
Sixth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Program in Mexico

(UNDP PIMS ID 5531 GEF ID 9167)

Mid-Term Review October-November, 2019

Final Report,

October 2019

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GEF Focal Area Objective: BD-4 Program 9; CC-2 Program 4; and LD-1 Program 1

Implementing partner and other strategic partners: Implementing partner: UNOPS

Mid-Term Review team members: Mrs. Elena Laura Ferretti, International Consultant

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Acronyms

| | |
|----------|--|
| BD | Biodiversity |
| CBOs | Community-based Organizations |
| CC | Climate Change |
| CEO | Chief Executive Officer |
| CO | Country Office |
| COMDEKS | Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative |
| CONABIO | National Commission for Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity (Comisión Nacional para el Conocimiento y Uso de la Biodiversidad) |
| CONAFOR | National Forestry Commission (Comisión Nacional Forestal) |
| CONANP | National Commission of Protected Areas (Comisión Nacional de Areas Naturales Protegidas) |
| CPM | Country Program Manager |
| CPMU | Country Programme Management Unit |
| CPT | Country Programme Team |
| FSC | Forest Stewardship Council |
| FSP | Full Size Project |
| GEB | Global Environmental Benefits |
| GEF | Global Environment Facility |
| HA | Hectare |
| ICCA | Indigenous People and Community Conserved Territories and Areas |
| LD | Land Degradation |
| MBC | Mesoamerican Biological Corridor |
| MoMs | Minutes of Meetings |
| M&E | Monitoring & Evaluation |
| NC | National Coordinator |
| NGOs | Non-Governmental Organizations |
| NSC | National Steering Committee |
| OP | Operational Program/Operational Phase |
| PA | Program Assistant or Protected Area |
| PIF | Project Identification Form |
| PIR | Project Implementation Review |
| PMU | Programme Management Unit |
| PRF | Project Results Framework |
| QPR | Quarterly Project Review |
| REDD | Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation |
| RR | Resident Representative |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SEMARNAT | Ministry of Environment & Natural Resources (Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales) |
| SGP | Small Grants Programme |
| SL | Strategic Landscape |
| SMART | Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-bound |
| ToR | Terms of Reference |
| TT | Tracking Tools |
| UCP | Upgraded Country Programme |
| UNDAF | UN Development Assistance Framework |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNOPS | United Nations Office for Project Service |

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The present Report constitutes the Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the Sixth Operational Phase (OP) of the GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) Project in Mexico, an initiative financed by GEF, implemented by the United Nations Office for Project Service (UNOPS) with guidance and oversight by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The evaluation took place in September-October 2019. The purpose of the review is to assess progress towards the achievement of project objectives and outcomes, identify risks for sustainability and provide recommendations.

Table N.1 Project Summary

| | | | |
|---|---|--|------------------|
| Project Title: | Sixth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Mexico | | |
| UNDP Project ID (PIMS #): | 5531 | PIF Approval Date: | Apr 19, 2016 |
| GEF Project ID (PMIS #): | 9167 | CEO Endorsement Date: | Nov 6, 2017 |
| ATLAS Award ID: | 97091 | Project Document Signature Date (date project began): | Feb 22, 2018 |
| Country(ies): | Mexico | Date project manager hired: | June 2018 |
| Region: | LAC | Inception Workshop date: | Jun 15, 2018 |
| Focal Area: | Multifocal | Midterm Review date: | Sept-Oct 2019 |
| GEF-6 Focal Area Strategic Objectives and Programs: | BD-4, Program 9 CCM-2, Program 4 LD-2, Program 3 | Planned closing date: | Feb 22, 2021 |
| Trust Fund: | GEF TF | If revised, proposed closing date: | N/A |
| Executing Agency (Implementing Partner): | UNOPS | | |
| Other execution partners: | N/A | | |
| Project Financing: | Expected at CEO endorsement (USD) | At Midterm Review (USD) | |
| [1] GEF financing (incl. PPG): | 4,429,223 | 4,429,223 | |
| [2] UNDP contribution (in-kind): | 300,000 | 150,000 | |
| [3] Government: | | | |
| - (State Gov. of Yucatan, municipalities of Peto, Chacsinkin and Min. of Education) | 390,843 | | - |
| - (State Gov. of Quintana Roo, Ministry of Education and Environment) | 1,395,868 | | - |
| -Secretaria del Bienestar, Secretaria Desarrollo Sustentable, CONAFOR, CONANP | | | 414,254 |
| [4] Other Partners: | | | |
| -Scientific and Technological Park of Yucatan | 279,174 | | - |
| -The Institute of Entrepreneurs of Yucatan (IYEM) | 167,504 | | - |
| -Kellogg Fellows Leadership Alliance (in-cash) | 50,000 | | - |
| -Private Sector | | | 130,973 |
| -Donors | | | 542,436 |
| -Civil Society Organizations | | | 154,385 |
| -Grantees (in-cash) | 1,500,000 | | 127,998 |
| -Grantees (in-kind) | 2,250,000 | | 54,856 |
| [5] Total co-financing [2 + 3+ 4]: | 6,333,389 | | 1,574,902 |
| PROJECT TOTAL COSTS [1 + 5] | 10,762,612 | | 6,004,125 |

I Project Description

The GEF SGP in Mexico is implemented since 1994. With OP6, it takes an integrated landscape approach to development and conservation. The Project is designed to empower community organizations to take collective action for socio-ecological resilience of their production landscapes/seascapes in the States of Quintana Roo, Yucatan, Chiapas, Tabasco in Southern Mexico, through design and implementation of grant projects for global environmental benefits and sustainable development. The objective is to empower local communities to manage production landscapes in Mexico's southeast large ecosystems in a manner that enhances their social, economic and environmental sustainability and resilience. The Project document was signed on February 2018 but field operations started only in June, when the Country Programme Team (CPT) was recruited and completely renovated. The project is due to end in February 2021, three years after the signature of the contract. At signature, the Project budget totals US\$ 10,762,612 of which US\$

4,429,223 from GEF and US\$ 6,333,389 from different co-financing resources. It is implemented by UNDP and executed by UNOPS, through the Country Program Management Unit (CPMU).

II Project Progress Summary

The Project is **relevant** in relation to GEF SGP strategies, aligned with UNDP and national policies and plans and instrumental for CBOs and NGOs living in the area. **Progress of implementation** is rated as satisfactory and this MTR confirms the view of stakeholders that the Project is well managed and executed.

Table N.2 MTR Ratings & Achievements

| Project Strategy | Rating ¹ | Achievement Description |
|---------------------------|---------------------|--|
| | N/A | Project design is relevant, appropriate and innovative and based on lessons learnt; with OP6, it takes an integrated, landscape approach. The drivers of environmental degradation are adequately exposed, focusing on the weaknesses of organizations/civil society for collective action, to build and maintain resilience of socio-ecological landscapes. It is aligned with GEF, UNDP and national policies/strategies; although climate change appears not be a priority of the current federal government, it is reportedly integrated into sectoral plans, currently under development. The Results Framework is well connected through logical linkages, with a few shortcomings in Outcome 1 indicators. Landscapes strategies are not yet completed; grant-making has been done in parallel and small grants indicators are coherently linked to GEF targets. |
| Progress Towards Results | Rating | Comments |
| | S | Progress is registered in the Results Framework, with achievements and ratings in Table 5. The 106 small grants approved with two calls for proposals absorb the entire GEF budget and, on paper, cover the GEF targets. With half of the small grants recently starting, including all strategic and transversal projects, progress is insufficiently advanced to assess how successful and sustainable implementation will be. Interviews and projects visited reveal a promising situation, sound environmental awareness and willingness to support activities beyond this operational phase. Following the June 2018 elections, the alternation of authorities compromised previous co-financing commitments; yet, management has been extremely active to find alternative opportunities, especially with private partners the totality of which will potentially go beyond initial expectations. The Terminal Evaluation will be in a better position to assess results. |
| | S | Outcome N.1 Most targets achieved on paper, with many of them potentially exceeded. A few targets require adjustment, either for planning mistakes (presence of invasive alien species in freshwater/marine water or markets' limitations for the hatcheries) or for the need to revise the methodological approach to assess CO2 (Objective level). Good links established between the small grants and the strategic projects (i.e. Forestry, Tourism). In a few cases, the co-financing ratio of the organization is largely beyond the established ratio. |
| | MS | Under Outcome N.2 stakeholders are mapped and a considerable number of new communities have been reached through the financing of over 70 new organizations (not part of the network before OP6). The design of the landscapes/seascape involved over 500 people (25% women) and is under completion, with a regional vision also being prepared; its completion is overdue. The two Tabasco areas merged to take a watershed approach, therefore SGP covers five instead than six landscapes. Business development and management capacities are strengthened through both individual grants and the transversal Business Administration grant. |
| | S | Outcome N.3 Three strategic and six transversal projects have been selected and designed with the careful coaching of the Country Programme Team (CPT). All of them are just starting; although landscape multi-stakeholders platforms require more work, the CPT never miss the occasion to create links and alliances among communities and producers; the potential to strengthen second and even third level organizations is at hand. The extensive use of social media and communication tools, including the work currently developed for the upcoming 25 th Anniversary of SGP in Mexico, produce knowledge management material (only partially available for revision during the MTR) which should be systematized and transformed into case studies. Overall, there is evidence of great capacities of communication and of establishing relations. |
| Implementation & Adaptive | Rating | Comments |

¹ *Progress Towards Results, Implementation and Adaptive Management*: HS: Highly Satisfactory; S: Satisfactory; MS: Moderately Satisfactory; MU: Moderately Unsatisfactory; U: Unsatisfactory; HU: Highly Unsatisfactory.
Rating for Sustainability: L: Likely; ML: Moderately likely; MU: Moderately Unlikely; U: Unlikely.

| Management | | |
|--|--------|--|
| | S | Notwithstanding some delays, activities are efficiently and effectively implemented; the CPT is integrated by three close-knit persons, led by a dynamic and capable programme manager. The budget delivery rate has been low to date but it is climbing up as the first installment of the second call grants are being processed. All the GEF grant budget is committed. Grantmaking working modalities were innovated during this phasemaking formats more accessible (but without disrupting current stakeholders' habits), increasing the use of digital technologies (making work easier for the National Steering Committee (NSC) and implementing a communication strategy which allowed reaching a larger number of organizations and communities. The renovation of the NSC should be implemented gradually but according to clear plans. Great efforts in monitoring do not eliminate the need to establish a M&E system to allow monitoring at programme, landscape and projects level, collecting significative data and information beyond those needed for tracking the GEF Core indicators and project's targets, making more accurate tracking of co-financing and overall systematizing efforts. SGP is producing knowledge management material that together with the extensive use of social media is expected to improve the delivery of information to different levels of stakeholders. |
| Sustainability | Rating | Comments |
| Financial resources | L | SGP co-financing system is effective in stimulating ownership and commitment; although small groups have difficulties in complying with requirements, other groups are often able to go beyond them. SGP has taken an active and effective role in partnering with private donors as government financial commitments will not be honored by newly installed authorities. Effective financing will have to be determined at EoP; in addition to co-financing mobilized to date, negotiations are on-going and considerable new amounts are expected. More can be done with public partners. Strengthening CBOs' capacities translates into empowerment and opportunities to access additional funding to finance activities strategically linked within the landscapes. Rules should be established to no longer finance organizations which appear to have the means to invest in their business, instead supporting alliances through second and third level organizations. Funds availability for OP7 appears not at risk. |
| Socio-economic | L | Strategic and transversal projects supporting alliances, marketing opportunities and the possibility to influence public policies are just starting and assessment of their performance is premature. Yet, interviews and experience in the field indicate the CPT's considerable knowledge of the environmental and social actors as well as an outstanding capacity to reach new communities, create alliances and interact at different levels. With the purpose to go beyond donations, SGP Mexico is exploring its grant-making-plus approach which promotes social inclusion, training of trainers, and sharing of knowledge. The possibility to influence policies is pursued through strategic projects such as in tourist sector (finding common ways to manage data and information), in the forestry sector (sustaining the processes for wood certification, for the recognition of the Maya Milpa as an important agricultural heritage system), and in the apiculture sector (establishing a beekeeping agenda around which donor may coordinate investments). SGP has taken an integral and new approach to gender mainstreaming, to generate awareness and specific actions to reduce gender inequities. |
| Institutional framework and governance | ML | Political instability has required the establishment of a new dialogue with federal and state authorities. Although not unforeseen, it takes time and efforts to establish relations, gain the trust of people, and obtain alternative co-financing. The decision of the federal government to stop direct financing to NGOs puts a strain on the social fabric created within the years and challenges important civil society processes; it is valuable that SGP is collaborating with current federal government programmes (<i>Sembrando Vida</i> and <i>Construyendo el Futuro</i>). State Governments are invited to participate but unfortunately, officials have travelling budgets' limitations; therefore, virtual information should be used in the most extensive way and renewed efforts needs to be implemented in creating and supporting private-public landscapes platforms. |
| Environmental | L | SGP and the UNDP Disaster Risk Management project collaborate to implement an integral approach to enhance resilience: all SGP-financed projects implement a disaster risk reduction strategy which includes climatic but also anthropic risks. Many projects have dedicated a percentage of their budget to finance measures to make their activities more resilient. The approach should be extended and integrated at landscape level. |

II Concise Summary of Conclusions

The Project is well managed; the delayed start affects the capacity to implement the Project within the established timeframe but it does not affect the **efficiency** and **cost-effectiveness** of the implementation, since the CPT took office. The landscapes/seascape strategies are still under completion; although the situation is not optimal, it allowed grant-making to proceed in parallel with the design of the strategies, in accordance with the GEF Core Indicators and Project targets established in the Project Document and

within the framework of the SGP 2020-2030 Strategic Planning. If three years of implementation are generally a limited timeframe for this type of projects, here an extension is highly recommended, considering that Mexico SGP is adopting the landscape approach for the first time and that management was completely renovated; two calls for proposals assigned the entire GEF grant budget to 106 small grants but the second half of projects only recently started. The CPM active role to find co-financing alternatives is translating into potential commitments. The CPT is encouraged to continue exploring such synergies to promote the upscaling and replication impacts of the best practices, with renovated efforts for bringing on board public officials. Overall, SGP supports the rights of communities over their natural resources and strengthen their actions against the power of tour operators (in the tourism sector) and of intermediary – the so-called *coyotes* – in the commercialization of products (coffee, cocoa, honey and wood). Some organizations may have the capacity to finance proposed activities without SGP support, given relative success in their business; yet, all projects address sustainable activities, in accordance with OP6 objectives. All communities visited highly value the support received.

There seems to be a general agreement among stakeholders to support Mexico SGP for OP7. The continuing presence of the Programme in the same geographical area has been a matter for discussion during the years, and stakeholders have mixed opinions. Certainly, at programme start, in a very large country such as Mexico, it was imperative to concentrate grants in a specific geographic area to reduce operational costs and facilitate contact with grantees and partner organizations. However, as the landscape approach is taken for the first time and activities in Chiapas and Tabasco are new, it is not consistent to consider OP6 a consolidation phase. Therefore, in the upcoming design of the Project Identification Form (PIF) for OP7, before moving to other geographical areas the following should be considered: i) landscapes/seascape strategies are designed with a long-term view (at least a decade) and will not be completed until after OP6 mid-implementation, therefore being a key input for OP7; ii) targeted states are experiencing the landscape approach for the first time, with 75% of organizations receiving grants for the first time and of the 25% which were already supported previously, 10% are dealing with a new thematic; iii) work in Chiapas and Tabasco is incipient; iv) any expansion should be gradual, consider the continuity of the ecosystems already targeted and safety of operations (there is no point in expanding to areas which are ecologically important but where it would be too insecure for both the team and the communities to work); iv) the presence of an already solid civil society fabric should be verified to ensure governance and the effective possibility to set in motion processes of change; v) reliability of co-financing commitments; vi) definition of rules for a mixed approach focusing mainly on strengthening second /third level organizations where SGP has been a long presence while direct support for CBOs should focus on new areas; vii) value socio-economic elements, i.e. migratory fluxes as opportunities to strengthen actions.

IV Recommendations Summary

The following recommendations are tailored to improve the implementation and sustainability of the SGP as a whole and not of specific grants.

Table N. 3 Recommendations

| N. | Recommendation | Responsible entity |
|------------|--|--------------------------|
| A | Outcomes level | |
| A.1 | Outcome N.1 Modification of the Project Results Framework. Adopt the revised text suggested in the PRF matrix to: clarify the name of the landscapes/seascape; order the numbering of indicators; correct the presence of alien species in freshwater instead than in marine waters. The revision does not affect the meaning or the targets of indicators. | CPT, NSC, UNDP RTA |
| A.2 | Outcome N.2 Design of landscapes/seascapes strategies. Although the decision to proceed with grant-making in parallel with the design of the landscapes/seascapes strategies has been supported by all stakeholders, the activity is beyond time and SGP Mexico is encouraged to ensure their finalization at least by the end of 2019, well documenting lessons learnt not only at landscape but also at regional level. | CPT, NSC, Consultants |
| A.3 | Outcome N.3 Accelerate the implementation of Strategic and Transversal Projects. Planning has been accurate; as implementation of these projects just started, delay should be recuperated and monitoring ensure that results feed the establishment and/or strengthening of multi-stakeholder | CPT, NSC, grantees |

| | | |
|------------|---|---|
| | policy dialogue platforms in each landscape. | |
| B | Project Implementation and Adaptive Management | |
| B.1 | Consider a no-cost extension of the Project. Delay in hiring the CPM, the fact that the team is completely new and had to get fully acquainted with the SGP together with the large number of projects approved, half of which just recently awarded including all strategic and transversal projects, suggest considering an extension of the SGP of at least 6 months, and according to funds availability. Lack of an extension would compromise the capability of organizations to achieve results and of the CPT to document lessons learnt and prepare for OP7. | NSC, CPT, RTA, UNDP GEF Executive Coordinator |
| B.2 | Monitoring. Establish a structured M&E system to track progress at Programme (GEF Core Indicators and Project's targets), Landscape and small grants levels, defining indicators able to capture the richness of on-going processes beyond the GEF targets. Take a long-term view on the landscapes/seascape instead than only addressing the current small grants and find a balance between monitoring second call grants (just starting) and first call grants (already quite advanced). Given the multiple actors involved, include an effective system to track co-financing at project level (not accurately done at present). Develop a Small Grants Management and Monitoring Handbook, based on current experience balancing current flexibility allowed to organizations with the need to produce results and obtain data to feed further planning. Revise the Internal Project database to include grant's short summaries of achievements and ensure increased accuracy in the collection and management of data. Finally, SGP is encouraged to transform the small grants risk management approach into a landscape risk management approach, assessing the way this may influence public policies through thematic clusters. | CPT with input from the NSC |
| B.3 | Renew the NSC. The NSC functions well but requires modernization by: i) respecting the rotation rule (especially for people that have long been sitting there and may be in a conflict of interest), and strengthening expertise in terms of tourism and agroecology ii) proceed to develop internal functioning rules, as planned; iii) establish mechanisms for virtual meetings to possibly support the CPT not only during project selection but also implementation. | NSC, CPT, UNDP CO |
| B.4 | Improve reporting. i) standardize the NSC's reports making them more than an internal document adopting the new template recently finalized by SGP Global, of use also for an external reader; ii) ensure thematic areas are systematically called in the same way to facilitate communication and knowledge management; iii) ensure different versions of documents are dated; iv) ensure targets, and in particular for Outcome 3, are gender and age disaggregated. | CPT, NSC |
| B.5 | Systematize information and communication. The CPT makes extensive use of social networks and information tools to communicate, many of which are currently under development; systematize this material and have it at hand in various formats to be used with different types of stakeholders. While there is a strong capacity to communicate with civil society and the private sector, SGP should renew and accelerate the political dialogue with national authorities. The 25 th Anniversary is a key opportunity to increase the dissemination of the program at the local, regional and national levels. | CPT, CPMT |
| C | Sustainability | |
| C.1 | Assess results achieved at small-grant project level and design a Programme's exit-strategy. As landscapes/seascape's strategies are a key input for OP7, the PIF of which is under preparation, it is suggested to develop a Programme's exit strategy and start thinking about guidelines for financing OP7: i) define what is intended by consolidation phase; ii) identify and separate promising, yet not mature, initiatives for further support from long-sustained organizations/areas to be reinforced only through second or third level networks for increasing their capacity to influence environmental governance; iii) Find links (i.e. ecosystem continuity, migration fluxes) and synergies (i.e. effective possibility for governance; concrete funding opportunities) among areas/organizations supported for years and new ones to ensure an integrated support. | CPT; CBC |
| C.2 | Strengthen and systematize the multi-stakeholder policy dialogue platforms. The ability of the CPM to initiate dialogue with partners is without question; however, the federal government's budget cuts strongly limit the capacity of officials to participate. Intensify and creatively find alternative virtual and non-virtual systems of dialogue to bring together community organizations, NGOs, and federal and state government authorities, as well as other stakeholders to share information, lessons learned and experiences while advocating for policy changes. Strong multi-stakeholder partnerships are critical to overcome financial, technical, and capacity barriers for benefitting producers as well as the global environment. | |

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Purpose of the Mid-Term Review and objectives

This document is the Mid-Term Review (MTR) report of the **Sixth Operational Phase (OP) of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Program (SGP) in Mexico**; the Project is financed by the GEF and co-financed by a number of partners, including state governments, beneficiary Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), the local private sector and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Implemented by UNDP, and executed through the the United Nations Office for Project Service (UNOPS), UNDP, the Project started operations in February 2018 and is expected to end in February 2021. It is part of the long-term strategy of support to community organizations implementing grant projects to produce global environmental and sustainable development benefits. It is a Full-Size Project (FSP), subject to an MTR under the GEF Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) policies and procedures.

The independent consultant, Elena Laura Ferretti, conducted the review during the period September-October 2019 and elaborated the MTR report in accordance with UNDP and GEF guidance, rules and procedures, in particular the Guidance for Conducting Mid-Terms Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-financed Projects and the TORs ([Annex A](#)).

According to the ToRs, the purposes of the MTR are to:

- Assess progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outcomes as specified in the Project Document
- Assess early signs of project success or failure with the goal of identifying the necessary changes to be made in order to set the project on-track to achieve its intended results
- Assess the project's strategy and its risks to sustainability.

2.2 Scope and methodology

The MTR aimed at collecting and analyzing data in, as much as possible, a systematic manner so as to ensure that findings, conclusions and recommendations are substantiated by evidence. The rationale of the Consultant's approach included:

- i) A qualitative evaluation based on the analysis of primarily secondary data, documents and information collected, including the Project Results Framework (PRF), the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system, and interviews with stakeholders;
- ii) An analysis based on the evaluation criteria described in the ToRs, in accordance with UNDP-GEF guidance, policies and procedures, namely: Project Strategy, Progress Towards Results, Project Implementation and Adaptive Management, and Sustainability;
- iii) Gender inclusion assessed in terms of integration of gender disaggregated data in planning and in monitoring with a focus to understand the capacity of the Project and of the small grants to go beyond the simplicity of including women in training, workshops or being represented as a more or less larger percentage of people participating in an activity/project;
- iv) Evaluation findings assessed at landscape/seascape level in the key ecosystems of Deltaic-estuarine landscape of the Grijalva-Usumacinta Rivers; Coastal lagoons and marine interface in the Yucatan Peninsula; tropical deciduous, sub-deciduous and sub-evergreen forests in the Yucatan Peninsula; and Montane broadleaf and cloud forest in northern Chiapas, mainly considering the stakeholders' perspectives of the project's adequacy and the perceptions of its long-term possibility for impact;
- v) An evaluation based on both face-to-face and long-distance interviews with stakeholders;

- vi) Field visits to projects located in all landscapes/seascape and to the five states targeted by OP6 except Chiapas through interviews to relevant stakeholders. The selection of the projects to be visited considered: a) covering all landscapes, based on the number of small grants under implementation and their stage of development; b) availability of stakeholders for both individual and focus group interviews; c) geographical coverage; d) challenges experienced in adhering to the programme; and e) the geographical dispersion, distance, timing and security situation;
- vii) A well-prepared desk phase, key to the success of the mission;
- viii) An evaluation based on the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System.

The approach developed in four phases:

- a) Preparation Phase: a home-based desk review of basic documentation and literature ([Annex B](#)) provided by the Project and complemented through web research; first identification of gaps of information; preparation of the evaluation design: evaluation questions, proposed methods, sources of information and data collection procedures ([Annex C](#)); elaboration of the Inception Report, submitted to UNDP on September 19th, 2019. It included the tentative schedule of the field mission and the identification of relevant stakeholders to be interviewed (UNDP-GEF staff in New York, Mexico City and Merida where the SGP office is located, grantees, beneficiaries, authorities, National Steering Committee (NSC) members, key informants) ([Annex D](#): mission schedule & people/institutions interviewed). Long-distance interviews initiated in this phase as well as a first analysis of the PRF and of documents available. Suggested modifications to the PRF, based on the findings of this MTR, are included in the PRF Matrix with achievements and rating ([Table N.2](#)), utilizing the orange color to identify suggested changes;
- b) Field Phase: interviews with the SGP Country Programme Manager (CPM) and other SGP staff, grantees, members of the NSC, UNDP Country Office (CO) staff, Government counterparts and other relevant stakeholders. The methodology of interviews included both focus groups and individual sessions. The process has been participatory to ensure the contribution of stakeholders to the analysis of the context, confirm data and information collected and discuss outcomes achieved. Open sessions served also as capacity development opportunities, allowing government and non-government organizations as well as SGP and monitoring staff to interact and share experiences; co-financing information is included in the chapter under financial management; Core Indicators were reviewed and the matrix, filled by management, is in [Annex G](#). Discussions and exchanges with the Project's team allowed different analysis of data, opening new insights on monitoring;
- c) Draft reporting phase: the draft report was submitted at the end of the field mission, in October 2019, in accordance with the TORs;
- d) Final reporting phase: the final report was completed, based on comments received. It included the provision of ratings to assess the relative importance of project's achievements towards outcomes as per GEF requirements (Guidance for Conducting Mid-Terms Reviews).

2.2.1 Limitations and elements of attention

The organization of the interviews and of the field visits involved a representative number of stakeholders within the five landscapes. It did not present major difficulties; project staff and stakeholders have been highly collaborative and facilitated meetings and interviews, with an outstanding organization of the field visit. As common in SGP programmes, some critical elements should be considered in reading this report:

- the high dispersion of projects over large areas and security's issues discouraged visits of the MTR mission to certain areas;
- Following the July 2018 elections, a new federal government and new federal state authorities installed changing the picture of co-financing commitments and the Government's knowledge of SGP in the field;
- As common practice in SGP, the analysis of achievements and sustainability is not tailored to specific projects (there are more than 100 small grants under implementation): the focus is on processes with minimum insight on project's visited; in addition, progress can be appreciated only on the small grants

approved during the first call for proposal as those e selected in August 2019 are only about to start, including strategic and transversal² projects;

- the question of “attribution” of results in SGP is of difficult solution as CBOs and NGOs may be in the second or even in the third reception of grants from SGP and/or from other donors. SGP builds on synergetic activities with great capacity for both reaching communities in the most remote areas as well as for strengthening capacities and supporting innovation of existing experiences.
- Without specifying any fixed proportion, the MTR Consultant made a specific request to include projects already under implementation as well as projects just started and both successful as well as less successful activities. Over a total of about 100 grants, half of which about to start, the MTR Evaluator visited 12 projects, held discussions with representatives of the Forestry Strategic Project, one of the two Gender transversal projects, participated in a meeting with key representatives of the tourist sector led by the Tourist Strategic Project and interacted with the consultant coordinating the landscapes/seascape’s design. Overall, this provided a reasonable indication of progress to date and of challenges at landscapes and thematic areas level as well as at community level.

2.3 Structure of the Report

The MTR report was prepared in accordance with the UNDP-GEF MTR guidelines. The report follows the suggested format with a description of the methodology taken, a description of the project and then the finding organized around the:

- Project Strategy
- Progress towards results
- Project implementation and adaptive management
- Sustainability

Conclusions and recommendations complete the report.

² In the SGP Mexico terminology, “transversal” projects refers to small grants dealing with subjects of interest for all or for many other small grants, namely: gender mainstreaming, climate change resilience, business administration, communities’ communication, biodiversity strategy communication, ICCAs.

3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND CONTEXT

3.1 Development context

Since 1994, the Mexico SGP has been supporting community-driven natural resource management aimed at alleviating poverty through promotion of local, sustainable livelihoods, targeting the states of Campeche, Quintana Roo and Yucatan in the Yucatan Peninsula; later, some areas of the states of Tabasco and Chiapas were added on. The SGP coordination office is established in Merida, the cultural and economic centre of the Peninsula. Today, Mexico's SGP encompasses landscapes connected to and sometimes overlapping the territories of 17 federal protected areas and two state protected areas, an approximate 17% of the total land area (249,993 km²) of the five states, corresponding to 12% of the national territory with a population of 11,231,499 according to the national census of 2010.

The project objective is **closely aligned** with the programming directions and underlying mission of the **GEF-SGP**. **Applicable GEF Focal Areas** for this Project are:

- **Biodiversity/BD-4; Program 9, Outcome 9.1** Increased area of production landscapes and seascapes that integrate conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity into management; **Outcome Indicators:** BD Indicator 9.1 Production landscapes and seascapes that integrate biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into their management preferably demonstrated by meeting national or international third-party certification that incorporates biodiversity considerations (e.g. FSC, MSC) or supported by other objective data.
- **Climate Change/CC-2; Program 4, Outcome A** Accelerated adoption of innovative technologies and management practices for GHG emission reduction and carbon sequestration). **Outcome Indicators** CCM Indicator 4. Deployment of low GHG technologies and practices, specifically (d) Area under low GHG management practices (number of hectares, with monitoring of low GHG impact undertaken).
- **Land Degradation/LD-2; Program 1, Outcome 1.1** Improved agricultural, rangeland and pastoral management; **Outcome Indicators:** LD Indicator 1.1 Land area under effective agricultural, rangeland and pastoral management practices and/or supporting climate-smart agriculture

As an **Upgraded Country Program (UCP)**³, Mexico SGP is in line with the policy for UPC (*GEF/C.36/4 Small Grants Programme Execution Arrangements and Upgrading Policy for GEF-5; GEF/C.46/13 GEF Small Grants Programme: Implementation Arrangements for GEF-6*, Cancun 2014), with the SGP Strategic Directions for GEF VI (pages 200-206 of *GEF/R.6/20/Rev.04, GEF Programming Directions*, March 2014) and contributes to specific GEF VI corporate results No. 1, 2 and 4.

Mexico has been an active actor in the definition of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. The Project Document refers that the Project will contribute to the following **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**: SDG 1 (End poverty in all its forms everywhere); SDG 2 (End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture); SDG 13 (Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts by regulating emissions and promoting developments in renewable energy); SDG 14 (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development); and SDG 15 (Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests,

³ Countries fulfilling a certain number of criteria (among others, number of years of SGP implementation, amount of funds delivered) are "upgraded" in the sense that they no longer receive GEF Core funds and are instead managed as GEF FSP under the guidance of the UNDP GEF UCP Global Coordinator. They follow the same programmatic approach as other SGP country programmes to achieve global benefits through local community and civil society action, but place an emphasis on integrated solutions at the landscape level that can address the combination of income, food security, environmental and social issues that confront rural communities. It builds progressively greater levels of coherence, consolidation, and strategic focus to the country program, culminated in the adoption of the current *community-based landscape and seascape approach*, which forms a central feature of OP6.

combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss). The contribution that civil society and local and regional governance may give to reaching the SDGs is widely recognized. This project will also contribute to the following country outcome included in the [UNDAF/Country Programme Document](#): UNDAF Cooperation Area III: Environmental sustainability and green economy; Outcome 6: the three orders of government, the private sector, academia, and civil society strengthen their capacity to revert environmental degradation and to sustainably and equitably use natural resources, through mainstreaming environmental sustainability, low carbon development, and a green economy in legislation, planning and decision-making ([UNDP's contribution](#): to promote low carbon development strategies which also address disaster risk reduction, resilience and environmental sustainability with a gender focus and multicultural for poverty reduction).

In terms of [UNDP Strategic Plan](#), this project is linked to the following output: Outcome 1: Growth and development. Growth and Development are inclusive and sustainable, incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor and excluded. Output 1.3. Solutions developed at national and sub-national levels for sustainable management of natural resources, ecosystem services, chemicals and waste.

The Mexico SGP contributes to achieve global environmental benefits as a consequence of the synergistic effects of activities that increase communities' governance and technical capacities and skills, and that produce livelihood benefits; in principle, it contributes to all [Strategic Aichi goals](#), but in particular to:

Target 2: *By 2020, biodiversity values have been integrated into national and local development and poverty reduction strategies and planning processes and are being incorporated into national accounting, as appropriate, and reporting systems.* By developing and implementing land/seascape sustainable management plans linking poverty reduction to biodiversity conservation and sustainable use and monitoring, SGP contributes to local-level poverty reduction strategies.

Target 5: *By 2020, the rate of loss of all natural habitats, including forests, is at least halved and where feasible brought close to zero, and degradation and fragmentation is significantly reduced.* The project supports sustainable production practices that help conserve terrestrial (including forests), freshwater and coastal/marine habitats and avoid ecosystem fragmentation. SGP collaborates with organizations working on REDD+ activities at the state and local levels.

Target 7: *By 2020 areas under agriculture, aquaculture and forestry are managed sustainably, ensuring conservation of biodiversity.* SGP supports communities in these endeavors and ensures that species used for aquaculture and forestry community projects are native species. It also supports early detection and if possible, eradication of invasive alien species, also contributing to Target 9.

Target 13: *By 2020, the genetic diversity of cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and of wild relatives, including other socio-economically as well as culturally valuable species, is maintained, and strategies have been developed and implemented for minimizing genetic erosion and safeguarding their genetic diversity.* SGP supports communities to maintain the genetic diversity of key species important for agriculture or culturally.

Target 14: *By 2020, ecosystems that provide essential services, including services related to water are restored and safeguarded.* SGP supports communities to maintain key ecosystem services in the selected landscapes/seascapes, particularly those of forests.

Target 15: *By 2020, ecosystem resilience and the contribution of biodiversity to carbon stocks has been enhanced, through conservation and restoration, including restoration of at least 15 per cent of degraded ecosystems.* SGP supports forest ejidos and communities to sustainably use their forest resources while maintaining and, where possible, enhancing carbon stocks.

3.2 Problems that the project sought to address: threats and barriers targeted

In Mexico, the prevailing form of agriculture and forestland tenure is communal in the form of *ejidos*⁴ and communities. It is estimated that 15,584 'agrarian nuclei' of about 200 ha. possess some 62.6 million ha. of tropical and temperate forests as well as other areas with arid zone forest vegetation corresponding to about 45% of the total national forest cover. Of these, 20.2 million ha are within the territories of indigenous communities. It is evident that conservation of ecosystem services and resilience of production landscapes depends significantly on the ability of rural communities to implement sustainable production practices. On the other hand, rural communities, and in particular those living in forest areas are among the most economically and socially disadvantaged in the country. While communities own the land and the natural assets within these territories, there are multiple barriers for communities to be able to make

⁴ Ejidos and Communities are collective land tenure forms created by the Mexican Revolution; ejidos are land given to landless peasants after government expropriation, while a Community refers to ancestral lands reclaimed by indigenous communities.

effective use of natural resources and improve their livelihoods with sustainability considerations. Notwithstanding some supportive policies and regulations by government, there remain organizational, technical, financial, commercial as well as fiscal, policy, and regulatory barriers; among others: there are no incentives for ejidos and communities within large ecosystems to come together and invest time and resources to plan and implement integrated land use management. Institutions at the federal, state and local levels also face significant challenges when trying to overcome horizontal (between sectors) and vertical (federal, state and local government) coordination barriers. Individual communities are generally constrained by the local trade system that makes them depend on a few individuals who control the trade and hence the prices of their products in exchange for working capital and consumer credits. Ejidos lack access to financial markets, mostly because they cannot use the land as collateral for credit. This makes communities vulnerable and creates dependency from those advancing cash against future production. In the absence of sufficient working capital, technical knowhow and business skills, communities on their own are unable to innovate to change their production systems or achieve the quantity and quality that more sophisticated markets would require.

During its 25 years of operation Mexico's SGP has funded 664 projects, including those of OP6 for a total amount of GEF financing of USD 16.8 million; these activities benefit about 14,000 people out of whom an approximate number of 6,000 are women. It is estimated that small grants projects have generated over 5,000 works directly and 13,000 indirectly. All GEF Focal Areas are addressed, with a majority of projects in the Biodiversity area (463 projects). The initial small number of organizations grew over time to become a large network of active and collaborating CSOs. While lessons learnt allowed the SGP to upscale successful experiences in each of the four large ecosystems previously identified and today guides an instrumental use of resources to consolidate support to communities grouped within different landscapes/seascapes, the main problem remains the prevalent weakness of rural communities in the Southeast of Mexico to address the drivers of global environmental degradation (biodiversity loss, land degradation, and greenhouse gas emissions) in a strategic, integrated and sustainable way at landscape/seascape level. The capacity to participate in multi-level and multi-sector landscape governance and diversification of economic strategies to sustainably support these efforts is similarly weak. Community organizations still operate under significant technical, organizational and financial weaknesses to be able to effectively act strategically and collectively in building and maintaining social and ecological resilience. The Project Document identifies **five barriers to achieve the solution**:

Barrier 1: *Community organizations lack sufficient means and/or knowledge to plan, manage and coordinate their landscapes and seascapes with a long-term vision for the conservation of biodiversity, and the reduction of deforestation and forest degradation, improving ecosystem connectivity and increasing the production of goods and services.*

Barrier 2: *Community organizations have insufficient capacities to plan their initiatives, implement and evaluate them effectively, and systematically derive practical lessons from the experience.*

Barrier 3: *Communities lack the means to sustainably produce goods and services at scale.*

Barrier 4: *Community organizations lack the financial resources to motivate and support new land and resource management practices and sustain or scale up successful experiences.*

Barrier 5: *Community organizations do not coordinate with others in taking collective action in favor of landscape resilience outcomes built on global environmental benefits and the strengthening of social capital.*

3.3 Description of the Project and Strategy

The **long-term objective** of the Mexico SGP OP6 project is to empower local communities to manage production landscapes in Mexico's southeast large ecosystems in a manner that enhances their social, economic and environmental sustainability and resilience. Organized around a single component: *Increased Resilience of selected landscapes and seascapes for local sustainable development and global environmental benefits*, **three Outcomes** are formulated to deliver **10 outputs**:

Outcome 1: Landscape and seascape resilience enhanced through the individual and synergistic impacts of a set of adaptive community practices that maintain ecosystem services, conserve biodiversity, mitigate climate change and reverse land degradation in Mexico's southeast large ecosystems and selected landscapes.

Outcome 2: Community-based organizations possess the organizational and managerial capacities for business development and performance on a larger scale to contribute to landscape and seascape governance and management.

Outcome 3: Successful small grants experiences from this and previous phases are consolidated/ up scaled/ replicated through production and marketing chains and second-level organizations, as well as through exchange of knowledge and experiences, linking community-based organizations within and across land/seascapes.

Therefore, the [solution to the problem](#) is for communities in the large ecosystems of Southeast Mexico to develop and implement adaptive landscape/seascape management, production and marketing strategies that build social, economic and ecological resilience and are sustainable.

Until the end of OP5 the geographical focus of the Programme were [four large terrestrial and marine ecosystems](#): - *Deltaic-estuarine landscape of the Grijalva-Usumacinta Rivers*; - *Coastal lagoons and marine interface in the northern Yucatan Peninsula*; - *Tropical deciduous, sub-deciduous and sub-evergreen forests in the Yucatan Peninsula*; and - *Montane broadleaf and cloud forest in northern Chiapas*. In line with OP6 guidelines, the landscape approach is now taken with five instead of the envisaged six landscapes /seascape as the two Tabasco areas merged to reflect a watershed approach. These are [production landscapes/seascape](#) of great importance for maintaining the integrity of the ecosystems, with *ejidos* and collective indigenous community lands as the predominant form of land tenure; they cover the States of Campeche, Chiapas, Quintana Roo, Tabasco and Yucatan in the Southeast of Mexico. These landscapes are virtually part of the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor (MBC) which in Mexico included 17 federal and state protected areas⁵ and the adjacent lands that interconnect them; landscapes are located in this area but in Mexico the MBC is no longer active. A brief characterization of each landscape, with their key biodiversity values and main threats is included in [Annex F](#) together with key elements of the current implementation:

- Agroforestry Coffee and Cocoa Landscape in Northern Chiapas and Southern Tabasco
- Usumacinta and Grijalva Rivers Watershed of Tabasco and Campeche
- Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Coastal Seascape
- Timber and Non-Timber Production Forestry Landscape;
- Forestry and Milpa Landscape

The SGP is intended to be implemented over a period of three years from February 2018 to February 2021. The Project budget totals US\$ 10,762,612 out of which US\$ 4,429,223 from GEF and US\$ 6,333,389 as parallel co-financing from diverse partners, both in-kind and cash.

3.4 Project Implementation Arrangements

The Project is delivered through the GEF SGP Mexico UCP as part of its long-term strategy of support to community organizations implementing grant projects to produce global environmental and sustainable development benefits. It is implemented by UNDP and executed by UNOPS, through the [Country Program Management Unit \(CPMU\)](#). It observes the SGP Strategic Operational Guidelines and practice where the [National Steering Committee \(NSC\)](#) is responsible for strategic guidance and for making funding decisions on CBOs and NGOs grants while daily management is the responsibility of the [Country Program Team \(CPT\)](#).

⁵ Protected Areas: Lacan Tun, Montes Azules, El Triunfo, Selvas El Ocote, Laguna de Terminos, Los Petenes, Calakmul, Uaymil, Arrecifes de Sian Ka'an, Sian Ka'an, Yumbalam, Arrecifes de Xcalak, Pantanos de Centla, Ria Lagartos, Ria Celestun, Otoch, Ma'Ax Yetel Koch, and Maalam Ka'ax.

The Mexico **NSC** is an independent and multi-stakeholder body, with a non-governmental majority and including recognized experts on global environment and sustainable development issues; two government representatives (one from the federal government/Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources - SEMARNAT from the Spanish acronym- and one from the local government/Ministry of Environment of Quintana Roo State) and a representative from UNDP. NSC members serve without remuneration, rotate periodically and are appointed formally by the UNDP Resident Representative (RR), after clearance by the UCP Global Coordinator/Technical Advisor. The NSC contributes to bridging community-level experiences with national policy-making; determine the criteria for project eligibility in each landscapes/seascape.

The CPT comprises a **Country Program Manager (CPM)**⁶, a **Program Assistant (PA)**, and a **Technical Assistant** hired through competitive processes. The CPT supports the NSC strategic work and grant selection by developing technical papers; undertaking ex-ante technical reviews of project proposals; monitoring the grant portfolio; providing technical assistance to grantees during project design and implementation; mobilizing cash and in-kind resources; preparing reports for UNDP, GEF and other donors; implementing capacity development activities for communities, CBOs and NGOs; and developing a communication and knowledge management strategy to ensure adequate visibility of GEF investments, and disseminating good practices and lessons learnt. The performance of the CPM is assessed by the NSC, with input from the UNDP RR, and UNOPS.

UNDP monitors and supports the project as GEF Agency as well as acts as permanent member of the SGP NSC. It provides overall program oversight and take responsibility for standard GEF project cycle management services beyond assistance and oversight of project design and negotiation, including project monitoring, periodic evaluations, troubleshooting, and reporting to the GEF. UNDP also provide high-level technical and managerial support through the Low Emissions Climate Resilient Development Strategies cluster, and from the UNDP Global Coordinator for Upgrading Country Program, who is responsible for project oversight for all upgraded country program projects worldwide. The SGP's Central Program Management Team (CPMT) monitors for compliance of upgraded country program with the core policies and procedures of the SGP as a GEF Corporate Program. The **Country Office (CO)** is the business unit in UNDP for the SGP project and is responsible to ensure the Programme meets its objective and delivers on its targets. The RR signs the grant agreements with beneficiary organizations on behalf of UNOPS.

CBOs and **NGOs** respond to calls for proposals submitting their proposals for approval by the NSC, according to the agreed country and landscapes geographical and thematic strategies. Although government organizations cannot receive SGP grants, there is an important effort to coordinate grant implementation with relevant line ministries, decentralized institutions, universities and local government authorities to ensure their support, create opportunities for co-financing, and provide feedback on policy implementation on the ground. Contributions from and cooperation with the private sector is also sought.

UNOPS provides country program implementation services, including human resources management, budgeting, accounting, grant disbursement, auditing, and procurement. It is responsible for SGP's financial management and provides periodic financial reports to UNDP. It operates in accordance with UNOPS' Financial Rules and Regulations (provided these do not contravene the principles established in UNDP's Financial Regulations and Rules) as well as UNOPS SGP Standard Operating Procedures. UNOPS as the Implementing Partner shall comply with the policies, procedures and practices of the United Nations security management system.

2.5 Project timing and milestones

The Project Identification Form (PIF) was approved on April 19th, 2016; the document received the GEF Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Endorsement on November 6, 2017 and was signed on February 22, 2018.

⁶ Formerly the National Coordinator (NC).

While the Project Document indicates as the starting date January 2018 and as the ending date January 2020, the project should be implemented over a three years period starting from the date of the signature of the Project; therefore, the official ending date should be February 2021.

The timing of some key implementation milestones appears slightly delayed. The management team was completed renovated, with a new CPM, one PA and a Technical Assistant replacing the previous NC and the PA. The inception workshop - aimed at sharing among relevant actors the strategy and approach of SGP OP6 - was implemented in June 15th 2018, four months after the signature of the project but only 15 days after the hiring of the CMP. Two Calls for Proposals have been launched, the first one in June 2018 which resulted in the assignment of about 40% of the GEF budget for grants; the relative Memorandum of Agreements (MoA) were signed in December of the same year. The second call was launched in February 2019, with MoA signed in August 2019. The totality of the GEF budget for grants is committed, with 106 small grants, including three Strategic Projects, 6 transversal projects and 4 landscapes' design projects.

The MTR envisaged for August 2019, is taking place in the period September-October 2019; this is slightly delayed with respect to plans but not enough to fully appreciate implementation as the second batch of projects approved with the second call for proposals have just recently signed their MoA, including all strategic and transversal projects. The first PIR, the key input for the MTR, was prepared in June 2019 and completed with the UNDP CO and UNDP GEF UCP Global Coordinator/Technical Advisor assessments in September 2019.

3.6 Main stakeholders: summary list

Partnerships are sought at all levels: between community members, organizations, the GEF and co-financiers of community grants, the institutions and members of the NSC. The formation of multi-stakeholder platforms in each landscape/seascape, and the establishment of broad partnerships for value chain development, involve public and private entities that are supposed to provide financing, technical assistance or other forms of support. Significant co-financing was committed by government institutions, and other donors. Actions taken by the civil society and local communities are a vital component of the 20/20 GEF Strategy (i.e. stakeholders partnerships formed to achieve overall benefits for the environment and contributing to UNDP strategic plan, focusing on sustainable development). Capacity development of CSOs, with priority for CBOs and indigenous people's organizations, is a cross-cutting objective of the SGP. The Project's stakeholders are summarized in the table below:

Table N.4 SGP Stakeholders and Partners

| Type of Stakeholder | Role/Type of Collaboration |
|---|---|
| Legally established CBOs and local community members, including Indigenous People | Primary stakeholders are CBOs who will design and implement grants projects to generate global environmental and community livelihood benefits. Special consideration is given to all aspects (cultural, social, productive) related to the identity and ethnicity of communities, organizations and individuals (Maya, Chontal and other ethnical groups). |
| Second level organizations and NGOs with active presence in the area and relevant focus | Second and third level organizations and community production associations to be created and/or consolidated as participants of partnerships agreements and implementing agents. Landscape and regional-level civil society organizations play a central role in enabling planning, coordination, exchange of information, technical assistance and business development support. |
| State Governments of Yucatan, Quintana Roo, Chiapas, Tabasco, Campeche | State governments are key partners. As the original in-kind and/or cash commitments did not materialize, new commitments are being negotiated. |
| National Government entities with programs possibly contributing to SGP objectives | At present, there are two new government programs with a strong presence in the area which are: i) <i>Sembrando Vida</i> and ii) <i>Jovenes Construyendo el Futuro</i> . SGP is establishing alliances with both to complement activities. |
| International or local NGOs with relevant interests and objectives | Other NGOs not directly associated with SGP but with activities in the landscapes are invited to share information and experiences and be part of the dialogue. International NGOs are |

| | |
|--|---|
| | associated through co financing (Rainforest Alliance, Heiffer International and The Nature Conservancy) |
| Private Sector companies. | Collaboration may be related with tourism and/or apiculture companies. The oil company Pemex-Pacma is a potential co-financing partner. |
| Interested development partners/donors with relevant ongoing projects | Other relevant GEF initiatives and UNDP Projects such as Biofin, the Disaster Risk Reduction, the Resilience Project, the Agrobiodiversity project. As the MBC in Mexico is no longer active, previous collaboration with the Mexican National Commission for Biodiversity Knowledge (CONABIO) is reduced to the support of state's biodiversity strategies. Other SGP participating countries, through peer-to-peer support. |
| Universities with relevant academic departments | Universidad Marista, Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Yucatán (UADY); Universidad Juárez Autónoma de Tabasco; Centro de Investigación de Consejo Nacional de Ciencias y Tecnología, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México |

4. FINDINGS

4.1 Project Strategy

4.1.1 Project design

Project design is relevant and appropriate; this is confirmed by the analysis of documents and policies as well as by interviews with stakeholders. Alignment with the programming directions and underlying mission of UNDAF, UNDP and the GEF-SGP is referred to in the chapter above describing the development context.

Since 1994, the GEF-SGP in Mexico has supported community-driven natural resource management activities in the Yucatan Peninsula, covering the states of Campeche, Quintana Roo and Yucatan; over the years, the geographical focus has not changed, except from adding some areas of the states of Tabasco and Chiapas. This has ensured a long-term presence in the same area, strengthening the capacity to bring about change. Evidently, with over 600 projects funded over a period of about 25 years, the approach and strategy were modified and refined as a result of internal (management and NSC) as well as external evaluations (i.e. the 2003 participatory evaluation process set in motion by the NSC and the June 2014 Terminal Evaluation⁷), reflecting lessons learnt and addressing emerging issues and opportunities (i.e. connection with the MBC, participation in COMPACT⁸ and COMDEKS⁹ initiatives). The initial approach targeted *micro-regions*; in 2003, following the major participatory evaluation process (some 2,000 stakeholders consulted in 87 workshops), the decision to target *large ecosystems* was taken and this has guided the Programme until the end of OP5. An impressive number of outputs were delivered during OP5 and the independent terminal evaluation of June 2014 concluded that the SGP strategy is solid and should continue guiding the Programme, with some adjustments. As Mexico was part of the first group of UCPs, with the beginning of OP6, the Programme takes now the *landscape approach*, aligning the strategy with GEF SGP OP6 directions.

SGP supports the generation of global environmental benefits in line with the strategic priorities of the GEF as well as national sustainable development objectives. The project is consistent with *Mexico's national development plan and priorities*: i) the National Development Plan 2013-2018 (Objective 4.4; 4.2 and 4.10); reportedly, there are two versions of the 2019-2024 National Development Plan, in one of which environment and climate change do not appear as priorities; however, sectoral plans, with a bio-cultural focus, are under development by the Ministry of Environment; ii) the National Biodiversity Strategy; the National Programme of Protected Areas (2013-2018) with SGP specially contributing to integrated landscape management, the conservation of ecosystem services through community practices that generate environmental and social benefits; iii) Climate Change Legal and Policy Framework and the National Climate Change Strategy with SGP supporting its targets and iv) other policy instruments related to environment and sustainable natural resources management (i.e. REDD+). SGP is also in line with two programmes of the current Federal Government, supporting communities and individuals, "Sembrando Vida" and "Jovenes Construyendo el Futuro".

While the Project Document still described the four large ecosystems based on which previous SGP's phases were implemented and identified six possible landscapes, at present five landscapes/seascapes are

⁷ Imbach C., Alejandro. June 2014. Terminal Evaluation of the Fifth OP of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Mexico (PIMS #4519)

⁸ COMPACT (Community Management of Protected Areas Conservation) is an initiative designed to complement and add value to existing conservation programmes, by supporting community-based initiatives that increase effectiveness of biodiversity conservation and improve livelihoods of local people.

⁹ COMDEKS (Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative) is a unique global programme implemented by UNDP within the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative; it is community driven and support local community activities to maintain and rebuild Socio-Ecological Production Landscapes and Seascapes (SEPLS).

defined covering an area of 17,787,338.89 terrestrial ha and 3,981,910.34 marine ha. for a total of 21,769,249 ha. The two Tabasco landscapes merged, thus taking a watershed approach; as the negative impact of agricultural practices in the mountain part also impact the estuarine area, the merger allows creating a homogenous landscape with a shared vision along Mexico's biggest free-flowing river, the Usumacinta. The agroforestry Landscape was expanded after the integration of new data and community consultations. The five landscapes/seascape are briefly characterized in [Annex F](#).

Project design adequately lays out the drivers of environmental degradation. It recognizes achievements gained in the area during the years while acknowledging remaining organizational, financial and technical capacities' barriers which make communities vulnerable; it identifies both the need to strengthen those already supported in the past as well as to reach out additional communities. Building on lessons learnt, the current OP6 strategy maintains the foundations of past strategies while introducing innovative elements:

- the large ecosystems approach is substituted by the *landscape approach*;
- *small grants* are offered to newly identified communities for sustainable livelihood activities that proved to be environmentally, socially and economically sustainable and are upscaled at the landscape level;
- a focus on the *sustainability of production projects* defined as the communities' capacity to continue managing their natural assets in a responsible manner, generating goods and services efficiently, and establishing equitable relations with local, regional or global markets well after SGP funding concludes;
- *Strategic interventions* that is activities capable of generating both environmental and community benefits are maintained and upscaled to involve second and third levels' organizations (associations, networks in thematic areas and also alliance of networks);
- Inclusion of an integral *gender mainstreaming approach*;
- *Establishment or strengthening networks and second-level organizations* to integrate and bring to scale production and marketing of sustainably produced goods and services and the integration of supply chains to sectorial markets (promoting dialogue and facilitating access to credit institutions and other financial mechanisms beyond grants). Strategic projects should facilitate specific product development, certification and marketing at scale;
- *Cross-cutting interventions* are meant to overcome regulatory, governance, technical, communications and policy barriers identified to achieve sustainability and transition from a grant-making approach concerned primarily with local issues to a *process-oriented approach* in which planning, implementation and evaluation increasingly address a larger geographic scale with longer time-horizons;
- Strengthening CSOs that may provide technical assistance to communities to plan and manage complex initiatives and test, evaluate and disseminate community level innovations promoting the incidence of those best practices in the relevant sectorial policies.

The design of Mexico SGP strategic Ppanning 2020-2030 at landscape level started in 2019 when the main stakeholders were trained in the community-based landscape approach and COMDEKS methodologies. Although landscapes/seascape strategies are still under completion (see below), the socio-economic assessment and the identification of critical areas and subjects under each landscape have been done in the five landscapes and involved interviews to 212 persons plus participation to 23 communities' workshops with about 500 people (25% women). The strategy proposes a vision to develop innovative, inclusive and equitable projects, contributing to the management and conservation of biological diversity and adaptation to climate change while generating economic, social, organizational and health benefits for local communities. The strategy will be finalized once the landscapes/seascapes strategies are ready and the regional vision prepared; yet, this is the framework which allowed OP6 grantmaking to be carried out. It was not ideal but was certainly the best approach to ensure careful design of the strategies while not losing momentum for grants implementation. The thematic lines of intervention remain similar to those of the past, with some adjustments adding community conservation and a larger focus on agroecology and agroforestry due to the expansion of the programme to Tabasco and Chiapas:

- **Agroecology/Agroforestry** (sustainable actions to improve soil; coffee and cocoa adaptive techniques; local organic products; community education and research; eco-business development plans; agroecology /agroforestry cooperatives).
- **Community Conservation** (conservation and improvement of environmental conditions at specific sites, organized groups for natural resources conservation work; community participation in conservation efforts).
- **Timber/Non-Timber Sustainable Forest Management** (sustainable forestry use practices and programs, training in sustainable forestry use of equipment and technology; creation of community forestry cooperatives, family operation units for carbon/wood use; certified forestry).
- **Ecotourism** (technical information for sustainable tourism development, training of guides; equipment, restoration of infrastructure, analysis of ecotourism potential at specific sites, circular economy).
- **Organic Apiculture** (organic honey certification, training for producers, establishment of honey quality standards; community apiculture organization improvement; development of financial models for community apiculture, market access).
- **Aquaculture/Sustainable Fisheries:** (aquaculture reconversion with native species, development of local sustainable aquaculture, recuperation of ancestral knowledge with native species; marine areas management for sustainable fishing, sustainable local fisheries management).

4.1.2 Results Framework Analysis

The PRF is a well-designed, articulated matrix, which comprises three outcomes, overall expecting to deliver 10 outputs, well connected through logical linkages. The first Outcome focuses on the innovation and adaptation small grants projects may bring about to contribute to the GEF Biodiversity, Climate Change and Land Degradation focal areas. The second Outcome focuses on the barriers communities face to develop sustainable enterprises and contribute to sustainable landscape and seascape governance and management. The third Outcome is cross-sectoral and cross-grants aiming at creating/consolidating second-level organizations to scale up successful activities and then share knowledge and experiences, linking communities within and across landscapes/seascape. The Project objective and the three outcomes are clearly formulated. A few shortcomings are found at the level of Outcome Indicators which are sufficiently but not fully SMART:

- Experience in the field indicates that a few indicators may not be within reach. This should not be regarded as a shortcoming but as the result of the in-depth on the ground analysis; in particular, the second indicator of Outcome 1 targets *additional* hatcheries and 15 *new* community fish farms but field visits showed that the market for the fingerlings is limited and it is more appropriate to strengthen existing hatcheries instead than creating new ones; the fish farm target is not within reach.
- The third and the sixth indicators of Outcome 1 require to detect alien invasive species in both marine and freshwater areas while invasive species are mostly in freshwaters and in particular, the armored catfish is found only in freshwaters, in Tabasco, Campeche and Quintana Roo. Instead, in Tabasco and Campeche there are no marine invasive species;
- The formulation of some indicators in Outcome 3 may hide information (i.e. the gender/age component) which can instead be clearly derived from the various outputs and sources of verification as outlined in the M&E Plan attached to the ProDoc. Reporting on gender/age group can be easily overlooked as in fact happened in the June 2019 PIR. To fill the target in terms of numbers is not significative and does not exhaust the task; at the same time having second-level organizations and strategic projects fully functioning may not be within reach during the project timeline;
- At Objective level, a methodological problem is reported in the way tons of CO₂e mitigation are calculated. This is explained in the section about Core Indicators (previously Tracking Tools) below.

Changes proposed to the indicators (to reflect the situation on the ground) and a rewording of the landscapes/seascape names as compared to the previous large ecosystems and reflecting the merger of the

two Tabasco landscapes can be found in orange color in [Table 5 - PRF with achievements and rating](#). This is also the occasion to renumber the Outcome 1 indicators which were erroneously numbered.

Assumptions and risks are well identified and provide for an initial, solid base for monitoring risks. The [Social and Environmental Screening Process \(SESP\)](#) was carried out and concluded that the overall risk for the Project is Low; this rating was revised to Moderate after project start, as reflected in the PIR. The [Gender Equity and Social Inclusion Plan](#) was developed and is annexed to the Project Document. Gender has been considered throughout design and implementation. The Project Document clearly indicates that the SGP will prioritize work with women's groups, particularly indigenous women as well as girl's groups. A specific strategy to engage women/girls as primary actors has been formulated. Consultations with CBOs and NGOs during landscapes/seascape' strategy formulation identified ways to ensure women's comfortable participation in grant project design and implementation, as well as in landscape management planning.

4.2 Progress towards Results

4.2.1 Progress towards outcome analysis

The analysis of the June 2019 PIR and information collected through interviews with relevant stakeholders, (SGP Project Team, beneficiaries, UNDP staff and Government representatives) indicate good progress to date, although with delay mostly due to: i) late hiring of the CPM at project start; ii) the time it took for stakeholders to get acquainted with the COMDEKS methodology and then conduct participatory workshops and field interviews to prepare the socio-economic baseline assessment; and iii) the December 2018 change of federal and state governments which resulted in an intense and time-consuming work to reestablish dialogue and find additional and alternative co-financing opportunities.

CBO/NGO projects have been selected through Calls for Proposals in the framework of the Mexico SGP Strategic Planning 2020-2030 and along the general guidelines for the Landscape/Seascape's approach (although at the time of this MTR, the relative strategies are still under completion). The decision was taken to operate towards the targets established in the ProDoc and in accordance with the COMDEKS methodology; to wait until the landscapes/seascape's strategies were fully complete would have delayed the approval and operationalizing of the small grant. Stakeholders interviewed support this decision; as these strategies are developed with a decade time period, they will fully inform the next operational phase, OP7. The elaboration of the landscapes/seascape strategies provides the occasion for a truly participatory analysis of each area's challenges and opportunities, definition of a baseline, selection of outcomes and indicators and identification of the typology of activities to be implemented. Activities contribute to the SDGs and the Aichi Targets; however, the quantification of proposed targets and indicators will be defined/refined when each strategy will be complete.

SGP Mexico assigned the totality of the GEF grant budget to 106 projects selected through two calls for proposals. The first one in June 2018 assigned 43% of the budget, that is USD 1,369,428 to 57 projects (within the 170 proposals received). The second Call was launched in February 2019; the selection process terminated in August 2019, with funding provided to 49 proposals (within the 140 proposals received) for USD 1,787,523. Overall, committed GEF grant funds amount to USD 3,156,951 of the total USD 3,182,151 assigned that is almost the full amount available for grants, including strategic projects. The NSC approved also 10 additional projects which are not covered by the GEF budget and for which they will try to find appropriate co-financing for an amount of USD 274,400. As one project of about USD 37,000 approved is experiencing unsolvable problems, the amount is likely to be used to finance one/two of these 10 pipeline projects. Projects which had both a preparatory planning phase and a full phase are considered one project; three projects from the first call dropped due to different reasons (lack of interest; lack of a bank account); among them, the NSC supports the recuperation of a proposal from a group of vulnerable women which is considered worthy of support although they still do not fully qualify. All considered, SGP Mexico has been extremely efficient in the selection of the first group of projects and manages an impressive

number of more than 100 grants. The average amount by grant is USD 30.000, within the maximum limit of USD 50.000. There are small projects up to USD 5.000 and larger ones up to USD 50.000, reflecting the difficulties vulnerable groups face to match the two to one indicative co-financing rule, that is a minimum of 30% cash and 70% in kind (from the grantee) plus the leverage of external co-financing from donors.

SGP Mexico established general guidelines for the development of the call for proposals process, among others: i) gender and other vulnerable sector equity, with at least 35% proposals to come from women's groups; ii) incorporation of productive innovations and sustainable management; iii) recognition of rights on land and water; iv) governance and community participation strengthening; v) community alliances creation/strengthening; vi) organizational, technical and participatory community capacities strengthening; vii) creating value for markets, strengthening transformation and commercialization capacities; viii) improving the quality of life, especially health; ix) improving local, especially touristic infrastructure; x) possibility to influence public policies for sustainable development. Grants process selection developed along the following lines:

1. Launch and promotion of the Call, including stakeholder's identification
2. Elaboration of projects profiles by the CBOs/NGOs
3. Selection of eligible project profiles by the NSC
4. Workshops for the formulation of the proposals by the proponents
5. Presentation of the full project proposals (15 pages)
6. Selection of the proposals by the NSC
7. Signature of the MoU

The new CPT has been fully briefed by the previous NC and PA. Process selection has followed precedent SGP OPs procedures, maintaining an external appearance as similar to previous phases as possible, while internally undertaking a few changes which were meant to: i) make formats more accessible (simpler, shorter) to vulnerable communities, ii) increase the focus on the gender component, iii) include reference to the SDGs and iv) make project selection more dynamic and less time consuming for the NSC which can now work on-line. An additional innovative element is the acceptance of hand-drafted proposals on very simple format which can be photographed and delivered by telephone (i.e. using the *Whatsapp* application); this is to target vulnerable, non-computer educated groups which may not have an electronic e-mail address. Unfortunately, this makes proposals difficult to compare for the NSC; the idea appears valid but needs further development.

Overall, the Call for Proposal process has been well implemented, balancing the need for innovation with the need to avoid a complete revolution which would have probably led to confusion for the proponents. Communities' stakeholders declare to appreciate both appropriate guidance in developing their proposals (well supported, all questions answered and answers sent to all participants, coaching) and greater flexibility during implementation. Documents reviewed indicate that the CPT and the NSC well drafted and well communicated easy-to-grasp material for stakeholders to well understand the landscape approach, the targets of OP6 and the guidelines to deliver proposals; all process targets have been met. The adoption of the COMDEKS methodology found no difficulties as it effectively represents the vision of local communities; similarly, the request to evaluate risks related vulnerability, including climate-related risks was well received and many projects decided to shield their activities by developing specific strategies and risks mitigation measures.

Three Strategic Projects have been selected for an average amount of about 100.000 USD each, overall absorbing USD 323,900 of the GEF budget: i) Community Forestry Management; ii) Sustainable Apiculture and iii) Alternative Tourism. Strategic projects are based on successful pilot projects implemented in previous phases and are meant to reflect alliances between secondary-level organizations and community networks for identifying innovative strategies for capacity building, upscaling activities and influencing marketing and public policies. During the First Call, the most promising proposals were identified to be

supported for full development; approval came with the Second Call and already received the mandatory approval from GEF SGP Headquarters, in New York. Therefore, all of them just started. In addition, the following [Transversal Projects](#) have been approved: i) gender (for Quintana Roo, Yucatan and Campeche while the gender component for Tabasco and Chiapas is inserted in a small grant led by a group of women approved for forestry management in Tabasco); ii) Communication by communities; iii) Biodiversity strategies communication (this is to print and to translate into an accessible language the results of the special project approved in 2006 in agreement with the National Commission for Biodiversity (CONABIO) to elaborate biodiversity studies in each state of the Yucatan Peninsula); iv) Community Business Administration; v) Climate Change Resilience and vi) ICCA – Indigenous People and Community Conserved Territories and Areas. Transversal projects contain also strategic components and support second or third levels organizations, according to the focus of OP6.

Progress towards outcomes is registered in the Results Framework matrix, with achievements here below as [Table 5](#), based on the Project’s three outcomes and indicators, with provision of ratings as required by the ToRs with coloring following the GEF MTR Guidelines:

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| Green: Completed, indicator shows successful achievements | Yellow: Indicator shows expected completion by the EOP | Red: Indicator shows poor achievement – unlikely to be completed by project closure |
|---|--|---|

It should be noted that most targets are covered on paper, meaning that small grants approved are likely to achieve the targets; however, the green light can only be given when implementation shows to be successful and management effectively conducted; as half of the small grants were only recently approved and all strategic and transversal projects are just starting, a conservative yellow light is provided instead of a green light.

In addition, basic information on some of the small-grant visited is provided in [Annex E](#); it is not meant to be fully informative but to exemplify projects and summarize the assessment of performance.

Table N.5 Results Framework Matrix, with achievements, comments and rating

| Objective: To empower local communities to manage production land/seascapes in Mexico's Southeast large ecosystems in a manner that enhances their social, economic and environmental sustainability and resilience. | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| Description of Indicator | Baseline Level | End of project target level | Progress as of October 2019 | Rating & Comment: |
| A. Increased area (ha) in the target landscapes and seascapes with improved community management | 118,281 ha with improved management achieved during SGP's fifth operational phase | 67,940 additional ha. with improved community management of which 49,940 ha. of landscapes and 18,000 ha of seascapes | <p>- 53,601 additional ha. of landscape and 23.636 ha. of seascape are under improved community management. The largest part was already covered with 1st Call's grants:</p> <p>-Landscape level, 43,709 additional ha. of forest ecosystem resulting from: i) community conservation areas, ii) inclusion of new communities; iii) ecotourism; iv) agro-ecology in Yucatán and v) agro-forestry in Chiapas. In addition, SGP is impacting 47,000 ha. through the support of FSC certification.</p> <p>-Seascape level, 16,071 ha. of coastal and marine areas in Campeche, Yucatán and Quintana Roo (i.e. i) the Mayan cooperative "Los Aluxes" in Quintana Roo improving 2,158 ha. of a RAMSAR site in the Sian Ka'an biosphere reserve through ecotourism; and ii) the cooperative "Pescadores de Banco Chinchorro" monitoring 2,380 additional ha. of the Banco Chinchorro protected area to control the 'Lionfish' invasion.</p> <p>New terrestrial and marine areas were added with grants from the 2nd Call thus covering the difference with the total ha under management.</p> | <p>-On track. Both terrestrial and marine targets are covered on paper to improve community management. The terrestrial area may further increase as ejidos' land undergoing FSC certification considers only projects approved during the 1st Call while those of the 2nd Call are still to be calculated.</p> <p>The programme is creating its own geographic information system (GIS) in order to precisely track implementation results and impacts. This system should be ready by December 2019. A consultant may be needed to strengthen communities' capacities to use the GIS maybe with a telephone application.</p> |
| B. Tons of CO2e mitigated in community-owned lands through sustainable forest management and avoidance of forest fires | To be determined during landscape level environmental assessments (see output 1.2.1) | 2,874,564 tons of CO2e | - The methodology proposed in the ProDoc appears not to produce realistic estimations. The landscape-level environmental assessment is under completion and will use a carbon map for Mexico, produced by the Woods Hole Research Center to set an adequate baseline. | -On track. Although the precise amount is to be estimated only with the newly adopted methodology, communities forest management projects and community conservation projects tailored to avoid deforestation and restore forest with agroforestry practices should significantly contribute to the target which is likely to be met by EOP. |
| C. Number of communities directly benefitting from | 91 communities improved their | 135 communities with improved livelihoods and | - Stakeholders mapped; SGP communication and stakeholders engagement strategy allowed | -On track. Activities go beyond target. - While not all projects directly improve |

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|--|--|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| improved livelihoods and enhanced resilience to climate change | livelihoods and resilience through sustainable land and resource use as well as by developing and implementing risk prevention and management plans during SGP OP5 | enhanced resilience to climate change | to reach out more than 70 new communities previously not part of the SGP network. SGP Mexico is currently collaborating with 185 communities in the southeast of Mexico through the implementation of local sustainable production projects (aquaculture, apiculture, sustainable forest management, ecotourism, agroforestry and agroecology), which have a direct impact on the incomes of families, and improve the quality of ecosystem management. More than half of them are being supported for the first time. Communities targeted in previous phases receive direct support for their community business administration; in addition, the transversal Business Administration grant approved will include additional communities. | livelihoods, all of them improve resilience to climate change. SGP Mexico and UNDP Mexico's Risk Management Program are piloting a methodology called "ecosystem-based risk reduction" which includes a participative design of a community action plan where sustainable ecosystem management is a tool to increase socio ecological resilience: each project is assessed to identify main risks and design specific strategies, dedicating 3% of their budget to mitigate them. A set of indicators are used to monitor actions improving these capacities. -Precise impacts of projects in terms of access to market, number of visitors/ tourists, cost reduction, and quality improvements will be measured at EoP |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|---|--|

Component 1: Increased resilience of selected landscapes and seascapes for local sustainable development and global environmental benefits

Outcome 1.1 Landscape and seascape resilience is enhanced through the individual and synergistic impacts of a set of adaptive community practices that maintain ecosystem services, conserve biodiversity, mitigate climate change and reverse land degradation in Mexico's Southeast selected landscapes.
GEF budget: US\$ 2,686,000

Output 1.1.1 Community level small grant projects in production landscapes and seascapes implementing i) Land management practices that maintain or enhance carbon stocks, mitigate GHG emissions, and help avoid land use change; ii) Economically viable, socially and environmentally sound natural resource use initiatives; iii) Practices that enhance productivity and sustainability of smallholder agro-ecosystems; iv) Initiatives leading to new or expanded community conservation areas in terrestrial and marine ecosystems

| Description of Indicator ¹⁰ | Baseline Level | End of project target level | Progress as of March 2019 | Comment & Rating: On Track |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| A. Agroforestry Landscape in Chiapas and Tabasco: A.1.1.1 Area under community management implementing agroecological principles and practices for selected crops | A.1.1.1 0 ha. in participating communities | A.1.1.1 300 ha. under agroecological coffee production & 300 ha. under agroecological cacao production | - A.1.1.1 Projects approved cover additional 363 ha. of <u>cocoa</u> and 487 of <u>coffee</u> production, transitioning to agroecological practices to control plant diseases. Training is provided to improve soil management, seed selection, shade control, natural pest management and also to process the product. | - A.1.1.1 On track. Both targets covered and exceeded under projects approved. Management is confident that implementation activities will confirm sustainable management. MTR visits to Tabasco cacao plantations confirm the approach. |
| B. Usumacinta and Grijalva Rivers Watershed: B. 1.1.2 Number of community enterprises and initiatives contributing to sustainable fisheries and aquaculture with native species | B.1.1.2 Six community-managed hatcheries producing fingerlings of Alligator gar and Castarrica (Cichlasoma urophthalmus) | B.1.1.2 Five additional community-managed hatcheries producing native fish species' fingerlings to be released into their natural habitat and | - B.1.1.2 Initial proposals not eligible as coming from <u>existing hatcheries</u> . During the 2 nd Call, 6 projects selected: 3 new and 3 existing hatcheries to be strengthened. 8 community fish farms supported (7 new and one to be reinforced) to contribute restoring | - B.1.1.2 On track. CPT's field visits detected a lack of market for fingerlings. The decision to strengthen existing hatcheries as well as existing fish farms is sound and in agreement with field reality. The second part of the indicator is |

¹⁰ With relation to the original PRF, Outcome N.1 indicators have been renamed to identify with greater clarity the name of the landscape/seascape as defined during project implementation; for consistency, Outcome 1 indicators are re-numbered. The orange colour signals the modifications suggested. Changes do not affect the indicator *per sé*.

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| <p>B. 1.1.3 Number of ha. of continental and marine areas monitored to detect and control invasive alien species using SGP's established system</p> <p>B.1.1.4 Number of fisheries with improved community management</p> | <p>18 community fish farms</p> <p>B.1.1.3 A community system to detect and control alien invasive species in the freshwater ecosystem of the Grijalva-Usumacinta was established in SGP OP5</p> <p>B.1.1.4 There are no sustainable fisheries management activities by communities currently taking place in the project area</p> | <p>15 new community fish farms, targeting 5,500 ha.</p> <p>B.1.1.3 Documented management of 2,400 ha. to detect and control invasive alien species in freshwater (400 ha) and marine (2,000 ha) areas</p> <p>B.1.1.4 At least three fisheries of ten species in rivers, protected interior and coastal lagoons, and wetlands with improved community management</p> | <p>ecosystem's biodiversity though release of 20% of fingerlings in <i>Laguna de Términos</i> PA.</p> <p>-B.1.1.3 Workshop done and a strategy developed to control <u>invasive species</u> and reach new stakeholders. The NGO which was awarded the grant detected various monitoring points and established a buffer zone covering an area of 62.830 ha. of freshwater.</p> <p>-B.1.1.4 3 grants selected covering 4 cooperatives with one lobster fishery and others with a variable number of species which are still being identified. The fishery refuge counts more than 80 species, including turtles.</p> | <p>not within reach. 8 out of 15 communities fish farms are supported, of which 3 located in the Coastal Landscape, with a view to connect the activity to the market.</p> <p>B.1.1.3 The capacity of COBIUS NGO to leverage co-financing allowed a match of almost 1 to 10. Working the buffer zone area allows covering a considerable larger number of ha.</p> <p>-No invasive species detected in marine area of targeted landscape.</p> <p>B.1.1.4 All fisheries are outside of the targeted landscape and located in the Coastal Landscape.</p> |
| <p><i>C. Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Coastal Seascapes</i></p> <p>C.1.1.5 Number of community initiatives implementing alternative tourism as a substitute to unsustainable production practices</p> <p>C.1.1.6 Area with improved community monitoring and control of marine alien invasive species</p> | <p>C.1.1.5 Two tourism routes including marine and terrestrial areas were established during SGP OP5</p> <p>C.1.1.6 A community system to detect and control marine alien invasive species was established in SGP OP5</p> | <p>C.1.1.5 Thirteen community initiatives implementing alternative tourism targeting 12,000 ha. (marine) and 300 ha (terrestrial)</p> <p>C.1.1.6 2 4,000 ha. of marine and freshwater areas monitored to detect and control invasive alien species in particular <i>Pterois volitans</i> (red lionfish) and <i>Plecostomus</i> sp (Armored catfish)</p> | <p>-C.1.1.5 <u>Alternative tourism</u>. 17 communities implementing actions (i.e. fishermen switching to or strengthening eco-tourism as a livelihood alternative in PA of the Yucatán Peninsula (among others coral reef restoration, designing eco-touristic tours to secure long-term revenue generation).</p> <p>C.1.1.6 <u>Invasive alien species</u>: 2.380 ha of marine areas monitored to detect the lionfish and 9.973 ha of freshwater to detect the armored catfish. NSC also included a strategy to monitor sargassum, which negatively impacts the livelihoods of coastal communities and affect biodiversity (coral reef and sea turtle) but no grants were received.</p> | <p>-C.1.1.5 <u>Alternative tourism</u>. Target covered and on track. Terrestrial area will be precisely measured using the GIS which is under development; however, projections indicate at least over 15.500 ha. most of which being marine area.</p> <p>C.1.1.6 <u>Invasive alien species</u>: target covered and on track. To be noted that the armored catfish live in freshwater (therefore the indicator is modified to include freshwater). One grant is outside of targeted landscape, located in Usumacinta & Grijalva watershed where the problem was detected.</p> |
| <p><i>D. Timber and Non-Timber Forestry Landscape</i></p> <p>D.1.1.7 Area with improved community forest management</p> <p>D.1.1.8 Number of communities obtaining forest certification or retaining existing certification</p> | <p>D.1.1.7 85,573 ha. under sustainable forest management achieved during SGP OP5</p> <p>D.1.1.8 7 forest ejidos in Quintana Roo have FSC certification achieved during SGP OP5. 4 communities with certified organic apiculture achieved</p> | <p>D.1.1.7 42,000 ha. under sustainable forest management</p> <p>D.1.1.8 10 communities obtain or retain FSC or NMX 143 certification, for diverse products or services</p> | <p>D.1.1.7 <u>Sustainable forest management</u>. Grants approved cover 50,599 ha. of rainforest, out of which 41.499 were covered already with 1st Call grants, in collaboration with 12 ejidos.</p> <p>D.1.1.8 <u>FSC certification</u>: 10 ejidos supported in their process to obtain FSC certification, including training both for sustainable forestry management and for supply chain involving a large number of people (the amount still unknown as the report is not yet ready).</p> | <p>D.1.1.7 <u>Sustainable forest management</u>. On track with target exceeded on paper.</p> <p>D.1.1.8 <u>FSC certification</u>: on track. SGP interacting with and being recognized as a key partner of FSC in Mexico. Certification is a long process and should not be regarded as an end in itself; the value lies in the process involving different management steps; sustainable</p> |

| <p>D.1.1.9 Number of communities implementing alternative tourism activities</p> <p><i>E. Milpa Forestry Landscape</i></p> <p>E.1.1.10 Area under community management implementing agroecological principles and practices for selected crops</p> | <p>during SGP OP5.</p> <p>D.1.1.9 Five communities under SGP OP5 implementing ecotourism activities</p> <p>E.1.1.10 102 ha. and about 1,000 families implemented sustainable agricultural practices during SGP OP5 -No research activities on agroecology during SGP OP5</p> | <p>D.1.1.9 10 communities implement ecotourism activities targeting 1000 ha</p> <p>E.1.1.10 140 ha. under agroecological land management</p> | <p>D.1.1.9 Ecotourism: 18 communities carrying out ecotourism activities; although the width of the area is to be precisely determined when the GIS is ready, the approach allows communities to impact large areas.</p> <p>E.1.1.10 Agroecological land management: 421 ha. covered, involving 74 communities using innovative agroforestry/agroecology practices, improved soil management, and implementing innovations (soil analysis, microorganism fertilization, use of walking tractor) in the Mayan Milpa system (traditional indigenous crops). SGP actively promotes exchange between groups (i.e. 6 tons of native seeds exchanged during 12 seeds fairs; support provided to a group of 13 farmers (6 women) to participate and share experience during Mexico's first congress on agroecology held in Chiapas in May).</p> | <p>management is already occurring although the target may not be reached within the timing of OP6.</p> <p>D.1.1.9 On track. Ecotourism activities are not limited to the forestry landscape but cover all landscapes/seascapes. The area covered will certainly be larger than the target.</p> <p>E.1.1.10 Agroecological land management: on track with target exceeded. Sound practices shared among producers, i.e. on-site training by producers to other producers. Laudably SGP supports the process for the recognition of the Mayan Milpa as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS) through a regional workshop and the participation in the technical group. SGP seeks collaboration with government programs such as Sembrando Vidas.</p> |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| <p>Outcome 1.2: Community-based organizations possess the organizational and managerial capacities for business development and performance on a larger scale to contribute to landscape and seascape governance and management. GEF budget: US\$ 931,500</p> | | | | |
| <p>Output 1.2.1 Participatory social and environmental assessments of community organizations, their capacities, territories and production potential Output 1.2.2 Education and training based on applied innovation results for sustainable production and conservation practices Output 1.2.3 Adaptive participatory land/seascape management plans Output 1.2.4 Participatory evaluation of results at landscapes/seascape level and by production activity for learning and adaptive management.</p> | | | | |
| Description of Indicator | Baseline Level | End of project target level | Progress as of March 2019 | Comment and Rating |
| <p>1.2.1 Number of adaptive and participatory land/seascape management strategies and plans developed/updated</p> | <p>0</p> | <p>Six adaptive and participatory land/seascape management strategies and plans developed/updated</p> | <p>1.2.1 The 4 participatory Landscapes Strategies are developed each by an NGO through a grant and are in the final stage of completion; the Coastal Seascape strategy, developed by a consultant, started later and is less advanced. Comprehensive socio-ecological baseline assessments were conducted for the 5 Landscapes/Seascape (23 workshops with 501 persons of whom 127 women (25%) using COMDEKS methodology. -The two Tabasco areas merged: as the</p> | <p>-Landscapes/Seascape strategies are beyond schedule but likely to be ready by the end of the year. They will inform more the next OP than the current one. -Merging of two Tabasco areas do not affect proposed targets and indicators: the watershed approach is taken and merged areas share the same targets. -Adoption of the COMDEKS methodology well received by participants as its holistic approach is closely linked with the</p> |

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|---|--|--|--|--|
| | | | <p>negative impact of the agricultural practices in the mountain part is also impacting the estuarine area, the merger will allow to create a homogenous landscape with a watershed vision along Mexico's biggest free-flowing river, the Usumacinta.</p> | <p>indigenous cosmovision of the territory. The process also allows SGP to renew dialogue with new state authorities.</p> <p>-Stakeholders and SGP identified need to widely share results within and beyond the boundaries of the landscape. State governments shared new available data which allowed a more precise definition of key ecosystems and to redesign the landscape boundaries (now covering 21 million ha.: 18% in marine and 72% in terrestrial ecosystems. Main changes were made in the agroforestry landscape of Chiapas and Tabasco (managed by small cocoa and coffee farmers). Strategies will reflect updated needs of local communities in the 5 landscapes.</p> |
| <p>1.2.2 Number of community members with increased capacities for business development and management disaggregated by sex</p> | <p>140 community members increased their capacities for business development and marketing of timber and non-timber forest products</p> <p>358 community members increased their capacities for ecotourism development and operation</p> | <p>200 additional community members with increased business development and management capacities of which at least 30% female</p> | <p>1.2.2 SGP is strengthening cooperatives that were previously supported by SGP and the COMPACT programme, in order to increase incomes while strengthening resilience against shocks in the markets. Examples of activities:</p> <p>*<u>Beekeeping cooperatives</u> improving capacity to diversify and improve production and to sell honey; in addition, they are now focusing on the entire landscape, including in their selling offer products of their traditional crops. This may diversify incomes and increase resilience to environmental or economic shocks.</p> <p>*<u>Alternative Tourism cooperatives</u> adopting innovative approaches, including circular economy practices in their supply chain (buying locally produced food and handicraft to sell to visitors) to increase benefits for the entire community and improve resource efficiency. Capacities to market services, increasing visibility and outreach are also improved.</p> <p>*<u>Forestry sector cooperatives/alliances</u> learning to manage and operate a new sawmill, market new products, and manage the accounting system. Women learning how to sell honey from native bees, eggs and vegetables from their gardens in local market. In Quintana Roo, a cooperative led by Mayan women improves the resilience of a native fruit jam factory by</p> | <p>- On track. The exact number of people receiving SGP support to improve capacities to manage small businesses of timber and non-timber forest products as well as eco-tourism products and services, cannot yet be established.</p> <p>-The NSC approved a Business Administration transversal grant to ensure similar levels of knowledge between cooperatives; it is expected to benefit 355 persons belonging to 26 CBOs.</p> <p>-Intermediaries are still controlling the market of community products such as timber, cacao, honey and coffee. However, some cooperatives have already reached independence in terms of market access through SGP support. Based on this success, SGP is supporting smaller cooperatives to strengthen their capacities.</p> |

| | | | reconstructing their small factory that was damaged by severe flooding. In Tabasco and Chiapas, a new value chain for cocoa and coffee products is under development, with potential to generate additional sustainable income. | |
|--|--|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Outcome 1.3: Successful small grants experiences from this and previous phases are consolidated/ up-scaled through production and marketing chains and second-level organizations as well as through exchange of knowledge and experiences, linking community-based organizations within and across landscapes/seascapes GEF Budget: US\$ 599,000 | | | | |
| Output 1.3.1 Networks and second-level organizations established and/or strengthened to integrate and bring to scale production and marketing of sustainably produced goods and services Output 1.3.2 Strategic projects to facilitate specific product development, certification and marketing at scale Output 1.3.3 Second-level organizations access financial resources for sustainable production activities at scale Output 1.3.4 Engagement of potential financial partners and public sector institutions, as relevant and viable, in analysis, planning, and evaluation of results Output 1.3.5 Experiences described and analyzed; knowledge disseminated widely using different means and targeting civil society, decision-makers and other development partners | | | | |
| Description of Indicator | Baseline Level | End of project target level | Progress as of March 2019 | Comment and Rating |
| 1.3.1 Number of second level organizations established or consolidated at landscape or thematic levels | None existent for pursuit of this project's objectives | At least 5 | 1.3.1 8 second-level organizations under creation/consolidation; among others, Ya'ax Sot' Oot' Yook'ol Kaab in Jose Maria Morelos, Quintana Roo; Sociedad de Productores Forestales Ejidales de Q.Roo in Othon P Blanco, Quintana Roo; Red Mayense de guardianes de Semillas, and Red de Productores agroecológicos, Campeche State; Mayan Alliance for the Bees of the Yucatan peninsula, Kaanáalo'on. | - Target covered on paper. The network created by grant-making activities during the last 25 years is a solid base to identify this kind of networks and start the consolidation process. SGP OP6's goal is to foster a second-level organization in each landscape: Maya Alliance for Bees in Milpa Forestry Landscape, Alianza Selva Maya in Forestry Landscape, Sistema producto peces nativos in Usumacinta Watershed, Coordinadora Latinoamericana y del Caribe de Pequeños Productores y Trabajadores de Comercio Justo in the Agroforestry Landscape. -Although the way the indicator is formulated may hide information, data should be disaggregated by organization but also by gender and age group. |
| 1.3.3 Number of strategic projects consolidating, replicating and up-scaling specific successful SGP-supported technologies, practices or systems | None existent in relation to this project's objectives | At least 3 | - NSC approved 3 out of 5 proposals received for strategic projects. Identified during 1 st call, they were carefully supported by the CPT to develop full proposals which were approved during the 2 nd Call and received needed approval from GEF SGP headquarters. Approved projects are: *Alternative Tourism (covering Timber and | - Beyond schedule: all Strategic and Transversal projects are just starting; successful implementation requires an extension of the Programme's duration. -CPT closely coached selected NGOs to develop sound proposals with shared strategic visions on influencing public policy, improving direct access to |

| | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| | | | <p>Non-Timber Forestry Landscape, Coastal Seascape and Milpa Forest Landscape) *Sustainable Apiculture (covering Timber and Non-Timber Forestry Landscape and Milpa Forest Landscape) *Community Forestry Management (in the Timber and Non-timber Forestry Landscape)</p> | <p>markets, and strengthen existing capacities within the organizations. Although the 3 strategic projects appear to target the Quintana Roo State and the original idea was to have one project per landscape, there are other grants which are identified as transversal projects (i.e. climate change resilience, business administration, gender, communities' communication, biodiversity strategy communication, ICCAs, which also have strategic components.</p> |
| 1.3.4 Number of knowledge products (case studies) produced and disseminated. | No case studies produced at the landscape level | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 6 case studies developed (1 per landscape) | <p>-No case studies yet developed but material and stories from stakeholders started to be gathered. -Intensive use of social media as communication means. -case studies are under development to be presented at the 25th anniversary of SGP Mexico at the end of October 2019; it includes 5 short videos, and a brochure, a publication. -5 additional case studies, one per landscape, will be published in 2020.</p> | <p>-The communication strategy developed by SGP OP6 focuses on supporting communities to create their own stories and express themselves as they consider appropriate. - Activities being developed for the 25th Anniversary of SGP are likely to produce quality communication material which was not yet available at the time of the MTR.</p> |

Implementation delays are present but can barely be attributed to management; the late recruitment of the CPM and even more importantly the time elapsed between the end of OP5 and the start of OP6 resulted in an urgency to approve small grants, without waiting the completion of the landscapes' strategies. The First Call approved an impressive quantity of grants within an even more impressive short period of time. Activities are efficiently and effectively implemented and the capacity to mobilize stakeholders, establish links and promote alliances is outstanding. This should be regarded as extremely positive given that the CPT is completely new and had therefore to settle and take over from previous management and that this is the first time that a landscape approach is taken in Mexico. Notwithstanding, as half of the small grants and all strategic and transversal projects are just about to start, successful implementation and sustainable management will only be appreciated at EoP. On paper, the 106 projects approved cover 95% of the GEF project targets and most of them exceed the target. The minor deviations in **Outcome 1** are shortcomings of design (i.e. a lack of market for fingerlings and the presence of invasive species in freshwater instead than in marine waters) as assessed during the field visits of the CPT.

Regarding **Outcome 2**, the landscape strategies are still in a draft format with some of them more advanced than others; in particular the Coastal Landscape strategy is delayed and it is the only one which has been assigned to a consultant instead than developed by an NGO through a grant. The delay is due to a late start of the assignment and not to the consultant's performance. Stakeholders had to first get acquainted with the COMDEKS methodology; in addition, the truly participatory socio-economic baseline with a multi-stakeholder governance and gender perspective focus has taken time. Each landscape is different and has faced dissimilar challenges in terms of design and organization, with one NGO with more capacity for field investigation and one with more capacity to define the geographical borders of the territory. By the end of October 2019 all strategies should be completed except the Coastal Landscape but all of them should be ready by the end of the year, including documented lessons learnt. A coordinator consultant has been hired to ensure methodological homogeneity of the landscapes/seascape processes and socialize the COMDEKS approach; the consultant will also systematize information into a regional strategy. Understandably, this is a long process and the decision to approve the small grants before the strategies were ready is supported; yet, with the Project having already passed its midline, the target is beyond schedule.

For **Outcome 3** collaboration with second-level organizations is on track. Although strategic and transversal projects are yet to start, the MTR visit could appreciate that management do not miss an occasion to create links and alliances between communities and producers. A nice example is provided by the current organization of the celebrations for the SGP 25th Anniversary: communities are invited to participate, present projects, bring products to be sold in a fair and communities' goods and services are purchased for the organization of the event. Even for Outcome 3 everything is in place for an effective strengthening of second-level organizations; yet, strategic and transversal projects are just starting and much work is needed to facilitate producers' access to financial instruments beyond grants, ensure the sustainability of efforts and the commercial benefits of the best practices. The MTR Consultant had the opportunity to exchange views with stakeholders of: i) the Timber and Non-Timber Forestry strategic project where a dynamic group of producers belonging to six *ejidos* presented their ideas of sustainable and certified forestry management through the *Alianza Selva Maya* in Quintana Roo; and ii) participate as an observer to the first meeting of the Ecotourism projects where key stakeholders presented their projects and ideas to find a common methodology to collect and systematize data and align positions on key issues such as the so called Maya Train (a quite debated and yet incipient project to develop a train trail along the Yucatan Peninsula).

The analysis of data indicates that most projects under implementation are judged by management as progressing fairly well, with only a few of them experiencing some organizational problems and/or delays in producing technical and financial reports. All first call grants have received one and often two installments while the payment of the first installment of the second call grants are in process. No project is yet fully completed. As it can be appreciated from Table 6 below, the highest amount of GEF grant resources is invested in the Agroecology/Agroforestry thematic area, in Aquaculture/Fisheries and in Ecotourism. This is

both due to the absorption capacity of the thematic area as well as the expansion of SGP OP6 to Tabasco and Chiapas where projects focus on agroecology and agroforestry.

Table N.6 Grants allocations by thematic area in US\$

| Thematic Area | Ecotourism | Organic Apiculture | Agroecology/Agroforestry | Community Conservation | Timber/Non-Timber Forest Management | Aquaculture & Sustainable Fisheries |
|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| N. of CBOs/NGOs projects | 17 | 15 | 25 | 4 | 12 | 20 |
| GEF funding | 517,220 | 296,787 | 685,623 | 87,424 | 299,309 | 636,518 |
| Cash co-financing | 671,141 | 539,094 | 756,542 | 47,320 | 535,093 | 641,360 |
| In-kind co-financing | 571,569 | 274,057 | 490,805 | 85,448 | 301,751 | 1,225,445 |
| Total | 1,759,930 | 1,109,939 | 1,939,970 | 220,193 | 1,136,153 | 2,503,324 |

There are 26 grantees supported for the second or third time, 11 of which addresses a new thematic; 76 projects are managed by organizations that were previously not part of the SGP network; 43 grants are led by NGOs and among the CBOs, 39 are led by indigenous CBOs. It may be argued that some organizations have the capacity to finance proposed activities without SGP support, given relative success in their business; yet, all projects address sustainable activities, in accordance with OP6 objectives. All communities visited highly value the support received.

4.2.2 Remaining barriers to achieving the project objectives

Greater food security and/or generation of employment and income for resource-dependent communities from sustainable management of ecosystem processes and marketing of biodiversity and other resources provide the primary economic incentive to communities, individually and collectively, to conserve biodiversity and optimize ecosystem services. Organizations are building capacities to plan and manage resources adaptively and strategic projects work to make their actions synergetic, thus contributing to the sustainability of biodiversity conservation, land management and climate mitigation at landscape scales. As most indicators are virtually fulfilled, SGP seems well positioned to achieve and institutionalize planned targets through participatory processes; however, community organizations still operate under significant technical, organizational and financial weaknesses to be able to effectively act strategically and collectively in building and maintaining social and ecological resilience. The barriers identified in the ProDoc are still operating; during the MTR it was possible to appreciate that:

- **Financial barriers** have possibly worsened with the decision of the Federal Government to cut the budget of institutions such as CONANP and CONAFOR previously subsidizing activities in the forestry and protected areas sectors. Aside from new programmes such as “ Jovenes Construyendo el Futuro” and “Sembrando Vida” which provide direct individual or community support, the decision to no longer support civil society organizations as a deterrent to corruption may translate into breakages of long-term civil society processes.
- **Cultural and gender barriers** are still in place; although an integral gender approach has been taken for the first time, gender inequalities are strong barriers (decision making remains under men’s control, women participation is still not fully recognized, there is still caution in promoting gender awareness for fear of causing disruption in families and or communities). The projects’ gender experts as well as the NSC gender focal point underline that much more needs to be done in this respect.
- **Technical and production barriers** in certain landscapes’ areas are of difficult solution such as the tendency to purchase land in view of the possible implementation of the Mayan Train or the expansion of land for cattle breeding in oil dependent areas of Tabasco at the expense of cacao and other agricultural cultivations.
- **Insecurity barriers:** violence and insecurity which have until now not affected the Yucatan Peninsula are increasing, putting additional pressure on communities (i.e.Tabasco and Chiapas).

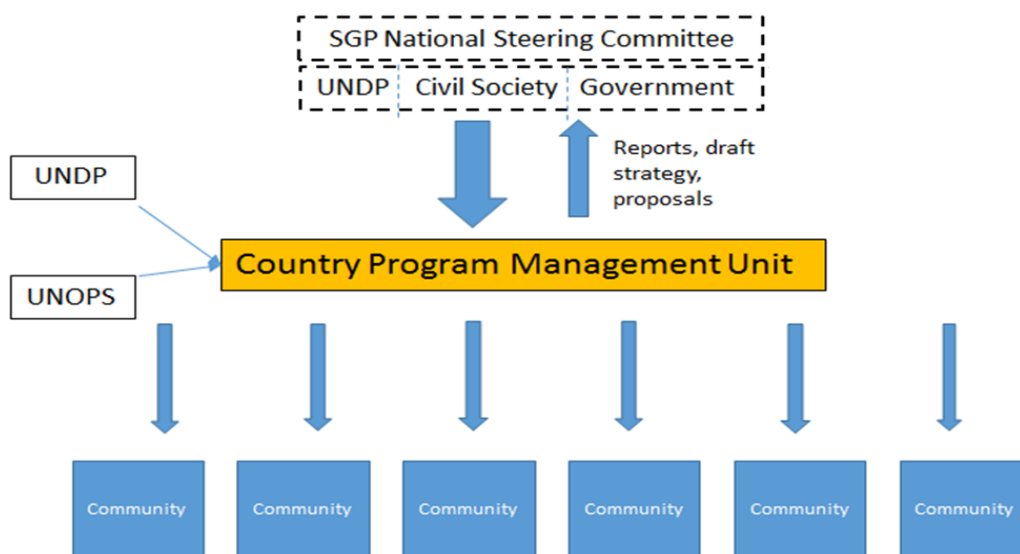
- Institutional barriers:** the potential for establishing and/or strengthening multi-stakeholder platforms in each landscape is still not fully analyzed; the dialogue with federal and state authorities is incipient and unfortunately, budget cuts in the federal government strongly limit the capacity of officials to travel and participate. There is the need to intensify and creatively find alternative virtual systems to bring together community organizations, NGOs, and federal and state government authorities, the private sector and the academia to share information, lessons learned and experiences while advocating for policy changes. Strong multi-stakeholder partnerships are critical to overcome financial, technical, and capacity barriers to benefit both producers and the global environment.

Strategic and transversal projects are designed to be instrumental in linking projects within or across landscapes to strengthen CBOs production (cocoa, coffee, honey, wood) and marketing capacities (apiculture...) as well as to generate alternative income (ecotourism projects). These projects have recently started; therefore, it is too early to assess how successful and synergistic their actions will be. It is well known that achieving technical goals is the least of the challenge in short-time implemented projects aiming at achieving long-term processes; instead, developing organizational, managing and monitoring capacities takes an enormous amount of time and require sustained support.

4.3 Project Implementation & Adaptive Management

4.3.1 Management Arrangements

Management is rated as satisfactory, with a great level of commitment and dedication of staff and an appropriate and professional coaching of CBOs and NGOs, project monitoring and stimulation of the production of outputs. The Mexico CPT has been completely renewed since OP6 with a new CPM, a Programme Assistant dedicating to administration and a Technical Assistant, tasked with monitoring activities. Although there was no overlap between the two teams, the previous NC and PA were hired as consultants to brief the new staff and support the beginning of OP6. The CPT is responsible for all aspects of project operations, including implementation, management, partnership development, knowledge management and M&E of the programme. Worries about the capability of the new team to take over after 23 years of permanence of the previous team, without much experience of the UN System have been erased by its capacity to gain the respect of superiors and stakeholders and create collaboration and trust among the team members. With previous experience in the region and good relations already established, the CPM shows enormous respect for stakeholder and both dynamism in activating dialogue at all levels and in actively seeking alternative co-financing.



In adherence to the country-driven nature of the programme, the CPT seeks guidance and support from, and in a sense also reports on progress in programme implementation to the NSC, which is composed, of a

variable number between 10-12 voluntary members (in 2009 the SGP NSC and the COMPACT NSC merged). The majority non-governmental membership reflects the mandated focus of the programme for CBO capacity building and “country-drivenness”. The NSC includes recognized Mexican professionals who provided valuable and mixed expertise over the years; the UNDP RR-delegated staff member is a permanent member of the NSC. Some members have been sitting on the committee for years, including the president of the NSC. Renovation is gradually operated to avoid disruption, and in this phase three members alternated; however, this appears to be more the consequence of some members deciding to renounce than a voluntary act of renovation. Certainly, the NSC has provided the continuity of the SGP in a moment in which management completely changed and allowed an efficient approval of small grants; yet, application of the rotation rule could bring new insight and vision to the programme (i.e. the recently nominated Secretary of the Environment of Quintana Roo who has long been sitting on the committee and continue to do it on a personal basis). Overall, the multi-stakeholder NSC assures impartiality and neutrality of decisions for often highly competitive situations.

The particular situation of the Program, located in the Yucatan Peninsula, with NSC members leaving in different areas of the country and with a limited budget for travelling makes face-to-face communication more difficult; there is instead constant e-mails-skype contacts and virtual meetings are now being considered. During the reporting period, the NSC met three times. Project selection is regarded as a rewarding process of learning, with intense discussions and interchange of opinions thanks to different cultural and expertise backgrounds but a relatively easy way to reach consensus. During grants selection, visits to projects are organized while during implementation NSC’s members are kept informed by the CPT but do not undertake field visits. NSC’s Minutes of the Meetings (MoMs) are detailed and informative but more for an internal use that easy to understand for an external reader. The format could be improved and standardized. The President of the NSC is presently leading a process to formally develop internal rules.

Interviews confirm appreciation for the way the CPT keeps them informed and motivated and for the adoption of new working modalities, based on current available technology which makes processes shorter and easier, with less waste of time and minimum waste of paper. In particular, appreciation is reported for smoother administrative processes and less methodological rigidity, the capacity to process and store data and information and finally the capacity to react to field requests and find new and stronger alliances.

The SGP is implemented by **UNDP** and executed by UNOPS. UNDP provides quality assurance and oversight services for SGP at global and country levels as well as value-added benefits as programme implementation proceeds in synergy with overall UNDP and UNDP CO programming. UNDP’s representation on the NSC supports synergy with other projects in the country, plays a role in resource mobilization as well as in establishing formal relations with state governments (i.e. in Chiapas a MoU has been recently signed and the same could soon happen in the Tabasco State). UNDP reports greater and appreciated capacity for SGP collaboration with UNDP both at projects and CO levels. Strict collaboration with the UNDP Risk Management Project allowed a completely new approach in the way small grants shield their activities against climate change and other risks. A Programme level, risk management appears well conducted, with SGP reporting information as required by UNDP. During the MTR visit to Tabasco, UNDP logistical support to SGP and the good cooperation established clearly manifested. UNDP annually compiles the required sections of the PIR; to date, this has been done on time and accurately.

UNOPS has been the executing agency of the SGP since its inception. It provides human resources and legal support, and provides financial and procurement management guidance and supervision to SGP staff. Under the SGP, UNOPS is responsible for grants management, following the signature of a grant agreement between the NGO and the UNDP RR (on behalf of UNOPS). UNOPS effectively supports the Programme, efficiently hiring consultants, disbursing funds to grantees on time and solving difficulties when they arise as well as providing training and coaching for budget management and administrative issues. No major challenges have been identified.

4.3.2 Work Planning

The SGP develops and follows an Annual Workplan, which is basically a financial instrument with a detail of activities to be carried out during the year. Within the Results Framework, activities are strategically and logically linked. Small grants projects are approved according to the overall SGP strategy defined at Project start while Landscapes Strategies are still to be completed.

4.3.3 Finance and co-finance

The total Project budget amounts to USD 10,762,615 out of which USD 4,429,223 from the GEF and USD 6,333,392 as co-financing from different partners. UNDP, as the GEF co-financing Implementing Agency, is responsible for the execution of the GEF resources and the cash co-financing transferred to the UNDP bank account. The GEF budget allocated for small grants amount to USD 3,156,951, including USD 323,900 for strategic projects. The remaining funding covers programme management costs, travel for M&E, and equipment and supplies. All GEF budget is totally committed, including USD 25.201 which have been approved to be used for the design of the seascape's strategy which is not assigned as a grant.

The budget is managed by outcome. Budget flexibility within budget lines is possible, within a 10% variance. Outcome N.4 is a management outcome where expenditures are not allowed to go over the amount planned. The Project is executed by UNOPS, which takes responsibility for financial management. UNOPS fees amount to 6% for each transaction plus a fixed amount of USD 12.000 per year for CMDC. UNOPS submits a cumulative financial report to UNDP each quarter, utilizing the One UNOPS system. The budget is translated into the UN ATLAS system used by UNDP; the required quarterly reconciliation is hardly implemented. A Project Annual Report is produced. As the team was completely new, in February 2018 UNOPS undertook a monitoring/coaching mission to Mexico to ensure alignment of procedures. An audit is envisaged for 2020.

Table N.7 Budget allocations and expenditures per Outcome (US\$)

| Budget line/Amounts | Budget Allocation per Outcome as of beginning of October 2019 | | |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| | GEF | GEF Expenditures to date | GEF Commitments to date |
| Outcome N.1 | 2,686,000 | 1,023,545 | 1,276,778 |
| Outcome N.2 | 931,500 | 182,907 | 424,242 |
| Outcome N.3 | 599,000 | 52,195 | 2,878 |
| Outcome N.4 (Management) | 212,723 | 38,679 | 905 |
| Total | 4,429,223 | 1.297.326 | 1,704,803 |

Funds' transfers to organizations are made in three tranches, according to the absorptive capacity of the organization and not with a pre-fixed percentage; only planning projects with small amounts are delivered in a single tranche. Grantees from the first call received the first payment in December 2018 and the second one upon presentation of technical and financial reports in the summer of 2019 (not all of them have already produced a report). Grantees of the second call are recently claiming their first disbursement and payments are being processed. The Programme started in February 2018; notwithstanding delay accumulated in hiring and setting up the new CPT, by the end of 2018, the NSC allocated 40% of the total grant amount. In June 2019, the delivery rate was only 19.82%; but by the end of August 2019, USD 3,182,150 are assigned for small-grants disbursement. Current project expenditures (USD 1.297.326) plus commitments (USD 1,704,803) amount to USD 3,002,129, together corresponding to about 67,78% of the total budget. The expenditures delivery rate is expected to further climb in the next weeks, when the first payment of newly approved grants is processed.

The well-established and efficient mechanism of the GEF SGP and the utilization of already effectively proven methodologies (COMDEKS landscape planning) ensure a competent use of funds and cost-efficiency. The size of the grant allocation remains fixed with a maximum ceiling of US\$ 50,000 for CBOs and of US\$ 150,000 for NGOs. The CBOs' absorptive capacity in the area is mixed and the SGP has awarded small projects up to USD 5,000 and more consistent ones up to almost USD 50.000 with the average grants being around USD 30.000. 10 projects have been approved without the GEF budget coverage and co-financing is sought for USD 274,400.

Grant-making budget allocations to the five landscapes did not follow established criteria; the number of projects assigned to each landscape is unequal but this is irrelevant as projects may be quite small and it also depends on the thematic area. Instead, there is an almost equitable distribution of GEF resources per landscape, with the largest amount going to the Milpa landscape and lowest amount to the Agroforestry Landscape as cocoa and coffee targets were modest in terms of ha.

Table N.8 Grants allocations by landscape in USD

| Southern Mexico | Agroforestry Chiapas & Tabasco | Usumacinta & Grijalva watershed | Coastal seascape | Timber & Non-Timber Forestry | Milpa Forestry | Cross-cutting project | Strategic Projects: | Landscape Strategy | Total |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| CBOs/NGOs projects N. | 7 | 15 | 20 | 22 | 29 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 106 |
| GEF funding | 248,423.92 | 543,867.25 | 536,297.99 | 527,953.75 | 666,339.12 | 224,200 | 323,900 | 100,968,90 | 3,171,951 ¹¹ |
| In-kind co-financing | 199,251.97 | 1,076,039.90 | 688,198.37 | 455,431.55 | 530,155.17 | 74,845.20 | 127,637.81 | 42,475.09 | 3,194,035 |
| Cash co-financing | 230,995 | 539,603 | 654,650 | 831,890.17 | 933,413.26 | 310,567.42 | 447,368.64 | 23,597.27 | 3,972,086 |
| Total | 678,671 | 2,159,510 | 1,879,147 | 1,815,275 | 2,129,908 | 609,613 | 898,906 | 167,041 | 10,338,072 |

Table 8 shows that in terms of overall resources, the largest investments are in the Usumacinta and Grijalva Landscape and in the Milpa Forestry Landscape. Overall, cross-cutting grants, strategic projects and grants assigned for the design of the landscapes count for USD 649,068 of the GEF budget, with a total cash co-financing of USD 781,533 and in-kind co-financing of USD 244,958. CBOs' co-financing contributions are estimated; the exact amount could only be determined at the end of the implementation as organizations have the possibility to produce co-financing even after implementation but within the timing of their final report. The co-financing ratio is established in a 1 to 1 ratio for conservation projects and a 2 to 1 ratio for production projects meaning that an organization must contribute in cash or in-kind plus obtain external co-financing. This is a great challenge for CBOs but if met permits to considerably increase the impact of activities. Organizations with greater capacities to mobilize funds may balance those with more difficulties.

Federal and state governments' elections occurred in June 2018 meant a change of authorities in the state governments where the SGP operates (except two) leading to challenges in terms of co-financing: i) newly installed authorities do not feel committed; ii) several subsidy programs linked to the environment are no longer receiving enough funding (i.e. National Forest Commission (CONAFOR) or Protected Area Commission (CONANP); iii) new state governments are struggling with high levels of debt. The Programme adopted a strategy of work with the new authorities presenting the SGP approach, establishing a dialogue and analyzing possible collaboration (i.e. SGP supports resilience against climate change for the federal government nationwide agroforestry project, launched in 2018 and collaboration is ongoing with federal governments' programmes *Sembrando Vida* and *Jovenes Construyendo el Futuro*). Instead, the co-financing strategy focused on alliances with private donors and foundations such as W.K. Kellogg Foundation, ADO Foundation, Citibanamex Foundation, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Yucatan Peninsula Climate Action Fund, Rainforest Alliance and World Bank, among others. Already received co-financing allocations, as of October 2019, are reported below, in Table 9; in Table 1, it is possible to appreciate that none of the Government expected commitments at Programme start will materialize.

¹¹ This slight difference with GEF total committed funds is due to a small contribution of the GTZ cooperation to strengthen ICCA, the network of indigenous and community conservation.

Table N.9 Co-financing allocations in US\$, received as October 2019

| Sources of Co-financing | Name of Co-financier | Type of Co-financing | Investment Mobilized | Amount (\$) |
|------------------------------|---|----------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Beneficiaries | Grantee | Grant | Investment Mobilized | 127,998 |
| Beneficiaries | Grantee | In-kind | Recurrent Expenditures | 54,856 |
| GEF Agency | UNDP | Grant | Investment Mobilized | 150,000 |
| Recipient Country Government | Secretaría de Bienestar-Federal Government | Grant | Investment Mobilized | 52,110 |
| Recipient Country Government | CONAFOR-Federal Government | Grant | Investment Mobilized | 169,796 |
| Recipient Country Government | Secretaría de Desarrollo Sustentable-Yucatan States | In-kind | Recurrent Expenditures | 45,146 |
| Recipient Country Government | CONANP-Federal Government | Grant | Investment Mobilized | 128,634 |
| Recipient Country Government | CONANP-Federal Government | In-kind | Recurrent Expenditures | 18,568 |
| Civil Society Organization | Heifer Mexico | Grant | Investment Mobilized | 6,261 |
| Civil Society Organization | Heifer Mexico | In-kind | Recurrent Expenditures | 44,006 |
| Private Sector | PACMA-PEMEX | In-kind | Recurrent Expenditures | 125,152 |
| Private Sector | Fundacion ADO | Grant | Investment Mobilized | 5,821 |
| Donor Agency | WK Kellogg Foundation | Grant | Investment Mobilized | 257,152 |
| Donor Agency | World Bank-MDE | Grant | Investment Mobilized | 45,962 |
| Donor Agency | World Bank-MDE | In-kind | Recurrent Expenditures | 16,445 |
| Donor Agency | Yucatan Peninsula Climate Action Fund | Grant | Investment Mobilized | 222,877 |
| Civil Society Organization | GIZ | Grant | Investment Mobilized | 88,096 |
| Civil Society Organization | The Nature Conservancy | In-kind | Recurrent Expenditures | 11,358 |
| Civil Society Organization | The Nature Conservancy | Grant | Investment Mobilized | 4,664 |
| Total Co-Financing | | | | 1,574,902 |

SGP plays an intermediary role between the projects and co-financing partners; the intense activity of the CPT with private donors and the Government translates into a considerable potential for co-financing which the CPT estimates around 7 million USD. Some projects have a strong capacity to mobilize resources and can balance the lower capacity of others. Overall, the co-financing potential is higher than expectations at Programme's start; clearly, this will have to be reviewed and confirmed by the Terminal Evaluation.

4.3.4 Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems

The ProDoc includes a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan with an estimated cost of USD 169,000, with 134,000 covering the standard and mandatory GEF M&E requirements and USD 35,000 for M&E activities associated with implementation of the individual grants. The Monitoring Plan is detailed and comprehensive of assumptions and risks. In the Programme, monitoring tasks are shared among team members and all meetings and trainings are learning opportunities; the Technical Assistant is the primary reference for monitoring but has joined the team only after more than a year of Programme's implementation. Although monitoring is carefully conducted to ensure coverage of the GEF SGP targets, a system to monitor grants' performance at Programme, Landscape and Projects levels is not yet established.

Programme level. The main responsibility lies with the CPT and the main tools are the PRF, the Monitoring Plan, the Core Indicators (which substitute the previous Tracking Tools), Risk Management and the PIR. Data are collected since the moment small grants are awarded; aggregating individual projects already provides an idea of how indicators at objective level can be fulfilled in terms of coverage of hectares under management, reduction of GHG emissions and number of communities reached/involved. A GIS is under construction to geo-reference projects and accurately keep track of progress. The PIR is prepared in the period June-September each year; it is the main tool to inform higher management and serves as the key input for external evaluations. The first PIR has been prepared in June 2019 and then reviewed/compiled by UNDP CO and UNDP GEF SGP New York. In addition to the SGP database which is regularly updated, an

internal database is established to record and classify grants awarded; although information is easily compiled upon requests, keeping track of co-financing and of performance is still to be improved. At objective and outcome level, targets are fulfilled *on paper*, as implementation progress is not enough advanced to confirm successful management. The way some indicators at Outcome level are formulated hide the requests of the Monitoring Plan to disaggregate information in terms of organization, gender and age groups; this happens for all indicators of Outcome 1.3 and should be reviewed to ensure the PIR is explicit when reporting about strengthening of second and third level organizations through strategic and/or transversal projects.

Landscape/seascape level. This level monitoring still not happen as landscapes/seascapes strategies are not completed. As reported elsewhere grant-making has gone in parallel with the design of the landscapes/seascape's strategies; although this is not optimal, high-level targets were already established in the PRF and careful monitoring of resilience indicators as developed according to the Satoyama Initiative and COMDEKS methodology will be done. A regional vision of the different landscapes/seascape is also under preparation; it is possible that once the landscapes/seascapes strategies are completed, targets and indicators may change. This information will be a key input for OP7.

Project level. The main responsibility lies with project coordinators tasked with carefully coaching communities' members participating in a project and being responsible for the preparation of technical and financial reports according to the guidelines provided by the SGP. Communities' projects are regularly visited; the CPT allows flexibility for communities' management and reporting which is a complex task for CBOs, especially those receiving grants for the first time.

Adaptive management is well implemented, often creating further opportunities for work and alliances. Risks are well identified in the ProDoc; the June 2019 PIR has identified as a critical risk the federal government prohibition to transfer public funds to civil society organizations ("Circular Uno"). While this is not expected to affect GEF SGP activities, keeping a dialogue and exploring co-financing alternatives with private donors as well as collaborating with ongoing government programmes ("Sembrando Vida" and "Jovenes Construyendo el Futuro") is the strategy of SGP to ensure civil society is not too much adversely impacted. Assumptions and Risk identified in the PRF and in the Monitoring Plan should guide a reflection in terms of risk management and reporting should be more exhaustive in this sense. Reportedly, the CPT responds to UNDP requests to report on the ATLAS Module related with risk management.

Overall, although management makes all efforts to ensure a solid presence in the field and coverage of the GEF targets, there is still much to do to ensure proper monitoring; without a clearly established monitoring system, there is the risk to focus only on the GEF Core Indicators and the Programme's targets, losing the richness of the on-going processes both at Programme and projects level, especially in terms of alliances and linkages with communities as well as with donors; the large number of potential co-financers approached may impact beyond the simple availability of funds. Under pressure of time, monitoring a large number of projects over a wide area and aggregating results from them remain complex: approving the impressive number of 100 small grants may have not been the best strategy considering that each project, regardless of the amount of funding, requires the same level of monitoring effort as small projects may deliver important results depending on the co-financing they may be able to leverage.

Monitoring of the Global environmental benefits (GEB) expected for biodiversity, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and sustainable land management is carried out through the Core Indicators Tables. GEB result from the synergistic implementation of community-based landscapes/seascape management initiatives and their aggregated longer-term impacts. Core Indicators, compiled for the MTR, are attached in [Annex G](#); on paper, they show fulfillment of expected targets when the following interpretation is taken:

- The target of 67,940 ha. preserved includes 49,940 ha of terrestrial landscape and 18.000 ha. of marine seascape. There is also a target of 42,000 ha, as sustainable land management. The total land

area would therefore be 91,940 ha. [Annex G](#) reports progress to date, calculating only small grants approved during the first call for proposals. It is anticipated that among those approved during the second call, there is a community conservation project which alone covers 35,000 ha. and a strategic project covering 113,000 ha. of tropical forest. Therefore, on paper the target is within reach.

- In terms of CO2 mitigation, the ProDoc refers to 2,874,564 metric tons of CO2e while the CEO endorsement refers to 212,000 tons. As the methodology proposed in the ProDoc ([Annex L](#)) do not appear to produce realistic estimations, in agreement with the NSC and to reconcile figures, SGP proposes to: i) develop a community GIS (SIGCOM) to precisely define impact and hire a consultant to develop capacities among grantees; ii) integrate the information collected within a SGP GIS and iii) use a carbon map for Southeast Mexico <http://mexico.carboncal.org/>, produced by the Woods Hole Research Center, to set an adequate baseline for the following calculations.

4.3.5 Stakeholder Engagement

The ability to engage in local dialogue processes with the main stakeholders (local communities, federal and state and private partners) is outstanding; the CPM is well-known and appreciated as a trustful and reliable person. A few numbers support evidence: i) thanks to an effective communication strategy, more than 70 new communities on board during OP6 and overall collaboration with 185 communities; ii) over 100 small grants approved, half of which within a very limited time since the installation of the CPT; iii) the difficulties in obtaining previous co-financing commitments translated into an intense dialogue with the private sector with over 70 potential co-financers contacted and with financing negotiated or under negotiation; iv) the socio-economic assessment of the landscapes/seascape involved interviews to 212 persons plus participation to 23 communities' workshops by 501 people, that is 374 men and 127 women (25%); v) dialogue initiated with the new federal and state authorities; vi) SGP Mexico being part of a national alliance for honey, which connects donors to implement shared strategies; vii) effective collaboration with other projects such as the GEF-funded "agrobiodiversity" project, UNDP Risk Management Project, BIOFIN among others; viii) good relations with the UNDP Country Office, the UNDP Risk Management Project (with which premises are shared and collaboration effective to ensure grantees take a risk management approach) and also with UNDP in Tabasco which offers logistical support to SGP.

Indigenous People. SGP Mexico gives special consideration to all aspects (cultural, social, productive) related to the identity and ethnicity of communities, organizations and individuals who live and work in the landscapes/seascapes. The traditional knowledge behind some of the management practices of local communities that have been instrumental in the conservation of the Yucatan Peninsula's large ecosystems is at risk of being lost. During the years, as a result of immigration and new settlements in the south of the State of Campeche through government land allocation Programmes for landless communities, the original majority of Maya ethnicity grantees enlarged to Chontal groups in the State of Tabasco and to many different ethnic groups in the State of Chiapas. SGP strives to help individuals and communities maintain a strong sense of their identity through various approaches (i.e. facilitating meetings between the various ethnic groups; improving coordination with government entities in charge of indigenous and cultural affairs; making indigenous communities aware of the opportunities to obtain support from organizations that may fund cultural projects; promoting bilingual practices and publishing Programme documents in local languages). On the other hand, SGP also helps identify indigenous communities' practices that may negatively affect the environment and works with communities to discourage or find substitutes for those practices without altering their cultural identity. There are currently 39 grants led by indigenous groups.

There is also a significant mestizo population in all five states. Ejidos and communities have predominantly rural livelihoods in which natural resources play an important role in spite of the fact that as much as 63% of the population of the Yucatan Peninsula is classified as urban. The "*milpa*" which is the name for the traditional multi-crop agricultural practice and the social organization associated with it is central to local culture. The *milpa* is based on the tropical forest diversity and its biodynamic cycles. It involves slash and burn agriculture with long fallow periods. Campeche and Quintana Roo include a significant number of forests ejidos in which communities own large tracks of forests managed for timber and other forest

products and services. Coastal areas and lagoons sustain many artisanal fisher communities in Tabasco and the three States of the Yucatan Peninsula. SGP is currently supporting the process for the recognition of the Mayan Milpa as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System with FAO.

4.3.6 The Gender Dimension

The gender approach has greatly evolved in the Programme. In recognition of the fact that rural women suffer from inequity in most aspects of their lives, SGP Mexico has included a gender equity perspective as early as 1995. If a survey conducted by SGP in 2003 found that only in 10% of projects was there an explicit gender perspective from project planning to implementation and evaluation, the Programme learned valuable lessons, which are the foundation of the existing SGP gender approach. Already well defined in the ProDoc which included a Gender Action Plan, the CPT and the NSC developed an integral gender approach starting with a needs' assessment, and implementing a number of gender mainstreaming measures across the entire Programme (to reduce gender inequities and generational gaps). Together with the NSC gender focal point, ideas were identified for initial discussions and gender-sensitive NGOs were engaged to support women/girls' groups in defining/designing grant project objectives and activities. Women/girls groups are supposed to evaluate their projects' performance to identify lessons and knowledge for adaptive management as well as gender specific policy recommendations.

SGP developed a [Gender Action Plan](#) to ensure full and effective participation of women/girls in projects and that the gender approach and gender-disaggregated data are qualification criteria when awarding small grants. It was established that at least 35% of all proposals come from women's groups and all proposals are developed taking into account gender equality, social inclusion and women's empowerment criteria. Other indicators were also established such as at least 30% female participation among the 200 additional community members with increased business development and management capacities, a minimum participation of 50% of ladies in training and that training is led by both men and women. In addition, [Recommendations for the Inclusion of the Gender Approach](#) were formulated (in diagnoses, project design, activities planning, implementation, trainings and workshops), with specific example; provided to all applicants, they included among others: i) ensure full women's participation in the governance platforms; ii) establishing specific targets in the project's logframe; iii) full consideration for gender equity in situational analysis; iv) ensure recollection of gender disaggregated data.

During the two calls for proposals, 332 proposals were received; 9% came from groups composed exclusively by women and 46% from groups that involve more than 50% of women in implementation. The 45% which came from groups formed mostly by men were mainly in the forest and fishery sectors. Reportedly, seven capacity building workshops on a gender-sensitive approach were offered to 60 women and 54 men. In the end, 8 small grants have been awarded to women's groups; 44 projects work with a majority of women, and 2 grants are dedicated to gender mainstreaming one for the Tabasco and Chiapas area and the other for Yucatan, Campeche and Quintana Roo states. The design of the five landscapes strategies is gender-sensitive; the coordinator is a lady who also provides gender expertise to one of the grantees. As noted, PIR reporting has missed the gender and age group requirements for Outcome 3 indicators; although reporting on the number of participants is certainly limitative, the way indicators are formulated causes overlooking of data that may be significant when accompanied by more substantial information on how changes in people's attitudes are detected; i.e., in communities, the main owners of land are men and decision-making falls to the assemblies of *ejidatarios* (mostly men) while the few ejido women are widows or bought the rights to the land; during workshops, partners started to recognize the importance of the support of the ejido assembly in the development of women's activities and new proposals partly reflect these views. A few examples are made:

- participatory diagnosis conducted with women specifically consider their needs/desires, leading to proposed adaptations of technologies in bio-factories to support their work in that space;
- the deep reflection which developed in a beekeepers' cooperative to incorporate women into the productive activity (a gender expert consultant was hired to jointly identify actions for women

empowerment; ongoing processes to change the cooperative's statutes to include women's participation; a space for women participation in assemblies is established in statutes awarding ladies the right to be heard and to vote; reduction by 50% of the membership fee for women to be part of the cooperative). The appropriation of women of a productive activity such as beekeeping reduces chances that this may be abandoned due to the strong migratory movements of the male population, in Southern Mexico. Women's interest in beekeeping activities (beehives management, by-product manufacturing or selling processes) enriches the economic activity, with more people working in different links of the value chain and increasing the added value of honey.

- women's groups demonstrated creativity proposing innovative solutions to problems related to climate change; i.e. women members of the ULU UMIL BEH cooperative, who manage a jam factory in Chumpon, Quintana Roo. In 2018, they suffered heavy losses from an atypical flood. With the support of SGP, they were able to hire a "climate" insurance to protect their crops from major climatic risks. They also proposed to move towards an agroecological management of their crops.

Led by the *Mujeres Organizacion y Territorios* (MOOTS), three [Gender Awareness Workshops](#) were implemented, to identify gender and youth's needs and challenges in the small grants as well as share information and find a common understanding in terms of gender equity. Another workshop on [Gender Mainstreaming in Productive Projects](#) was implemented to provide 32 grantees' representatives (16 women and 16 men) with theoretical-methodological tools to strengthen capacities to integrate a gender perspective in projects, promoting gender equality and women empowerment. MOOTS has been awarded a grant for land restoration in Tabasco; within the same grant, an additional amount is provided to support grantees of the Tabasco and Chiapas areas to mainstream the gender perspective; a gender transversal grant has been awarded to another NGO to support grantees in the other three states.

Interviews conducted with SGP staff, members of MOOTS, the NSC gender experts and ladies who participated to the Women Leaders' Summit (organized in September 2019 by *Red de emprendedoras y empresarias de Latinoamérica y del Caribe - WeAmericas*) confirm that before OP6 the gender approach was neither integral nor systematic. The analysis undertaken by MOOTS revealed the urgency to act to reduce gender inequities; their gender network was utilized to support activities in all SGP targeted states. The NSC gender expert feels that even more could be done, aligning with the new GEF gender policy which include protocols to prevent and act against gender domestic and non-domestic violence; however, in the field there is the feeling that the gender approach should be integral but respectful of cultural and religious identities, and adapted to the different and unique contexts (i.e. among indigenous communities, the need to translate in local language the gender terminology was found) promoting a re-thinking of gender roles in agriculture but with careful attention for disruption in families and communities or for increasing women's workload. Women have been well represented in meetings with the MTR evaluator; interviews show that although the process is still incipient, their participation in projects and in organized events to share experiences produces new insights on how rural ladies appreciate themselves in productive activities.

4.3.6 Reporting

The June 2019 PIR is well drafted and informative. Reporting could be improved by ensuring full gender disaggregated data in the PRF and ensuring risk management is well considered and reported on (Risk Log; full consideration for Risks and Assumptions; Risk Management in UNDP ATLAS).

The NSC MoMs are informative but drafted more for internal use and are difficult to follow for an external reader. To ensure full understanding of the decision-making process, the elaboration of a standard format for reporting on NSC meetings is advisable.

Members of the CPT produces short reports when visiting communities/projects but even more importantly they make immediate and full use of social media which is a way to share all experiences among grantees and also produces self-esteem in participants. There is no evidence that grantees reporting

is systematic; much flexibility is allowed to the grantee for the moment but reportedly management is actively requesting the production of technical and financial reports.

4.3.7 Communications

The GEF SGP attaches great importance to knowledge management and communication. The OP5 TE noticed a weakness in terms of documentation and knowledge management; its importance has been discussed between members of the NSC and SGP staff and with the intention to ensure systematization of information and its widely distribution and accessibility, SGP OP6 Mexico hired a consultant to support the creation of a brand-new strategy and implementation of a communication plan to effectively share information and also highlight the critical role of local communities in designing and implementing local solutions to global threats. Using social media and collaborating with the UNDP CO and SGP Global communication team, the new communication and stakeholder's engagement strategy allowed to reach over 70 new communities (not part of the program network before OP6). A capacity building grant is in place to improve the capacity of the communities to communicate their activities, results and lessons. Key communication documents were rebranded, new documents and videos prepared in preparation for SGP Mexico's 25th anniversary in October. A number of instruments are utilized:

- **Blog for SGP Mexico** (<https://ppdmexico.wordpress.com/> and accessible through the website): launched in December 2018 with the purpose to actively share stories and information about SGP, it has received 7,291 views from 4,071 visitors by October 2019. A few examples of the posts: i) Reflections emerging from SGP rural ladies invited to participate to the Summit of Latin-American Women Leaders, rethinking their roles in families and productive activities ii) Sustainable forestry management activities in Quintana Roo and the process of FSC certification which guarantees not only sustainable forestry but also social and environmental benefits; iii) Improving the Milpa as an agroforestry system; iv) The innovations of a group of Mayan women in order to adapt to climate change, using agroecology, a climate change insurance for the crop and arquitectonic modifications; v) Awareness of bees' world day, importance of the consumption of local honey to conserve the rainforest, and contact information of regional agricultural cooperatives vi) The meaningful contributions of seeds guardians of the Yucatan Peninsula during the first Mexican Congress of Agroecology.
- **Twitter account**, with 317 followers, is also used to promote GEF, SGP and UNDP stories.
- **YouTube Channel** with the video: World bees' day: consume more honey to preserve the jungle (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6AeyzjN4Fzw>), with 306 views.
- **Facebook page** (444 likes); and
- **Instagram account** with 61 followers.
- **SGP website** <http://ppd.org.mx> which is being completely renewed and will be shortly launched
- In collaboration with UNDP LAC, the Project shared 2 photo stories (<https://undplac.exposure.co/get-down-to-work> and <https://undplac.exposure.co/guardianes-del-bosque>) and created a UNDP video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cNUlyGU1OPg>)
- Visibility of SGP, UNDP and GEF images/logos is ensured in project events and communication products
- **SGP 25th Anniversary**: two celebrations days are being organized for the end of October 2019 with a representative from each small grant invited together with members of the NSC and of the state governments to share experiences, present panels, participate in a fair of producers and exchange visits to different landscapes. SGP finds multiple opportunities to purchase products from the grantees.
- **Communication material** has been prepared to share SGP information with the GEF focal point, support community consultations for the design of the landscape's strategies, disseminate information about the calls for proposals; five videos (one for each landscape) are under preparation as well as case studies and a publication.

Although SGP Mexico has not yet produced the case studies envisaged as outputs in Outcome 3, good progress is being made in terms of knowledge management, sharing of experiences and capacity building; the organization of the celebrations of SGP Mexico 25th Anniversary is producing quality material which will be shortly available; the design of the landscapes/seascape' strategies is accompanied by documented lessons learnt which will inform future activities, not only in the current operational phase but probably also for OP7, in terms of communication, information and scaling up of activities.

4.4 Sustainability

The SGP landscape approach is based on the principle that global environmental benefits can be produced and maintained through community-based sustainable development projects. Key elements of sustainability are contained in the Programme's design and approach, which counts on the long-term experience of the GEF SGP and on the commitment to continue supporting results. Previous SGP experience in Mexico is used to inform small grant project design by adopting, strengthening and replicating win-win opportunities with community initiatives and clusters of initiatives in areas such as sustainable use of biodiversity, aquaculture, apiculture, sustainable land and water management, sustainable forest management and value addition to non-timber forest products, and alternative tourism. SGP OP6 Mexico has virtually achieved the GEF targets in number of hectares and number of communities supported. Activities are country-driven, fully participatory and comprehensive; however, implementation is not yet enough progressed to assess how successful activities will be and therefore how sustainable management of the land and of the coast will be. Although on paper, the situation is more than auspicious, the Terminal Evaluation will be in a better position to assess it.

4.4.1 Financial risks to sustainability

The success of the small grants activities highly relies on the capacity to mobilize funds and leverage co-financing. As following the federal and state governments' elections, new installed authorities will not honor previous co-financing commitments, current partnering of SGP with the private sector is determinant for successful implementation and sustainability. Circumstances are promising but still to be verified at EoP. Strengthening CBOs' capacities is the way to empower and make communities able to advocate on local governments and private donors to finance activities, strategically linked within the landscapes/seascape. The SGP co-financing system is effective in stimulating ownership and commitment; organizations honor commitments and some of them are even able to exceed the established co-financing ratio which in general is challenging for CBOs (i.e. the NGO COBUS providing a co-financing match of almost 1 to 10 in their project to detect invasive species in freshwaters). Community benefits may be reached by promoting circular economy activities, i.e. the Cenote project, managed by Zaaz Koolen Haa, in Yokdzonot which operates a touristic restaurant purchasing food in nearby communities: with over 40.000 tourists received by year, benefits can be relevant. Sustainability is pursued also through the promotion of alliances as the project is not only partnering with the Tourism Strategic Project managed by Co'ox Mayab but can be considered three projects in one as it groups three cooperatives managing different environmentally sustainable activities but with funds administered by only of them, thus requiring trust and cooperation.

SGP support is often offered across phases with various organizations and activities supported for a second or even a third time; as these are short-term implemented projects seeking long-term processes, when this happens results are visible as was appreciated in some projects during this MTR visit (i.e. The Aluxes cooperative in Quintana Roo or the Wotoch Aayin Crocodile project in Isla Arena). However, organizations that appear to be financially solid should no longer be supported for specific technical activities but only to strengthen alliances, market opportunities and training of trainers' activities. SGP should develop and openly share rules for the next operational phase to ensure funding goes to the most vulnerable CBOs or to strengthen the capacities of second and third level organizations to influence environmental governance and public environmental and marketing policies. An end-of-Project strategy should be developed for each single small-grant to analyze results achieved, strengths and weaknesses and identify needs for further support for initiatives that present potentialities but are not yet mature to play an advocacy role within the landscape. Given the large number of new communities involved during OP6, some CBOs may still have not the organizational strength to manage a project and a budget and advocate for additional funding.

Funds availability for OP7 appears not at risk. There is widespread recognition of the effective work conducted by the SGP in the past and the current CPT is rewarded with the trust and support of

Government officials and stakeholders. Mexico was among the countries which strongly supported SGP UCPs during the GEF General Assembly to ensure up to USD 5 million budget for OP7 projects.

4.4.2 Socio-economic risks to sustainability

Grants administered through the GEF SGP decentralized grant-making facility have increased the feeling of national ownership by civil society and therefore sustainability. Communication has been well used so far to convey the right message to the largest number of stakeholders; the SGP has reached an impressive number of new communities; however, this could disperse the efforts of consolidation and make monitoring rather complex. The support of second-level organizations and the strengthening of commercial networks are crucial; three strategic projects and six transversal projects, awarded as a grant, should ensure support to the grantees and creation/strengthening of alliances and networks. They are all about to start; therefore, assessment is premature. As grants are not islands, SGP promotes an instrumental use of alliances with stakeholders invited to know and participate in respective projects/activities (i.e. The Aluxes cooperative coordinator is also a key actor of the strategic ecotourism project led by a third level organization (a network of NGOs) and is invited to provide training in ecotourism; DUMAC is a solid organization which positively replied to the unrewarded request for support of a small and determined community of the *Ria Celestun* Biosphere Reserve which almost with no resources undertakes a valuable activity to protect the magnificent forest of mangroves, an habitat to many plant and animal species). Support provided in the Tabasco and Chiapas areas is valuable; Tabasco is almost totally dependent on oil and cocoa production hardly survives against the deforestation trend to expand cattle breeding.

With the purpose to go beyond donations (“to be more than a donor”), SGP Mexico is exploring a “**grant-maker plus**” approach which includes : i) promoting social inclusion (focused efforts to include marginalized or excluded groups such as women, youth, indigenous people); ii) sharing knowledge of local practices with a global outreach (community innovations stories for the global environment; South-South platforms to interchange community innovations); iii) creating dialogue platforms between organized civil society and Governments, based on trust and collaboration. Communities’ processes are supported offering a combination of training activities at regional level (i.e. 6 regional training, 2 sector forums, a South-South interchange with Jamaica and the participation of communities in a symposium). Meaningfully, SGP supports stakeholders in their process to influence public policies (i.e. contributed to develop a regional apiculture/beekeeping agenda, in collaboration with the Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development (SADER) and it partners with UNDP, Banamex, TNC, Heifer and Kellogg’s Foundation to coordinate investments). SGP also promotes collaboration within the community ecotourism sector under the umbrella of its dedicated strategic project. Something similar could be created for the forestry sector, knowing that when donors coordinate action, there are more chances for impact, especially if the coordinator is not one of the donors but a civil society organization as it is in the case for the apiculture agenda. Gender mainstreaming efforts are still incipient but certainly more determined than in previous SGP phases. The Terminal Evaluation should fully assess results.

Systematization of lessons learnt and knowledge management is a key element to reduce socio-economic risks for sustainability. Innovative and successful activities may materialize and often community members do not have the capacity to visualize the causality between actions and results. Sharing knowledge through brochures, printed material, and the organization of exchange events, fairs and forums is key to allow people to learn from experience and decide to scale up and/or replicate successful activities. Knowledge management is still to be fully developed but actions already in place appear effective (SGP blog and wide use of the social networks).

4.4.3 Institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability

SGP Mexico has faced political instability during its implementation; in December 2018 there were federal and state elections which not only challenged the previously committed co-financing but also required the establishment of a new dialogue; this is not an unforeseen challenge: it still requires an important

mobilization effort but may also open new opportunities. In Mexico, SGP is appreciated as a complementary partner and fully supported; therefore, funding for OP7 is unlikely to be challenged.

The main institutional challenges at present relate with the Government's decision to cut the budget of departments before supporting/subsidizing forestry activities (i.e. CONAFOR) and stop financing organizations of the civil society to instead provide direct individual support to communities through the already mentioned programmes *Sembrando Vida* and *Construyendo el Futuro*. SGP found adaptive management ways to collaborate with these programmes. If the idea is to combat corruption, demonizing civil society weakens long-term processes of associationism which are of great support to convert the landscapes/seascape' strategies into public local policies. The CPM is extremely active in promoting dialogue and cooperation and benefits from a long-term experience in the Yucatan Peninsula; his knowledge of both public and private actors is instrumentally used to mobilize efforts for alternative co-financing and new alliances; yet, many proposals received by SGP envisaged activities that in principle should be financed by the government.

Intended and unintended positive effects should not minimize the limitations that still exist in the landscapes for an effective partnership between civil society and local authorities; building capacities and awareness raising require continued support and practice at different levels. Participating CBOs and NGOs as well as local authorities confirm positive appreciation for the experience of strengthening capacities in the thematic areas and in the landscapes/seascapes. However, Government's involvement has been minimum up to present. The GEF Focal point, sitting in the Ministry of Finance, alternated three times and relations are kept with the officer in charge of SGP who remained in place. State Governments are invited to participate but unfortunately, officials have travelling budgets' limitations; therefore, virtual information should be used in the most extensive way. Previous co-financing commitments will not materialize but conversations are on-going with new authorities; with UNDP support, MoU are being signed with state governments: in Tabasco where there is a strong connection with the local government and possibly shortly happening in Yucatan where relations are built in cooperation with the UNDP Risk Management project. Interviews confirmed the interest of the Secretary of the Environment to collaborate, particularly for the agrobiodiversity sector, the Milpa and possibly the water sector (not a current SGP focus but water is anyway strictly related with tourism activities and the upcoming project to investigate the quality of water of the Yucatan "cenotes" may provide an opportunity). Various communities' MoA for their grants were signed in the Yucatan Secretary of the Environment.

4.4.4 Environmental risks to sustainability

During OP6, SGP Mexico and the UNDP Disaster Risk Management Project implemented an approach to enhance resilience through the individual and synergetic impacts of a set of adaptive practices that maintain ecosystem services, mitigate climate change, empower local communities, and strengthen local economies, while conserving biodiversity. Collaboration initiated in 2002, when hurricane Isidor destroyed 70 SGP projects; when SGP quickly made funds available for reconstruction, a vulnerability analysis component was added and Mexico pioneered the approach which has later been adopted and even improved by other SGP in other countries. With OP6, this component is further systematized with all SGP financed projects receiving technical support to implement a [disaster risk reduction strategy](#) which now includes not only climatic but also anthropic risks (i.e. implementing agricultural policies without a vision on indigenous rights may make communities less resilient). The approach allows grantees to define risk mitigation actions to guarantee long-term impacts of activities, while generating a culture of prevention and adaptation to climate change instead than a culture of reaction to emerging problems. A clear example of this approach is the experience of the women's cooperative in the community of Chumpon mentioned above in the Gender chapter; affected by an atypical flooding, they submitted a proposal that prioritized local needs to recover their hand made jam factory and protect the pitahaya and associated crops with improved resilience. For the first time, an agricultural insurance to cover 29 ha. of crops was opened against the main climatic risks (floods and droughts). Furthermore, they proposed the adoption of an

agroecological management approach for their crops, a perspective that has been proven to contribute to increased agroecosystem resilience capacity.

At landscape level the climatic risk frequently emerged in the design of the Milpa landscape but generally it is not people's primary concern and unfortunately climate change is not a priority of the current federal government. SGP is encouraged to integrate the project risk management vision with a landscape risk management vision, including anthropic risks; this is happening with the apiculture agenda where various donors, including UNDP and SGP support a dialogue with the federal government which already produced results such as i) a ban on the use of pesticides, ii) honey purchases by government, iii) revision of subsidies to ensure no medicines are delivered to stakeholders if their use may boycott the process of honey certification.

Communities' members are aware of the challenges of biodiversity loss and climate change; an increasing environmental consciousness can be appreciated during conversations and interviews. **Ecotourism** and the establishment of alternative tourism routes are supported both as profitable community businesses and for environmental protection and conservation. SGP activities transformed Southern Mexico into an **agroecology** leader, with proven methodologies, installed capacities and training centres. Strengthening the best Milpa practices supports the recognition of the Mayan Milpa within GIAHS and can be a key input for the Agroecology National Strategy, announced by SADER and FAO in May 2019; in December 2018, SGP sponsored a regional workshop with the participation of 45 farmers and a regional follow up committee was created. **Agroforestry** improved techniques are sustained for coffee and cocoa production in Northern Chiapas and Southern Tabasco. The Yucatán Peninsula **Community Sustainable Forestry Management** model is a source of inspiration for other countries; capacities are strengthened to produce/commercialize non timber forest products, including **apiculture** and FSC certified wood. The *Alianza Selva Maya* in Quintana Roo is looking for alternatives ways to ensure their production is sustainable, certified and able to reach the Mayan Riviera as well as international markets despite the termination of Government support.

SGP strengthens community organization to create community businesses with social impact: i) more than half of resources support **indigenous communities**, both for equity reasons and in recognition of the role played by traditional knowledge in environmental management; ii) SGP partners pioneered the creation of the concept of **Aquaculture with native species** which allow to repopulate Chiapas and Tabasco estuaries; iii) community systems are established to detect, control and inform about invasive species and **Sustainable Fishing** is promoted. Altogether, these strategies have the potential to increase the resilience and sustainability of agroecosystems and to adapt to constant socio-environmental changes.

5. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

The Project is **relevant** in relation to GEF SGP strategies, aligned with UNDP and national policies and plans and instrumental for CBOs and NGOs living in the area. **Progress of implementation** is rated as satisfactory and this MTR confirms the view of stakeholders that the Project is well managed and executed. The new CPT took office in June 2018, quickly acquainted with the reality on the ground, took full advantage of the expertise of the previous NC and PA by hiring them as consultants, and implemented innovations which improved project delivery and selection without a revolution that would have confused proponents. Interviews and analyzes of documents reveal that management has well guided proponents and well supported the NSC. The design of the landscapes/seascape's strategies has proceeded in parallel with grants-making; although **efficiency** is affected by delays that are mostly not a management responsibility, the completion of the landscapes strategies is overdue. If three years of implementation are generally a limited timeframe for this type of projects, an extension appears necessary in this case considering that Mexico SGP is adopting the landscape/seascape's approach for the first time, that management was completely renovated and that half grants are just recently starting, including all strategic and transversal projects. The CPM has taken an active role to find co-financing alternatives facing the reality of new federal and state authorities, following the June 2018 elections; an impressive amount of new partnerships, including private and international foundations, were found which may translate into potential commitments. The project team is encouraged to continue to explore such synergies in the coming reporting period to promote the upscaling and replication impacts of the best practices, with renovated efforts for public support.

The introduction of the COMDEKS methodology has been well received by communities as it responds to their cosmovision. Lessons learnt indicate that while the COMDEKS approach is valuable for the communities' socio-economic diagnostic, designing a strategy requires an effort, tailored to each unique context, to integrate the perception of people with more scientific social and environmental information. Overall, SGP supports the rights of communities over their natural resources and strengthen their actions against the power of tour operators (in the tourism sector) and of intermediary – the so-called *coyotes* – in the commercialization of products such as coffee, cocoa, honey and wood. Although only half of the approved grants are under implementation as the other half is in a too incipient situation for assessment, the call for proposals process already indicate positive outcomes, among others: i) different proposals have a **community business focus** (i.e. increasing the number of visitors in ecotourism centres; positioning organic honey from Calakmul in the markets of Cancun and of the Maya coastal area), thus contributing to the OP6 target of generating additional capacities for the development and administration of community cooperatives and businesses (administration, customer service, quality, benefit distribution, associativity and value chain); ii) following appropriate training, small grants include **risk management** mitigation measures, with often a 3.8% of the budget invested in resilience to climate change and/or other risks; iii) 12 proposals are presented as **regional alliances**, a sound approach to increase chances for impact in terms of land coverage (with a decreased grant budget for ha.) and communities supported. The intention is to extend and generalize this approach for OP7; iv) workshops were organized to train proponents in their understanding of the **gender approach**.

SGP Mexico has maintained a geographical focus over the years. At programme start, in a very large country such as Mexico, it was imperative to concentrate grants in a specific geographic area to reduce operational costs and facilitate regular contact with grantees and partner organizations. The Yucatan Peninsula being relatively homogeneous ecologically and culturally, with good road infrastructure and a flat topography, was an ideal location to pilot the Programme. The NSC included institutional representatives and experts from the region but also from the country's capital to provide links with national policies and decision-makers. The above measures proved important for cost-effectiveness and to enhance the likelihood of impact; more recently, the geographical focus expanded to areas of Tabasco and Chiapas and stakeholders are debating if and when further expansion should be done. There seems to be a general

agreement among stakeholders, including Government officials to support Mexico SGP for OP7; the Mexico GEF Focal Point strongly defended SGP during the GEF General Assembly in June 2018, asking to keep the maximum amount of 5 million USD for UPCs. The PIF is in the process of definition to be presented in February 2020. The continuing presence of the Programme in the same geographical area has been a matter for discussion during the years and stakeholders have mixed opinions. If OP6 was supposed to be a consolidation phase, a number of elements (some of which may be contradictory) should be considered while designing the PIF for OP7: i) landscapes strategies will not be complete until after OP6 mid-implementation, targeted states are experiencing the landscape approach for the first time, with 75% organizations receiving grants for the first time and of the 25% which were already supported previously, 10% are dealing with a new thematic; and iii) work in Chiapas and Tabasco is only incipient. Therefore, it is difficult to affirm that OP6 is fully a consolidation phase and going out of the Yucatan Peninsula would not be strategic. This MTR suggests that an expansion to different geographical areas should be gradual and consider: i) continuity of the ecosystems already targeted; ii) safety of operation: there is no point in expanding to areas which are ecologically important but where it would be impossible or too insecure for both the team and the communities to work; iii) presence of an already solid civil society tissue allowing governance and processes to effectively bring about change; iv) a mixed approach to support CBOs and second/third level organizations according to the *maturity* of the area; v) socio-economic elements, i.e. migratory fluxes which may be opportunities to strengthen actions; and vi) reliable co-financing commitments.

5.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations are tailored to improve the implementation and sustainability of the SGP as a whole and not to specific grants.

Table N.10 Summary of Recommendations

| N. | Recommendation | Responsible entity |
|------------|---|---|
| A | Outcomes level | |
| A.1 | Outcome N.1 Modification of the PRF. Adopt the revised text suggested in the PRF matrix to: clarify and update the name of the landscapes/seascape; order the numbering of indicators; correct the presence of alien species in freshwater instead than in marine waters. The revision does not affect the meaning or the targets of indicators. | CPT, NSC, UNDP RTA |
| A.2 | Outcome N.2 Design of landscapes/seascapes strategies. Although the decision to proceed with grant-making in parallel with the design of the landscapes/seascapes strategies has been supported by all stakeholders, the activity is beyond time and SGP Mexico is encouraged to ensure their finalization at least by the end of 2019, well documenting lessons learnt not only at landscape but also at regional level. | CPT, NSC, Consultants |
| A.3 | Outcome N.3 Accelerate the implementation of Strategic and Transversal Projects. Planning has been accurate; as implementation of these projects just started, delay should be recuperated and monitoring ensure that results feed the establishment and/or strengthening of multi-stakeholder policy dialogue platforms in each landscape. | CPT, NSC, grantees |
| B | Project Implementation and Adaptive Management | |
| B.1 | Consider a no-cost extension of the Project. Delay in hiring the CPM, the fact that the team is completely new and had to get fully acquainted with the SGP together with the large number of projects approved, half of which just recently awarded including all strategic and transversal projects, suggest considering an extension of the SGP of at least 6 months, and according to funds availability. Lack of an extension would compromise the capability of organizations to achieve results and of the CPT to document lessons learnt and prepare for OP7. | NSC, CPT, RTA, UNDP GEF Executive Coordinator |
| B.2 | Monitoring. Establish a structured M&E system to track progress at Programme (GEF Core Indicators and Project's targets), Landscape and small grants levels, defining indicators able to capture the richness of on-going processes beyond the GEF targets. Take a long-term view on the landscapes/seascape instead than only addressing the current small grants and find a balance between monitoring second call grants (just starting) and first call grants (already quite advanced). Given the multiple actors involved, include an effective system to track co-financing at project level (not accurately done at present). Develop a Small Grants Management and Monitoring Handbook, based on current experience balancing current flexibility allowed to organizations with the need to produce results and obtain data to feed further planning. Revise the internal database to include grant's short summaries of achievements and ensure increased accuracy in the collection and management of data. Finally, SGP is encouraged to transform the small grants risk management approach into a landscape risk management approach, assessing the way this may influence public policies through thematic clusters. | CPT with input from the NSC |
| B.3 | Renew the NSC. The NSC functions well but requires modernization by: i) respecting the rotation rule (especially for people that have long been sitting there and may be in a conflict of interest), and strengthening expertise in terms of tourism and agroecology ii) proceed to develop internal functioning rules, as planned; iii) establish mechanisms for virtual meetings to possibly support the CPT not only during project selection but also implementation. | NSC, CPT, UNDP CO |
| B.4 | Improve reporting. i) standardize the NSC's reports making them more than an internal document, adopting the new template recently finalized by SGP Global, of use also for an external reader; ii) ensure thematic areas are systematically called in the same way to facilitate communication and knowledge management; iii) ensure different versions of documents are dated; iv) ensure targets, and in particular for Outcome 3, are gender and age disaggregated. | CPT, NSC |
| B.5 | Systematize information and communication. The CPT makes extensive use of social networks and information tools to communicate, many of which are currently under development; systematize this material and have it at hand in various formats to be used with different types of stakeholders. While there is a strong capacity to communicate with civil society and the private sector, SGP should renew and accelerate the political dialogue with national authorities. The 25 th Anniversary is a key opportunity to increase the dissemination of the program at the local, regional and national levels. | CPT, CPMT |
| C | Sustainability | |
| C.1 | Assess results achieved at small-grant project level and design a Programme's exit-strategy. As landscapes/seascape's strategies are a key input for OP7, the PIF of which is under preparation, it is suggested to develop a Programme's exit strategy and start thinking about guidelines for financing OP7: i) define what is intended by consolidation phase; ii) identify and separate promising, yet not | CPT; CBC |

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| | <p>mature, initiatives for further support from long-sustained organizations/areas to be reinforced only through second or third level networks for increasing their capacity to influence environmental governance; iii) Find links (i.e. ecosystem continuity, migration fluxes) and synergies (i.e. effective possibility for governance; concrete funding opportunities) among areas/organizations supported for years and new ones to ensure an integrated support.</p> | |
| <p>C.2</p> | <p>Strengthen and systematize the multi-stakeholder policy dialogue platforms. The ability of the CPM to initiate dialogue with partners is without question; however, the federal government’s budget cuts strongly limit the capacity of officials to participate. Intensify and creatively find alternative virtual and non-virtual systems of dialogue to bring together community organizations, NGOs, and federal and state government authorities, as well as other stakeholders to share information, lessons learned and experiences while advocating for policy changes. Strong multi-stakeholder partnerships are critical to overcome financial, technical, and capacity barriers for benefitting producers as well as the global environment.</p> | |

Annex A – Terms of Reference,

Annex B – Document consulted/available for consultation

General documents

- TORs for the Mid-Term Review
- UNDP Guidance for Conducting Mit-Term Review of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects
- Marco Estratégico de Cooperación de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo en México (UNDAF), 2014-2019
- UNDP Country Programme Document for Mexico 2014-2018 (extended for one year to align with UNDAF)

Project documents

- Project Document: Sixth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Program in Mexico, with annexes
- Project Implementation Review (PIR) -2019, with annexes
- Asignacion de donativos – 2a Convocatoria
- Avance Paisaje, PP
- Paisajes y Subpaisajes para SP
- Resumen 1 Año PPD 2019
- Mapa Paisaje PPD
- Reporte Taller Arranque PPD Julio 2018, con todos los anexos
- Practicando un Modelo de Desarrollo, Reflexion sobre la experiencia del PPD del FMAM en la Peninsula de Yucatan, Mexico, Raul E. Murgìa, Carmen Ravera Mexico 2017
- Terminal Evaluation of the Fifth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Mexico (PIMS N. 4519), Final Report, Alejandro C. Imbach, June 2014
- Co-financing letters
- Estrategia para la Resiliencia del Paisaje de Café y Cacao de Chiapas y Tabasco 2020-2030, borrador de Agosto 2019 and Lecciones Aprendidas del proceso
- Estrategia del Paisaje Maderable y no maderable, borrador
- Estrategia de Paisaje Milpero, borrador
- Brief description of the composition and the members of the National Steering Committee
- Mexico Gender Action Plan
- Inclusion and Gender Awareness Workshop
- Mainstreaming gender perspective in productive projects workshop
- Gender approach recommendations
- NSC Meetings (Acta Reunion CND 1 6FO; Acta XXXVII Reunion del CND; Acta XXXVIII Reunion CND – Borradorde trabajo)
- Semblanza Consejo National Directivo
- Monitoring reports formats
- Detailed information on projects visited/discussed
- SGP Mexico Successful Case Studies
- Visits to the blog, web site

Annex C – Evaluation Questions

| Evaluative Criteria Questions | Indicators | Sources | Methodology |
|--|--|--|--|
| PROJECT STRATEGY (Relevance): Project Design: How appropriate is the strategy and project design? | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the problem addressed by the project and the underlying assumptions. Review the effect of any incorrect assumptions or changes to the context to achieving the project results as outlined in the Project Document. • Review the relevance of the project strategy and assess whether it provides the most effective route towards expected/intended results. Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated into the project design? • Review how the project addresses country priorities. Review country ownership. Was the project concept in line with the national sector development priorities and plans of the country (or of participating countries in the case of multi-country projects)? • Review decision-making processes: 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 during project design processes? • Review the extent to which relevant gender issues were raised in the project design. • If there are major areas of concern, recommend areas for improvement. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence of a clear relationship between project objectives and GEF/SGP policies and strategies • Degree of coherence between the project proposals and the strategic framework of the GEF SGP • Degree of coherence between the problems addressed and underlying assumptions • Degree of coherence between project strategy and most effective route to achieving results • Degree of coherence of the project proposals with national environmental and development priorities • Appreciation from national stakeholders with respect to adequacy of project design and implementation to national realities and existing capacities: evidence of incorporation of their perspective • Degree of involvement of stakeholders in project design and implementation • Evidence of lessons learnt incorporated in project design | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents • UNDP/GEF/SGP policies and strategies • National policies and strategies • Key project partners and stakeholders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents analyses • UNDP website • GEF SGP website • Interviews with UNDP, GEF/SGP, project staff and participating national stakeholders • Annex 9 of Guidance for Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects for further guidelines • Interviews with relevant stakeholders |
| PROJECT STRATEGY: Results Framework/Logframe | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a critical analysis of the project’s logframe indicators and targets, assess how “SMART” the midterm and end-of-project targets are (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound), and suggest specific amendments/revisions to the targets and indicators as necessary. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of coherence between project expected results and project design internal logic • Level of coherence between project expected results and individual CBOs/NGOs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents • CBOs/NGOs proposals • Results Framework • Key project stakeholders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document analysis • Key interviews |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the project’s objectives and outcomes or components clear, practical, and feasible within its time frame? • Examine if progress so far has led to, or could in the future catalyse beneficial development effects (i.e. income generation, gender equality and women’s empowerment, improved governance etc...) that should be included in the project results framework and monitored on an annual basis. • Ensure broader development and gender aspects of the project are being monitored effectively. Develop and recommend SMART ‘development’ indicators, including sex-disaggregated indicators and indicators that capture development benefits. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> proposals • Adequacy of Indicators (SMART) • Evidence of gender monitoring | | |
| PROGRESS TOWARDS RESULTS: Progress towards outcome analysis | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the logframe indicators against progress made towards the end-of-project targets using the Progress Towards Results Matrix and following the Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects; colour code progress in a “traffic light system” based on the level of progress achieved; assign a rating on progress for each outcome; make recommendations from the areas marked as “Not on target to be achieved” (red). • Compare and analyse the GEF Tracking Tool at the Baseline with the one completed right before the Midterm Review. • Identify remaining barriers to achieving the project objective in the remainder of the project. • By reviewing the aspects of the project that have already been successful, identify ways in which the project can further expand these benefits. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicators in Project Document/Results Framework • GEF Tracking Tool information • Examples of supported partnerships • Evidence that particular partnerships/linkages will be sustained • Appreciation by stakeholders • Identification of risks and assumptions • Quality of risk mitigations strategies developed and followed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents • PIR • Project team and relevant stakeholders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents analysis • Interviews with project team • Interviews with relevant stakeholders |
| PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT: Management Arrangements | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review overall effectiveness of project management as outlined in the Project Document. Have changes been made and are they effective? Are responsibilities and reporting lines clear? Is decision-making transparent and undertaken in a timely manner? Recommend areas for improvement. • Review the quality of execution of the Executing Agency/Implementing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management Arrangements • Evidence of efficiency of management procedures • Analysis of delays and respect of timeline | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents • UNDP/GEF-SGP • Project team | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document analysis • Review of files • Key interviews |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner(s) and recommend areas for improvement. Review the quality of support provided by the GEF Partner Agency (UNDP) and recommend areas for improvement. | | | |
| PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT: Work Planning | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review any delays in project start-up and implementation, identify the causes and examine if they have been resolved. Are work-planning processes results-based? If not, suggest ways to re-orientate work planning to focus on results? Examine the use of the project's results framework/ logframe as a management tool and review any changes made to it since project start. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timeliness and adequacy of work planning Evidence of efficiency of management tools | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents UNDP and Project team | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis Interviews |
| PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT: Finance and Co-finance | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the financial management of the project, with specific reference to the cost-effectiveness of interventions. Review the changes to fund allocations as a result of budget revisions and assess the appropriateness and relevance of such revisions. Does the project have the appropriate financial controls, including reporting and planning, that allow management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allow for timely flow of funds? Informed by the co-financing monitoring table to be filled out, provide commentary on cofinancing: is co-financing being used strategically to help the objectives of the project? Is the Project Team meeting with all co-financing partners regularly in order to align financing priorities and annual work plans? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability and quality of financial and progress reports Level of discrepancy between planned and utilized financial expenditures Cost in view of results achieved Cash or in-kind co-financing funds committed and effectively delivered and level of its strategic use | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents UNDP/GEF-SGP Project team | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis Review of files Key interviews |
| PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT: Project-level M&E Systems | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the monitoring tools currently being used: Do they provide the necessary information? Do they involve key partners? Are they aligned or mainstreamed with national systems? Do they use existing information? Are they efficient? Are they cost-effective? Are additional tools required? How could they be made more participatory and inclusive? Examine the financial management of the project monitoring and evaluation budget. Are sufficient resources being allocated to monitoring and evaluation? Are these resources being allocated effectively? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of results-based management Occurrence of change in project design/ implementation approach (i.e. restructuring) when needed to improve project efficiency Participatory monitoring | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents UNDP/GEF-SGP Project team | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis Review of files Key interviews |

| PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT: Stakeholders Engagement | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project management: Has the project developed and leveraged the necessary and appropriate partnerships with direct and tangential stakeholders? • Participation and country-driven processes: Do local and national government stakeholders support the objectives of the project? Do they continue to have an active role in project decision-making that supports efficient and effective project implementation? • Participation and public awareness: To what extent has stakeholder involvement and public awareness contributed to the progress towards achievement of project objectives? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appreciation from national stakeholders with respect to adequacy of project design and implementation to national realities and existing capacities • Degree of involvement of stakeholders in project design and implementation • | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents • UNDP/GEF-SGP • Project team | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document analysis • Review of files • Key interviews |
| PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT: Reporting | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess how adaptive management changes have been reported by the project management and shared with the Project Board. • Assess how well the Project Team and partners undertake and fulfil GEF reporting requirements (i.e. how have they addressed poorly-rated PIRs, if applicable?) • Assess how lessons derived from the adaptive management process have been documented, shared with key partners and internalized by partners. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of results-based management reporting (progress reporting, M&E) • Timeliness and adequacy of reporting provided | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents • UNDP/GEF-SGP • Project team | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document analysis • Review of files • Key interviews |
| PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT: Communication | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review internal project communication with stakeholders: Is communication regular and effective? Are there key stakeholders left out of communication? Are there feedback mechanisms when communication is received? Does this communication with stakeholders contribute to their awareness of project outcomes and activities and investment in the sustainability of project results? • Review external project communication: Are proper means of communication established or being established to express the project progress and intended impact to the public (is there a web presence, for example? Or did the project implement appropriate outreach and public awareness campaigns?) • For reporting purposes, write one half-page paragraph that summarizes the project's progress towards results in terms of contribution to sustainable development benefits, as well as global environmental | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of Project's communication efforts • Quantity and Quality of knowledge management material | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents • UNDP/GEF-SGP • Project team | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document analysis • Review of files • Key interviews |

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| benefits. | | | |
| SUSTAINABILITY: | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Validate whether the risks identified in the Project Document, Annual Project Review/PIRs and the ATLAS Risk Management Module are the most important and whether the risk ratings applied are appropriate and up to date. If not, explain why. <p>Financial risks to sustainability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available once the GEF assistance ends (consider potential resources can be from multiple sources, such as the public and private sectors, income generating activities, and other funding that will be adequate financial resources for sustaining project's outcomes)? <p>Socio-economic risks to sustainability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 the project benefits continue to flow? Is there sufficient public / stakeholder awareness in support of the long term objectives of the project? Are lessons learned being documented by the Project Team on a continual basis and shared/ transferred to appropriate parties who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it in the future? <p>Institutional Framework and Governance risks to sustainability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do the legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes pose risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project benefits? While assessing this parameter, also consider if the required systems/ mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer are in place. <p>Environmental risks to sustainability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any environmental risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project outcomes? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of risks and assumptions • Quality of risk mitigations strategies developed • Evidence / quality of sustainability strategy • Evidence / quality of steps taken to ensure sustainability • Level and source of future financial support and commitments following project ends • Level of recurrent costs after completion of project and funding sources for those recurrent costs if any • Degree to which project activities and results have been taken over by local counterparts or institutions/organizations • Level of financial support available to continue activities • Degree of relevance for future projects | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents and reporting • Project Case Studies • UNDP/GEF-SGP, project staff and partners • Beneficiaries | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document analysis • Interviews • Beneficiaries |

Annex D – Schedule, Itinerary and Institutions/People met: September-October 2019

(Rome timing is expressed when home-based)

| Task/Interview | Date – Time | Location | Contact |
|---|----------------------------|---|--|
| Preparation | September | Home based | |
| Presentation of Inception Report | Delivered on 19 September | Home-based | |
| Long-distance Interviews with UNDP/GEF/SGP before and after the field mission | | | |
| Diana Salvemini, SGP UCP Coordinator, GEF UNDP | 17 September | Skype | diana.salvemini@undp.org |
| Sebastien Proust, Programme Manager, National coordinator | Various times in September | Skype | Sebastien.proust@undp.org Tel +529 831380390 |
| Andrea Alejandra, Serrano, SGP Monitoring PA and Omar Omar Hernandez Carmona, SGP administrative PA | 25 September | Skype | andrea.serrano@undp.org omar.hernandez-carmona@undp.org |
| Rosanna De Luca, Associate Portfolio Manager | 27 September | Mail/Skype | rosannadl@unops.org |
| Itza Castañeda Camey, Gender FP- on the NSC | | | itza.castaneda@gmail.com |
| Edgar Gonzalez, UNDP CO, Mexico City | 17 October | Skype | edgar.gonzalez@undp.org |
| Travel to Mexico, Cancun 01st October, 2019 and start of the field visit | | | |
| Sebastien Proust, Programme Manager | Wed 02 October 8:00 | Hotel Adhara | Sebastien.proust@undp.org Tel +529 831380390 |
| Andrea Alejandra, Serrano, SGP Monitoring PA | Wed 02 October 8:00 | Hotel Adhara | andrea.serrano@undp.org |
| -Jonathan Ryan, NSC Member -Maria Eugenia Arreola, NSC Member -Nubia, representing the Minister of Environment of Quintana Roo | Wed 02 October 9-11:00 | Secretaria Medio Ambiente de Quintana Roo | djabbaka@gmail.com maria.arreola@fmcn.org |
| -Alfredo Arellano, NSC member and Minister of Environment of Quintana Roo State | Wed 02 October, 13:00 | Muyil, Chunyaxché, | alf.arellano@hotmail.com |
| Roman Caamal and staff of ALUXES Tourism Project (1st Call) visit | Wed 02 October, 14:00 | Muyil, Chunyaxché, | romankmal@gmail.com |
| Homobona Borges Dzul, Agroecology and climate change resilience project (1st Call) | Thur 03 October 9:30 | Chumpon | |
| Abraham Gonzales, Yuriria, Claudia Palafox TRL, Forestry Project (1st Call) Strategic Project Forestry (2d call). Meeting with the head of FSC in Mexico | Thur 03 October 15:00 | Noh Bec, Felipe Carrillo Puerto | Luis Alfonso Argüelles alfarguelles@gmail.com Claudia Palafox Barcenas claudia.palafoxbarcenas@gmail.com |
| Miguel Ku REPSEAM, Agroecology Project (1st Call) | Fri 04 October, 10 am | Ejido Tabasco, José Maria Morelos | repseramrural@gmail.com |
| Travel, reading/writing | Sat. 05 and Sun 06 Oct. | Merida | |
| Round trip to Villahermosa Tabasco 07 October | | | |
| Eduardo ALTER Strategic Project Cocoa 1st CFP | Mon 07 October 9:00 | Comacalco, Tabasco | empuma@hotmail.com |
| Claudia Velazquez, MOOTs, Transversal Project Gender, 1st CFP | Mon 07 October 13:00 | Comacalco, Tabasco | claudiacomunitario@gmail.com |
| Gabriel Marquez, Fish farm and hatcheries, 2 nd CFP | Mon 07 October 15:00 | Comacalco, Tabasco | gmctabasco@hotmail.com |
| Round trip to Celestun (Ria Celestun Biosphere Reserve and Isla Arena) 08 October | | | |
| Isaia DUMAC, (2 nd Call) – Proyecto simplificado | Tue 08 Oct 10:00 | Celestun, | dzinitun@gmail.com |
| Pepe de la Gala, Consultant for the design of the Coastal seascape | Tue 08 Oct | Celestun | |

| | | | |
|--|----------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Rosana, Wotoch Aayin, (1st Call) | Tue 08 Oct 13:00 | Isla Arena | Grupo Wotoch Aayin contacto@wotochaayin.com |
| James Callaghan and partners, Kaxil Kiuic, Agroforestry Project – collaboration with federal programmes (1st Call) | Wed 09 Oct. 9:00 | Kaxil Kiuic Merida | kaxilkiuic@gmail.com |
| Fernanda Cepeda (Mafer), Consultant Coordinator for the design of the 5 Landscape Strategies | Wed 09 Oct 9 :45 | SGP Office | Stardust.cepeda@gmail.com mafercepeda@hotmail.com |
| Xavier Moya Garcia, Manager of UNDP Risk Management Project | Wed 09 Oct 10 :30 | UNDP Office | Xavier Moya <xavier.moya@undp.org> |
| Participation in the regional meeting of organizations/communities of the ecotourism sector and the Ecotourism Strategic Project | Wed 09 Oct 11:00 | UNDP-SGP premises, Merida | Carolina Canto Herrera gerencia@cooxmayab.com |
| Nick Remple, Technical Advisor, UNDP-GEF | 9 October | Skype | Nick.remple@gmail.com |
| Sayda Rodríguez, Secretary of Environment of Yucatan State Government | Wed 09 Oct 15:00 | Merida | sayda.rodriguez@yucatan.gob.mx |
| Yokdzonot, Cenote project, Hector Ciau | Thur 10 Oct | Valladolid | Carolina Canto Herrera gerencia@cooxmayab.com |
| Debriefing, Writing and travel to Cancun | 11 Oct | | |
| Travel Cancun- Florence, 12-13 October | | | |

Annex E – Samples of projects visited in each landscape

Annex E-A

| LANDSCAPE: Coastal Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean | | |
|--|---|--|
| Thematic area: Biodiversity – Ecotourism | | |
| CBO: Muyil Conjunto de Aluxes S de PR de RI – ALUXES State: Quintana Roo Title: Equipamiento, remodelacion de embarcaciones y embarcadero Budget: GEF: US\$ 28,442; Co-financing cash US\$ 5,244; in-kind US\$ 3,120; external Co-financing Cash: 30,781 First Call Project. Starting Date: Nov. 2018 | | |
| Financial Delivery: 90% disbursed SGP support: third time | Description: Contribution to conservation of Sian Kaan Biosphere Reserve covering 2.158 ha. Aluxes is a civil society association some members of which created a cooperative to operate ecotourism activities. The purpose is to create a circuit with a more integral touristic offer including visit to the canals, archeology, and water floating experiences. This is the third time over 25 years of SGP in Mexico that the organization obtains a grant; in this occasion, to change power of motors' boats used for tourists along the channels circuits to reduce impact and undertake maintenance works. During the years, the cooperative experienced difficulties and members split into two cooperatives, both operating eco-touristic activities. The Project coordinator is also an actor of the Ecotourism Strategic Project: his experience in Aluxes is a basis for other people's strengthening of capacities through training. | MTR comment: this is a consolidation grant to a cooperative born thanks to SGP over 20 years ago. The cooperative is composed of members of communities living near the Biosphere Reserve who protect the area while offering touristic services. Taking full advantage of the law which allows only communities of the Sian Kaan protected area to manage these services, the activity functions as a deterrent to the entrance of Tour Operators in the area. Well managed and significant project with capacities to support and train other actors; yet, support should have probably been given only to strengthen alliances and linkages and not to change motor boats. The NSC stated that this will be the last grant to the cooperative which by now is sustainable. |
| Thematic area: Land Degradation. Alternative Tourism. | | |
| CBO: Ducks Unlimited de Mexico, A.C. - DUMAC State: Yucatan Title: Fortalecimiento y revalorizacion de Manglares de Dzinitun Budget: GEF: US\$ 8,500; Co-financing cash US\$ -; in-kind US\$ 8,914 External Co-financing cash: - External co-financing in-kind: 5,768 Second Call Project. Starting Date: Sept. 2019 | | |
| Financial Delivery: 50% disbursed SGP support: first time | Description: Establishing a medium-term plan for restauration works with community participation and starting a revalorization process of the mangroves' conservation area in Ria Celestun and of the recently formed cooperative. | Issues or MTR comment: A well supported community, which is totally committed with mangroves preservation, receiving support for the first time. DUMAC is the legal entity which supports the community but work is carried out by a determined group of people seeking support for years. They were able to protect the area and organize touristic activities. |
| Thematic area: Biodiversity – Alternative Tourism | | |
| CBO: Wotoch Aayin State: Campeche | | |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| Title: Ecoturismo entre cocodrilos y manglares Isla Arena Budget: GEF: US\$ 27,789; Co-financing cash US\$ 8,262; in-kind US\$ 19,215. External co-financing cash: 39,328; in-kind: - First Call Project. Starting Date: Nov. 2018 | | |
| Financial Delivery: 50% disbursed SGP support: Second time | Description: Contribute to biodiversity conservation of 2 ha. of mangroves forest in Arena Island, Campeche, Biosphere Reserve Ria Celustun. A project contributing to conserve mangroves areas while breeding crocodiles both for sustainable use (the group manages the nearby restaurant and touristic tours of the installations) and to release them in their habitat according to percentages agreed with the government. | Issues or MTR comment: Probably not the community with the greatest need, giving their already sustainable activity. Interesting example of shield against climate change. |

Annex E-B

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|---|--|--|
| LANDSCAPE: Agroforestry Coffee and Cocoa | | |
| Thematic area: Biodiversity; Wood and non-wood forestry products: cocoa | | |
| CBO: Alternativas de Vida Solidaria para el Desarrollo y la Paz A.C – ALTER State: Tabasco Title: Rescate Agroecologico y Comercializacion del Cultivo de Cacao en Comalcalco, Tab. Budget: GEF: US\$ 9,400; Co-financing cash US\$ 5.652; in-kind US\$ 5,453. External co-financing cash: 8,760 First Call Project Starting Date: Nov. 2018 | | |
| Financial Delivery: 50% disbursed SGP support: first time (all projects in Tabasco and Chiapas are first time support) | Description: Biodiversity conservation 100 ha. of Cocoa. 40 producers grouped within the project, mostly small producers with 2-3 ha. of production and one larger producer with about 7 ha. Project focuses on three main lines of activities: i) Sustainable management practices for organic cacao production and control of weeds; ii) Value chains for selling the product including processing whenever possible trying to refrain the power of intermediaries (“coyotes”); iii) support to their business activity. Attention paid to control cocoa weeds and to ensure cocoa plantations grow and enrich with other plants. | Issues or MTR comment: an interesting project with many small producers, mostly growing cocoa with dedication in an area which is almost 95% dedicated to the oil industry. Ladies play a good role in cocoa production. Many producers benefit from the Government Programme Construyendo el Futuro and SGP collaborate. |

Annex E-C

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| LANDSCAPE: Usumacinta Watershed | | |
| Thematic area: Land Degradation. Agroecology. | | |
| CBO: Mujeres, Organización y Territorios MOOTS AC State: Tabasco Title: Practicas Agrosilvoculturales: aprendizaje, saberes locales, biodiversidad y comunidad Budget: GEF: US\$ 50,000; Co-financing cash US\$ 21,500; in-kind US\$ 20,765. External co-financing Cash: 36,759; in-kind: 5,610 First Call Project. Starting Date: Nov. 2018 | | |
| Financial Delivery: ???% disbursed SGP support: first time | Description/State of implementation: Promote biodiversity conservation and community resilience through strengthening Comunidades de Aprendizaje Locales (CAL) through restauration with agro-silvo-cultural practices in 40 ha, 6 river km and 50 ha buffer zone at the Guatemala border. | Issues or MTR comment: Producers may resist shifting from animal breeding unless, as in this case, they are supported with an |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| | MOOT also received an additional grant (which is included in this grant) for managing the gender component in Chiapas and Tabasco. | integral approach with cocoa, wood and fruit production. MOOT has extensive gender experience and is part of a gender network allowing them to support other organizations. Agricultural activities provide the opportunity to re-think gender roles within the family or the cooperative. The approach is respectful of cultural and religious identities, suggesting a re-thinking of gender roles without imposing or disrupting and carefully avoiding an increase of women's workload. |
| Thematic area: Biodiversity. Sustainable aquaculture with native species. | | |
| CBO: OTOT-IBAM State: Tabasco Title: Proyecto de Acuacultura Sostenable con Pejelargarto en Tabasco. Budget: GEF: US\$ 5,000; Co-financing cash -; in-kind US\$ 7,540. External co-financing cash: -; in-kind - Second Call Project. Starting Date: Sept. 2019 | | |
| Financial Delivery: 70% disbursed SGP support: third time | Description: Over 30 producers grouped within the project for sustainable aquaculture. 3 laboratories were already supported in previous phases. The leading laboratory has already been certified two times for good practices and is recognized internationally. They support other producers to establish their laboratories, producing fingerlings, 20% of which are liberated. They have 7 young people of Construyendo el Futuro. The promote the Programme "Adopt a fish" with children. In addition, the leading laboratory coordinator has received a small planning grant of USD 5.000 to develop activities to influence public policies. | Issues or MTR comment: a sustainable activity which should be supported only for the work they can do in supporting other producers and to influence government to recognize the importance of native species aquaculture. As the current Mexican President is from Tabasco and know the importance of aquaculture, time may be propitious to influence public policies. |

Annex E-D

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|---|---------------------------------|--|
| LANDSCAPE: Milpa Forestry | | |
| Thematic area: Cambio Climatico- Agroecology | | |
| NGO: Red de Productores de Servicios Ambientales "Ya'ax Sot'Ot'Yook'ol Kaab – REPSERAM State: Quintana Roo Title: Mejoramiento Participativo de la Milpa como Sistema Agroforestal Budget: GEF: US\$ 18,077; Co-financing cash US\$ 14,417-; in-kind US\$ 1,613. External Co-financing Cash: 11,358; in-kind: 4,664 First Call Project. Starting Date: Nov. 2018 | | |
| Financial Delivery: 50% disbursed | State of implementation: | Issues or MTR comment: an interesting |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>SGP support: second time</p> | <p>Improve milpa productivity of 40 ha of agroforestry system through agroecology and agroforestry good practices</p> | <p>project contributing to preserve seeds and experimenting alternative productions using different agroforestry and agroecology systems. Collaboration among producers and exchanges of experience, including training of other producers.</p> |
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Annex E-F

| LANDSCAPE: Wood Forestry | | |
|--|---|--|
| Thematic area: Biodiversity – Sustainable wood forestry management | | |
| <p>CBO: Tropical Rural LatinoAmericana State: Quintana Roo Title: Certificacion FSC de Ejidos forestales, en Quintana Roo Budget: GEF: US\$ 50,000; Co-financing cash US\$ 8,295; in-kind US\$ 36,744. External co-financing cash: 22,279; in-kind: 21,263 First Call Project Starting Date: Nov. 2018</p> | | |
| <p>Financial Delivery: 20% disbursed SGP support: Second time</p> | <p>State of implementation and management appreciation: Contribution to conservation of 40,000 ha of forestry cover in the Sia Ka’an-Calakmul Biosphere Reserve through FSC certified responsible forestry management. The NGO receives SGP funds for the second time to develop capacities and support three wood producers ejidos in their certification process and creating the basic conditions for other ejidos to join. In this way, producers may be able to join the secondary industry and strengthen capacities to access the international market. There are two lines of certification, one for the sustainable management of the forest of single ejidos and one for the Supply Chain.</p> | <p>Issues or MTR comment: Following restructuring of budget/priorities in Federal Government, wood producers require support to maintain or obtain FSC certification. The ONG has a solid experience in Community Wood Forestry; it is managed by a lady and ladies are higher in number among project participants. The project is strictly linked with the Forestry Strategic Project. The socio-economic monitoring is almost completed and biodiversity monitoring under way.</p> |
| Thematic area: Biodiversity. Agroecology | | |
| <p>CBO: ULU UMIL BEH State: Quintana Roo Title: Restablecimiento de fábrica de mermeladas Y cultivos de pitahaya. Budget: GEF: US\$ 25,658; Co-financing cash US\$ 1,048; in-kind US\$ 7,865. External co-financing cash: 39,656; in-kind - First Call Project. Starting Date: Nov. 2018</p> | | |
| <p>Financial Delivery: ???% disbursed SGP support: Second time</p> | <p>State of implementation and management appreciation: Preservation and protection of the forestry landscape through restauration of 200 ha. of pitahaya cultivation of the Mayan community Chumpon.</p> | <p>Issues or MTR comment: The activity was already sustainable but last year flood in the area caused the loss of most pitahaya plants which are now being restored to allow a group of ladies to continue producing their marmalade and possibly open new markets in the Mayan Riviera.</p> |

STRATEGIC PROJECT: ACROSS LANDSCAPES

Thematic area: Multi-focal. Ecotourism - Strategic Project

CBO: RED PENINSULAR TURISMO COMUNITARIO

Title: Creación de una Red Peninsular de Turismo Comunitario

Budget: GEF: US\$ 109,000; Co-financing cash US\$ 42.500; in-kind US\$ 307,650

Starting Date: Jan 2018

Financial Delivery: 50% disbursed
SGP support: First time

Description/State of implementation: Strengthening community tourism through creation of a third level organization integrating 23 community businesses in the states of Yucatan, Quintana Roo y Campeche with a Peninsular Network focused on capacities, certification, governance and influencing public policies and trade.

Issues or MTR comment: Alignment of modalities to collect and process tourism data and information; establishing alliances and collaboration; positioning themselves on key issues such as the Mayan Train.

Annex F – Status of Grants Received/Implemented per Landscape, Summary Table as of October 2019

| Subject/Landscape | Agroforestry (Coffee and cocoa) Northern Chiapas and Southern Tabasco | Usumacinta and Grijalva rivers watershed | Coastal seascape of the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean | Timber and non-timber production forestry landscape | Milpa forest landscape |
|--------------------------------|---|--|--|--|---|
| Provinces and districts | States of Chiapas and Tabasco 5,943,534.40 ha. 117 municipalities | States of Tabasco and Campeche 2,866,540.86 ha. 31 municipalities | States of Campeche, Quintana Roo and Yucatan 5,153,876.90 ha. 34 municipalities | States of Quintana Roo, Campeche and Yucatan 5,991,031.93 ha. 35 municipalities | States Yucatan, Quintana Roo, Campeche 5.263,860.10 ha. 64 municipalities |
| Inhabitants | 3,669,94 inhabitants, 16% indigenous (various ethnic groups) 2,452 communities | 2,141,490 inhabitants | 362,036 inhabitants | 1,080,225?? inhabitants | 975,582 inhabitants Majority of indigenous people (Maya) |
| Importance of resources | Tropical Rainforest; Low-land and Mountain Forest.12 federal PA (696,000 ha.) including El Triunfo and La Sepultura, Montes Azules and el Ocote; 2,572,912 ha. of pine forest and rainforest. Important agrobiodiversity linked to traditional culture. | Delta considered second within North and Central America for its volume of water discharge. Wetlands system. Fauna and flora of the PA of Laguna de Términos and of Biosphere reserve of Centla Wetlands. High plant and fauna diversity, with threatened species (manatee, Jabiru stork; white-tailed deer, marine turtles). Alligator gar (Pejelagarto) and Morelet Crocodile. Important feeding ground for white and brown shrimps. | The result of subterranean freshwater flows and elevation of the continental platform. Large, important biodiversity and endemic plants. Coastal lagoons ecosystems; Coral reefs; Mangroves; wetlands. Breeding, feeding and resting area for migratory and resident birds, including the Mexican flamingo; two Seagull species; Marine turtles, manati. Biosphere Reserve Sian Ka'an; Los Petenes. Biosphere Reserve Ria Celestun and Ria Lagartos PA, 2 state PA in Yucatan. | Deciduous, Sub-deciduous ever green forest with high plant endemism. Parts of: Sian Ka'an Biosphere, Terminos Laguna, Biosphere Reserve de Calakmul, protected Area Balam Kaax, State protected area of Balam Ki and balum Ku. Home of the jaguars and puma. | Parts of: Sian Ka'an Biosphere, Terminos Laguna, Biosphere Reserve de Calakmul, protected Area Balam Kaax, State protected area of Balam Ki and balum Ku. Home of the jaguars and puma. |
| Main threats | Land use change to cattle ranching and extensive agriculture. Forest fire, loss of agrobiodiversity. Introduction of Robusta coffee (do not need shade from other trees). | Bush fires, pollution from oil production, overfishing, invasive species, large sediment deposits due to expansion of commercial agriculture and urban development. | Siltation, eutrophication, habitat loss (especially mangroves), invasive species, overfishing, pollution from oil and unsustainable tourism. | Commercial agriculture, timber production, hunting. Selling of communal land. Forest Fire. Migration to Cancun. | Land use change to cattle ranching. Forest fire, land acquisition by private individuals, migration to Cancun. Use of pesticide in agriculture. |
| Landscape Strategy | Advanced draft. Good capacity for the socio-economic assessment with more difficulties in defining the borders of the territory under the landscape | Advanced draft Easy definition of the landscape with challenges for the fisheries sector. | Not ready, started in April Should be ready by end of November | Final stage of preparation Great capacity for field work with interviews conducted individually. | Final stage of preparation; Optimal participation; gender component well included. Milpa in different areas well |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------------|
| | | | | | characterized. |
| N. of CBOs/NGOs grants by Thematic Area: | 7 | 15 | 20 | 22 | 29 |
| -Ecotourism | - | 2 | 10 | 2 | 3 |
| -Apiculture | - | - | - | 2 | 13 |
| -Agroec./Agrofor. | 7 | 1 | - | 6 | 11 |
| -Community Conservation | - | - | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| -Timber/Non-Timber Forestry | - | - | - | 11 | 1 |
| -Acquac./Fisheries | - | 12 | 8 | - | - |
| GEF Funding (US\$) | 248,423 | 543,867 | 536,298 | 527,953 | 662,339 |
| Co-financing | 430,247 | 1,615,643 | 1,342,848 | 1,287,321 | 1,463,568 |
| Strategic Projects by thematic area | <p>1) Alternative Tourism (Timber and non-timber production forestry landscape, Coastal seascape of the Yucatan Peninsula, Milpa forest landscape; Starting Date: October 2019 GEF Funding: 109,000;</p> <p>2) Sustainable Apiculture (Timber and non-timber production forestry landscape, Milpa forest landscape) Starting Date: August 2019; GEF Funding: 104,900</p> <p>3) Community Forestry Management (Timber and non-timber production forestry landscape); Starting Date: October 2019 GEF Funding: 110,000</p> <p>Total GEF financing: 323,900</p> <p>Total Co-financing: 575,006</p> | | | | |
| Transversal Projects | <p>6 projects</p> <p>Total GEF financing: 209,200</p> <p>Total Co-financing: 400,412</p> | | | | |
| Landscapes Strategies | <p>4 projects</p> <p>Total GEF financing: 100,968</p> <p>Total Co-financing: 66,072</p> | | | | |

Annex G – GEF Core Indicators

UNDP PIMS 5531 Mexico (GEFID 9167) FY19 / MTR GEF 7 Core Indicator Worksheet

| Core Indicator 1 | Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use | | | | (Hectares) | | |
|------------------------|---|---------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------|----|
| | Hectares (1.1+1.2) | | | | | | |
| | Expected | | | Achieved | | | |
| | | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Indicator 1.1 | Terrestrial protected areas newly created | | | | | | |
| Name of Protected Area | WDP A ID | IUCN category | Hectares | | | | |
| | | | Expected | | Achieved | | |
| | | | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE | |
| | | | (select) | | | | |
| | | (select) | | | | | |
| | | Sum | | | | | |
| Indicator 1.2 | Terrestrial protected areas under improved management effectiveness | | | | | | |
| Name of Protected Area | WDP A ID | IUCN category | Hectares | METT Score | | | |
| | | | | Baseline | | Achieved | |
| | | | | | Endorsement | MTR | TE |
| | | | | (select) | | | |
| | | (select) | | | | | |
| | | Sum | | | | | |
| Core Indicator 2 | Marine protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use | | | | (Hectares) | | |
| | Hectares (2.1+2.2) | | | | | | |
| | Expected | | | Achieved | | | |
| | | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Indicator 2.1 | Marine protected areas newly created | | | | | | |
| Name of Protected Area | WDP A ID | IUCN category | Hectares | | | | |
| | | | Expected | | Achieved | | |
| | | | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE | |
| | | | (select) | | | | |
| | | (select) | | | | | |
| | | Sum | | | | | |
| Indicator 2.2 | Marine protected areas under improved management effectiveness | | | | | | |
| Name of Protected Area | WDP A ID | IUCN category | Hectares | METT Score | | | |
| | | | | Baseline | | Achieved | |
| | | | | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE |
| | | | | (select) | | | |
| | | (select) | | | | | |
| | | Sum | | | | | |
| Core Indicator 3 | Area of land restored | | | | (Hectares) | | |
| | Hectares (3.1+3.2+3.3+3.4) | | | | | | |
| | Expected | | | Achieved | | | |
| | | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE | | |
| | | | 42,000 | 6,669 | | | |
| Indicator 3.1 | Area of degraded agricultural land restored | | | | | | |
| | | | Hectares | | | | |
| | | | Expected | | Achieved | | |
| | | | PIF | Endorsement | MTR | TE | |
| | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|--|---|--|----------------------------|-------------|----------|-------------------|
| | | | stage | | | |
| | | | | | N/A | 170 |
| Indicator 3.2 | Area of forest and forest land restored | | | | | |
| | | | Hectares | | | |
| | | | Expected | | Achieved | |
| | | | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE |
| | | | | | N/A | 6,479 |
| Indicator 3.3 | Area of natural grass and shrublands restored | | | | | |
| | | | Hectares | | | |
| | | | Expected | | Achieved | |
| | | | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE |
| | | | | | | |
| Indicator 3.4 | Area of wetlands (including estuaries, mangroves) restored | | | | | |
| | | | Hectares | | | |
| | | | Expected | | Achieved | |
| | | | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE |
| | | | | N/A | 20 | |
| Core Indicator 4 | Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas) | | | | | (Hectares) |
| | | | Hectares (4.1+4.2+4.3+4.4) | | | |
| | | | Expected | | Achieved | |
| | | | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE |
| | | | n/a | 49,940 | 83,499 | |
| Indicator 4.1 | Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity | | | | | |
| | | | Hectares | | | |
| | | | Expected | | Achieved | |
| | | | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE |
| | | One new certification by CONANP of "Area destinada voluntariamente a la conservación" in Laguna Om community, State of Quintanan Roo | | | 35,000 | |
| Indicator 4.2 | Area of landscapes that meet national or international third-party certification that incorporates biodiversity considerations | | | | | |
| Third party certification(s): | | | Hectares | | | |
| Forest Stewardship Council Certification | | | Expected | | Achieved | |
| | | | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE |
| | | | | | 48,000 | |
| Indicator 4.3 | Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems | | | | | |
| | | | Hectares | | | |
| | | | Expected | | Achieved | |
| | | | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE |
| | | Mixed activities (agroforestry, agroecology, new forest management) | | | 499 | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---------------------|----------|--|--|
| Indicator 4.4 | Area of High Conservation Value Forest (HCVF) loss avoided | | | | |
| Include documentation that justifies HCVF | Hectares | | | | |
| | Expected | | Achieved | | |
| | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE | |
| | | | | | |
| Core Indicator 5 | Area of marine habitat under improved practices to benefit biodiversity | | | (Hectares) | |
| | | | | Endorsement: 18,000; | |
| | | | | MTR: 16,071 | |
| Indicator 5.1 | Number of fisheries that meet national or international third-party certification that incorporates biodiversity considerations | | | | |
| Third party certification(s): | Number | | | | |
| | Expected | | Achieved | | |
| | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE | |
| | | | | | |
| Indicator 5.2 | Number of large marine ecosystems (LMEs) with reduced pollution and hypoxial | | | | |
| | Number | | | | |
| | Expected | | Achieved | | |
| | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE | |
| | | | | | |
| Indicator 5.3 | Amount of Marine Litter Avoided | | | | |
| | Metric Tons | | | | |
| | Expected | | Achieved | | |
| | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE | |
| | | | | | |
| Core Indicator 6 | Greenhouse gas emission mitigated | | | (Metric tons of CO₂e) | |
| | Expected metric tons of CO ₂ e (6.1+6.2) | | | | |
| | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE | |
| | Expected CO ₂ e (direct) | 212,000 metric tons | n/a | | |
| | Expected CO ₂ e (indirect) | | | | |
| Indicator 6.1 | Carbon sequestered or emissions avoided in the AFOLU sector | | | | |
| | Expected metric tons of CO ₂ e | | | | |
| | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE | |
| | Expected CO ₂ e (direct) | | | | |
| | Expected CO ₂ e (indirect) | | | | |
| | Anticipated start year of accounting | | | | |
| | Duration of accounting | | | | |
| Indicator 6.2 | Emissions avoided Outside AFOLU | | | | |
| | Expected metric tons of CO ₂ e | | | | |
| | Expected | | Achieved | | |
| | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE | |
| | Expected CO ₂ e (direct) | | | | |
| | Expected CO ₂ e (indirect) | | | | |
| | Anticipated start year of accounting | | | | |
| | Duration of accounting | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|---|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------|----------|----------------------|
| Indicator 6.3 | Energy saved | | | | | |
| | | | MJ | | | |
| | | | Expected | | Achieved | |
| | | | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Indicator 6.4 | Increase in installed renewable energy capacity per technology | | | | | |
| | | | Capacity (MW) | | | |
| | | Technology | Expected | | Achieved | |
| | | (select) | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE |
| | | (select) | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Core Indicator 7 | Number of shared water ecosystems (fresh or marine) under new or improved cooperative management | | | | | (Number) |
| Indicator 7.1 | Level of Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action Program (TDA/SAP) formulation and implementation | | | | | |
| | | Shared water ecosystem | Rating (scale 1-4) | | | |
| | | | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Indicator 7.2 | Level of Regional Legal Agreements and Regional Management Institutions to support its implementation | | | | | |
| | | Shared water ecosystem | Rating (scale 1-4) | | | |
| | | | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Indicator 7.3 | Level of National/Local reforms and active participation of Inter-Ministerial Committees | | | | | |
| | | Shared water ecosystem | Rating (scale 1-4) | | | |
| | | | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Indicator 7.4 | Level of engagement in IWLEARN through participation and delivery of key products | | | | | |
| | | Shared water ecosystem | Rating (scale 1-4) | | | |
| | | | Rating | | Rating | |
| | | | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Core Indicator 8 | Globally over-exploited marine fisheries Moved to more sustainable levels | | | | | (Metric Tons) |
| Fishery Details | | | Metric Tons | | | |
| | | | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Core Indicator 9 | Reduction, disposal/destruction, phase out, elimination and avoidance of chemicals of global concern and their waste in the environment and in processes, materials and products | | | | | (Metric Tons) |
| | | | Metric Tons (9.1+9.2+9.3) | | | |
| | | | Expected | | Achieved | |
| | | | PIF stage | PIF stage | MTR | TE |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Indicator 9.1 | Solid and liquid Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) removed or disposed (POPs type) | | | | | |
| | | | Metric Tons | | | |
| | | POPs type | Expected | | Achieved | |
| | | (select) | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE |
| | | (select) | | | | |
| | | (select) | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--|------------|---------------------|-------------|-----------|---|
| | | | | | | |
| (select) | (select) | (select) | | | | |
| (select) | (select) | (select) | | | | |
| Indicator 9.2 | Quantity of mercury reduced | | | | | |
| | | | Metric Tons | | | |
| | | | Expected | | Achieved | |
| | | | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE |
| | | | | | | |
| Indicator 9.3 | Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFC) Reduced/Phased out | | | | | |
| | | | Metric Tons | | | |
| | | | Expected | | Achieved | |
| | | | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE |
| | | | | | | |
| Indicator 9.4 | Number of countries with legislation and policy implemented to control chemicals and waste | | | | | |
| | | | Number of Countries | | | |
| | | | Expected | | Achieved | |
| | | | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE |
| | | | | | | |
| Indicator 9.5 | Number of low-chemical/non-chemical systems implemented particularly in food production, manufacturing and cities | | | | | |
| | | Technology | Number | | | |
| | | | Expected | | Achieved | |
| | | | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE |
| | | | | | | |
| Indicator 9.6 | Quantity of POPs/Mercury containing materials and products directly avoided | | | | | |
| | | | Metric Tons | | | |
| | | | Expected | | Achieved | |
| | | | PIF stage | Endorsement | PIF stage | Endorsement |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Core Indicator 10 | Reduction, avoidance of emissions of POPs to air from point and non-point sources | | | | | <i>(grams of toxic equivalent gTEQ)</i> |
| Indicator 10.1 | Number of countries with legislation and policy implemented to control emissions of POPs to air | | | | | |
| | | | Number of Countries | | | |
| | | | Expected | | Achieved | |
| | | | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE |
| | | | | | | |
| Indicator 10.2 | Number of emission control technologies/practices implemented | | | | | |
| | | | Number | | | |
| | | | Expected | | Achieved | |
| | | | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE |
| | | | | | | |
| Core Indicator 11 | Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment | | | | | <i>(Number)</i> |
| | | | Number | | | |
| | | | Expected | | Achieved | |
| | | | PIF stage | Endorsement | MTR | TE |
| | | Female | n/a | n/a | 910 | |
| | | Male | n/a | n/a | 1,185 | |
| | | Total | n/a | n/a | 2,095 | |

Annex H - Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form

Evaluator 1:

1. Must present information that is complete and fair in its assessment of strengths and weaknesses so that decisions or actions taken are well founded.
2. Must disclose the full set of evaluation findings along with information on their limitations and have this accessible to all affected by the evaluation with expressed legal rights to receive results.
3. Should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. They should provide maximum notice, minimize demands on time, and respect people's right not to engage. Evaluators must respect people's right to provide information in confidence, and must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. Evaluators are not expected to evaluate individuals, and must balance an evaluation of management functions with this general principle.
4. Sometimes uncover evidence of wrongdoing while conducting evaluations. Such cases must be reported discreetly to the appropriate investigative body. Evaluators should consult with other relevant oversight entities when there is any doubt about if and how issues should be reported.
5. Should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty in their relations with all stakeholders. In line with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, evaluators must be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender equality. They should avoid offending the dignity and self-respect of those persons with whom they come in contact in the course of the evaluation. Knowing that evaluation might negatively affect the interests of some stakeholders, evaluators should conduct the evaluation and communicate its purpose and results in a way that clearly respects the stakeholders' dignity and self-worth.
6. Are responsible for their performance and their product(s). They are responsible for the clear, accurate and fair written and/or oral presentation of study imitations, findings and recommendations.
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.

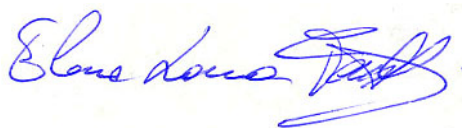
Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form¹²

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

Name of Consultant: Elena Laura Ferretti

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): _____

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



Signed in Florence, Italy on 12 April 2019

¹² www.unevaluation.org/unegcodeofconduct

Annex I: Signed UNEG Code of Conduct Agreement Form

Evaluators:

1. Must present information that is complete and fair in its assessment of strengths and weaknesses so that decisions or actions taken are well founded.
2. Must disclose the full set of evaluation findings along with information on their limitations and have this accessible to all affected by the evaluation with expressed legal rights to receive results.
3. Should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. They should provide maximum notice, minimize demands on time, and: respect people's right not to engage. Evaluators must respect people's right to provide information in confidence, and must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. Evaluators are not expected to evaluate individuals, and must balance an evaluation of management functions with this general principle.
4. Sometimes uncover evidence of wrongdoing while conducting evaluations. Such cases must be reported discreetly to the appropriate investigative body. Evaluators should consult with other relevant oversight entities when there is any doubt about if and how issues should be reported.
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6. Are responsible for their performance and their product(s). They are responsible for the clear, accurate and fair written and/ or oral presentation of study limitations, findings and recommendations.
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.

MTR Consultant Agreement Form

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

Name of Consultant: Elena Laura Ferretti

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

Signed at Florence on 01 October 2019

Elena Laura Ferretti

MTR Consultant

Annex J: Signed MTR final report clearance form

| Midterm Review Report Reviewed and Cleared By: | |
|---|-------|
| Commissioning Unit | |
| Name: | |
| Signature: | Date: |
| UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor | |
| Name: | |
| Signature: | Date: |