Outcomes

19. *The GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy*, minimum requirement 3, specifies that a terminal evaluation will assess, at minimum, the "likelihood of sustainabil-

ity of outcomes at project termination, and provide a rating for this.” Sustainability is understood as the likelihood of continued benefits after the GEF project ends. Given the uncertainties involved, it may be difficult to have a realistic a priori assessment of sustainability of outcomes. Therefore, assessment of sustainability of outcomes will give special attention to analysis of the risks that are likely to affect the persistence of project outcomes. This assessment should explain how the risks to project outcomes will affect continuation of benefits after the GEF project ends. It will include both exogenous and endogenous risks. The following four dimensions or aspects of risks to sustainability will be addressed:

- a. **Financial risks.** Are there any financial risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outcomes? What is the likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available once GEF assistance ends? (Such resources can be from multiple sources, such as the public and private sectors or income-generating activities; these can also include trends that indicate the likelihood that, in future, there will be adequate financial resources for sustaining project outcomes.)
 - b. **Sociopolitical risks.** Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outcomes? What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership (including ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained? Do the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that project benefits continue to flow? Is there sufficient public/stakeholder awareness in support of the project’s long-term objectives?
 - c. **Institutional framework and governance risks.** Do the legal frameworks, policies, and governance structures and processes within which the project operates pose risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project benefits? Are requisite systems for accountability and transparency, and required technical know-how, in place?
 - d. **Environmental risks.** Are there any environmental risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outcomes? The terminal evaluation should assess whether certain activities will pose a threat to the sustainability of the project outcomes. For example, construction of a dam in a protected area could inundate a sizable area and thereby neutralize the biodiversity-related gains made by the project.
20. Each of the above dimensions of risks to sustainability of project outcomes will be rated based on an overall assessment of the likelihood and magnitude of the potential effect of the risks considered within that dimension. The following ratings will be provided:
- a. **Likely (L).** There are no or negligible risks that affect this dimension of sustainability.
 - b. **Moderately likely (ML).** There are moderate risks that affect this dimension of sustainability.

- c. **Moderately unlikely (MU).** There are significant risks that affect this dimension of sustainability.
 - d. **Unlikely (U).** There are severe risks that affect this dimension of sustainability.
21. All the risk dimensions of sustainability are critical. Therefore, overall rating for sustainability will not be higher than the lowest rated dimension. For example, if a project has an “unlikely” rating in any dimension, its overall rating cannot be higher than “unlikely.”

3.4 Catalytic Role

22. The terminal evaluation will describe any catalytic or replication effect of the project. If no effects are identified, the evaluation will describe the catalytic or replication actions that the project carried out. No ratings are requested for the project’s catalytic role.

3.5 Assessment of M&E Systems

23. *The GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy* specifies that a terminal evaluation will assess whether the project met the minimum requirements for project design of M&E (minimum requirement 1) and the implementation of the project M&E plan (minimum requirement 2).
24. **M&E design.** Projects should have a sound M&E plan to monitor results and track progress toward achieving project objectives. An M&E plan should include a baseline (including data, methodology, and so on), SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely) indicators and data analysis systems, and evaluation studies at specific times to assess results and adequate funding for M&E activities. The time frame for various M&E activities and standards for outputs should have been specified.
25. **M&E plan implementation.** A terminal evaluation should verify that an M&E system was in place and facilitated timely tracking of progress toward project objectives by collecting information on chosen indicators continually throughout the project implementation period; annual project reports were complete and accurate, with well-justified ratings; the information provided by the M&E system was used during the project to improve performance and to adapt to changing needs; and projects had an M&E system in place with proper training for parties responsible for M&E activities to ensure that data will continue to be collected and used after project closure.
26. **Budgeting and funding for M&E activities.** In addition to incorporating information on funding for M&E while assessing M&E design, the evaluators will determine whether M&E was sufficiently budgeted for at the project planning stage and whether M&E was funded adequately and in a timely manner during implementation.

27. Project M&E systems will be rated as follows on quality of M&E design and quality of M&E implementation:
- a. **Highly satisfactory (HS).** There were no shortcomings in the project M&E system.
 - b. **Satisfactory (S).** There were minor shortcomings in the project M&E system.
 - c. **Moderately satisfactory (MS).** There were moderate shortcomings in the project M&E system.
 - d. **Moderately unsatisfactory (MU).** There were significant shortcomings in the project M&E system.
 - e. **Unsatisfactory (U).** There were major shortcomings in the project M&E system.
 - f. **Highly unsatisfactory (HU).** The project had no M&E system.
28. The overall rating of M&E during project implementation will be based solely on the quality of M&E plan implementation. The ratings on quality at entry of M&E design and sufficiency of funding during planning and implementation will be used as explanatory variables.

3.6 Monitoring of Long-Term Changes

29. The monitoring and evaluation of long-term changes is often incorporated in GEF-supported projects as a separate component and may include determination of environmental baselines; specification of indicators; and provisioning of equipment and capacity building for data gathering, analysis, and use. This section of the terminal evaluation report will describe project actions and accomplishments toward establishing a long-term monitoring system. The review will address the following questions:
- a. Did this project contribute to the establishment of a long-term monitoring system? If it did not, should the project have included such a component?
 - b. What were the accomplishments and shortcomings in establishment of this system?
 - c. Is the system sustainable—that is, is it embedded in a proper institutional structure and does it have financing?
 - d. Is the information generated by this system being used as originally intended?

3.7 Assessment of Processes Affecting Attainment of Project Results

30. When relevant, the evaluation team should consider the following issues affecting project implementation and attainment of project results. Note that evaluators

are not expected to provide ratings or separate assessments on these issues, but these could be considered in the performance and results sections of the report:

- a. **Preparation and readiness.** Were the project's objectives and components clear, practicable, and feasible within its time frame? Were the capacities of the executing institution(s) and its counterparts properly considered when the project was designed? Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated in the project design? Were the partnership arrangements properly identified and roles and responsibilities negotiated prior to project approval? Were counterpart resources (funding, staff, and facilities), enabling legislation, and adequate project management arrangements in place at project entry?
- b. **Country ownership/drivenness.** Was the project concept in line with the sectoral and development priorities and plans of the country—or of participating countries, in the case of multicountry projects? Are project outcomes contributing to national development priorities and plans? Were the relevant country representatives from government and civil society involved in the project? Did the recipient government maintain its financial commitment to the project? Has the government—or governments in the case of multicountry projects—approved policies or regulatory frameworks in line with the project's objectives?
- c. **Stakeholder involvement.** Did the project involve the relevant stakeholders through information sharing and consultation and by seeking their participation in project design, implementation, and M&E? For example, did the project implement appropriate outreach and public awareness campaigns? Did the project consult with and make use of the skills, experience, and knowledge of the appropriate government entities, nongovernmental organizations, community groups, private sector entities, local governments, and academic institutions in the design, implementation, and evaluation of project activities? Were perspectives of those who would be affected by project decisions, those who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the process taken into account while taking decisions? Were the relevant vulnerable groups and powerful supporters and opponents of the processes properly involved?
- d. **Financial planning.** Did the project have the appropriate financial controls, including reporting and planning, that allowed management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allowed for timely flow of funds? Was there due diligence in the management of funds and financial audits? Did promised cofinancing materialize?
- e. **GEF Agency supervision and backstopping.** Did GEF Agency staff identify problems in a timely fashion and accurately estimate their seriousness? Did GEF Agency staff provide quality support and advice to the project, approve

modifications in time, and restructure the project when needed? Did the GEF Agency provide the right staffing levels, continuity, skill mix, and frequency of field visits for the project?

- f. **Cofinancing and project outcomes and sustainability.** If there was a difference in the level of expected cofinancing and the cofinancing actually realized, what were the reasons for the variance? Did the extent of materialization of cofinancing affect project outcomes and/or sustainability, and, if so, in what ways and through what causal linkages?
- g. **Delays and project outcomes and sustainability.** If there were delays in project implementation and completion, what were the reasons? Did the delays affect project outcomes and/or sustainability, and, if so, in what ways and through what causal linkages?

3.8 Lessons and Recommendations

- 31. The evaluators will present lessons and recommendations in the terminal evaluation report on all aspects of the project that they consider relevant. They will be expected to give special attention to analyzing lessons and proposing recommendations on aspects related to factors that contributed to or hindered attainment of project objectives, sustainability of project benefits, innovation, catalytic effect and replication, and project M&E.
- 32. Evaluators should refrain from providing recommendations to improve the project. Instead, they should seek to provide a few well-formulated lessons applicable to the type of project at hand or to the GEF's overall portfolio. Terminal evaluations should not be undertaken with the motive of appraisal, preparation, or justification for a follow-up phase. Wherever possible, terminal evaluation reports should include examples of good practices for other projects in a focal area, country, or region.

Notes

- 1. Outcomes are the likely or achieved short- and medium-term effects of an intervention's outputs. Examples of outcomes could include, but are not restricted to, stronger institutional capacities, higher public awareness (when leading to changes of behavior), and transformed policy frameworks or markets.
- 2. A focus on assessment of project outcomes in terminal evaluations will be accepted by the GEF Evaluation Office.
- 3. Impacts are positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, Development Assistance Committee, "Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management," www.oecd.org/dataoecd/secure/14/57/31950400.pdf). For the GEF, environmental impacts are the main focus.

4. Independent Review and Validation

33. The GEF encourages independent review of the findings, ratings, and quality of terminal evaluations. Such independent reviews should assess the consistency of the ratings for outcomes, sustainability, and project M&E based on the evidence presented in the terminal evaluation reports; they should also assess the overall quality of the evaluation.
34. Several GEF Agencies have an established process in place whereby an independent evaluation group reviews and validates terminal evaluations and assesses the quality of terminal evaluation reports. Where such processes exist, the GEF Evaluation Office will assess the extent to which the independent review process meets GEF concerns and provides the required information for GEF oversight and reporting. Once the Office has deemed that a GEF Agency's independent review process meets GEF concerns and information needs, it may accept the reviews and the verified ratings by the independent evaluation unit of the respective Agency. In such cases, the GEF Evaluation Office will periodically assess the extent to which the independent review process continues to meet GEF concerns.
35. Where a GEF Agency does not have an independent evaluation unit or lacks an independent review process, the GEF Evaluation Office will review the terminal evaluation reports to verify ratings and assess quality. Upon completion of the review, the Office will send it to the appropriate GEF Agency, which will then have two weeks to provide its comments. The GEF Evaluation Office will finalize the review, taking these comments into consideration.
36. When a terminal evaluation report submitted by a GEF Agency addresses only some of the issues of interest to the GEF, the GEF Evaluation Office may carry out another, supplementary, review.
37. The GEF Evaluation Office will include in terminal evaluation report reviews any relevant information collected independently as part of other evaluations carried out by the Office, and this will be reflected in the annual performance report to the GEF Council.
38. The terminal evaluation report reviews will use the same criteria as indicated above for project outcomes, sustainability, and M&E system. They will also provide information on the quality of the terminal evaluation report.

39. Periodically, the GEF Evaluation Office may also carry out special reviews on issues not addressed by the terminal evaluations. The Office may also participate in a select number of terminal evaluation missions as a means of assessing the evaluation practices of the GEF Agencies. For a select group of projects, it may carry out a technical assessment of project impacts after project completion.

4.1 Criteria for Rating Quality of Terminal Evaluation Reports

40. The GEF Evaluation Office will use the following criteria to assess the quality of terminal evaluation reports:
- a. The terminal evaluation report presented an assessment of all relevant outcomes and achievement of project objectives in the context of the focal area program indicators if applicable.
 - b. The terminal evaluation report was consistent, the evidence presented was complete and convincing, and the ratings were well substantiated.
 - c. The terminal evaluation report presented a sound assessment of sustainability of outcomes.
 - d. The lessons and recommendations listed in the terminal evaluation report are supported by the evidence presented and are relevant to the GEF portfolio and future projects.
 - e. The terminal evaluation report included the actual project costs (totals, per activity, and per source) and actual cofinancing used.¹
 - f. The terminal evaluation report included an assessment of the quality of the M&E plan at entry, the operation of the M&E system used during implementation, and the extent M&E was sufficiently budgeted for during preparation and properly funded during implementation.

4.2 Ratings on Quality of Terminal Evaluation Reports

41. The rating on the overall quality of the terminal evaluation reports will be as follows:
- a. **Highly satisfactory (HS).** There were no shortcomings in the terminal evaluation report.
 - b. **Satisfactory (S).** There were minor shortcomings in the terminal evaluation report.
 - c. **Moderately satisfactory (MS).** There were moderate shortcomings in the terminal evaluation report.

- d. **Moderately unsatisfactory (MU).** There were significant shortcomings in the terminal evaluation report.
 - e. **Unsatisfactory (U).** There were major shortcomings in the terminal evaluation report.
 - f. **Highly unsatisfactory (HU).** There were severe shortcomings in the terminal evaluation report.
42. The first two criteria (of all relevant outcomes and achievement of project objectives and report consistency and substantiation of claims with proper evidence—see paragraphs 40a and b) are critical. Thus, the overall rating on the quality of the terminal evaluation report will not be better than the lower rating on either of these two criteria.

Note

1. See annex for specific information required regarding cofinancing.

5. Interim Evaluations

43. Projects that have been approved by the GEF Council as phased projects will submit a terminal evaluation that conforms to these guidelines at the time of endorsement by the GEF Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the project's next phase. For projects that have not been approved by the GEF Council as phased projects, project proposals requesting support for a follow-up project will be accompanied by an independent terminal evaluation of the earlier project when the project concept is reviewed for pipeline entry. If the current phase of the project is still under implementation, an interim evaluation should be prepared following these guidelines and presented when the follow-up phase is first presented to the GEF Secretariat. Both the terminal and interim evaluations should be carried out by individuals who are independent from those responsible for the design and implementation of the new phase. In addition to the interim evaluation, Agencies will also prepare a full terminal evaluation of the previous phase that conforms to these guidelines at the time of work program inclusion.

6. Communications with the GEF Evaluation Office

44. By May 15 of each year, the GEF Agencies will send a list to the GEF Evaluation Office indicating the terminal evaluations scheduled for the next fiscal year,¹ including the approximate schedule of missions and of completion of terminal evaluation reports. The GEF Evaluation Office will use this information to track submission of completed evaluations and to identify those in which the GEF Evaluation Office staff could participate. The final terminal evaluation reports will be sent to the GEF Evaluation Office on a rolling basis no later than two months after the completion of the evaluation process, along with any independent assessment of the terminal evaluation report by the relevant GEF Agency independent evaluation unit. This information will be used by the Evaluation Office in making its annual reports to the GEF Council on portfolio trends. The annual performance report will cover evaluations prepared from July 1 to June 30 of the respective fiscal year and submitted no later than August 15 of the following fiscal year. Thus, the *GEF Annual Performance Report 2007* will be based on terminal evaluation reports prepared from July 1, 2006, through June 30, 2007, but submitted no later than August 15, 2007.

Note

1. The GEF fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30.

Annex.

Required Project Identification and Financial Data

The terminal evaluation report should provide information on project identification, time frame, actual expenditures, and cofinancing in the following format, which is modeled after the project identification form (PIF).

I. Project Identification

GEF Project ID: [Assigned by the GEF Secretariat at pipeline entry.]

GEF Agency Project ID:

Countries:

Project Title: [As per the project appraisal document submitted to the GEF.]

GEF Agency (or Agencies):

II. Dates

Milestone	Expected date	Actual date
CEO endorsement/approval		
Agency approval date		
Implementation start		
Midterm evaluation		
Project completion		
Terminal evaluation completion		
Project closing		

Expected dates are as per the expectations at the point of CEO endorsement/approval.

III. Project Framework

Project component	Activity type	GEF financing (in \$)		Cofinancing (in \$)	
		Approved	Actual	Promised	Actual
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6. Project management					
Total					

Activity types are investment, technical assistance, or scientific and technical analysis.

Promised cofinancing refers to the amount indicated at the point of CEO endorsement/ approval.

IV. Cofinancing

Source of cofinancing	Type	Project preparation		Project implementation		Total	
		Expected	Actual	Expected	Actual	Expected	Actual
Host gov't contribution							
GEF Agency (ies)							
Bilateral aid agency (ies)							
Multilateral agency (ies)							
Private sector							
NGO							
Other							
Total cofinancing							

Expected amounts are those submitted by the GEF Agencies in the original project appraisal document.

Cofinancing types are grant, soft loan, hard loan, guarantee, in kind, or cash.



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