

Management Response: Implementation Plan for Evaluation Recommendations

General Information

Eval ID	744
Evaluation Manager	Pauline Marima
Project Evaluation Title	Performance Assessment Report of the UNEP/GEF Project "Agricultural Biodiversity Conservation and Man and Biosphere Reserves in Cuba: Bridging managed and Natural Landscapes" (GEF ID 4158)
PIMS #	
GEF ID	4158
UNEP Sub-programme	SP4 – Environmental Governance
GEF Focal Area	
Project Manager/ Task Manager	Fabien Monteils/Niklas Hagelberg
Office/Division	Ecosystems Division
Branch & Unit	Biodiversity Unit
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Total # of Recommendations as per Report	3
Implementation Plan Sent to PM/TM (Date)	27/05/2024
Implementation Plan Returned by PM/TM (Date)	28/05/2024
Implementation Plan finalized (if different from the date above)	00/00/00

Implementation Plan

No	Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation	Recommendation	Priority level	Type of Recommendation	Responsibility	Proposed Implementation time-frame	Acceptance	Reason if not Accepted or Partially Accepted	Management Action(s) to be taken
1	Although the Assessment was unable to interview targeted communities or farmers in the Reserves, project surveys suggest that local expectations were centred on improved marketing and commercialization opportunities for agricultural products. In this respect, the activities and results leading to the third project outcome provided a key incentive for farmer engagement and collaboration with the project's research and	Manage local expectations on the basis of realistic assumptions and prior situational analysis, especially when vulnerable communities are involved.	Important	Partners	Bioversity CIAT Alliance, INIFAT, CNAP	UNEP project staff should pass on the recommendation to the relevant third party in an effective or substantive manner within 12 months	Accepted		GEF biodiversity and land degradation unit will send an email to partners highlighting the recommendation.

	conservation activities. It is probable that local expectations were not met by the scale of commercialization and benefit-sharing that was reached, or by the (undocumented) livelihood and income benefits that may have been achieved. This could affect the trust that was built over the course of the project and discourage farmer collaboration with future conservation projects.								
2	Activities supporting data collection and baseline assessments were included in the project Results Framework, and fed into the design of project work plans and deliverables. As noted earlier, however, PPG funding should have provided an opportunity to conduct baseline research and feasibility studies prior to implementation, so as to gain better insight into contexts, complexities and risks associated with change processes. The ex ante knowledge that was gained would have informed the design of project implementation strategies and deliverables, in particular for the third project component.	Generate baseline knowledge at the project design or inception phases to guide implementation and measure performance.	Opportunity for improvement	Project	Biodiversity and Land Branch, Ecosystems Division	UNEP initiatives in Cuba that are ongoing or in the pipeline	Accepted		all projects in Cuba within the GEF biodiversity and land degradation portfolio will consider the recommendation during project design and inception phases.
3	Realistic timeline assessments are particularly important for the design of food transformation and biodiversity conservation initiatives that are conditioned by seasonal or biological cycles and require longer gestation periods to manifest impact. Likewise, the development of capacities to manage product supply and value chains may require technical	Implementation timelines should be based on a realistic assessment of the impacts and transformative changes that are being sought.	Important	Project	Biodiversity and Land Branch, Ecosystems Division	UNEP initiatives in Cuba that are ongoing or in the pipeline	Accepted		all projects in Cuba within the GEF biodiversity and land degradation portfolio will consider the recommendation during project design and inception phases, and implementation timelines adjusted accordingly.

	guidance and follow-up beyond the approved project period. The standard 4 to 5-year project cycle is often insufficient to consolidate results and generate the enabling conditions for impact; this project required an extension to deliver the planned outputs. This is an overarching issue that needs to be discussed between donors and recipient agencies, in order to explore options such as the gradual disengagement of technical support to transfer project functions, designing and budgeting exit strategies, or programming concurrent project phases across programme or funding cycles.								
4	The project offered an interesting case study of institutional collaboration that appears to have been effective and merits further review. The project's institutional framework was well-conceived, comprehensive and encouraged synergies between project partners and components. This included the participation of three UN agencies – UNEP, UNESCO, FAO – that used of their comparative advantages to the project's benefit. The findings could have value for future projects contemplating inter-agency collaboration.	It is recommended that a study be conducted to explore the factors that contributed to the successful inter-agency collaboration demonstrated by this project, and if feasible, can be replicated on a broader scale to support the One UN and Delivering as One corporate policies that historically have had limited success	Opportunity for improvement	Project		The study should be conducted within 12 months, if contacts and data are available.	Not Accepted	The project has ended and there is no funding for this study.	