

Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP/GEF Project
“Sustainable Capacity Building for Effective Participation in
the BCH (BCH-III), and GEF Project ID: 5688, SMA ID: 30436”
(2016-2025)



Evaluation Office of the United Nations Environment Programme
April 2026



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The AI tool ChatGPT was used to elaborate the first draft of some paragraphs based on multiple sources before reformulating and adding additional wording. The consultant takes full responsibility for its accuracy and application.

For further information on this report, please contact:

Evaluation Office of UNEP
P. O. Box 30552-00100 GPO
Nairobi Kenya
Email: unep-evaluation-director@un.org

Website: <https://www.unep.org/evaluation-office>

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(BCH III)

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The evaluation consultant hopes that the findings, conclusions and recommendations will contribute to the successful closing of the current project, formulation of any potential next phases and to the continuous improvement of similar projects in the important area of biosafety.

Evaluation team

Trond Norheim – Principal Evaluator

Evaluation Office of UNEP

Su Jin Pak – Evaluation Manager

Mercy Mwangi – Evaluation Programme Assistant

Brief consultant biography



Dr. Trond Norheim (PhD Forest Ecology) is Manager of Environment and Climate Change in Scanteam AS, Norway, with 40+ years' experience in 82 countries on all continents, including reviews and evaluations of 112 projects. His main competence is Team Leadership for design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. He worked 12 years as Senior Specialist in the Inter-American Development Bank, and has carried out assignments for the World Bank, ADB, GCF, UNEP, UNDP, FAO, NGOs and bilateral agencies. Since 2017 he led 8 evaluations for UNEP Evaluation Office and regional offices and did 3 long-term contracts for the GEF Evaluation Office.

About the Evaluation

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ABSTRACT: This report is a Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP/GEF project “Sustainable Capacity Building for Effective Participation in the Biosafety Clearinghouse” (BCH-III), implemented between 2016 and 2025. The project's goal was to provide support to eligible parties for GEF funding in order to sustain and build capacity for effective participation in the BCH in line with COP/MOP Decisions, specifically BS VI/5 paragraph 2f. The evaluation sought to assess project performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency) and determine the sustainability of its results. The evaluation had two primary purposes: accountability and learning. Data collection methods included: field observations, in-depth interviews, Focus Group Discussions and document reviews. Data analysis was based on applying triangulated data to assess performance against a reconstructed Theory of Change and its causal pathways.

With an overall performance rating of Satisfactory, the 2nd point on a six-point scale, the main findings include: i) strong strategic relevance and effective output delivery despite COVID-19 disruptions and extended implementation delays; ii) effectiveness was broadly achieved at output and outcome levels, though outcome-level monitoring was weak and country-level institutionalization varied considerably due to staff turnover and limited domestic financing; iii) enhanced sustainability prospects supported by the VLE's continued availability and the Regional Advisor network, but constrained by uneven national ownership and the absence of dedicated domestic resources. The main recommendations to UNEP are: to strengthen outcome-level monitoring in future global capacity-building projects, formalize knowledge-transfer continuity mechanisms including VLE maintenance and explicitly integrate human rights and gender frameworks into project. Implementing parties are advised to prioritize countries with demonstrated institutional commitment through performance-based financing, and to engage non-state actors through targeted entry points within national biosafety governance frameworks.

Source(s) of Funding by Country: In-kind contributions from multiple participating countries.

Source(s) of Funding by Institution Type: *(indicate all that apply)*

Foundation/NGO	No
Private Sector	No
UN Body	Yes
Multilateral Fund	Yes
Environment Fund	No

Key words (max. five words): [\[Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety \(CPB\), Biodiversity\]](#)

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List of acronyms and abbreviations

BCH	Biosafety Clearing-House
BCH-III	Biosafety Clearing-House, Phase 3
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CNA	Competent National Authority
COP	Conference of the Parties
CPB	Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
EA	Executing Agency
E&S	Environmental and Social
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FM	Financial Management
FSP	Full Size Project
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GM	Genetically Modified
GMO	Genetically Modified Organism
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach
IA	Implementing Agency
IAC	Informal Advisory Committee (of the BCH)
ICGEB	International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology
KBCH	Korea Biosafety Clearing-House
KII	Key Informant Interview
KM	Knowledge Management
LAC	Latin America & Caribbean
LDC	Least Developed Country
LMO	Living Modified Organism
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MOP	Meeting of the Parties
MTR	Mid-Term Review
MTS	Medium-Term Strategy
NAU	National Authorised Users
NFP	National Focal Point
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PIR	Project Implementation Report
PoW	Programme of Work
ProDoc	Project Document
PM	Project Manager
PMU	Project Management Unit
PSC	Project Steering Committee
RA	Regional Advisor

RS	Regional Specialist
RTOC	Reconstructed Theory of Change
SC	Steering Committee
SCBD	Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDS	Small Island Development States
SSFA	Small-Scale Funding Agreement
TAGEM	General Directorate of Agricultural Research and Policies (Rep. of Türkiye)
TE	Terminal Evaluation
TM	Task Manager
ToC	Theory of Change
ToT	Training of Trainers
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UN-LDI	UNEP-Law Division
VLE	Virtual Learning Environment

Project identification table

Table 1. Project Identification Table

GEF Project ID/SMA ID:	GEF ID 5688/ SMA IPMR ID: 30436		
Type of GEF Project	Child: N	Global Coordinating Project:	N
	If yes, provide GEF programme ID: N/A	Medium-Size Project or Full-Size Project:	Full Size Project (FSP)
UNEP Management (Division/Branch/Unit):	UNEP Ecosystems Division, Biodiversity and Land Branch (previously UNEP DEPI), GEF Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit	Executing Agency: (internally executed)	UNEP Law Division (MEA Support and Collaboration Unit) National Executing Agencies in participating countries (previously UNEP DELC)
Sources of Funding:	Countries: 42 countries ¹		Institution: 2 institutions: KBCH and Secretariat of the CBD (SCBD)
Relevant SDG(s):	SDG 2: Zero Hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. (Target 2.5)		
MTS (at approval):	MTS 2014-2017		
POW Output(s) number/reference (applicable for projects approved pre-2022)	POW Output: Governance: (ii) Number of international legal agreements or instruments advanced or developed with UNEP support to address emerging or internationally agreed environmental goals	POW Expected Accomplishment(s) number/reference	MTS 2025 Outcome POW Expected Accomplishment: Environmental Governance Sub-programme (a)
Sub-programme:	2. Environmental Governance	Programme Coordination Project (if relevant):	N/A
UNEP approval date:	16/09/2016	GEF approval date	22/06/2016
GEF Operational Programme #	GEF-6	GEF Strategic Priority	BD 3 – Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
Focal area:	Biodiversity		
Expected start date:	15/09/2016	Actual start date:	01/10/2016
Planned completion date:	15/09/2020 (original) 31/12/2024 (revised date)	Actual operational completion date:	31/03/2025
Planned project budget at approval:	GEF grant allocation: \$4,699,684		
	Expected co-financing: \$8,755,491 (all In-kind)		
	Total Planned Budget: \$13,455,175		
Actual expenditures reported:	GEF grant expenditures reported as of 30/06/2025: \$4,516,309.66		
	Actual co-financing reported as of 25/08/2025: 8,489,278		
	Total actual expenditures reported as of 30/06/2025: \$13,005,587.66		
No. of formal project revisions:	5 (no-cost extensions)	Date of last approved project revision:	12/08/2024
No. of Steering Committee meetings:	2	Date of Last Steering Committee meeting:	02/03/2021
Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (required or not required):	UNEP requirement:	Y	Mid-term Review/ Evaluation actual date: 14/05/2019-30/08/2019
	Donor requirement:	Y	
Terminal Evaluation (planned date):	30/06/2025	Terminal Evaluation actual date:	15/07-31/12/2025
Coverage - Countries:	76 countries	Coverage - Region(s):	Global
Dates of previous project phases:	BCH-I 2004-2009 BCH-II 2010-2013	Status of future project phases:	TBD

¹ Full list of the countries is available in Annex XII.

Executive Summary

Project background

1. The project “Sustainable Capacity Building for Effective Participation in the Biosafety Clearinghouse – phase 3” (BCH-III) was implemented globally in 76 eligible countries with USD 4.70 million in grant funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and approximately USD 8.76 million in planned to co-finance, all in-kind, from participating countries and partner institutions. The project was implemented between October 2016 and March 2025 by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), with the Ecosystems Division acting as the Implementing Agency (IA) and the Law Division as the Executing Agency (EA). Building on Phase I (2004-2009) and Phase II (2010–2013), the project was designed to address persistent capacity gaps that limited effective participation by developing countries in the Biosafety Clearinghouse (BCH) under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB). Its objective was to strengthen individual and institutional capacities for effective, inclusive, and sustainable participation in the BCH, thereby supporting informed decision-making on living modified organisms and contributing to biodiversity conservation.

This evaluation

2. The Terminal Evaluation (TE) assessed the project performance in terms of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency; and sought to determine expected impact and sustainability of its results, applying nine evaluation criteria and assigning a score from a six-point scale, in line with UNEP and GEF evaluation policies. The evaluation served dual purposes of accountability and learning. The evaluation applied a participatory approach, ensuring the participation of the stakeholders throughout the evaluation and a retrospective approach to assess long-term effects across successive programme phases. Data collection methods included document review, semi-structured interviews conducted during field missions and online, focus group discussions, an online stakeholder survey, and secondary data sources. Analysis was based on triangulation of qualitative and quantitative data and an assessment of performance against a reconstructed Theory of Change (RTOC), with particular attention to causal pathways from outputs to outcomes and longer-term impacts.

Key findings and performance ratings

3. The TE found that the project was **relevant** and responded effectively to long-standing and well-documented capacity gaps in biosafety information management under the CPB. The project design was well aligned with Conference of the Parties/Meeting of the Parties (COP/MOP) guidance, the strategic objectives of the GEF biodiversity focal area, and UNEP’s mandate to support countries in strengthening environmental governance through information systems and capacity development. The focus on the BCH as a central mechanism for transparency, compliance, and informed decision-making was appropriate and timely, particularly given the persistent challenges faced by developing countries and economies in transition in meeting their BCH obligations. The project also demonstrated adaptability to an evolving policy and operational context, including changes in BCH architecture and the significant disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Overall strategic relevance is rated as satisfactory.
4. In terms of **effectiveness**, the project delivered a comprehensive and coherent set of outputs at global, regional, and national levels. These included the establishment or upgrading of national BCH portals, significant increases in the number and completeness of BCH records, delivery of extensive training programmes, and provision of sustained technical assistance. The evaluation confirms that, across most

participating countries, these outputs contributed to improved technical skills, increased familiarity with BCH requirements, and enhanced ability of designated national authorities to upload, manage, and retrieve biosafety-related information. The project's performance was particularly strong in relation to output delivery, with most planned activities completed despite external constraints, however with considerable implementation delays.

5. A key strength of the project was the development of **system-level enabling mechanisms** with potential for impact beyond the project lifecycle. The Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) emerged as a central asset, offering standardized, modular, and multilingual training materials accessible to a wide range of stakeholders. The VLE substantially expanded the project's reach, reduced dependency on in-person training, and provided a platform for continuous learning that remains available after project closure. In parallel, the BCH Regional Advisors (RA) network proved to be a highly effective delivery and support mechanism. Regional Advisors played a critical role in contextualizing guidance, responding to country-specific needs, facilitating peer learning, and maintaining engagement during periods when global travel was constrained. These mechanisms collectively strengthened regional cooperation and contributed to more consistent application of BCH procedures across participating countries.
6. The project also demonstrated moderate to good performance with respect to **cross-cutting issues**. Women were well represented among trainees and beneficiaries, reflecting inclusive participation patterns, even though gender considerations were not systematically articulated in the project's original design or results framework. Knowledge management was a notable strength, with training materials, guidance documents, and tools systematically developed, updated, and disseminated. The project's reliance on digital delivery modalities enhanced accessibility and cost-effectiveness, particularly for small administrations and countries with limited public budgets.
7. Notwithstanding these achievements, the evaluation identifies several **constraints that limited the consistency and depth** of outcomes across countries. Levels of country ownership and institutionalization varied considerably, influenced by factors such as national governance arrangements for biosafety, clarity of institutional mandates, availability of dedicated staff, and domestic budgetary support. In some countries, capacity gains remained concentrated at the level of individual focal points, with limited evidence of broader institutional embedding. High staff turnover within national authorities further reduced continuity and diluted the longer-term effects of training and technical assistance in certain contexts.
8. The evaluation further finds that the ability to **demonstrate impact** in a consistent and comparable manner across countries was constrained by monitoring and reporting systems primarily oriented toward tracking activities and outputs, with limited systematic measurement of outcome-level change such as sustained BCH use, integration of BCH data into regulatory decision-making, or improvements in compliance quality over time. While qualitative evidence suggests positive contributions to biosafety governance, particularly in terms of transparency and procedural capacity, these effects were not always captured through formal indicators. Overall, effectiveness considering delivery of outputs, achievements of outcomes, and likelihood of impacts is rated as satisfactory.
9. From an **efficiency perspective**, the project made generally effective use of resources, particularly through its hybrid delivery model combining global coordination, regional support, and digital tools. However, the extended implementation period, driven by external shocks and procedural delays, reduced momentum in some activity streams and complicated coordination. While the project adapted pragmatically to these challenges,

the evaluation notes that more streamlined management arrangements and earlier adjustments to the results framework could have enhanced efficiency and clarity of focus. Therefore, overall efficiency is assessed as Moderately Unsatisfactory.

10. Overall, the project's **sustainability** prospects are assessed as moderately likely. The persistence of the VLE, the continued relevance of BCH obligations, and the skills acquired by trained personnel provide a strong foundation for sustained benefits. However, sustainability remains contingent on continued national commitment, allocation of domestic resources, and retention of trained staff. The evaluation concludes that future global biosafety capacity-building initiatives would benefit from clearer sustainability pathways differentiated by country readiness, stronger incentives for institutional ownership, and more robust outcome-oriented monitoring frameworks to capture longer-term governance effects. Overall, sustainability is rated as Moderately Likely.

Summary of responses to the key strategic questions²

11. Q1: *To what extent has the project evolved across the phases over time and to what extent did the project incorporate lessons learned from the previous phase of the project (BCH I and BCH II) and any recommendations from its own Mid Term Review into the project design/implementation?* The BCH programme **evolved progressively across phases**, from basic awareness-raising and infrastructure support in Phase I, through deeper technical capacity-building and regional cooperation in Phase II, to a stronger focus in Phase III on institutionalization, sustainability, inclusiveness, and system-level functionality. This reflected a deliberate response to recurring weaknesses identified in earlier phases, particularly related to sustainability, ownership, and integration into national biosafety systems. BCH-III explicitly incorporated lessons from BCH Phase I and Phase II by continuous learning through the VLE, strengthening institutional mandates and procedures, scaling up the RA System, and promoting regional peer learning, which were further strengthened in response to the MTR recommendations.
12. Q2: *What mechanisms were established to ensure that the skills and knowledge gained from the workshops and training were retained and transferred over time?* To support **long-term retention** and transfer of knowledge, BCH-III expanded the VLE, applied a Training of Trainers (ToT) approach, and relied on the RA system for ongoing mentoring and peer learning. These mechanisms aimed to embed BCH competencies within national systems, but their effectiveness varied depending on national ownership, staff continuity, and availability of domestic resources.
13. Q3: *What changes were made to adapt to the effects of COVID-19 and how might any changes affect the project's performance?* The project **adapted to COVID-19** by shifting from in-person workshops to virtual and hybrid formats, expanding online training and remote technical assistance, and adjusting workplans and timelines. While these measures helped sustain implementation and increased accessibility and cost-efficiency, they also limited hands-on learning and peer interaction and affected the pace and depth of some capacity-building outcomes.
14. Q4: *To what extent did the country take the installed BCH Capacity in their national biosafety measures to facilitate biosafety decision making? What long lasting effects of the project can be observed over time and what persistent or recurring challenges have hindered the sustainability across the phases?* Many countries increasingly used the installed BCH capacity to achieve long-lasting effects on national biosafety processes, particularly for information sharing, regulatory transparency, and procedural compliance under the CPB. However, the extent to which BCH data directly informed substantive biosafety decision-making varied, and was strongest where institutional mandates were clear, biosafety frameworks were functional, and trained staff remained in place. The most durable effects

² All key strategic questions can be found in Section 5 and Annex II.

of BCH-III are evident at the global and regional level, including sustained access to the VLE, improved availability and quality of BCH information, and strengthened regional networks for technical exchange. Persistent challenges—such as staff turnover, weak institutional anchoring, limited national financing, and uneven enforcement of biosafety frameworks—have continued to constrain long-term sustainability and full institutionalization at the country level.

15. Q5: *To what extent has the project performance been affected by the integration / absence of gender considerations during project implementation?* **Gender considerations** in BCH-III were reflected mainly through a participation target of 50/50, with approximately 45% female participation achieved in national workshops, indicating broadly inclusive implementation. However, the absence of systematic gender mainstreaming beyond participation meant that gender considerations had a largely neutral effect on project performance, resulting in a gender-sensitive but not gender-responsive intervention.

Table 2. Summary of project ratings

Criterion	Rating
Strategic Relevance	Satisfactory
Quality of Project Design	Satisfactory
Nature of External Context	Moderately Unfavourable
Effectiveness	Satisfactory
Financial Management	Satisfactory
Efficiency	Moderately Unsatisfactory
Monitoring and Reporting	Moderately Satisfactory
Sustainability	Moderately Likely
Factors Affecting Performance	Satisfactory
Overall Project Performance Rating	Satisfactory

Conclusions summary

16. Overall, the project performed at a **Satisfactory level**. Its main achievements include the establishment of a global digital public good for biosafety learning, expanded technical capacity for biosafety data management among public-sector actors responsible for BCH operations, strengthened national and regional cooperation, and improved access to international biosafety information.
17. The strongest performing aspects were the project's scale, inclusiveness, and blended learning approach, which combined national, regional, and global mechanisms effectively. Comparative weaknesses related to monitoring of outcomes, uneven national uptake, and management inefficiencies and institutional turnover that led to long implementation duration.

Lessons Learned

18. **Lesson 1:** A blended delivery model combining national, regional, and global platforms can substantially extend the reach and durability of capacity-building interventions.
19. **Lesson 2:** Regional advisory networks are most effective when they are institutionalized early and embedded in clear accountability and sustainability arrangements.
20. **Lesson 3:** Strong output delivery does not automatically translate into outcomes unless monitoring systems explicitly track institutional and behavioural change.
21. **Lesson 4:** Country ownership is strongest where project activities align with existing legal mandates, budgetary commitments, and national policy priorities.

22. **Lesson 5:** Gender and human rights considerations are more effective when they move beyond participation to explicit analytical monitoring frameworks. Gender balance targets can however yield meaningful and measurable gender outcomes even when they are introduced without a formal gender strategy.

Recommendations

23. **Recommendation 1: Strengthen outcome-level monitoring and reporting in global capacity-building projects.** UNEP (Implementing and Executing Divisions) should ensure that all future BCH-related or similar global capacity-building projects include a limited set of clearly defined *outcome-level indicators aligned with UNEP result definitions and means of verification* at design stage, and report progress against them systematically in Project Implementation Reports (PIRs) and terminal reporting, starting from project inception. UNEP should also require all participating countries in future BCH or similar projects to prepare *context-specific sustainability and ownership pathways* to facilitate monitoring differentiated by national readiness (e.g. legal framework, budget allocation, institutional mandate) and validate these plans no later than mid-term review.
24. **Recommendation 2: Formalize continuity of knowledge-transfer mechanisms and systems.** UNEP should maintain the VLE as a central asset for BCH capacity and e-learning. Future capacity-building should continue to be done jointly for Access & Benefit Sharing and BCH focal points. UNEP should also strengthen and control the *mandatory handover, archiving, and knowledge-transfer procedures*, including standard institutional documentation repositories and transition briefings - for all projects that undergo Project Management (PM) or Financial Management (FM) staff transitions.
25. **Recommendation 3: Strengthen engagement of non-state actors where relevant to biosafety governance.** UNEP should design future BCH-related interventions with **targeted entry points for non-state actors** (e.g. private sector, academia, civil society), including tailored outreach, incentives, and participation modalities with national biosafety mandates supported by the RA Network.
26. **Recommendation 4: Explicitly integrate human rights and gender frameworks into project design and monitoring.** UNEP should ensure that future biosafety and environmental governance projects incorporate an explicit human rights and gender analysis, including clear indicators, targets, and monitoring arrangements, building on BCH-III's positive gender participation.
27. **Recommendation 5: Use performance-based financing:** Prioritize a smaller number of countries with demonstrated commitment and require minimum % of cash co-financing in future biosafety interventions. UNEP and partners should design any future biosafety project or project phase to *prioritize countries demonstrating sustained interest and institutional commitment* and require a *minimum level of verified cash co-financing* (scaled to national capacity) as an eligibility or continuation criterion. Only the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Development States (SIDS) would be able to deliver only in-kind co-financing. UNEP should adopt a *phased participation model* in future biosafety (and other) projects, under which continued technical support and access to advanced capacity-building activities are *conditional on meeting agreed milestones*, including submission of national outputs and delivery of committed co-financing.

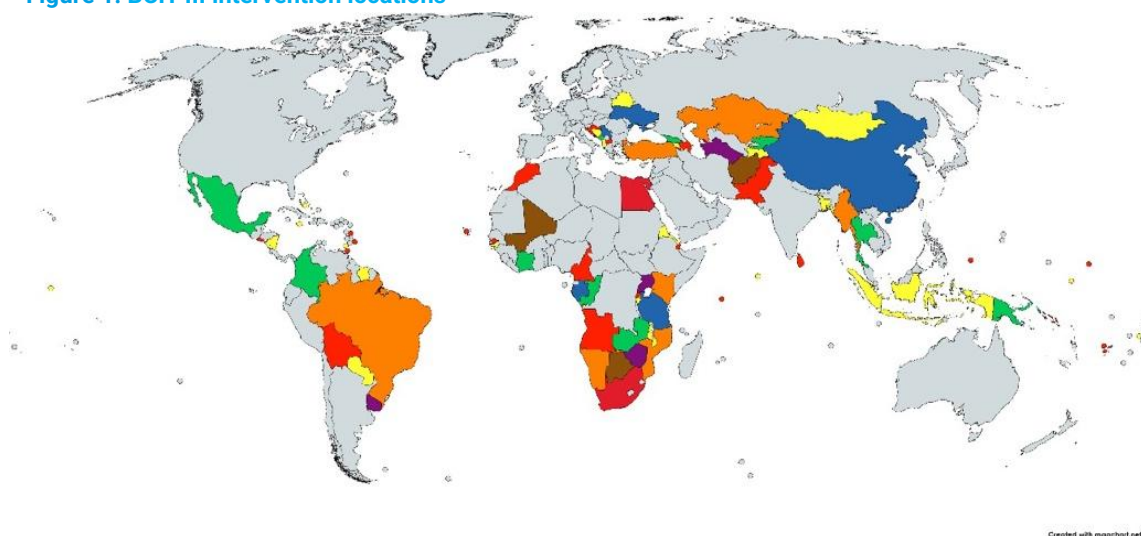
1 THE PROJECT

1.1 Context

1.1.1 Intervention context

29. The project 'Sustainable Capacity Building for Effective Participation in the Biosafety Clearinghouse, third phase (BCH-III) was implemented from 1 October 2016 to 30 March 2025 by UNEP, supporting implementation in 76 countries. The Phase III was built on the previous phases - BCH phase I (2004-2009) and BCH Phase II (2010-2013), reflecting a deliberate response to recurring weaknesses identified in BCH I and II3.
30. The project was designed to address a set of *persistent and interrelated systemic problems* that had constrained effective participation of many Parties in the BCH since the entry into force of the CPB. Despite the legal obligation under Article 20 of the Protocol to provide, update, and use biosafety information through the BCH, a large number of developing countries and countries with economies in transition continued to face low levels of compliance and engagement. These challenges stemmed from multiple factors, including limited awareness among government officials and other stakeholders of BCH requirements and potential benefits; insufficient technical expertise to manage, upload, and retrieve information; weak or incomplete national biosafety frameworks and institutional arrangements; and the absence of standardized national procedures for gathering and validating information prior to submission to the BCH. In addition, many countries experienced high turnover of trained focal points, language and translation barriers, limited interoperability between national information systems and the central BCH portal, and low political and budgetary prioritization of biosafety information management. Previous capacity-building efforts had improved infrastructure and individual skills but had not sufficiently ensured sustainability, institutionalization, or consistent use of the BCH over time. As a result, information available on the BCH was often incomplete, outdated, or uneven across countries, undermining the BCH's effectiveness as a global mechanism for transparency, informed decision-making, and safe handling and use of living modified organisms.

Figure 1. BCH-III intervention locations⁴



³ A summary of the phase I and Phase II is provided in paragraph 94.

⁴ **Africa:** Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Rwanda, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

1.1.2 Institutional context

31. The overall project goal was to provide support to eligible parties for GEF funding in order to sustain and build capacity for effective participation in the BCH in line with COP/MOP Decisions, specifically BS VI/5 paragraph 2f. This would be reached through two main objectives: (i) Effective participation to the BCH: Participating countries to set up portals that are inter-operative with the Central portal of the BCH including sub-regional or regional portals and where appropriate hosted by the CBD Secretariat in Montreal; and (ii) Stakeholders' inclusiveness: key stakeholders will be identified and involved in decision-making and interpretation. Compliance with these objectives would give safer and more effective use of modern biotechnology, with the long-term impact enhanced conservation of biodiversity. The project sought to improve sustainability by involving stakeholders in addressing what is needed on the BCH, what is needed to meet stakeholder requirements and assuring continuity following the completion of the project. The main project challenge was the COVID-19 pandemic in the middle of the implementation period.
32. The project's IA unit was UNEP's Ecosystems Division (GEF Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit, Biodiversity and Land Branch) and the project's EA unit was UNEP's Law Division, Multilateral Environmental Agreement (MEA) Support and Collaboration Unit.
33. Local implementing partners were agencies in charge of biosafety in each participating country, mostly ministries or specialised public agencies. The project was approved by the Project Review Committee on Sept 16, 2016, with Project Document (ProDoc) signed Sept 28, 2016. The project duration was 8 years and 5 months, from Oct 1, 2016, to March 30, 2025. This was the third project phase, however each phase with a separate project number. The total project budget was USD 13,455,175, including USD 4,699,684 GEF funding and USD 8,755,491 in-kind contributions. Seventy of the seventy-six BCH-III project countries (92%) participated in the first phase and none in the second phase. A Mid-term Review (MTR) of BCH-III was carried out from May 14 to Sept 14, 2019.
34. The project contributed to the UNEP Programme of Work (PoW) subprogramme "Environmental governance". The PoW indicator that the project reports to is Governance (ii): Number of international legal agreements or instruments advanced or developed with UNEP support to address emerging or internationally agreed environmental goals.

1.2 Results Framework

35. The results framework was adjusted and specified after the MTR, where the currently valid version approved in 2020 was used in the PIRs. Two main objectives: 1) Effective participation in the BCH from participating countries; and 2) Stakeholders' inclusiveness. There are four expected project outcomes focused on BCH information used in decision-making; Exchange of information and knowledge; an established BCH system; and a sustainable regional advisor system. There are several outputs under each outcome (see table 3, source PIR 25-08-2025).

Asia & the Pacific: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, Fiji, Indonesia, Kiribati, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nauru, Niue Island, Pakistan, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tuvalu. **Europe & Central Asia:** Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Tajikistan, Republic of Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Ukraine. **Latin America & the Caribbean:** Bahamas, Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Dominica, El Salvador, Grenada, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay.

Table 3. Summary of project's latest approved results framework

	Results Statement
Project objective	To provide support to eligible parties for GEF funding to build and sustain individual and institutional capacities for effective participation in the BCH in line with COP/MOP Decisions, specifically BS VI/5 para 2f. Two main objectives: 1) Effective participation in the BCH from participating countries; and 2) Stakeholders' inclusiveness.
Impact	Enhanced conservation of biological diversity (Project goal)
Intermediate states	Not mentioned in the latest approved results framework
Project outcomes	1. Enhanced access and use of BCH data, effective and inclusive participation in the BCH system 2. Strengthened national BCH systems and organizational procedures for biosafety information 3. Enhanced regional networking and knowledge sharing for effective management of the BCH 4. Strengthened and Institutionalized BCH Regional Advisory system supporting parties to effectively participate in biosafety information sharing mechanisms
Outputs	1.1 National training activities organized and delivered. 1.2: Key national Biosafety stakeholders trained in registering and finding information on the BCH 1.3: BCH capacity building and e-participation of National Focal Points (NFPs) and Competent National Authorities (CNAs) strengthened and enhanced 1.4: Interactive e-learning environments comprising courses and webinars in the 6 UN languages established 1.5: Outreach materials on success stories and lessons learnt produced and disseminated 2.1 National knowledge on the BCH improved. 2.2 Enhanced number of countries who have organized and delivered their third national workshop on their own. 2.3 National BCH training materials developed. 2.4 The number of BCH national records reported on in the BCH Central Portal increased. 2.5 The number of new BCH portals created increased. 2.6 National procedures to gather information established, and roles of CNA NFPs clearly identified. 2.7 National policies and legal frameworks strengthened. 3.1 Regional trainings organized delivered. 3.2 Regional training of trainer's workshops for NFPs and National Authorized Users (NAUs) organized and delivered. 3.3 Tailored regional training materials developed and disseminated. 3.4 Additional key stakeholders and experts identified for national implementation. 3.5 Regional stakeholders and institutions identified. 3.6 Capacity building activities' material available after national, regional and global workshops 3.7 Cooperation enhanced on BCH nodes. 4.1 Training at the national, regional, and global levels facilitated through the Regional Advisors' (RA) Network 4.2 Expertise and visibility of the RA Network enhanced via capacity building activities and UNEP certification. 4.3 Sustainability of the VLE is assured beyond project duration. 4.4 Participation of key regional and global organizations in regional and national training activities increased. 4.5 Centres of Excellence that are available to undertake biosafety capacity-building activities after the project has ended identified and approached. 4.6. Agreements governing institutional support arrangements developed and signed.

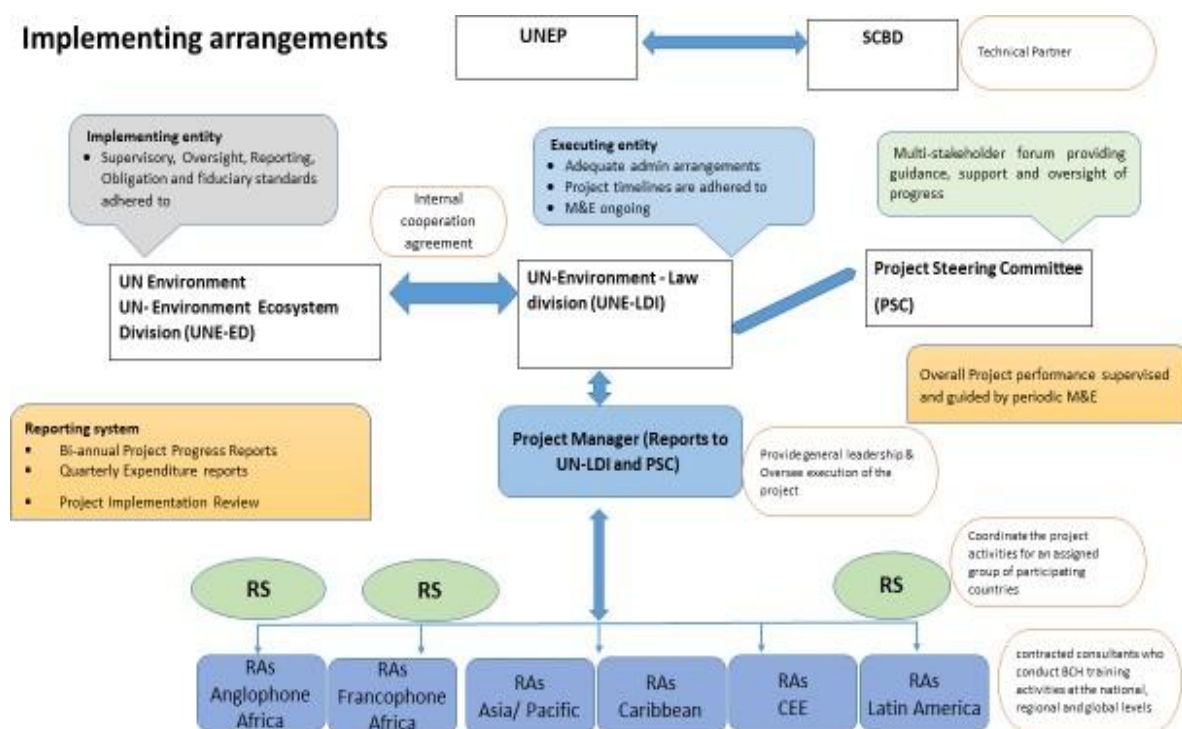
1.3 Project Implementation Structure and Partners

36. The project was internally executed by UNEP in close cooperation with the eligible parties and the Secretariat of the CBD (SCBD) with support from Regional Advisors (RA) and Regional Specialists (RS). As the IA, UNEP's Ecosystems Division (GEF Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit, Biodiversity and Land Branch) was responsible for the implementation and supervision of the project, as well as ensuring that all the GEF reporting obligations and fiduciary standards were adhered to. UNEP's Law Division (MEA Support and Collaboration Unit) served as an EA, being responsible for the day-to-

day operations of the Project to ensure that: (i) adequate administrative arrangements were in place for smooth project execution; and (ii) the project staid on schedule and project outputs were completed on time and within the budget.

37. A total of 76 countries were eligible to participate in the project through national-level partnerships. The roles of the national partner agencies were e.g., to develop national websites for BCH, organise national workshops, prepare knowledge products, interact with national stakeholders, and maintain contact with the project and regional advisors. The key national partners were typically selected based on their institutional mandates, technical capacity, and alignment with biosafety and biotechnology governance. The kinds of partner agencies vary in the participating country; however, some general groups could be defined: (i) National Competent Authorities for Biosafety - Examples: National Biosafety Authority, Kenya; and Comissão Técnica Nacional de Biossegurança, Brazil. (ii) Ministries Responsible for Environment or Biotechnology – Examples: Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales, Mexico; and National Council for Science and Technology, Uganda; (iii) National Research Institutes / Universities – Examples: Universidad Nacional de Colombia; and Instituto Paraguayo de Tecnología Agraria. (iv) National BCH Focal Points – Examples: Ministério do Meio Ambiente e Mudança do Clima, Brazil; and Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, South Africa. Note that some national partner institutions could be part of more than one of these groups.
38. According to the CEO Endorsement, a Project Steering Committee was to involve representatives from UNEP-DEPI, now part of the Ecosystems Division (Chair); Secretariat of the CBD; FAO which manages the GM (Genetically Modified) Food Platform; International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB) who had at that time projects on introduction of Living Modified Organisms (LMOs) in Africa funded by the Gates Foundation; representative of industry, both for agricultural use of LMOs and for their use in other contexts; and one or more representatives of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) active in the area. A representative of those involved in developing software and training material would also be a member of the Project Steering Committee (PSC). There is also an Informal Advisory Committee (IAC) of the BCH, established in 2008 by the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol, consisting of representatives of parties from all the UN Regions, academia, private sector, civil society, Indigenous groups and UN agencies.

Figure 2. Organigram of the project with key project stakeholders



(Source: MTR 2019)

1.4 Stakeholders

39. The key stakeholder groups are mentioned in table 4, which additional to UNEP and GEF include the public and private sectors, academia, and civil society. There has been a good gender balance in the project activities, while under-represented/marginalised groups, including those living with disabilities were not specifically prioritised, and there are no data to confirm their participation.

Table 4. Key stakeholder groups involved in the project⁵

Stakeholders	Explain the power they hold over the project results/ implementation and the level of interest ¹	Did they participate in project design, and how	Stakeholder group ⁶	Roles & responsibilities in project implementation	Changes in behaviour expected through the project implementation
International					
UNEP Ecosystems Division- GEF Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit, Biodiversity and Land Branch (previously UNEP DEPI)	High power and high interest. UNEP was the GEF IA through its Ecosystems Division.	Yes, as GEF agency in charge of the project design	IG	Monitoring and supervision. Reporting to GEF.	No
UNEP Law Division- (MEA Support and Collaboration Unit)	High power and high interest. UNEP Law Division was the project EA led by a Project Manager.	Yes, as GEF agency in charge of the project design	IG	In charge of project day-to-day implementation and monitoring of activities in the project countries.	No

⁵ The column "Stakeholder group" refers to the nine major groups recognized by Agenda 21: *BI* = Business and Industries; *NG* = Non-Governmental Organizations (including Civil Society Organizations - CSO); and *ST* = Scientific & Technological Community. Additionally, the evaluator included Governmental organizations (*GO*) and Inter-governmental organizations (*IG*).

⁶ This is the evaluator's own analysis based on triangulation of sources, including stakeholder interviews online and during missions. There are however huge differences between the participating countries

Stakeholders	Explain the power they hold over the project results/ implementation and the level of interest ¹	Did they participate in project design, and how	Stakeholder group ⁶	Roles & responsibilities in project implementation	Changes in behaviour expected through the project implementation
GEF	High power and high interest. The GEF co-finances the project with US\$ 4,699,684 (34.9%), not including GEF agency fee.	Yes, through review of FSP Request Doc., progress and evaluation reports	IG	Review and acceptance of Annual Progress Reports (PIR), MTR and TE.	There could be changes based on GEF Council guidance or programmatic changes in project implementation guidance from the GEF
National					
76 national focal points ⁷	High power in each country and variable interest. Key government stakeholders for project implementation. Maintained relation with other national stakeholders involved.	Yes, some were involved in discussions during design	GO	These agencies implemented project activities on national level and received project advisory/support.	Yes. Expected stronger engagement and interest on the BCH.
Other public sector: environment and bio-safety agencies, regulatory agencies, boarder control, etc.	Medium power and variable interest. Have less power over the project implementation than the ministries where NFPs are situated. Many of public agencies have however high interest, but variable from country to country..	No	GO	Participated in national workshops and were beneficiaries of project advisory/development	Expected that workshop participants would use more the BCH website and regional advisory
Private sector	Low power and variable interest. Private sector has been little involved but has interest in some countries.	No	BI	Participated in national workshops and some were beneficiaries of project advisory/development	Expected that workshop participants would use more the BCH website and regional advisory
Academia/ research	Variable power and Medium to high interest. Research institutes involved with GMO/ LMO have high interest.	No	ST	Participated in national workshops and some were beneficiaries of project advisory/development	Expected that workshop participants would use more the BCH website and regional advisory
NGO/CSO	Mostly low power and variable interest. A few NGOs involved with NGO/GMO and biosafety have high interest.	No	NG	Participated in national workshops and some were beneficiaries of project advisory/development	Expected that workshop participants would use more the BCH website and regional advisory
Indirect beneficiaries	Low. The project is focused on central government with some other institutions involved, with low emphasis on local stakeholders	No	NG	Some individual persons signed up on the platform or participated in BCH national workshops.	Expected improved awareness and knowledge of biosafety

1.5 Changes in Design during Implementation

40. The project was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, with variable impact on executing progress in the different countries. A first extension was given in 2020 that also considered institutional turnovers and revised the project workplans. Changes on the design and Results Framework were at the same time included based on recommendations in the MTR 2019. Three additional project extensions were given, in 2021, 2022 and 2024.

Table 5. Approved changes to the Project Document

Version	Type	Approved by UNEP	Main changes introduced in this revision
Original	ProDoc and budget	2016-09-16	N/A
Amendment 1	Extension	2020-02-10	First extension to make room for delays in the signing of Small-Scale Funding Agreements (SSFAs) and execution of sub projects due to COVID restriction and institutional turnovers. Results framework was revised.
Amendment 2	Extension	2021-07-06	Revised workplan to respond the new Theory of Change (ToC) per the recommendations of the MTR

⁷ Most of them are responsible at Ministries as national focal point for biosafety, the focal point for Cartagena Protocol, etc.

Version	Type	Approved by UNEP	Main changes introduced in this revision
Amendment 3	Extension	2022-11-01	Revised workplan to respond the new Theory of Change per the recommendations of the MTR
Amendment 4	Extension	2024-05-23	Last extension, giving more time to finalise the workplan and closing of the project.

1.6 Project Financing

41. This FSP project was financed through a GEF grant of USD 4,699,684. Only 61 countries presented co-financing letters, as well as UNEP DELC, SCBD and Korea Biosafety Clearinghouse (KBCH) to the total value of USD 8,755,491 (all in-kind). Until the moment of the TE, out of 61 countries, only 14 countries had provided co-financing report through Anubis. Table 6 shows the summary of actual co-financing, with a total amount of only USD 1,929,556. Annex XII provides a complete co-financing table.

Table 6. Confirmed sources of Co-financing by type

Co-financing (Type/Source)	UNEP own Financing (US\$1,000)		Government (US\$1,000)		Other* (US\$1,000)		Total (US\$1,000)		Total Disbursed (US\$1,000)
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	
– Grants		0							
– Loans	0	0							
– Credits	0	0							
– Equity investments	0	0							
– In-kind support	585.3	324.6	7,073.5	626.9	1,096.6	978.0	8,755.5	1,929.6	1,929.6
– Other (*)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Totals	585.3	324.6	7,073.5	626.9	1,096.6	978.0	8,755.5	1,929.6	1,929.6

(Source: UNEP FMO)

* This refers to contributions mobilized for the project from other multilateral agencies, bilateral development cooperation agencies, NGOs, the private sector and beneficiaries.

2 EVALUATION METHODS

2.1 UNEP's Evaluation Approach

42. In line with UNEP Evaluation Policy and the UNEP Programme and Project Management Manual, the evaluation was undertaken at operational completion of the project to assess performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency) and determine outcomes and impacts (actual and potential) stemming from the project, including their sustainability. The evaluation had two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned.
43. The main target audiences for the evaluation findings are UNEP, the parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the signatories of the CPB, especially the national agencies that have participated in the project, for exchange of experiences and lessons learned (See table 4) for details of the different stakeholder groups including the main project partners.
44. In line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy, the UNEP Programme Manual and the Guidelines for GEF Agencies in Conducting TEs, the evaluation has been carried out using a set of 9 commonly applied evaluation criteria which include: (1) Strategic Relevance , (2) Quality of Project Design, (3) Nature of External Context, (4) Effectiveness (incl. availability of outputs; achievement of outcomes and likelihood of impact), (5) Financial Management, (6) Efficiency, (7) Monitoring and Reporting, (8) Sustainability, and (9) Factors Affecting Project Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues (see Annex II Evaluation Framework for more details on each evaluation criterion).
45. Most evaluation criteria are rated on a six-point scale as follows: Highly Satisfactory (HS); Satisfactory (S); Moderately Satisfactory (MS); Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU); Unsatisfactory (U); Highly Unsatisfactory (HU). Sustainability and Likelihood of Impact are rated from Highly Likely (HL) down to Highly Unlikely (HU) and Nature of External Context is rated from Highly Favourable (HF) to Highly Unfavourable (HU). The ratings against each criterion are 'weighted' to derive the Overall Project Performance Rating. The greatest weight is placed on the achievement of outcomes, followed by dimensions of sustainability.
46. The UNEP Evaluation Office has developed detailed descriptions of the main elements required to be demonstrated at each level (i.e. Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory) for each evaluation criterion. The evaluator has considered all the evidence gathered during the evaluation in relation to this matrix to generate evaluation criteria performance ratings.
47. In addition to the 9 evaluation criteria outlined above, the evaluation addresses a number of strategic questions that were formulated in the Terms of Reference. These questions were posed by the UNEP Evaluation Office in conjunction with members of the Project Team. Since the project is funded by the GEF, findings from the evaluation are to be uploaded in the GEF Portal. To support this process, evaluation findings related to the 5 topics of interest to the GEF are summarised in Annex IX. The intended action/results on the 5 topics were described in the GEF CEO Endorsement and Approval documents. The 5 topics are: i) performance against GEF's Core Indicator Targets; ii) engagement of stakeholders; iii) gender-responsive measures and gender result areas; iv) implementation of management measures taken against the Safeguards Plan; and v) challenges and outcomes regarding the project's completed Knowledge Management (KM) Approach.

48. This evaluation adopted a participatory approach, consulting with project team members, partners and beneficiaries at several stages throughout the process. Central to the evaluation was the analysis (and reconstruction) of the project's ToC. Since it had been done during the MTR, the changes during the TE were only minor. Consultations were held during the evaluation inception phase to arrive at a nuanced understanding of how the project intended to drive change and what contributing conditions ('assumptions' and 'drivers') would need to be in place to support such change. The RTOC, supported by a graphic representation and narrative discussion of causal pathways, was discussed with respondents during the data collection phase. The RTOC presented in this report was used throughout the evaluation process. The TE applied a retrospective approach to review progression during the three BCH project phases.

2.2 Data Collection

2.2.1 Primary data sources

49. Primary data were collected from: (i) Stakeholder interviews, Key Informant Interviews (KIs), and focus group discussions (FGD) face-to-face and online; (ii) Observations and meetings during country missions; (iii) Online survey of project participants; and (iv) Sessions to exchange views on the preliminary findings and proposed conclusions, which included people not previously interviewed. Missions were carried out to the Republic of Türkiye, Mongolia and South Africa, while a mission to Latin America & Caribbean (LAC) was replaced by several online interviews due to the availability challenges in selected countries. 4% of the project countries and 6.8% of the 44 countries that had carried out national activities were visited, with interviews of 51 persons (28F, 23M). The main criterion used to select stakeholders was to be able to speak with the people best informed about the project, but this was challenging (see 2.4). Mission countries were selected based on e.g., region, coverage in the MTR or former TEs of previous project phases, existence of a national BCH portal, language, the BCH team advice, and main stakeholders' availability. Online interviews were carried out with a total of 29 persons in 9 countries (58.6% women), including 17 from the project team (9 female, 8 male), 8 beneficiaries (5 female, 3 male), and 4 from the project partner SCBD (3 female, 1 male).
50. The TE considered historical progression across phases since 92% of BCH-III countries participated in phase I. The evaluation however covered the last phase and only referenced findings from evaluations of earlier BCH phases based on the available secondary data and retrospective analysis by interviews. Information about outcomes of the previous phases BCH-I (GEF ID 2128, years 2004-2018) and BCH-II (GEF ID 2581, years 2005-2018) was mainly extracted from the project evaluation reports, including data on participating countries, stakeholders and gender participation, and overall results.

Table 7. Evaluation respondents and field visits

Stakeholders - Individuals			A. Total number involved (M/F)	B. Number contacted (M/F)	Sample size (% B/A)	C. Total number responded Total (M/F)	Response rate (% C/B)
Project team	Project Team (with mgmt.. responsibilities)	Implementing agency	1F/2M	1F/2M	100%	1F/2M	100%
		Executing agency	8F/6M	8F/6M	100%	8F/6M	100%
Beneficiaries	Direct Beneficiaries: (e.g. duty bearers, gatekeepers, training participants, etc.)		3,316	Mission: 51 (28 F, 23M). Survey: 2385 Online interviews: 13 (5F, 8M)	Mission: 1.5% Survey: 71.9% Online interview: 0.4%	Mission: 51 (28F, 23M) Survey: 161 (74F, 86M, 1 n/a) Online: 8 (5F/3M)	100% 6.8% Online: 61.5%
Stakeholders - Entities			A. Total number involved	B. Number contacted	Sample size (% B/A)	C. Total number responded	Response rate (% C/B)
Partners	Project implementing/ executing partners (receiving project funds)		76 (44 on national level) ⁸	Interviews: 11 Survey: 76	10.5% 100%	Interviews: 8 Survey: 41	72.7% 54%
	Project collaborating/ contributing partners not receiving project fund		2	1 partner (3 F, 1M)	50	1	100
Field Visits		Region / country / locality	A.Total number of countries	A. Number of countries visited	Sample Size (%B/A)		
		Africa	27	1	3.7		
		Asia and the Pacific	19	1	5.3		
		Europe & West Asia	14	1	7.1		
		Latin America & Caribbean ⁹	16	0	0		

51. The online survey was managed by the evaluator with use of the tool SurveyMonkey, where the people invited were the people that had signed up as users of the BCH website. Out of 2,385 e-mails that went through, only 878 (36.8%) were opened. This is in fact a quite high percentage considering that the project was ongoing for 8.5 years and most of the users signed up many years ago¹⁰. On the other hand, even though the survey was only sent to people in the countries covered by BCH-III, we do not know how many of them actually participated in the project¹¹. The survey invitation went out to 36.8% in Africa, 23.1% in Europe & West Asia, 20.5% in LAC, and 19.1% in Asia & the Pacific. Replies came from people in 41 project countries (54%), plus 2 that are not project countries, but the people probably lived in project countries when they signed up.

⁸ Of the 76 participating countries only 44 had national level activities such as workshops.

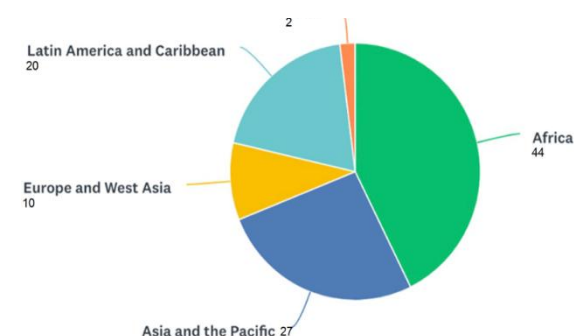
⁹ Difficulties in agreeing on mission in all contacted countries in this region (replaced by online interviews as agreed with the evaluation office and project team)

¹⁰ According to a large UK "Consumer Email Tracking Study," 62% of people said they had abandoned one or more email addresses" (i.e., left unused but still technically exist) <https://associationsnow.com/2017/03/people-arent-opening-marketing-emails/>. The source "Email uplers" claim that on average email list decays by 25% every year. It means that an email list can be mostly inactive but still have a large segment that remains technically valid <https://email.uplers.com/infographics/re-engagement-emails/>. If we assume that on average the BCH site users signed up five years ago, only 23.75% of them would still use the same email, so in this case the % of used emails is higher than the average.

¹¹ Some, but not all, countries provided complete information on the participating institutions.

52. A total of 161 people responded to the survey, or 18.3% of opened e-mails, which is considered satisfactory given the long time that has passed since most project activities were implemented. These were 42.7% from the African region, 26.2% Asia & the Pacific, 19.4% LAC, 9.7% Europe & West Asia, 1.9% others (people that lived in one of the regions when signing up and later moved). 60.2% were from the public sector, 26.1% Academia, 6.5% int. organisations, 5.1% NGO/CSO, 2.2% private sector.

Figure 3 Survey participation by region



(Source: TE survey)

2.2.2 Strategies for inclusivity

53. The evaluator encouraged the national partners to ensure gender balance and inclusion of minorities and marginalized groups in the mission interviews. The project did however not have any field activities, and most stakeholders were from the central government. A positive aspect is that the private sector, academia/research and NGOs that partly cover minorities (e.g., in Mongolia) were consulted. For online interviews the main focus was on achieving participation of the people that had been involved in the project activities including KIIs, independent of other criteria. In practice, gender balance was never a problem, with 55% of the people interviewed being women, for instance in South Africa (71%). For the survey, the neutral approach was used to maximize the response, so it was not feasible to actively encourage gender-balanced participation, but the results show 46% of the people surveyed were women. The register of gender in the online survey made it possible to analyse any potential gender bias in opinions.

2.2.3 Secondary data sources

54. Secondary data constituted a core pillar of the evidence base for the TE and were systematically reviewed to support triangulation with primary data sources. The documentary review focused on both corporate-level reporting and project-specific technical outputs, covering the full implementation period. Key categories of secondary data reviewed included:

55. **Mandatory project reporting and evaluation documents**, notably ProDoc and its annexes, the GEF CEO Endorsement and approval documentation, annual and final PIRs, financial delivery and expenditure reports, and the MTR report (2019). These documents provided the authoritative basis for assessing planned versus actual results, revisions to the results framework, progress against targets, fiduciary compliance, and management responses to recommendations. The revised results framework adopted after the MTR and reported against in subsequent PIRs was used as the primary reference point for the Project Management Unit (PMU) reporting on effectiveness.

56. **Project governance and management documentation**, including available PSC meeting minutes, internal progress summaries, implementation schedules, and correspondence archived in UNEP's internal document management systems (including Anubis). These sources were used to understand decision-making processes, implementation delays, extensions, and institutional transitions affecting project performance.

57. **Technical project outputs and knowledge products**, including training materials from national, regional, and global workshops; guidance notes and manuals related to BCH participation; outreach and communication products; and documented success stories

and lessons learned. Particular attention was given to materials made available through the VLE, as these constituted a central delivery mechanism and a key sustainability element of the project.

58. **Online platforms and external repositories**, including the BCH central portal, selected national BCH portals, and relevant pages of the GEF, SCBD, KBCH and national partners' websites. These sources were used to verify the existence, functionality, and updating of BCH records, portals, and learning resources, and to corroborate reported outputs related to information sharing and accessibility.
59. **Country-level and activity-specific documentation**, including national workshop reports, mission reports, regional training summaries, and selected national deliverables submitted to UNEP. While the availability and completeness of such documentation varied significantly across countries, these materials provided important contextual evidence for triangulating stakeholder accounts and survey responses. The secondary data sources consulted are listed in Annex IV.

2.3 Data Analysis

60. The quantitative and qualitative written information available was combined with interviews and discussions with key stakeholders, to combine the "What" from the written sources with the information and opinions on "Why and how". The Evaluation Framework (Annex I) represents a long list of questions where the most relevant questions for each stakeholder were selected before each interview. Triangulation of information sources (both quantitative and qualitative) ensured trust in the findings. When there was coincidence between the information achieved from written sources, interviews, the survey and sometimes the Internet, the information was considered as reliable. In case of not clear coincidence between the sources, the evaluator ensured additional information, such as written documentation and including the same question to a major number of stakeholders. On the other hand, different opinions on qualitative information were expected and is part of the analysis. The information achieved with a combination of sources were presented with focus on findings that could lead to conclusions and recommendations.
61. The assessment of project effectiveness compared the actual progress against each target on outcome and output level, then calculating the percentage progress at the end of the project for each target, as well as the average for each component and for the whole project. Key sources for assessing effectiveness were the updated targets after the MTR defined in the results framework and the results achieved according to the Final Project Report dated May 2025. A contribution analysis was also done based on the ToC (see 4.4.3). An Efficiency Index was calculated based on the ratio of outputs to effort (or % of targets achieved to % of expenditures) during the implementation time. The analysis of effectiveness and efficiency also considered interviews and the online survey as sources for the analysis. The results from the survey were analysed to ensure that all respondents had understood the question, and sometimes they were adjusted.
62. Thematic analysis of topics such as environmental country ownership, safeguards, and gender participation was mainstreamed in the report and summarised in chapter 4.9. The TE analysis also included rating of the quality of project design (table 13), FM (table 17) and the project evaluation findings (table 19).

2.4 Limitations and Mitigation Strategies

63. The main limitation for the analysis was that the project had been implemented for 8.5 years, approximately the double of what was originally planned. Most of the activities were however carried out during the first half of the implementation period. Due to high turnover in many of the national partner agencies and relatively low project budgets for each country, the evaluator had a challenge of finding interviewees with good knowledge of the project, and in many countries, the current staff had no recollection of the project at all. This issue affected both the missions and the online interviews, despite advice from the PMU about which countries to contact. It was most challenging in the LAC region, where finally the mission was cancelled and replaced with online interviews. In the online survey, to maximise the response rate with weak memories, it was partly mitigated by making the survey short and to send several reminder messages to all that had not responded. Since the survey was responded by 161 persons situated in all the regions, it was a very valuable tool to mitigate some of the limitations from the stakeholder interviews and documents.
64. Another limitation was the representativeness of the sample, considering the many countries and organisations to be covered within a limited budget. This was to large extent mitigated by the online survey, which made it possible to reach out to all the 76 countries and cover a much higher number of stakeholders than in the interviews. These issues are described further under 4.6. Efficiency.
65. Furthermore, one limitation was the major change of the results framework after the MTR, which was done on both output- and outcome level, which made it impossible to compare results with the original targets¹².

2.5 Ethical Considerations

66. The evaluator ensured to comply with the following principles and considerations of a free and open evaluation process, transparent and independent from Project management and policymaking, to enhance credibility. The evaluation ethics abided by relevant professional and ethical guidelines and codes of conduct, while the evaluation was undertaken with integrity and honesty. A partnership approach was however, used with the PMU and national partners to build development ownership and mutual accountability for results without affecting evaluation independence.
67. Throughout this evaluation process and in the compilation of the TE Report, efforts were made to represent the views of all stakeholder groups that participated in the project and data were collected with respect for ethics and human rights issues. The pictures that were taken, and other information gathered were based on prior informed consent from people. All participants in interviews and the survey were informed in advance that the information provided would remain anonymous and that it would not be possible to detect individual opinions based on the TE report. All information was collected according to the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) evaluation guidelines and UN 'Standards of Conduct'. To ensure confidentiality, only the evaluator knows who mentioned what in the interviews, while the survey was carried out completely anonymous, without recording of names. For the same reason, this TE report has only the mention of number of stakeholders that participated in interviews and the survey, and the percentages of each gender, and no names at all are included.

¹² The PMU did not provide any formal approval document for these changes, but since it would not have been possible to compare the final results with the original targets, the Evaluator agreed with the UNEP Evaluation Office to use the new targets in the last PIRs for assessment of effectiveness since 2020.

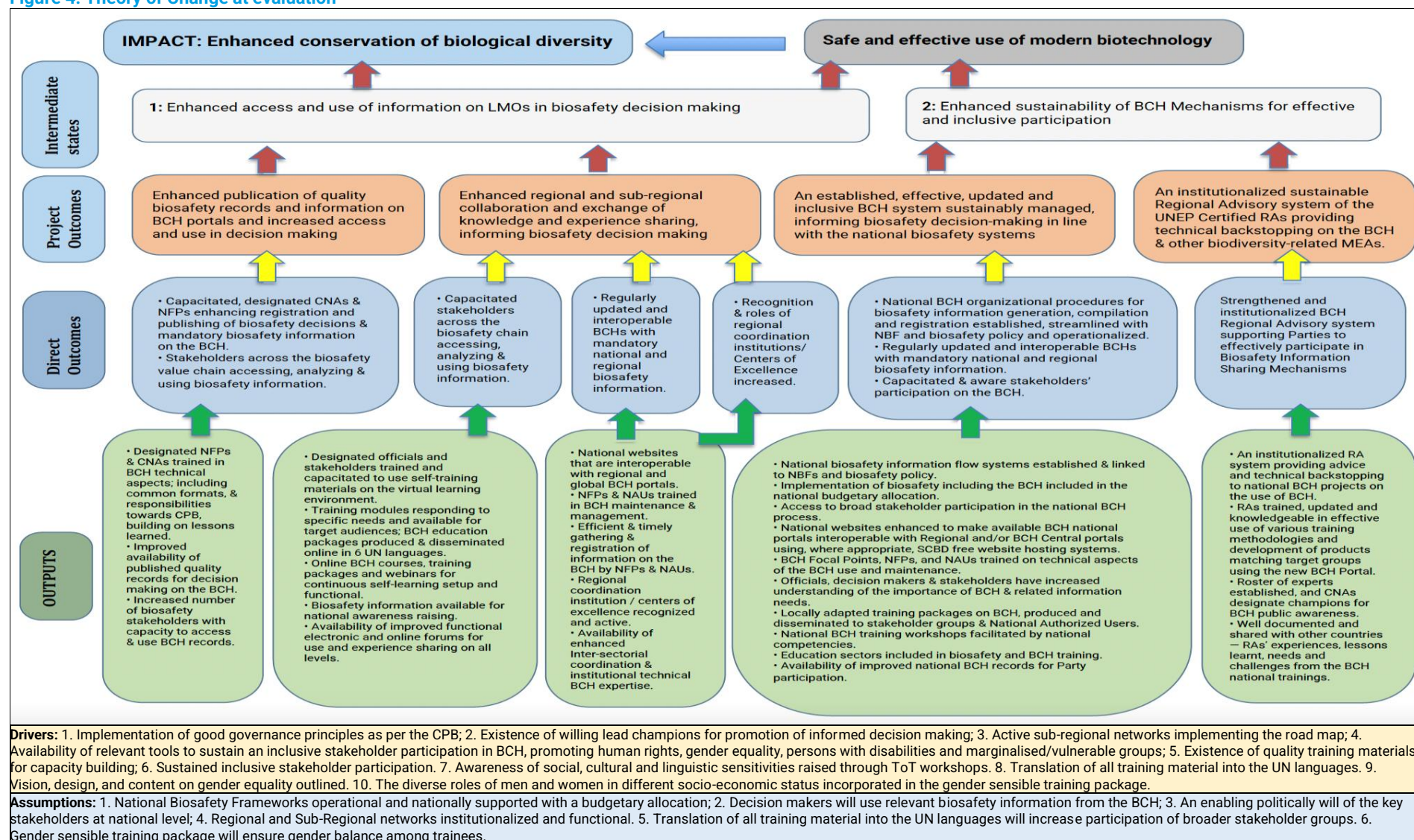
68. The only AI tool used was ChatGPT for drafting of some sections based on information provided by the evaluator. In alignment with ethical considerations, the evaluator confirm the full content of all parts of the report.

3 THEORY OF CHANGE AT EVALUATION

69. The RTOC at the TE illustrates the causal pathways towards achievement of the project goals and impacts, described below. The documents provided to the evaluator such as the ProDoc with appendixes, including the logical framework, establish the thoughts behind the ToC at design phase. Other literature, including the MTR Report and the PIRs, confirm the expected project outcomes and the potential for impact beyond the implementation period, and have given support to establishing the cause-and-effect relationships of the project. Consultations with the key UNEP project team members did also support this understanding of the ambition and causal narrative of the project.
70. The original project document did not include any ToC analysis since it was not required when the project was designed; however, such an analysis and a diagram of the ToC were done as part of the MTR 2019. This reconstructed ToC at the MTR was analysed during the TE inception phase and found to be of good quality. It presents well the causal pathways for the project implementation and the process towards achieving the project's purpose (project outcome) and goal (ex-post impact). The restructured ToC at the MTR was however slightly adjusted by the evaluator including the assumptions and drivers for project impact (see Figure 4). Justification for reformulations of results statements and justification for reformulation of drivers and assumptions are given in Annex III.
71. The ToC at the MTR 2019 presented a logical process of the causal pathways. On this basis, the terminal evaluator made some additional adjustments of the RTOC in line with UNEP glossary of results definitions, presented in Annex III. The four project outcomes feed into two Intermediate States, which are focused on: (i) access and use of information on LMOs in biosafety decision-making; and (ii) the sustainability of BCH for effective and inclusive participation. These two elements are together expected to provide a safer and more effective use of modern biotechnology in line with the project's purpose. The expected long-term impact is enhanced biodiversity conservation. The four Project Outcomes at the TE, adopted from intermediate outcomes of the MTR 2019, correspond with a reduction from 5 to 4 project outcomes that was done during the MTR, with minor reformulation.
72. The project drivers are most relevant from the outcomes to achievement of the project purpose and goal, which could also be considered as the project impact (see Annex III). On the other hand, the assumptions are mostly related to the project implementation period. Outcome drivers underpinning the RTOC include the application of good governance principles under the CPB, the presence of committed national and regional champions, and the functioning of sub-regional networks implementing agreed roadmaps. They also encompass the availability of quality training tools and materials, inclusive stakeholder participation mechanisms within the BCH, as well as specific human rights and gender drivers such as culturally and linguistically sensitive training approaches, translation into UN languages, and gender-responsive design that reflects the diverse roles of women and men.
73. Achievement of outcomes is premised on several key assumptions, notably the existence of operational and nationally funded biosafety frameworks, political commitment and use of BCH information by decision-makers, and institutionalised regional and sub-regional networks. Additional assumptions introduced at the TE relate to expanded participation through multilingual training materials and improved gender balance through gender-sensitive capacity-building packages. As demonstrated in the RTOC, the project focused on strengthening capacity and institutional systems at

national, regional, and global levels, recognising that pathways to impact and sustainability vary across countries while regional mechanisms support knowledge sharing, empowerment, and expanded multi-stakeholder partnerships on national and regional level to ensure sustainability.

Figure 4. Theory of Change at evaluation



4 EVALUATION FINDINGS

4.1 Strategic Relevance

4.1.1 Alignment to UNEP MTS, POW and Strategic Priorities

74. The UNEP Mid-term Strategy (MTS) and Programme of Works (PoW) were adequately considered in the project design, as well as South-South Cooperation, while the Bali Strategic Plan was not mentioned. Interviews with UNEP project staff and national government partners revealed that the project implementation had strong alignment with the UNEP MTS, PoW and strategic priorities.

Table 8. Alignment to UNEP Medium Term Strategy, Programme of Work and Strategic Priorities

UNEP strategic document	Alignment with UNEP's mandate and thematic priorities	Level of alignment
MTS (2014-2017)	The MTS mentions under Environmental governance – Law: “Target 17 (NBSAPs adopted as policy instrument) National biosafety frameworks. It appears in the table comparing the MTS “expected accomplishments” to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, which lists “National biosafety frameworks”.	Full
PoW (2016-2017)	The PoW 2016-2017 does not refer to any specific output on biosafety, but the project is aligned with the MTS especially on support to governance and institutional development.	Partial
Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building	Bali Strategic Plan is not mentioned in the ProDoc. However, the project could still be understood as partially supporting the objectives of this plan.	Partial
South-South Cooperation	The project facilitated exchange of experience in seminars/ workshops, online data transfer, and through regional advisors, and cooperated with the KBCH and Asia BCH Family, but did not establish regional cooperation structures.	Partial

75. Regarding alignment to UNEP's strategic priorities, South–South cooperation is a strong feature of BCH-III, embedded directly in the project design. The PIRs and stakeholder interviews highlight regional networking and experience sharing (component 3) such as regional workshops, networking events, and exchange of experiences among NFPs.
76. There were global training workshops as side events supported by BCH-III at COP-MOP 9 in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt (Meeting of the Parties to the CPB) 2018, COP-MOP 10 in Montreal, Canada, 2022, and COP-MOP 11 in Cali, Colombia, 2024.
77. These events strengthened horizontal cooperation among developing countries. The Regional Advisors System (Component 4) was another appreciated form of South-South Cooperation. The RAs were trained on biosafety and MEA clearing-house systems to support regional and national capacity.

4.1.2 Alignment to GEF/Donor Strategic Priorities

78. The GEF strategic priorities of the project's topics were considered in the ProDoc's analysis. Table 9 presents the alignment found to the GEF and other donors' strategic

priorities. The project was fully aligned with the GEF Biodiversity Focal Area Strategy under GEF-6, and specifically aligned with BD-3 on CPB implementation and biosafety capacity-building.

Table 9. Alignment to GEF/Donor Strategic Priorities

Donor or partner strategic document	Alignment with donor or partner strategic priorities	Level of alignment
GEF	The project supported the GEF strategic long-term objective SO3 Biodiversity and the Strategic programme for Biosafety.	Full
Secretariat of the Convention of Biological Diversity	The BCH-III project is basically a delivery vehicle for several of the CBD Secretariat's core strategic priorities, especially around biosafety, KM and capacity-building.	Full
Korea Biosafety Clearing House https://www.biosafety.or.kr	The project and KBCH's strategic priorities are strongly aligned, with most of the same strategic priorities, however KBCH is limited to the Asia region.	Full

4.1.3 Relevance to Global, Regional, Sub-regional and National Priorities

79. Relevance to global, regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities were considered in the design. The project is especially coherent with the CBD, the CPB and the KBCH, which is implementing its own regional project in Asia. Collaboration with other agencies and regional organizations have been mostly participation in seminars.
80. Based on the ProDoc, PIRs, and Final Report, the BCH III project demonstrated strong relevance at global, regional, sub-regional, and national levels, fully aligned with UNEP, GEF, and CBD priorities. At the global level, the project was directly relevant to the objectives and decisions of the CPB, in particular COP/MOP decisions calling for sustained capacity building and effective participation in the BCH. The project supported GEF Biodiversity focal area objectives by strengthening transparency, access to information, and compliance with international biosafety obligations. It also contributed to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2.5 by supporting the conservation and safe use of genetic resources through improved biosafety decision-making and information-sharing mechanisms.
81. At the regional and sub-regional levels, relevance was reflected in the project's focus on networking, experience-sharing, and harmonisation across countries facing similar biosafety challenges. Through sub-regional workshops, regional roadmaps, ToT, and the RA system, the project responded to region-specific capacity gaps while promoting South–South cooperation and peer learning. These mechanisms are consistent with regional integration priorities and support collective implementation of the CPB through enhanced efficiency and sustainability beyond isolated national efforts.
82. At the national level, the project was highly relevant to participating countries' priorities for operationalising National Biosafety Frameworks, strengthening institutional arrangements, and meeting mandatory BCH reporting requirements. National workshops, sustainability plans, establishment of national procedures, and development of national BCH portals directly supported domestic regulatory functions and public-sector capacity. The emphasis on inclusive participation, gender considerations, and accessibility through multilingual training materials further reinforced alignment with national development, governance, and equity objectives, increasing the likelihood that project results would be institutionalised and sustained.
83. The VLE can be considered a South–South exchange platform, which aggregates training materials from multiple countries, hosts case studies and exercises used by

participants from all regions and facilitates continuous cross-country learning and transfer of lessons (see 4.4.2). Despite all the mentioned opportunities for South-South Cooperation, only 50% of the respondents to the survey consider that the project led to enhanced conditions for regional biosafety work, which is a lower figure than for national level. This might have to do with the fact that no regional structures were established (see also 4.8 Sustainability).

84. The stakeholder interviews and the survey reflect that the objectives and outcomes of the project are considered consistent with regional, sub-regional and national environmental policies and priorities. Activities on regional level were mostly participation in regional seminars/training and advisory from regional advisors. Collaboration between countries in the same region was more ad-hoc according to needs, e.g., seeking information on lessons learned on different Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs). Respondents to the survey mostly define the project's relevance for the government as highly relevant or relevant (see table 10).

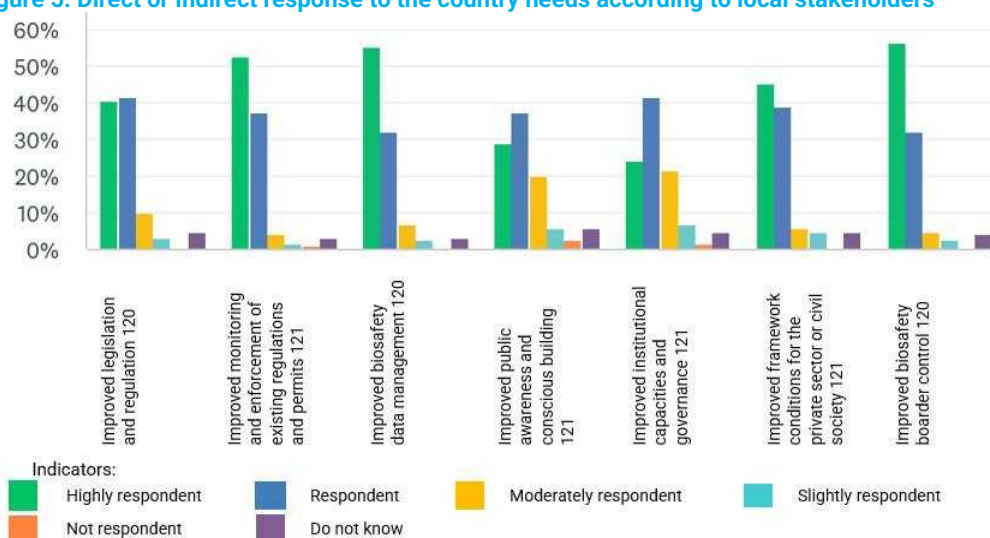
Table 10. Opinions of local stakeholders on the relevance of project activities (%)

The needs and priorities of:	Highly relevant	Relevant	Moderately relevant	Slightly relevant	Not relevant
Central government for decision making	40.50	41.3	9.9	3.3	0.0
The government agency in charge of biosafety	52.9	37.2	4.1	1.7	0.8
The government agency in charge of environment/ biodiversity	55.4	32.2	6.6	2.5	0.0
Private sector	28.9	37.2	19.8	5.8	2.5
Civil society	24.0	41.3	21.5	6.6	1.7
Universities, research, laboratories	45.5	38.8	5.8	5.0	0.0
The country for multilateral collaboration and compliance with the Cartagena Protocol	56.2	32.2	5.0	2.5	0.0

(Source: TE Survey)

85. According to the comments during stakeholder interviews and the results of the survey, the project was most respondent for biosafety data management and institutional capacity building in this area. Among the participants in the survey 65.9% thinks that the project was respondent or highly respondent to improved biosafety data management; 61.2% to institutional capacity improvement and governance; and 59.5% to improved public awareness and conscious building, while other alternatives had lower score. Only 43% consider that the project was respondent or highly respondent to the framework conditions of the private sector or civil society.

Figure 5. Direct or indirect response to the country needs according to local stakeholders



(Source: TE Survey) * Number of respondents are shown in the figure.

86. The table below presents a brief summary of the project's relevance to global, regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities, based on all available project documentation and additional Internet sources.

Table 11. Relevance to Global, Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities

Strategic document or agreement	Alignment with global, regional, sub-regional, national environmental priorities	Level of Alignment
Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB)	BCH mandated under Art. 20; directly supports Parties' biosafety obligations.	Full
Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)	Supports Articles 17–19, CHM, and biosafety information-sharing.	Full
Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework	Contributes to targets on biosafety, information access and capacity-building.	Full
2030 Agenda / SDG 15	Supports SDG 15.6, 15.9 and SDG 17 on capacity-building and data-sharing. The project only indirectly protected and promoted the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems	Partial
African Network of Biosafety Expertise (ABNE)	Regional workshops and RAs supported biosafety capacity-building.	Partial
CARICOM / Caribbean biosafety frameworks	Supports SIDS biosafety capacity and subregional information-sharing.	Partial
Central/Easter Europe (CEE) subregional BS initiatives	Strengthens BCH procedures, national portals and regional cooperation.	Full
Asia–Pacific biosafety platforms	Supports regional cooperation, ToT and information exchange.	Partial
National Biosafety Frameworks (NBFs)	Reinforces national biosafety procedures, roles and decision-making.	Full
NBSAPs	Strengthens biosafety, data systems and institutional capacities.	Full

4.1.4 Complementarity with Existing Interventions/ Coherence

87. The BCH-III project made strong and substantive contributions to UNEP's Environmental Governance subprogramme by significantly improving countries' capacity to implement the Cartagena Protocol's biosafety information-sharing obligations and strengthening national institutional frameworks for environmental rule of law. The project's model – comprising national workshops, structured procedures for biosafety information management, and a fully institutionalized VLE – directly supported UNEP's goals on digital environmental governance, KM, and MEA implementation. For donors, BCH-III delivered high-magnitude global public goods aligned with GEF-6 BD-3 priorities, including a 187% increase in national BCH records, 37 strengthened national portals, and a globally accessible e-learning infrastructure used by 181 countries. These results exceeded expectations and reinforced the strategic intentions of co-financing partners such as SCBD and KBCH by contributing to the modernisation and usability of the integrated BCH/ABSCH platform.
88. At country and regional levels, BCH-III generated extensive, high-impact benefits by building durable institutional capacity and strengthening national biosafety systems across the participating countries. The project outcomes (see 4.4 Effectiveness) such as sustainability plans; staff trained, national procedures were implemented with relatively good gender balance. Regionally, the subregional workshops and roadmaps created coherent frameworks for cooperation, while the Regional Advisor system

became a long-term mechanism for peer-to-peer support and harmonised biosafety practices. These contributions significantly advanced regional planned results in Africa, CEE, Asia & the Pacific, LAC, complementing initiatives by UNEP, SCBD, ICGEB, ABNE, FAO, and others. Overall, the project made significant contributions to UNEP's, donors', target countries' and the regions' results in the biosafety area.

89. Complementarity with other agencies and projects include support to government biosafety units by regional programmes such as the African Union Biosafety Network, the World Bank-GEF Biosafety capacity building in Latin America and KBCH sub-regional program in Asia. The Stakeholder interviews have however not revealed any examples of direct collaboration between the BCH-III project and other projects at national level.
90. The PSC was expected to maintain a watching brief on projects with similar goals funded through other agencies, and where appropriate, work with these agencies. This does not seem to have happened. The 2nd Steering Committee Minutes 2021 however mention ICGEB as a partner. The International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) played a minor role by covering a BCH-III side event 2018 in Earth Negotiations Bulletin (ENB), mentioned in the PIR 2019. Based on the first two SC Minutes these examples do not seem to be results of any SC advice. The third (last) SC Minutes have not been made accessible for the TE.
91. Across all PIRs and other project documentation, donor coordination appears limited in scope because BCH-III was essentially funded by a single donor (GEF), with co-financing partners (SCBD, KBCH) rather than multiple financial donors requiring coordination. The partners contributed in-kind logistical support and expertise, but there was no structured, multi-donor coordination platform, joint donor workplans, or a donor coordination group. The coordination concerned technical cooperation, e.g., collaboration with SCBD on the migration of the BCH platform, training materials, and troubleshooting, while KBCH collaborated as a technical partner in Asia. The project was almost entirely financed by the GEF Trust Fund with UNEP execution under internal structures. Coordination between DEPI and DELC should be relatively simple because it did not require coordination among multiple financing entities. How this worked out in practice is dealt with under 4.6 Efficiency. The Project SC was not set-up with the purpose of donor coordination.

Table 12. Complementarity with Existing Interventions/Coherence

Other initiatives by UNEP or other organisations	Complementarity	Level of Alignment
UNEP-GEF BCH Phase I and Phase II global projects	BCH III built directly on training materials, Regional Advisor network and lessons from BCH I-II, extending support to the remaining 76 eligible countries and focused on sustainability.	Full
UNEP-GEF National Biosafety Framework (NBF) and biosafety projects	NBF and implementation projects focused on putting in place biosafety laws, institutions and risk assessment systems, while BCH III strengthened the information management and BCH participation side of these same frameworks.	Full
SCBD capacity-building network and BCH online tools	SCBD manages the central BCH, online tutorials and bio-safety capacity-building network; BCH III complemented this by national and regional training, the VLE content and supported migration and usability of the new BCH platform.	Full
FAO GM Foods Platform and Codex/FAO biosafety and biosecurity work	The relation was on data exchange with the BCH Portal. FAO's GM Foods Platform shares official food-safety assessments of GM foods and BCH III focused on capacity building for BCH obligations under the CPB.	Partial

Other initiatives by UNEP or other organisations	Complementarity	Level of Alignment
UNIDO biotechnology and biosafety capacity-building	UNIDO supports biosafety and biotechnology capacity, but mostly for industrial and agricultural applications and not other areas covered by the project. BCH III complemented this by improving transparency and information-sharing on LMOs without duplicating technical risk-assessment work.	Partial
ICGEB biosafety and biotechnology training programmes	ICGEB provides scientific and regulatory training on biotechnology and biosafety and, under BCH III, cooperated on communication and outreach materials; technical training and BCH information-management support.	Full
African Biosafety Network of Expertise (ABNE)	ABNE helps African countries build functional biosafety regulatory systems. BCH III complemented this by strengthen BCH use and national information systems in many of the same countries, with scope for joint use of tools/expertise.	Partial
UNEP InforMEA portal and MEA e-learning	InforMEA provides a cross-MEA information and e-learning portal, while BCH III offered detailed, protocol-specific biosafety data and its own VLE. Together they broadened access to MEA information and training without duplicating each other's core functions.	Partial

Findings Statements on strategic relevance and complementarity

92. **Strategic Relevance:** The BCH-III project was strategically highly relevant because it directly addressed a core institutional gap – countries' limited capacity to meet their biosafety information-sharing obligations under the Cartagena Protocol. Stakeholder surveys show high relevance for government decision-making, biosafety authorities, and CPB compliance; while relevance was lower for non-governmental actors. This pattern indicates that the project's strongest relevance lay in strengthening national systems for biosafety data management, an area where existing policies and regional needs clearly aligned and where other initiatives had not provided sustained support.
93. **Complementarity:** The project achieved thematic complementarity with key biosafety initiatives but fell short of operational complementarity because coordination mechanisms were weak and largely passive. Although BCH-III aligned well with UNEP–GEF biosafety programmes and closely complemented SCBD and KBCH activities, the evaluation found no examples of active collaboration with other agencies at national level and noted that the Steering Committee did not effectively perform its intended “watching-brief” function. As a result, complementarity occurred primarily where pre-existing institutional relationships already existed, rather than through deliberate project coordination across the broader biosafety landscape.

Rating for Strategic Relevance: Satisfactory (S)

Rating for Alignment to UNEP MTS, PoW and Strategic Priorities: **HS**

Rating for Alignment to GEF/Donor Strategic Priorities: **HS**

Rating for Relevance to Global, Regional, Sub-regional and National Priorities: **S**

Rating for Complementarity with Existing Interventions/Coherence: Moderately Satisfactory **MS**

4.2 Quality of Project Design

94. The BCH programme shows a clear evolutionary trajectory, with each phase responding to gaps and limitations identified in the preceding one: **BCH phase I** (2004–2009) focused primarily on basic awareness raising, foundational training, and provision of hardware and connectivity, addressing countries' initial inability to access and use the BCH due to limited infrastructure and technical skills. While Phase I was successful in

developing high-quality training materials and raising awareness, its Terminal Evaluation highlighted weak sustainability, limited enabling environments, and insufficient integration with national biosafety frameworks. **BCH Phase II** (2010–2013) deliberately shifted emphasis toward deepening technical competencies, refining training packages, expanding stakeholder groups, and strengthening regional cooperation through RAs. However, the Phase II Terminal Evaluation found that capacity building remained fragmented, with limited institutional anchoring, weak sustainability planning, and insufficient integration with broader national governance systems. **BCH Phase III** (2016–2025) represents a qualitative evolution from training-centric interventions toward more institutionalization, sustainability, inclusiveness, and system-level functionality. This progression reflects a deliberate response to recurring weaknesses identified in BCH I and II, particularly regarding sustainability, ownership, and institutional embedding.

95. Project design strengths include Partnerships, Financial Planning, Efficiency, and Learning, Communication and Outreach. The capacity of the technical partner, SCBD, was assessed through explanation of its roles and tools, as well as partnership in previous phases, while capacities of national partners was assessed in the ProDoc as 'variable'. The document included complete financial information and co-finance letters, however there were only in-kind contributions. Regarding efficiency, the pre-existing agreements and partnerships that had been established with SCBD, South Korean BCH and national partners during previous project phases were expected to support project implementation efficiency. The Project planned to provide more efficient services to countries according to their biosafety status, which would allow for the optimisation of budgetary resources and make more efficient use of available human resources. The design had a KM approach with sharing of lessons and outreach to NGOs, CSOs, Farmers, Consumers, and organizations dealing with traditional knowledge.
96. Project design weaknesses included Monitoring, and to certain degree Project Preparation, Risk Identification and Safeguards, Logical Framework and Causality. The Costed M&E Plan did not include data collection methods, responsibilities and frequency. There was also not enough information for disaggregation of data on minorities and disadvantaged groups. There was no problem statement defined in the ProDoc; and not a complete costed workplan. ProDoc had a risk log, but the risk level did not consider probability and impact in case of occurrence. Two risks defined were not real risks, and financial risks such as noncompliance with co-financing were not considered. The design also confused safeguards with the activities to reach the project goals. The safeguards section presents activities such as developing awareness and databases and providing advisory. The project's drivers and assumptions were also not clearly described. Outcomes were not realistic with respect to the timeframe and scale, that would require a longer implementation period. Output- and outcome-level results were mostly not 'SMART' (improved during the MTR). The indicators and targets of outputs and outcomes in ProDoc were considered only at output level, not on outcome level, and there were no specific indicators for marginalized and disadvantaged groups.

Table 13. Summary of quality of project design assessment ratings

	SECTION	RATING (1-6)	Summary Assessment
A	Project Preparation	4	No problem statement was defined but threats and root causes included. Relevant stakeholder analysis is relevant for the project but lacking marginalized groups. Gender issues were satisfactory covered. Human rights issues focused on indigenous peoples. There was a project budget and a costed M&E plan, but no costed workplan. Draft Procurement Schedule had a budget.
B	Risk identification and Safeguards	4	The risk log did not consider probability and impact. Two risks included were not real risks. Financial risks were not considered. Operating context was assessed. The ProDoc mixed

	SECTION	RATING (1-6)	Summary Assessment
			safeguards with activities to reach the project goals. Mechanisms to reduce environmental footprint were defined.
C	Governance and Supervision Arrangements	5	A comprehensive project governance and supervision model considered UNEP's roles and responsibilities but division between implementing and executing entity was not clear.
D	Partnerships	6	Capacities of SCBD and national partners were assessed, as well as roles and tools.
E	Strategic Relevance	5	UNEP MTS and PoW, and S-S Cooperation were considered, but not Bali Strategic Plan. GEF strategic priorities of the project topic and coherence with global, regional and national priorities were considered. Complementarity and synergies were given priority but have few examples. PSC would propose/monitor collaboration with other agencies.
F	Logical Framework and Causality	4	ToC was not specified. Drivers and assumptions were not clearly described. Roles of stakeholder groups were described. Timeframe was not realistic. Output- and outcome-level results were mostly not 'SMART'. There were indicators and targets for outputs and outcomes, but outcome indicators are not considered as outcome level indicators. There were no specific indicators for marginalized groups.
G	Financial Planning	5	There was complete financial information. Co-financing expectations and co-finance letters were all in-kind. High number of countries would however give small amounts to each country and strong burden for financial follow-up.
H	Efficiency	6	Pre-existing agreements with SCBD, KBCH and national partners since previous phases. It was planned to provide more efficient services to countries based on their biosafety status to allow optimizing financial and human resources.
I	Monitoring	3	Costed M&E Plan was fully integrated in the project budget but did not include M&E data collection methods, frequency and responsibilities. There was not enough information in ProDoc or M&E Plan to disaggregate data on minorities and disadvantaged groups.
J	Sustainability / Replication and Catalytic Effects	5	Institutional, socio-political and environmental sustainability were assessed, and long-term impact. Economic-financial sustainability was highlighted, but not how to reach it. There was no exit strategy, but rather arguments for additional project phase(es). Dissemination of results and lessons learned was planned as a continuous activity. Potential for scaling-up was adoption of BCH training materials and topics into academic curricula. Replicability was already built into previous project phases.
K	Learning, Communication and Outreach	6	Knowledge sharing, lessons learned and outreach towards NGOs, CSOs, Farmers, Consumer groups, and Organisations specialized on traditional knowledge.
	Total (Weighted) Score:	4.73	<i>(Full analysis in the Inception Report, available from the Evaluation Office.)</i>

Rating for Project Design: Satisfactory (S)

4.3 Nature of the External Context

97. Throughout implementation, the BCH-III project was significantly constrained by external and unanticipated contextual factors, the most consequential being the global COVID-19 pandemic. Travel restrictions and lockdowns caused the cancellation or postponement of numerous national and regional workshops, delayed SSFA execution, and increased administrative workload. These constraints forced a rapid shift from in-person to virtual delivery modalities, which countries adopted unevenly due to different levels of digital readiness. Additional external pressures included political turnover in several countries—leading to repeated changes in national focal points—and the delayed rollout of the upgraded BCH platform by the SCBD, which limited progress in training and procedural updates that depended on system availability.
98. Apart from COVID-19, the most significant negative effects of the context during the project implementation were due to armed conflict and state instability (Afghanistan, Myanmar, Ukraine, Mali, Niger, Cameroon), international sanctions (Belarus), and large-scale natural disasters (Pakistan, Bangladesh, Mozambique, Malawi, Bahamas, Fiji, Solomon Islands). In these contexts, disruptions to governance structures, staff continuity, infrastructure, and international engagement likely constrained project implementation and participation more severely than in other project countries.

99. BCH-III is among the projects that most easily could carry out all activities online during the pandemic and other emergency situations. Although strong adaptive management such as institutionalisation of the VLE helped mitigate severe disruptions, the cumulative effects of different unfavourable conditions were among the factors creating variability in national performance that required extension of the project timeline.

Rating for nature of the external context: Moderately Unfavourable

4.4 Effectiveness

100. The effectiveness of BCH-III is best understood by tracing the causal pathways outlined in the RTOC. These pathways describe how the production of high-quality outputs and strengthened institutional capacities were expected to lead to improved biosafety information management (direct outcomes), enhanced regional cooperation and national systems (project outcomes), and ultimately effective and inclusive participation and informed decision-making on LMOs (intermediate states) as key prerequisites for safe and effective biotechnology and in the long term enhanced biodiversity conservation. Evidence from documents, interviews and the TE survey shows that BCH-III substantially delivered the majority of its planned outputs with satisfactory quality, thereby enabling strong progress toward its intended outcomes, although achievement varied across countries depending on national enabling conditions, political turnover and resource availability.
101. The PIRs, workshop reports, mission reports, etc., complemented by interviews show that availability of outputs was high, with extensive delivery of national and regional capacity-building workshops, updated training materials, thousands of trained stakeholders, expanded e-learning resources and upgraded or newly established national BCH portals. A total of 137 national workshops, extensive ToT programmes, and new BCH nodes were delivered, and many participating countries improved national BCH procedures and significantly increased the volume and quality of records uploaded to the BCH. These outputs fed logically into the direct outcomes envisaged in the ToC: improved institutional expertise, strengthened knowledge exchange, and revitalised regional networks. The RA system, though not uniformly stable, played a central role in supporting technical delivery mentioned in the RA reports and high quality of outputs confirmed by the TE survey (see 4.4.1). However, variability in national digital readiness, delays in SSFA processing, and delay in upgrade of the global BCH portal <https://unenvironment.org/explore-topics/biosafety>. Note that the BCH-III project website is no longer available since the documents were migrated to the VLE. This constrained output uptake and slowed progress in the countries with less resources. Stakeholder interviews and the TE survey indicate that staff turnover also made some countries unable to fully internalize training benefits, limiting the depth of direct outcome achievement, e.g., through WeLearn since the PIRs don't give much detail on outputs, the evaluator has partly used information from the outcomes to define level of achievement.
102. With respect to achievement of outcomes, the PIR 2025 reports that BCH-III made significant progress toward the four intended project outcomes, though progress was uneven. The survey data indicates that improved institutional expertise in registering and retrieving BCH data was achieved in countries where workshops were completed, and national coordinators remained stable. Regional workshop reports indicate that regional networking and knowledge exchange increased through the establishment of groups such as the Asian BCH Family, with development of 5 regional roadmaps and

peer-to-peer support reinforcing sustainability of practices. Stakeholder interviews, especially during the mission, support the finding that enhanced sustainability of national and regional BCH systems emerged in many contexts through mainstreaming the BCH tasks into ministerial workplans and renewed governmental budget allocations for maintaining BCH portals. The establishment and population of a multilingual VLE platform and strengthened RA network supported the outcome of an institutionalized e-learning environment. Yet, in countries such as Cape Verde and Grenada with limited political prioritization of biosafety, institutionalization of procedures and systems occurred more slowly.

103. The PIRs and TE survey show that the project did not significantly influence stakeholder diversity beyond women's participation (45% of workshop attendees). The national authorities largely controlled selection of workshop participants and safeguards for vulnerable and marginalized groups, which is consistent with the TE's finding that the project did not specifically focus on vulnerable groups due to the timing of the GEF safeguard reforms. There were no indications of negative gender or social consequences but the absence of systematic inclusion of disadvantaged groups may have constrained the potential breadth of BCH uptake and its downstream socio-economic benefits.
104. The causal logic of the ToC indicates that the four project outcomes should collectively feed into two intermediate states: (i) enhanced access and use of biosafety/LMO information in decision-making and (ii) strengthened sustainability of BCH mechanisms. Evidence confirms that BCH-III contributed substantially to both. National records were increasingly used in biosafety decision processes, regional networks began sharing and interpreting biosafety information more systematically, and national focal points demonstrated improved capacity to manage portals. These intermediate states, in turn, support the longer-term impacts envisioned by the ToC—safer and more effective use of modern biotechnology that would ultimately lead to enhanced biodiversity conservation—although realization of these impacts remains dependent on factors beyond the project's control. The evaluation noted that contribution to BCH-III is strong at capacity, procedural and data-management levels, but more diffuse for higher-order governance outcomes, which rely on political will, legal frameworks, and SCBD's global normative roles.
105. Unintended effects were mixed but generally positive. On the positive side, several countries used their own resources to replicate BCH-III training, demonstrating catalytic effects not originally planned. This finding came out of the missions and online interviews and is mostly not reflected in the co-financing reports. The regional networks, particularly the RA system, became more influential than anticipated, contributing to sustainability beyond the project's formal scope. The response rate to the TE survey might reflect the level of interest in the different regions, with Africa clearly on top. This might have to do with the number and experience of the RAs covering this region, as well as follow-up from the PMU. On the negative side, the long project duration (8.5 years) and the shift to virtual modalities created disparities between countries with strong digital infrastructure and those without, reinforcing pre-existing inequities in capacity to benefit fully from BCH-III outputs. Additionally, inconsistent provision of country-level documentation such as country reports and co-financing reports from national governments and delayed national portal upgrades created temporary inefficiencies and may have impeded some countries' progress toward outcome-level changes.

106. To summarize, BCH-III was largely effective in delivering the outputs and generating the institutional, technical and cooperative conditions required for its intended outcomes. It strengthened national and regional biosafety capacities, enhanced information availability and improved the enabling environment for compliance with the CPB. Variability in national contexts and external shocks such as COVID-19 limited the uniformity of outcome achievement. Nonetheless, the project made a strong, credible contribution to the intermediate states in the ToC and significantly increased the likelihood of long-term impact, particularly by institutionalizing BCH procedures, reinforcing regional networks, and modernizing global biosafety information systems.
107. Overall, BCH-III demonstrates higher effectiveness than the previous two phases, reflecting the incorporation of lessons related to sustainability, institutional anchoring, regional support mechanisms, and digital delivery. While persistent national policy and prioritization constraints continue to affect outcomes, BCH-III shows improved effectiveness in translating capacity-building efforts into more durable country-level results.
108. The BCH-III project did not specifically focus on the effects of the intervention on vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, with the exception of women. The interviewees mention a considerable improvement from previous project phases, but it cannot be confirmed since gender participation was not measured in BCH I and II. It should be considered that even though the GEF environmental and social standards of 2011 included social impacts, the risk analysis for vulnerable or disadvantaged individuals or groups was introduced only with the GEF Safeguards revision Dec. 2018, after the project had started its implementation. The PMU staff members interviewed highlight that the project had little influence on participation of different stakeholder groups and that the process in each country was led by the government.

4.4.1 Availability of Outputs

Table 14. Availability of outputs¹³

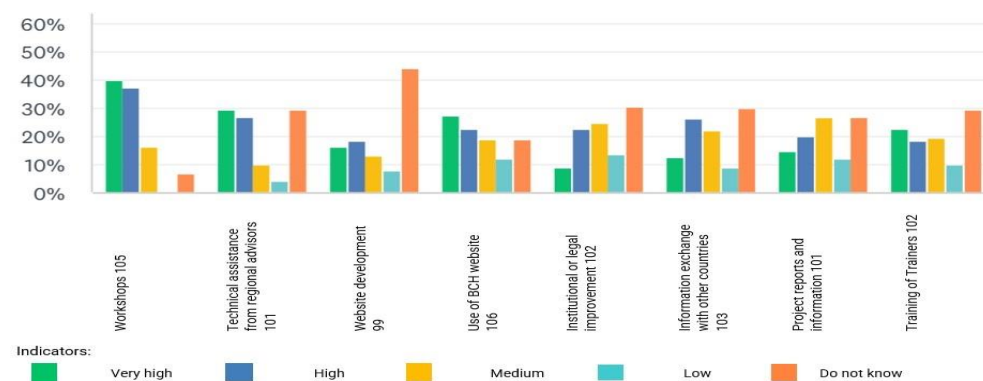
Performance against Indicators and Targets	See detailed information, including targets, and actuals for each indicator, in Annex IV.	Sources of Information/Evidence
Output 1:	Results statement: National BCH Institutional Capacity Development including Effective and Inclusive Participation, Production and Sharing of Information	PIRs 2019-2025. Project Final Report, Country reports, National workshop reports, Stakeholder interviews, Outreach material, Project final survey, and TE online survey.
Narrative assessment	The project delivered the five outputs for institutional capacity development that are expected to lead to effective and inclusive participation, production and information sharing. Achievement 96.3%.	
Output 2:	Results statement: National Sustainability of BCH Mechanisms through the Establishment of Effective National Procedures	
Narrative assessment	More effective national procedures to elevate the expectation of BCH sustainability on national level, however with great variation between the countries. Achievement 89.8%	
Output 3:	Regional Networking, Experience and Knowledge Sharing	
Narrative assessment	Improved regional networks, experience- and knowledge sharing. Achievement 91.4%	
Output 4:	Results statement: Global Sustainability of BCH and other Multilateral Environmental Agreements' sharing Mechanisms through the Regional Advisors System	
Narrative assessment	Stronger RA system including interaction with other multilateral environmental actors, giving improved expectation of BCH global sustainability. A 98.3%	
TOTAL ACHIEVEMENT	94%	

109. Among survey respondents, 87.7% reported that they had participated in project workshops, 29.5% in awareness building, and 18.7% had received technical advisory. Based on this experience, 77% (see fig. 6) consider that the workshops had a high or very high quality and 56.4% consider that the technical advisory from the Regional

¹³ The standard table of 'availability of outputs', including the detailed analysis, are presented in Annex IV.

Advisors had a high or very high quality. It should be considered that the RAs did not only give advisory but were in charge of organising the first and second workshop in each country together with local stakeholders. The RAs also helped mitigate the low digital readiness in some of the countries.

Figure 6. The opinions of local stakeholders about the quality of project results



(Source: TE Survey) * Number of respondents are shown in the figure.

110. Overall, the workshops and regional advisors were considered of very high quality, and most survey responders would like more BCH training. One criticism is, however, that the structure of a 2-day workshop is perceived a bit rushed and compact, leaving little room for in-depth exploration and interaction. It is also a demand for a greater variety of activities. One respondent says that “if you have attended one workshop, you have attended all workshops - there was no variation to the agenda”. Some claim that the workshops should move beyond basic training and develop a local expert group to sustain national capacity and provide peer-to-peer support.
111. **To summarise**, the project delivered the vast majority of its planned outputs with good quality across national, regional and global levels, including workshops, training materials, new and upgraded BCH portals, ToT programmes, and a fully populated multilingual VLE platform. The outputs enabled improvements in institutional capacity, data management and regional knowledge exchange but uptake varied due to differing digital readiness and staff turnover.

4.4.2 Achievement of Project Outcomes

112. During the inception phase, two revised results frameworks were identified: (i) the results framework proposed in the 2019 MTR; and (ii) a further revised results framework that adopted and operationalized the MTR version. Both versions differ significantly from the original results framework approved under the CEO endorsement in 2016. Since 2020, the revised results framework has been used consistently for project reporting, following its presentation to the Steering Committee. According to the project team, this revised framework was endorsed by the Task Manager (TM), in line with GEF policy.
113. The evaluation noted a discrepancy between GEF policy and UNEP policy regarding the criteria for results framework revisions and the associated approval processes. Following consultation with the UNEP Evaluation Office, and despite the revised 2020 results framework not having undergone UNEP’s formal approval process, the evaluation adopted this revised framework for assessment purposes. This decision was based on considerations of data availability and the consistent use of the revised framework for reporting since 2020. Table 15 is a summary of project outcome

achievements. As shown in Annex IV, most of the targets are in fact at output level and therefore some of them repeat information from the expected outputs.

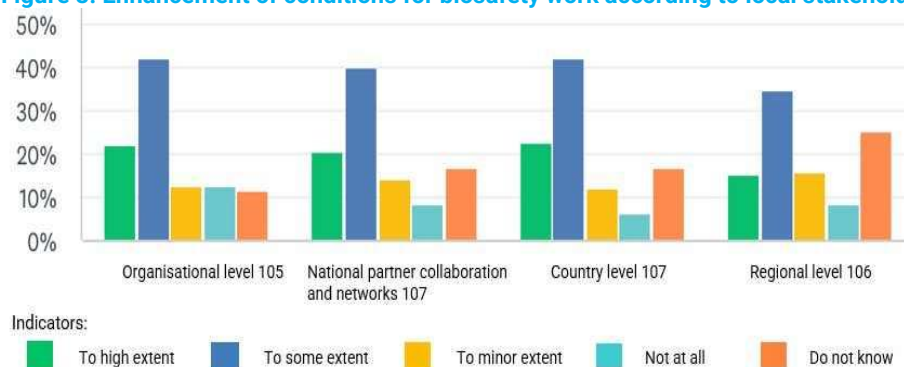
Table 15. Achievement of project outcomes¹⁴

Performance against Indicators and Targets:	See detailed information, including targets, and actuals for each indicator, in Annex IV.
Outcome 1	Revised Outcome (PIR): Enhanced access and use of BCH data, effective and inclusive participation in the BCH system. ROTC project outcome: Enhanced publication of quality biosafety records and information on BCH portals and increase access and use in decision making
Sources of Information / Evidence	- PIRs, Final Report, workshop reports, and other documents - Websites and project products - Interviews and additional information from PMU/UNEP - Interviews with national beneficiaries, including during missions - Project final survey and TE survey.
Narrative Assessment 1	Nearly all the project targets under Outcome 1 were achieved, however some are not possible to fully verify and were assessed through triangulation of different sources (see above). The project has led to improved decision-making regarding GMOs due to increased access to publication of biosafety records and information on the BCH portals, however the degree of involvement of politicians is highly variable between the countries. Average target achievement is approx. 91.8%.
Level of Achievement	Partially (close to fully)
Outcome 2	Revised outcome (PIR): Strengthened national BCH systems and organizational procedures for biosafety information ROTC outcome: An established, effective, updated and inclusive BCH system sustainably managed informing the biosafety decision making in line with the national biosafety systems
Sources of Information / Evidence	- PIRs, Final Report, workshop reports, MTR, and other documents - Statistics provided by RAs to PMU. - Websites and project products - Interviews and additional information from PMU/UNEP - Interviews with national beneficiaries, including during missions - Project final survey and TE survey.
Narrative Assessment 2	It is confirmed that the project has strengthened national BCH systems and organizational procedures for biosafety information. There are however much variations country by country and one target is not possible to assess. The project has led to adoption of national decision making informed by the BCH system in many of the project countries, mostly at government level, including a more inclusive and participatory approach than before. Estimated average for eight targets is 82.2%
Level of Achievement	Partial
Outcome 3	Revised outcome (PIR): Enhanced regional networking and knowledge sharing for effective management of the BCH ROTC outcome: Enhanced regional and sub regional collaboration and exchange of knowledge and experience sharing, informing biosafety decision making
Sources of Information / Evidence	- PIRs, Final Report, workshop reports, and other documents - Websites and project products - Interviews and additional information from PMU/UNEP - Interviews with national beneficiaries, including during missions - Project final survey and TE survey.
Narrative Assessment 3	Regional networking and knowledge sharing were enhanced through exchange of national experiences and lessons learned in regional events, as well as support from regional advisors, which improved effectiveness of BCH management in the participating countries. Estimated average of target achievement is 87.2% .
Level of Achievement	Partially
Outcome 4	Revised outcome (PIR): Strengthened and Institutionalized BCH Regional Advisory system supporting parties to effectively participate in biosafety information sharing mechanisms ROTC project outcome: An institutionalized sustainable regional Advisory system of the UNEP Certified Ras providing technical backstopping on the BCH & the biodiversity-related MEAs.
Sources of Information / Evidence	- PIRs, Final Report, workshop reports, and other documents - Websites and project products - Interviews and additional information from PMU/UNEP

¹⁴ The standard table of 'achievement of outcomes', including the detailed analysis, are presented in Annex IV.

Performance against Indicators and Targets:	See detailed information, including targets, and actuals for each indicator, in Annex IV.
	• Interviews with national beneficiaries, including during missions • Project final survey and TE survey.
Narrative Assessment 4	The BCH RA system was technically strengthened and institutionalised with the goal to support the Cartagena Protocol Parties and their effective participation in mechanisms for effective biosafety information sharing. There are however challenges for the sustainability of the system. Level of achievement 97.3% .
Level of Achievement	Partially (close to fully)
TOTAL ACHIEVEMENT	89.6% (however with achievement on sub-target 2.5 is N/A – see annex IV)

114. All project outcomes are related to the goal of improving knowledge and management of biosafety, especially in the participating countries. BCH-III's KM Approach—originally defined in the ProDoc through components on global and sub-regional networking, production of multilingual educational materials, and strengthening the RA system—was broadly implemented but faced several structural and operational challenges that shaped its outcomes. The PIR 2025 mentions that the RA system was conceived as a global mechanism to provide decentralized, regionally tailored technical assistance, but its effectiveness depended heavily on the availability and institutional anchoring of advisors. Operationally, the RA system faced challenges related to geographic coverage, workload, and uneven national capacity. Although the RAs delivered national, regional, and global workshops, the system remained person-dependent rather than institutionally embedded. This limited continuity in some regions and constrained long-term sustainability. Advisors often had to support countries with very different levels of institutional readiness, digital infrastructure, and staff continuity, requiring repeated engagement and retraining.
115. At CEO Approval, the project committed to producing BCH education packages in all UN languages, establishing virtual learning tools, generating knowledge products, supporting sub-regional experience sharing, and creating mechanisms for sustainability through national and regional systems. These commitments translated into an extensive suite of KM deliverables.
116. With the key outputs delivered, there was an increase of 11.7% of knowledge measured by tests before and after the national workshops, approximately until the end of the second workshops. In addition, the development or upgrading of national BCH portals, along with a significant increase (187%) in national records on the BCH Central Portal, constituted major KM outputs tied to strengthened information management systems. Through the platform the countries can contact other countries with similar challenges or experience with the same LMOs and GMOs and thereby transfer lessons.
117. Figure 8 shows that most participants in the TE survey consider that the project enhanced conditions for biosafety work only to some extent, which is a logical result considering the low national budget and only 2-3 workshops in each country. The results for organisational level, national networks and country level are similar, with the sum of “some” and “high” extent is from 60.5 to 64.5%, while regional level comes out a bit lower with 50%.

Figure 8. Enhancement of conditions for biosafety work according to local stakeholders

(Source: TE Survey) * Number of respondents are shown in the figure.

118. The strong achievement of project targets indicates that high turnover had relatively little influence on project outputs. It is, however, expected that it would have more influence on impacts (see 4.4.3) and sustainability (4.8) and less negative effect in countries where biosafety is well established in law and institutionalised. The project effectiveness was slowed by several challenges: delays in launching the harmonized BCH portal and in migrating training materials, limited digital literacy and poor Internet connectivity in some participating countries, and high turnover among national focal points that required repeated training. The MTR 2019 found that the project's results-oriented KM pathways were not clearly articulated in the original logical framework, reducing the ability to monitor how KM products translated into learning outcomes and decision-making improvements.
119. Despite these constraints, the project generated a strong body of lessons learned and good practices, such as the importance of regional champions (e.g., the "Asian BCH Family"), with the KBCH playing a central enabling role. At the regional level, the grouping strengthened peer-to-peer learning, continuity, and mutual support among NFPs, CNAs and technical experts across Asia. Through regular regional workshops, ToT, follow-up national activities, and informal technical exchanges, the group moved beyond individual capacity-building events toward a community of practice. This facilitated faster uptake of BCH tools, improved consistency in data submission, and shared problem-solving. The Asia regional roadmap developed under BCH-III further provided a shared strategic framework for collaboration and sustained engagement. Functionally similar but less institutionalised regional initiatives exist in other regions (South America, Caribbean, the Pacific, Central Asia and Eastern Europe, and Africa, with mixed results, showing the critical need to institutionalize knowledge systems beyond focal point turnover.
120. Adaptive management actions included shifting several workshops to virtual modalities (even prior to COVID-19), developing printed and asynchronous guidance for countries with low bandwidth, and migrating the VLE to UNEP's institutional server to ensure long-term accessibility and institutional ownership. Overall, the KM approach delivered substantial, multilingual learning assets, expanded BCH participation, and strengthened information systems globally, even as structural IT limitations, uneven country capacity, and delays in global platform upgrades constrained the full realization of the knowledge-to-impact pathways envisioned at CEO Approval.

121. **To summarise:** The project had an overall satisfactory performance on effectiveness. It substantially advanced biosafety KM and information-sharing capacities across participating countries, though achievement levels varied between the countries. Outcome 1 demonstrated broad progress in expanding access to BCH data and delivering national workshops. Under Outcome 2, national BCH systems showed measurable strengthening, particularly the significant increase in BCH records and establishment of new procedures or policies in some of the project countries. Outcome 3 confirmed that regional networking and knowledge exchange improved through workshops, case studies, and expert identification. Outcome 4 showed that the RA system was effectively mobilized and contributed to training and KM materials.
122. An outcome is however defined in the UNEP Glossary as a change at institutional level, or changes in behaviours, attitudes or conditions achieved from the use of outputs by intended beneficiaries. **BCH-III contributed to institutional-level changes** in how biosafety information is governed, accessed, and used by national authorities responsible for implementing the CPB. Across participating countries, the project supported a shift from ad-hoc or compliance-driven engagement with the BCH toward more regularised and functionally embedded use of the platform within national biosafety systems. In several contexts, BCH-related responsibilities became more clearly assigned within institutions, and the BCH was increasingly recognised as a legitimate reference point for information-sharing and decision-support, indicating uptake of project outputs into routine institutional practice rather than isolated project activities.
123. At the level of **behavioural and attitudinal change**, the project influenced how key stakeholders—particularly NFPs, CNAs, and technical staff—perceive and engage with the BCH. The PIRs and evaluation data provide evidence that assumptions held for national biosafety frameworks that are operational and nationally supported with a budgetary allocation and decision makers that use relevant biosafety information from the BCH, an enabling politically will of the key national stakeholders and functional regional networks. Despite national differences, it is an indication of increased confidence, autonomy, and willingness among trained stakeholders to use the BCH proactively, seek peer support at regional level, and maintain engagement, reinforced by regional and sub-regional networks, where repeated interaction fostered norms of collaboration, mutual accountability, and peer learning, contributing to more sustained participation beyond formal project events.
124. In line with the drivers defined in the RTOC, the project implementation promoted good governance principles as per the CPB. There were leading champions for promotion of informed decision making in many countries and sub-regional networks that have started implementation of road maps. Most importantly, the project provided relevant tools and quality training materials in all UN languages for inclusive stakeholder participation in the BCH, including gender. The vision of diverse roles of men and women and content on gender equality was strengthened in gender sensible training packages and awareness of social, cultural and linguistic sensitivities were raised through the ToT workshops.
125. For a global project with 76 countries, the level of engagement logically varies between the countries. Outcome achievement was uneven across countries and regions, reflecting differences in enabling conditions such as political support, institutional stability, and resource availability. Where national biosafety frameworks were operational and supported, behavioural changes consolidated into institutional routines, strengthening prospects for sustainability. Conversely, in contexts affected by instability or weak institutional anchoring, changes remained more fragile.

126. Overall, while some assumptions underpinning outcome-level change held only partially across countries, the project demonstrated positive adaptive management in response to contextual constraints, such as continued online training during and after COVID-19 and institutionalisation of the VLE that helped mitigate severe disruptions. As a result, BCH-III achieved outcome-level change by moving beneficiary institutions and individuals toward more consistent, informed, and collaborative engagement with the BCH, thereby strengthening the functional implementation of the CPB.

4.4.3 Likelihood of Impact

127. The BCH-III project has laid a strong foundation for long-term impact by significantly strengthening national and regional capacities to generate, manage, and share biosafety information in accordance with the CPB. BCH-III contributed to **long-term improvements in global and national biosafety governance** consistent with UNEP's mandate, to support environmental governance, transparency, and multilateral environmental agreements. By strengthening sustained engagement with the BCH, the project helped reinforce the conditions for more informed, transparent, and accountable decision-making on LMOs. The PIRs, other documents, interviews and TE survey indicate that BCH-III laid durable foundations for continued information exchange, regulatory cooperation, and compliance with the CPB at global and national levels.
128. At the **systemic level**, the project's impact is reflected in the consolidation of a global biosafety information system in which countries are better positioned to participate meaningfully and on a more equal footing. The institutionalisation of regional and sub-regional collaboration and strengthened national engagement, contributed to reducing information asymmetries between countries and enhancing South–South cooperation. These changes support longer-term global environmental benefits by enabling countries to manage biodiversity in accordance with internationally agreed rules and procedures.
129. In terms of **sustainability and intergenerational effects**, BCH-III strengthened human and institutional capacities that are likely to persist beyond project closure, particularly where national systems and regional networks are sufficiently anchored. By embedding access to information, participation, and gender responsiveness into biosafety capacity development, the project contributed indirectly to broader UNEP objectives related to human rights, equity, and sustainable development. While the full environmental impacts of improved biosafety decision-making will materialise over time, BCH-III's long-lasting contribution lies in reinforcing the governance conditions necessary for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in a rapidly evolving biotechnological landscape.
130. The process towards impact on the national institutional capacity and use of knowledge generated is variable. In many of the countries several years have passed since the main project activities, and current government staff members did not participate, or they simply do not remember the project. However, stakeholders that do recall the BCH-III activities mention that despite the relatively small budgets to each country it gave substantial positive results when they were combined with other national initiatives, but less when they were free-standing efforts. Institutional changes during the BCH project period have mostly been a product of government policies and strategies and not an outcome of the project, but the project has often been able to accompany these changes, e.g., public sector staff has improved its knowledge and access to the project site, tools, and advisory.
131. Overall, the likelihood of long-term impact is assessed as high in most of the project countries, while in other countries the project achieved some impact or no impact at all. This is logical for a global project with few resources to each country. Despite this

limitation and contextual risks such as turnover in national institutions and varied digital readiness, the project's systemic approach, combined with the creation of information systems and regional support structures, indicate that the project would continue to generate positive effects beyond its implementation period.

132. The survey and stakeholder interviews during the TE indicate that the project capacity building to certain degree involved monitoring of social and environmental impacts, but no unintended negative impacts of the project have been detected. However, some minor unintended effects were mentioned in the MTR and the PIRs 2023-2025 such as unrealistic expectations for biosafety reforms that could not be met within the project's mandate, occasionally resulting in frustration (e.g., Angola, Cameroon, Sri Lanka, Malawi, Mongolia, several SIDS). The BCH-III project generated unintended positive effects that strengthened biosafety governance beyond its planned outputs. In some countries including Maldives, Nicaragua and Kenya the project's capacity-building activities catalysed the drafting or updating of national biosafety laws, despite legal reform not being an explicit objective of the project. There were also improved national digital information systems and data management in many project countries as an effect of training on the BCH portals.

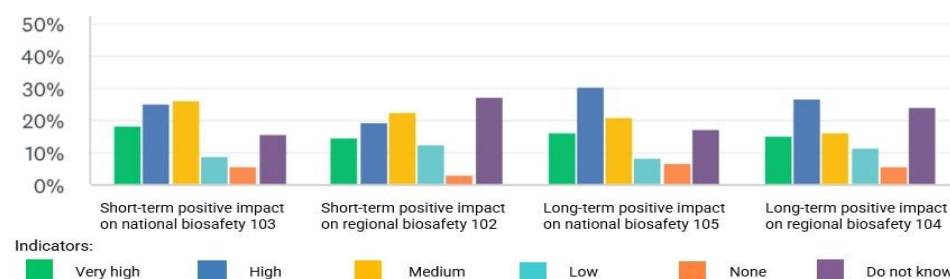
Table 16. Likelihood of impact

Factors influencing likelihood of impact	Assessment	Justification
Drivers to support transition from Outputs to the Project Outcomes	Partially in place	<i>The following drivers are in process but so far not fully in place:</i> i. Implementation of good governance principles as per the CPB, ii. Existence of willing lead champions to promote the use of the BCH to support informed decision making, iii. Active sub-regional networks implementing the BCH road maps, iv. Access to relevant biosafety information (capacity and skills to generate, collate and register biosafety information on the BCH, v. Sustained and inclusive stakeholder participation in biosafety information flow (from generation, collating, access and use) vi. Sustained existence and update of relevant and quality training materials for capacity building, and national training systems.
Assumptions for the change process from Outputs to Project Outcomes	Partially hold	<i>Assumptions i - v hold for many countries but not for all. Assumption vi does not hold (there is no secured RA funding)</i> i. NFPs and CNAs have the appropriate channels to publish BCH information. ii. National capacitated staff to carry out analyses is being maintained in the institutions. iii. National approvals of mandatory BCH information. iv. Websites and other public information lead to recognition of regional BCH Coordination Centres. v. National approvals of BCH organisational procedures. vi. Funding for Certified Regional Advisory System. vii. Translation of all training material into the UN languages will increase participation of broader stakeholder groups. viii. Gender sensible training package will ensure gender balance among trainees.
Proportion of Project Outcomes fully or partially achieved	Some	<i>The assessment format gives only 3 alternatives. Even though the proportion of project outcomes is high, the alternative "All" could not be selected</i>
Drivers to support transition from Project Outcomes to Intermediate States	Partially in place	<i>Same assessment as for Drivers mentioned above</i>
Assumptions for the change process from the Project Outcomes to Intermediate States	Partially in place	i. High-level Government representatives are using BCH portals for their decision-making: <i>Many, but not all project countries.</i> ii. Positive regional/sub-regional environment enables collaboration on BCH, which facilitates knowledge & experience sharing: <i>Ad-hoc.</i> iii. Sufficient national and/or international funding to maintain an effective and updated BCH system: <i>Not yet secured.</i> iv. Institutional support and funding for BCH Regional Advisory System: <i>Not secured.</i>

Factors influencing likelihood of impact	Assessment	Justification
		v. National Biosafety Frameworks operational and nationally supported with a budgetary allocation. vi. An enabling politically will of the key stakeholders at national level; vii. Regional and Sub-Regional networks institutionalized and functional.
Proportion of Intermediate States achieved	All	<i>The two intermediate states were achieved because they are defined as “enhanced” without defining the level of enhancement. This would in any case have been difficult to measure.</i>
Drivers to support transition from Intermediate States to Impact	Partially in place	<i>The following drivers are in process but so far not fully in place:</i> i. Easy and efficient access to info on LMOs ii. Awareness among decision makers of the importance of biosafety iii. Financial, institutional and socio-political sustainability of the BCH mechanisms
Assumptions for the change process from Intermediate States to Impact	Partially hold	<i>The following assumptions partially hold but vary between countries, depending on political priorities, budget constraints, lobbying, etc.:</i> i. Enhanced access and use of info on LMO will lead to decisions that enhance conservation of biodiversity ii. Enhanced sustainability of BCH mechanisms for effective and inclusive participation will lead to safe and effective use of modern biotechnology and thereby enhanced conservation of biodiversity.
Overall rating:	Moderately Likely	

133. The mentioned analysis of likelihood of impact is also reflected in the view of national stakeholders that responded to the TE survey. As presented in Figure 8, 50% respondents consider that the project would have a high or very high positive impact on biosafety in their country and 42.9% that it would have a high or very high positive impact on biosafety in their region. A high percentage responded “I do not know” on positive regional impact (24% for long-term and 27.5% for short term), which is due to fewer stakeholders with experience on the regional project activities than on national level.

Figure 9. Contribution to impact according to local stakeholders¹⁵



(Source: TE Survey)* Number of respondents are shown in the figure.

134. **Contribution to Impact:** The following Contribution Analysis was done based on the project's ToC. BCH-III made a substantial and credible contribution to the enabling conditions required for long-term improvements in biosafety governance, in line with UNEP's mandate and the CPB. Across its four outcomes, the project strengthened national capacities for generating, managing and interpreting biosafety information, reinforced regional cooperation mechanisms and structures, and consolidated global support functions through the RA network, VLE platform and UNEP-SCBD agreements supporting the BCH migration. These combined results constitute the core intermediate states envisioned in the project's ToC and represent necessary prerequisites for Parties to fulfil their CPB information-sharing obligations and take more transparent, evidence-based decisions regarding LMOs.

¹⁵ Number of respondents are shown in the figure.

135. Contribution to BCH-III is strongest at the level of national and regional capacity, procedures and tools. The project directly delivered 137 national workshops, extensive ToT programmes, regional workshops with roadmaps, new BCH nodes, updated training materials, and thousands of trained stakeholders. In more than 40 countries, it helped establish or improve national BCH procedures and significantly increased the volume and quality of records submitted to the BCH. Regional institutions and networks, many existing before the project, were reinforced and supported by structured roadmaps. These results are unlikely to have occurred in the same form or magnitude without BCH-III and are therefore considered to be largely caused by project interventions or achieved with high project contribution.
136. At the level of higher-order outcomes and long-term impact, direct contribution becomes more diffuse, as improvements in biosafety governance depend on multiple drivers, including SCBD's global normative role, national political will, legislative developments, and the broader biosafety assistance landscape. Nevertheless, BCH-III has demonstrably strengthened the information infrastructure essential for CPB implementation, improved the ability of national and regional actors to use biosafety information effectively, and enhanced the sustainability of these capacities through strengthened RAs, training systems and digital platforms. While no project of this type can, within its timeframe, show direct causal links to specific LMO decisions or risk-management outcomes, BCH-III has materially increased the likelihood of longer-term positive impacts by improving transparency, institutional readiness and the operational environment for informed biosafety decision-making.

Findings Statements on Effectiveness:

137. **Outputs and Outcomes:** BCH-III delivered the vast majority of its planned outputs at national, regional, and global levels, including most of the planned outputs. These outputs were generally of good quality and enhanced institutional capacity, data management, and regional knowledge exchange. However, uptake and effective use varied across countries due to differences in digital readiness, staff continuity, and institutional capacity. The project contributed to meaningful outcomes such as institutional and behavioural change in how biosafety information is governed and used under the CPB. Engagement with the BCH shifted in many countries from ad-hoc or compliance-driven reporting toward more regularised, embedded use within national biosafety systems, with clearer institutional responsibilities and greater recognition of the BCH as a decision-support and information-sharing tool. Stakeholders demonstrated increased confidence, autonomy, and willingness to engage proactively with the BCH and with regional peers, although outcome achievement remained uneven and more fragile in contexts with weak enabling conditions or institutional instability.
138. **Likelihood of Impact:** BCH-III has a moderately likely long-term impact by reinforcing national and regional capacities and contributing to a more coherent and inclusive global biosafety information system. Strengthened regional collaboration and sustained national engagement reduced information asymmetries and enhanced South–South cooperation, supporting more transparent and accountable biosafety governance in line with UNEP's mandate. While full environmental impacts will materialise over time and is highly variable between the countries, the project's emphasis on institutionalisation, inclusiveness, and access to information increases the likelihood that its benefits for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use will endure beyond project closure.

Rating for Effectiveness: Satisfactory (S)*Rating for Availability of Outputs: Satisfactory (S)**Rating for Achievement of Project Outcomes: Satisfactory (S)**Rating for Achievement of Likelihood of Impact: Moderately Likely (ML)***4.5 Financial Management****4.5.1 Adherence to UNEP's Financial Policies and Procedures**

139. The BCH-III project adhered well to UNEP's Financial Policies and Procedures, with some manageable weaknesses linked mainly to project duration, complexity, institutional transitions, and reporting, rather than non-compliance. FM followed UNEP's established procedures for budgeting, disbursement, and reporting, including the use of Project Cooperation Agreements (PCAs) and SSFAs with national partners. No cases of ineligible expenditures or audit concerns are flagged in the documents provided to the evaluator. The project maintained satisfactory financial risk ratings throughout most of its life, with no escalation to "Substantial" or "High" financial risk.
140. Other weaknesses and constraints included: (i) Delays linked to administrative and agreement processes: The PIRs note that delays in finalizing SSFAs and fund disbursement through partner agencies affected implementation schedules. While not a breach of financial rules, these delays reduced efficiency and point to procedural rigidity when operating across many countries and institutions; and (ii) Limited outcome-level financial reporting that focused appropriately on compliance, disbursement, and expenditure categories, but was less explicit in linking expenditures to outcome-level cost-effectiveness.

4.5.2 Completeness of Financial Information

141. The PIR 2025 informed that, as of 30 June 2025, the total expenditure matched the total disbursement, indicating clean financial reconciliation with no unexplained variances or outstanding balances. This reflects compliance with UNEP financial controls, Umoja tracking, and GEF reporting requirements. The FM reported a total actual expenditure of \$ 4,516,309.66 as of December 8, 2025, while the formal financial closing is until March 2026. There is no detail on cost per component because the UNEP accounting goes only by budget lines.
142. Co-financing was planned to USD 8.76 million, mainly to in-kind country contributions with 61 countries presenting endorsement letters during the project design period. As shown in table 6, actual co-financing registered to date is only USD 1,929,556, or 22% of the pledged amount. Out of this, USD 7,073,531 was pledged from the countries but only USD 626,898 (8.9%) has been reported.

Table 17. Financial management

Financial management components:	Rating	Evidence/ Comments
1. Adherence to UNEP's/GEF's policies and procedures:	S	
Any evidence that indicates shortcomings in the project's adherence to UNEP or donor policies, procedures or rules	Yes	Insufficient reporting and verification of national co-financing.
Was first disbursement carried out within 9 months of UNEP's project approval date.	Yes	24.10.2016

Financial management components:		Rating	Evidence/ Comments
Were the procurement policies of UNEP and the donor(s) followed? (<i>where applicable</i>)		Yes	There is no indication of the contrary in the docs
2. Completeness of project financial information:			
Provision of key documents to the evaluator (based on the responses to A-H below)		MS	Some provided, not all
A.	Co-financing and Project Cost's tables at design (by budget lines)	Yes	ProDoc App. 2 gave co-financing by budget lines.
B.	Revisions to the budget	Yes	The budget was revised after MTR, approved by UNEP
C.	All relevant project legal agreements (e.g. SSFA, PCA, ICA)	Yes	PCA, ICA and 42 of 46 SSFAs provided
D.	Proof of fund transfers	Yes	Only a table of transfers presented
E.	Proof of co-financing (cash and in-kind)	No	Some countries provided co-finance reports but not all given to evaluator
F.	A summary report on the project's expenditures during the life of the project (<i>by budget lines, project components and/or annual level</i>)	No	Summary is provided but not by components
G.	Copies of any completed audits and management responses (<i>where applicable</i>)	N/A	Project audit is not required. Corporate audit is satisfactory for GEF
H.	Procure documents, including the approved requisition document and Source Selection Plan (<i>where applicable</i>)	N/A	N/A
I.	Any other financial information that was required for this project (list):	N/A	
Overall rating		S	Satisfactory

Findings Statements on Financial Management:

143. The BCH-III project generally adhered to UNEP's Financial Policies and Procedures, following established rules for budgeting, disbursement, procurement, and financial oversight, with no evidence of ineligible expenditures or significant fiduciary non-compliance identified, despite some constraints related to delays and reporting gaps.
144. While core financial figures were reported and reconciled, the completeness of financial information was constrained by inconsistencies in final expenditure reporting (different figures from Fund Management Officer and PIR), incomplete national co-financing documentation, and missing supporting evidence such as detailed expenditure summaries.

Rating for Financial Management: Satisfactory (S)

Rating for Adherence to UNEP's Financial Policies and Procedures: Satisfactory (S)

Rating for Completeness of Financial Information: Moderately Satisfactory (MS)

4.6 Efficiency

145. **Project governance:** The BCH-III project should have been governed by the PSC, but that did not happen. Only two PSC meetings have been confirmed, in 2018 and 2021¹⁶. In parallel there were meetings by the IAC of the BCH in 2020, 2023 and 2025, which is a committee existing since 2008. Even though the IAC has a wider purpose, it would have

¹⁶There were confusions on the number of steering committee meetings but only 2 meetings were confirmed by the Task manager

been more efficient to use the IAC as the advisory committee for the BCH-III instead of a steering committee that seldom met.

146. **Cost-effectiveness:** BCH-III shows a mixed picture. The MTR rated efficiency as Moderately Satisfactory, noting that the project's even allocation of resources across countries, despite different baselines and needs, limited cost-effectiveness in contexts with weak biosafety demand. At the same time, the project leveraged substantial in-kind co-financing from SCBD, KBCH, and participating countries, allowing delivery of 137 national workshops and extensive training within the US\$ 4.7 million GEF budget. Countries such as Mongolia demonstrated strong co-financing by supporting national workshops, increasing efficiency, but most countries have not complied with the pledged co-financing amount (see table 6). The project also built effectively on pre-existing institutions in charge of biosafety that had been collaborating partners in BCH-I, including NFP/CNA structures, the RA system, previous biosafety projects, SCBD's global BCH infrastructure, and the Korea-led Asian BCH Family network, which improved efficiency because it was no need to establish such structures. The Regional Advisor system created economies of scale by enabling a small cadre of experts to support many countries. Efficiency was strengthened with virtual modalities during COVID-19 and later, which reduced travel and significantly lowered UNEP's carbon footprint.
147. Timeliness was a clear weakness and the main factor limiting overall efficiency. The project experienced a slow start due to administrative delays, including late signing of agreements and an almost year-long managerial gap following the resignation of the first PM. A major design dependency—the launch of SCBD's new BCH/ABSCH platform—was repeatedly delayed, causing corresponding delays in training materials and national rollout. COVID-19 magnified these issues, postponing workshops and requiring multiple no-cost extensions. The original 48-month project underwent four extensions (see table 5), resulting in 54 months extension and a total duration of 102 months by 2025. Despite these delays, the project implemented several time-saving measures: adopting virtual workshops, reallocating unused SSFA funds to regional ToTs, and streamlining the workplan after the MTR. According to the PIR 2025, these measures allowed completion of national workshops in all SSFA countries and deliver regional training while staying within the available budget.
148. Interviewees during the evaluation mentioned the following factors that defined project execution efficiency: **Positive:** The national stakeholders' real need for the BCH website and interest in learning. **Negative:** (i) COVID-19; (ii) High turnover in the participating countries combined with long implementation period; and (iii) Turnover and administrative issues in UNEP, especially transfer between the last project managers.
149. An additional factor reducing efficiency was that some countries lacked the enabling environment (political will, legal frameworks, institutional mandate), causing stakeholders to become discouraged after training. The PIRs mention that in parts of Eastern Europe and Central Asia formal legal mandates for BCH functions were weak or fragmented, with responsibilities split across ministries or embedded in institutions with limited authority. In the Caribbean (e.g., Barbados), small administrations faced overlapping mandates and limited legal clarity on BCH responsibilities. In Asia & the Pacific, some countries outside the Asian BCH Family (e.g., Sri Lanka and Solomon Islands) faced institutional mandate constraints linked to incomplete or outdated biosafety legislation. In Africa there are several examples, such as Angola needed substantial support but was lacking necessary prerequisites for biosafety implementation; Cameroon had institutional fragmentation and unclear mandates, leading to frustration among workshop participants; Congo had weak national coordination and low political priority, limiting the impact of training; and Namibia

needed significant technical support but had slow national uptake (all examples from PIRs except Congo that was mentioned in the MTR). In some countries that initially showed the same weaknesses (e.g., Nicaragua, Maldives), BCH-III was able to accompany national reforms and ensure institutional strengthening. Interviews during the TE process show institutional improvements also in Barbados and Mongolia.

150. A common indicator of efficiency is the ratio of outputs to effort (or % of targets achieved to % of expenditures) during the implementation time. The underlying assumption being that achieving 100% of targets with the available budget and during the planned execution period would give an efficiency ratio of 1. As shown in the table 18 below, the efficiency ratio was only 0.45 (moderately unsatisfactory), mostly due to the long implementation period.

Table 18. Calculation of efficiency ratio at the moment of the Terminal Evaluation

Input	Calculation	Result
Targets achieved	Outputs 94% + Outcomes 89.6% / 2	91.8
Part of budget used (GEF funds only)	USD 4,516,309.66 as % of USD 4,699,684	96.1
Time used	102 months as % of 48 months	212.5
Efficiency Ratio*	91.8 x 100 / 96.1 x 212.5	0.45

*<40 = U, 40-55 = MU, 55-70 = MS, 70-85 = S, >85 = HS

151. To assess the reasons for the overall low efficiency it is necessary to go back to the project design. The BCH-III project was expected to be implemented in 76 countries during 4 years, with a financial support from GEF of USD 4,699,684. This is an average of only USD 61,838 per country if we include also staff cost on central level, regional activities, etc. This is a challenge that should have been discovered already during the design process. Even worse, the project was expected to follow-up implementation in all the participating countries. The governments were requested to prepare plans, implement the activities (including 3 national level workshops) and prepare reports for all workshops, as well as country progress reports. All this management is extremely expensive from a cost-benefit perspective and results in relatively low priority from many countries compared to their ongoing larger projects. The project design also included USD 7,073,531 in-kind co-financing from the national governments, but only 8.9% of this has been reported. Lack of priority for presenting the reports is the main reason, but stakeholder interviews indicate that there is also much national in-kind co-financing that was not even considered during the project design, such as the value of offices and equipment (see also 4.5).
152. The mentioned situation greatly worsened during the period of consecutive no-cost extensions. The project should have ended in September 2020, and the PMU reported by June 2020 a Satisfactory implementation progress rating (source PIR 2020). At that moment the project had disbursed USD 3,524,537 (75% of the GEF funding) and had an expenditure of approx. USD 2.6 million. The project was given a first no-cost extension of 15 months, until Dec. 2021. The PMU could at that moment have requested the countries to finalise the activities in the extension period and then return any unused funds. Despite COVID-19 that had most impact in the same years, the project had the advantage of being able to do the activities online. Instead of wrapping up during the extension period, the project had five extensions of implementation for a total of 4.5 years (until March 2025), which is more than the expected implementation period. The financial closure was planned for March 2026. The types and duration of extensions, as well as the reasons for them, are presented in Table 5. *There is, however, no such thing as a "no-cost" extension.* The UNEP technical, administrative and financial staff still were getting paid, resulting in higher costs for UNEP than those covered by the GEF agency fee. There are no available data for the total staff cost for the extension periods, however

it must have had a very low cost-effectiveness since the GEF funds that were used in this period were only USD 1.68 million, or USD 373,846/year.

153. The project also suffered from frequent changes of UNEP project manager. After the first project manager left in 2022 there have been three additional project managers. Despite hand-over notes, it takes time to understand such a large global project and carry out the tasks efficiently. One specific weakness identified by the evaluation is document management and archiving, which often stems from inadequate management and lack of proper handover, but most of all that the project did not archive the documents in a centralised institutional system that a new project manager could directly take over. Interviews confirmed that some documents were lost during transition in project management. This is however not the only example of lost documentation. For instance, not all project documents were migrated from the BCH-III website to the VLE or not accessible for other reasons, and some have therefore not been reviewed by the evaluator.

Findings Statements on Efficiency:

154. The project had inefficient governance with very few PSC meetings, and it also demonstrated mixed cost-effectiveness due to variable results in the project countries. Despite successfully securing government efforts in many countries to deliver a high volume of workshops within a limited budget, supported by efficient Regional Advisors, the cost-effectiveness was significantly constrained by an overambitious design relative to available resources and uneven country efficiency. The high administrative burden required following up on 76 countries with minimal funding for each. These structural inefficiencies were further exacerbated by extended implementation periods, leading to increased total UNEP staff costs that reduced the overall cost-benefit.
155. Project implementation faced major and prolonged delays, driven by early administrative bottlenecks, repeated postponements in launching the new BCH/ABSCH platform, the COVID-19 pandemic, and high staff turnover—ultimately resulting in four no-cost extensions that more than doubled the planned duration. While adaptive measures such as virtual workshops and streamlined post-MTR planning improved delivery, the extended timeline significantly reduced efficiency and created substantial operational strain on both UNEP and participating countries.

Rating for Efficiency: Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)

4.7 Monitoring and Reporting

156. The monitoring and reporting arrangements of the BCH-III project were shaped by UNEP's standard GEF-compliant systems and the adjustments made following the MTR. Overall, monitoring improved significantly after the refinement of the results framework in 2020, although persistent weaknesses in documentation at the national level and gaps in risk monitoring constrained the system's ability to consistently verify progress across all indicators.

4.7.1 Monitoring of Project Implementation

157. Monitoring of project progress during the first half of the project was constrained by a results framework that lacked clear indicator definitions and measurable outcomes. This made it difficult to systematically track progress until the MTR prompted revisions. The updated framework, adopted in 2020, established four outcomes and a structured

set of indicators that improved the consistency and clarity of monitoring across national, regional, and global levels. Annual PIRs subsequently reported against these revised indicators, documenting progress in workshop delivery, training outputs, development of the VLE, and national-level institutional changes. However, the TE found that several indicators—particularly those requiring verification of institutional procedures, CNA staff training, sustainability plans, or legal reforms—remained difficult to substantiate due to inconsistent reporting from national partners and insufficient central archiving of evidence (see Efficiency). Despite these gaps, the project demonstrated active use of monitoring data for adaptive management. Following the MTR, workplans were streamlined, virtual modalities expanded, and workshop approaches adjusted to address uneven country engagement, COVID-19 disruptions, and delays linked to the SCBD platform migration. These adaptations allowed the project to maintain progress despite the extended implementation period.

158. The PMU planned, monitored and reported the project activities with use of the Results Framework, presented e.g. in the PIRs. There were as mentioned extensive changes in the results framework as a result of the MTR, but no documentation of formal approval of the changes was provided to the evaluator. Stakeholder interviews on national level confirmed that the participating countries did not use the results framework in their planning of project activities but instead most often considered the project workshops as individual activities, often with a long time between each event. Nearly all the 40 countries that carried out such workshops had at least two workshops and the majority had three (reports verified). The two first workshops were implemented with support from the regional advisors and the last one the countries took care of on their own. The workshops were summarised and reported from the countries to the PMU.
159. Risk monitoring was less systematic. Although the ProDoc included an initial risk matrix, there is no evidence that this matrix was regularly updated during implementation. PIRs assigned risk ratings annually, typically “Low” until 2024 and “Moderate” by 2025, but these ratings did not reflect a structured reassessment of changing risk factors such as repeated project manager turnover, national-level institutional instability, or delays in the BCH platform launch. Risk-related adaptations took place, but they occurred reactively rather than emerging from proactive risk monitoring processes.
160. Environmental and social safeguards monitoring reflected the project’s low-risk classification under UNEP policies. The safeguards checklist prepared during project design identified no environmental risks and only positive or neutral social impacts. No safeguard mitigation measures were considered as required, and PIRs consistently confirmed full compliance with UNEP’s Environmental and Social Safeguard Management procedures. The TE likewise confirmed that the project did not trigger any adverse environmental or social impacts throughout implementation.

4.7.2 Project Reporting

161. UNEP’s reporting requirements were extensive and clearly defined in the ProDoc, including quarterly financial reports, semi-annual progress updates, annual PIRs, co-financing reports, and final reporting obligations. These requirements were consistently met, despite the complications caused by staff turnover. Reporting quality improved markedly after the MTR, with PIRs from 2020 onward presenting more comprehensive and better substantiated information on the outputs, challenges, adaptive measures, gender participation, and safeguard compliance. The 2025 PIR, in particular, provided detailed narrative and quantitative reporting and served as the most complete synthesis of project progress.

162. Reporting on results mirrored the strengths and weaknesses of the monitoring system. Quantitative outputs (e.g. number of workshops, participants trained, national portals developed, and VLE products created) were well documented. However, reporting on institutional outcomes often lacked supporting evidence, reflecting the monitoring gaps noted above. This included limited documentation on national procedures, policy reforms, CNA training figures, and dissemination pathways for national training materials.
163. The project can be considered as “gender sensitive” because it recognized gender differences and avoided reinforcing inequalities but did not actively seek to transform them. The project team was aware of gender issues and encouraged gender-disaggregated participation data for national workshops, but there was limited outcome-level ambition.
164. Gender-disaggregated reporting was consistent across national and regional workshops, with PIRs tracking the proportion of women participants each year. While women’s participation in the workshops reached 45%, reporting did not extend beyond participation figures to assess gender-specific learning outcomes or structural barriers to women’s engagement. Reporting on vulnerable or marginalised groups was also largely absent. Although the safeguards assessment found no risk of disproportionate impacts, monitoring and reporting systems did not include mechanisms to identify or track participation of vulnerable populations, persons with disabilities, or lower-capacity stakeholder groups.
165. Reporting on environmental and social safeguards was appropriate for the project’s low-risk profile. PIRs confirmed compliance each year, and no grievances or safeguard-related incidents were reported. The TE concluded that safeguards monitoring was adequate and proportional to the project’s nature and objectives.
166. Overall, the monitoring and reporting systems of BCH-III were adequate and improved substantially with the post-MTR adjustments. They supported adaptive management and enabled the project to achieve the planned results however with significant delays and operational disruptions. Limitations in documentation, inconsistent national-level reporting, and lack of systematic risk monitoring reduced the system’s ability to fully substantiate institutional outcomes and intermediate states. Strengthening document archiving, establishing clearer evidence standards for institutional indicators, and integrating proactive risk monitoring mechanisms would improve the robustness of M&E systems in future phases or similar UNEP-GEF capacity-building projects.

Findings Statements on Monitoring and Reporting:

167. **Project monitoring** was weak from the beginning but improved significantly after the midterm review with clearer indicators and more structured tracking, however persistent gaps in national-level documentation monitoring limited the ability to fully verify institutional progress.
168. **Project reporting** met the UNEP and GEF formal requirements and became more comprehensive after the MTR, yet evidence for institutional outcomes remained weak due to inconsistent national reporting and limited documentation beyond quantitative outputs.

Rating for Monitoring and Reporting: Moderately Satisfactory (MS)

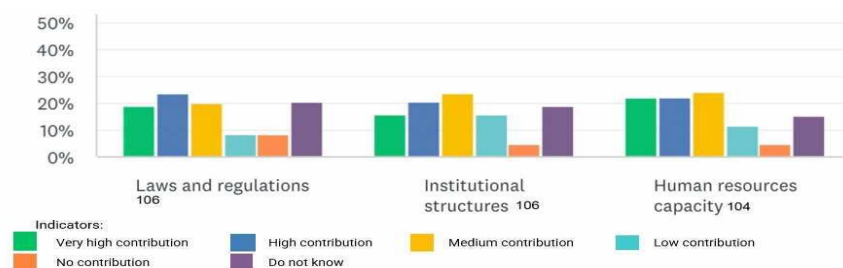
Rating for Monitoring of Project Implementation: Moderately Satisfactory (MS)

Rating for Project Reporting: Moderately Satisfactory (MS)

4.8 Sustainability

4.8.1 Socio-political Sustainability

169. The interviews with government officials during missions and online, showed a high degree of ownership and political support for the practices and tools that the project had promoted, but current staff in many of the countries has little information about the BCH due to staff turnover and the long time that has passed since the last BCH-III activity in these countries. The Final Report and PIR 2025 for the BCH-III project indicate moderate to high socio-political sustainability, supported by the institutionalisation of biosafety responsibilities in 40 countries. Broad national ownership was also confirmed in the MTR and the TE survey, where most emphasis was given to institutional strengthening through the extensive participation in national workshops that gave emphasis on the national biosafety roles, as well as technical support from the RAs. However, socio-political continuity remains vulnerable to high turnover of the government officials - a recurring challenge highlighted throughout project reporting. The VLE and regional networks (with or without UNEP support) would mitigate this risk by enabling self-paced learning and peer support, but long-term socio-political sustainability will depend on high-level political support, the countries maintenance of stable institutional points of responsibility, and integration of the BCH tasks into enduring mandates.
170. As demonstrated in figure 9, 44.2% of the TE survey participants consider that the project had a high or very high contribution to sustain the positive results on human resources capacity; while 42.5% consider that it had a high or very high contribution on laws and regulations and 36.8% indicated high or very high contribution on institutional structures.
171. A positive sign is also that 45% of the participants in the TE survey indicated that their organisation has high or very high capacity and experience to sustain the project results now when the project has ended, but a somewhat lower figure (36%) informed that they have much or very much human resources for it, while nearly all have strong interest. Those that were most positive mentioned improved knowledge on biosafety issues, strengthened regulatory frameworks (in some countries), more awareness and improved coordination. Only few examples of replication of project results were mentioned during interviews. These have been some national training courses and seminars covering BCH after the last project workshop. One alert for sustainability is that the regional advisors currently have no financing, and the system could collapse if nothing is being done soon. Since these advisors are highly skilled, they would most probably soon move on to other positions.

Figure 7. Project's contribution to changes that will sustain the BCH-III results according to local stakeholders

Source: TE Survey). * Number of respondents are shown in the figure.

4.8.2 Financial Sustainability

172. Financial sustainability varies significantly across countries, but interviews with government staff in institutions in charge of biosafety reveal that most will continue to be financed from the Government budget if they no longer can count on project funding. In many of the countries the small financial support from BCH-III was anyway not an important factor in their priorities and the project support should be seen in a wider perspective. The PIR-2025 and stakeholder interviews confirm that some governments have allocated funds for BCH portal maintenance and biosafety information systems. Examples from countries with strong biosafety legislation and institutional mandates such as Uruguay, the Republic Türkiye and South Africa indicate positive financial commitment, particularly in middle-income countries. Interviews also indicate a potential for increased national co-financing, even monetary, if there is a new BCH project phase. Since there is no decision on a potential next phase, the rating of sustainability is based on the BCH-III outcomes only without a new phase.
173. National stakeholder interviews in the poorer/smaller countries reveal that without funding from any agency the type of activities that BCH-III financed would be reduced due to budget restrictions. Many lower-capacity countries (LDC and SIDS) face constraints related to competing priorities and limited domestic funding for IT updates, data management, and staff training. Continued external support – both financial and technical – may be necessary for these countries to sustain portal functionality and maintain alignment with future platform upgrades.

4.8.3 Institutional Sustainability

174. Institutional sustainability is considered strong due to the BCH-III project's systemic approach. Trained core staff in ministries and biosafety authorities is the most common outcome of the project in all participating countries, but the sustainability of this improved institutional strengthening would depend on the degree of staff turnover and transfer of knowledge to new staff members. The creation or upgrading of national BCH portals, the institutionalisation of national data procedures, and the migration of the VLE to UNEP's core infrastructure ensure that core functions can continue after project closure. The RA network, where 19 are currently active and 16 certified, provides a pool of regional expertise for capacity building, but is depending on continued funding to not collapse and miss the current advisors. While institutional stability varies, the embedding of biosafety information management procedures into government systems, combined with durable global and regional support structures, has resulted in that most project countries are better positioned to maintain and expand project results in the medium and long term. As presented in figure 9, the three main areas of project support that would give expectations of sustainability of BCH-III outcomes beyond the project implementation are laws and regulations, institutional structure, and human resources capacity. Stakeholder interviews indicate interest for a new BCH project or

project phase; however, this seems to be motivated more by technical than financial reasons (except in the poorest and smallest countries), especially the need to train new staff.

Findings Statements on Sustainability:

175. **Socio-political and institutional sustainability** is strong, supported by broad national ownership, institutionalised biosafety responsibilities, and established national portals, but remains vulnerable to high staff turnover, limited replication, and the uncertain future support for regional advisor networks.
176. **Financial sustainability** is uneven across countries: the majority of the governments would be able to fund core biosafety functions domestically and many could even increase co-financing of future projects, but lower-capacity countries remain dependent on external financial and technical support to maintain BCH portals, conduct training, and keep systems aligned with future platform upgrades.

Rating for Likelihood of Sustainability: Moderately Likely (ML)

Rating for Socio-political Sustainability: Likely (L)

Rating for Financial Sustainability: Moderately Likely (ML)

Rating for Institutional Sustainability: Likely (L)

4.9 Factors Affecting Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues

4.9.1 Quality of Project Management and Supervision

4.9.1.1 UNEP/Implementing Agency:

177. As the IA, UNEP's Ecosystems Division (formerly DEPI) ensured overall oversight, GEF-level supervision, and compliance with fiduciary and reporting obligations. The governance arrangements clearly assigned the Division responsibility for monitoring and supervision, including reporting to the GEF and ensuring alignment with UNEP's Programme of Work and safeguards requirements. The evaluation notes that UNEP fulfilled these functions, maintaining coherence with strategic priorities and ensuring that project structures - such as the PSC and Regional Advisor network - remained functional throughout implementation, however with only two or three PSC meetings¹⁷. One weakness is that UNEP in its supervision role should have been able to intervene more strongly on the execution problems of the Law Division (see 4.9.1.2).

4.9.1.2 UNEP/Executing Agency:

178. UNEP's Law Division (formerly DELC) served as the EA, responsible for day-to-day operations, coordination with national partners, and monitoring progress across 76 participating countries. The Division managed national-level activity implementation—including training delivery, partnerships with national biosafety authorities, and coordination with regional advisors—as reflected in the project's strong output delivery. It should be highlighted that the Regional Advisors (RAs) had more direct with the countries than what UNEP had. The Project Document assigned the Law Division

¹⁷ PSC had meetings in 2018 and 2021. UNEP has not provided date or Minutes from a third meeting, and the Evaluator can therefore not confirm that it was carried out. During BCH-III implementation there were also three meetings (2020, 2023, 2025) of the Informal Advisory Committee (IAC) of the BCH.

responsibility for ensuring adequate administrative arrangements, maintaining schedules, and completing outputs on time and within budget, roles that the evaluation confirms were carried out despite the disruptions of COVID-19 and institutional turnover. The TE, however, found areas where executing-level management could have been stronger, such as absence of a complete costed workplan in the ProDoc, weaknesses in the original risk matrix, the transitions between project managers, monitoring focused more on outputs than outcomes, and incomplete archiving of documents, all of which affected execution efficiency.

4.9.2 Stakeholders Participation and Cooperation

179. Stakeholder participation was a core strength of the project, characterised by broad and increasingly institutionalised engagement across national, regional, and global levels. The project involved a wide range of actors, including public-sector duty-bearers, academia, civil society, border-control institutions, and BCH users, while participation remained predominantly public-sector, with limited private-sector involvement. Engagement of key authorities was a challenge throughout the implementation but improved significantly after the MTR, with expanded national training, strong participation of NFPs, CNAs and other authorities, near gender parity among trainees, and growing use of the VLE as a global learning and exchange platform. Several countries (e.g., Republic of Türkiye, Maldives, Kenya, Botswana, Uruguay) have institutionalized biosafety with strong support from the national government, but these are exceptions. A positive example of how to confront this challenge is Barbados, where the first national workshop was dedicated to political decision-makers, resulting in high-level awareness and political support for BCH-III, and increased interest for participation in the other workshops. Regional and global collaboration was reinforced through workshops, peer-learning, ToT, regional nodes, and the RA network, supported by close cooperation between UNEP and SCBD. See also 4.4.

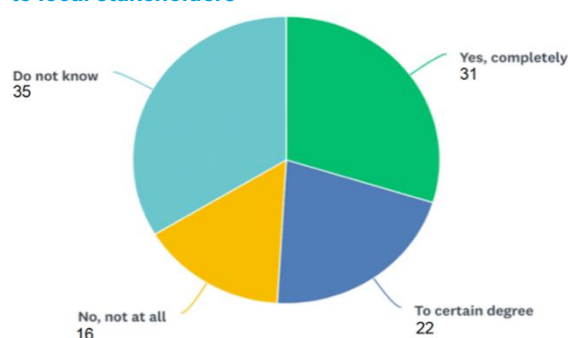
4.9.3 Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality

180. The PMU highlighted that the GEF policy instruments making the inclusion of gender and marginalized groups into project design was not yet a requirement when the project was approved. The GEF Policy on Gender Equality of Nov 2017 became effective for new activities from July 2018 and for ongoing activities from 1 July 2019. The GEF Policy on Stakeholder Engagement became effective from 1 July 2018 for new activities and 1 July 2019 for ongoing ones (source: <https://www.gefio.org/en/home>). Gender participation was more encouraged after the MTR, but emphasis on other marginalised groups was not affected.
181. The BCH-III project design did not include a stand-alone gender or human-rights strategy, but the project incorporated these principles indirectly through its emphasis on inclusive capacity-building, equitable access to biosafety information, and broad stakeholder participation. The project design recognized that biosafety information must be accessible to all stakeholders, including vulnerable groups, in line with UNEP's human-rights-based approach (HRBA). However, gender considerations remained largely implicit rather than operationalized through indicators, targets or gender-responsive actions. It was however a clear improvement from BCH-I and II when gender participation was not measured.

182. During implementation, the project effectively promoted and implemented gender-responsive measures that resulted in meaningful gender outcomes across national, regional and global levels. A consistent 50% gender-balance target guided the nomination process for all workshops, resulting in 45% female participation across national trainings, substantially strengthening the representation of women in biosafety information management roles. Inclusive training design, hybrid learning formats and open-access e-learning tools reduced structural barriers to women's participation, while targeted engagement ensured that women in NFP, CNA, NAU and related technical roles gained practical skills in BCH data entry, validation and use. Women also benefited from increased visibility and professional exchange through regional workshops, case-study development, and COP/MOP training events, contributing to broader networks of biosafety practitioners. The gender participation did however not lead to a transformative impact on the project performance.

183. The national workshops had on average a participation of 45%, verified by the workshop reports. The TE online survey revealed that 29.8% of the registered stakeholders consider that their organisation prioritised completely gender participation in the project, 21.2% to certain degree and 15.4% not at all (see fig. 10). The high percentage that does not know (33.7%) could indicate that there has been low degree of gender prioritisation in these organisations. Number of respondents are shown in the figure.

Figure 8 Gender prioritisation in BCH-III according to local stakeholders



(Source: TE survey)

184. Persons that answered "completely" or "to certain degree" had many different opinions about the impact of gender participation in the project. Some answered that the participation of women in the project was a strategic imperative for effectiveness, equity, and resilience. It ensured inclusivity and diverse perspectives that enhanced the effectiveness and sustainability. It promoted equal access to opportunities, strengthened community ownership, and improved decision-making processes. The project objectives would therefore more likely be achieved efficiently and with equity. Gender-balanced participation is considered a driving force that is resulting in stronger impact; improved ability to manage the BCH platform and access biosafety information, as well as better policies for problem-solving with sustainability. Others comment that they hope the project's constant queries about "gender participation" actually made institutions and departments consider the issue, including for future activities.

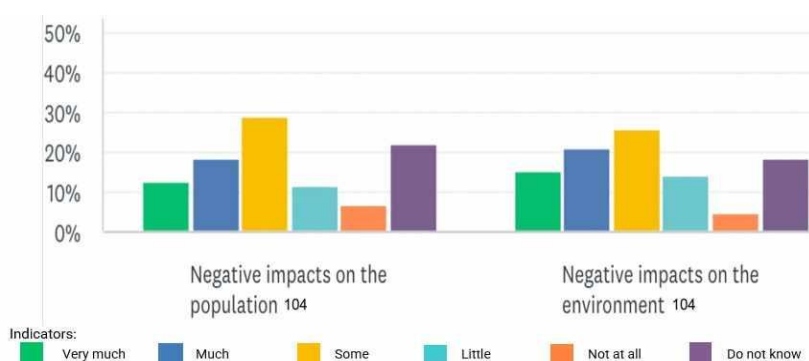
185. The project strongly supported the right of all people to access biosafety information relevant to health, the environment, and decision-making. By helping countries establish or upgrade national BCH portals, the project reinforced transparency and access to environmental information, consistent with Rio Principle 10 and UNEP's HRBA. BCH-III training included a wide range of stakeholders, such as government officials, researchers, customs and quarantine officers, private sector representatives, NGOs, and educators, which supported non-discrimination and equitable participation. The private sector was however not so often participating and NGOs/CSOs to variable degree. An exception is Mongolia, where the NGO Mongolian Biotechnology Association was in charge of organising all the three national workshops. This NGO has memberships of public and private actors, research and civil society. Translation of training materials into all UN languages improved accessibility for non-English speakers. However, the project did not include specific measures targeting indigenous peoples or vulnerable

groups and did not adopt an explicit human-rights framework. Its responsiveness to human rights was therefore indirect but still meaningful because the project gave benefits to all stakeholder groups in the society.

4.9.4 Environmental and Social Safeguards

186. The Environmental and Social Safeguards Assessment found no safeguard issues, and BCH-III was consistently classified as a “No/Low Risk” project throughout its lifecycle, with no risks, complaints, or safeguard-related impacts identified in the ProDoc, PIRs, MTR, or related reviews. Any relevant social aspects, such as stakeholder participation, human rights, and transparency, were adequately addressed through inclusive capacity-building, wide stakeholder engagement, and strengthened national BCH systems. The Social and Environmental Safeguard Management section of the PIRs reported no non-compliance cases and confirmed that activities remained low-risk and aligned with UNEP safeguards requirements. Risks (for project outcomes/outputs) were rated “Low” for many consecutive years but were raised to “Moderate” in the final PIR, reflecting residual institutional and operational risks rather than Environmental and Social (E&S) concerns; these classifications are consistent with the project’s documented challenges around country uptake, staff turnover, and uneven institutional capacity, as outlined in the MTR and subsequent PIR analysis. See also 4.2, 4.7.1, 4.7.2.
187. Overall, the management measures envisioned at CEO Approval were effectively implemented: stakeholder inclusion mechanisms functioned, transparency and information-access safeguards were strengthened through national BCH portals, and fiduciary safeguards (including anti-corruption measures) were applied through UNEP systems. Evidence from the MTR and PIRs also indicates that the project generated relevant lessons, particularly the need for: (i) sustained institutional capacity to maintain BCH systems; (ii) better integration of BCH functions into national biosafety frameworks; and (iii) adaptive management to address high turnover and uneven technical capacity across countries. As a result, the current “Moderate” overall risk rating is justified, and the safeguards-related measures can be assessed as largely effective in managing low inherent risks while contributing to long-term institutional sustainability.

Figure 9. Improvement of biosafety impact monitoring according to local stakeholders



(Source: TE Survey) * Number of respondents are shown in the figure.

188. Even though the project itself would not give any adverse environmental or social impacts, the activities carried out by the national agencies in charge of biosafety have such potential impacts, especially if monitoring and control is not done efficiently. The project therefore included monitoring of social and environmental impact in its training activities. The TE survey indicated that 62.5% consider that the project improved monitoring of negative environmental impact of biosafety (some, much or very much) and 60% consider that it improved monitoring of negative impacts of such work on the

population (figure 11). Changes in political contexts or differing national views on LMOs were assessed by the project as institutional or political risks, not safeguard risks, and were mitigated through broad stakeholder engagement and neutral facilitation approaches.

4.9.5 Country Ownership and Driven-ness

189. Country ownership and driven-ness in BCH-III was moderate overall, with a clear group of “champion” countries (e.g., Republic of Türkiye, Maldives, Kenya, Botswana, Uruguay) showing strong national leadership and a larger group remaining project-driven or passive. By mid-term, all 76 eligible countries had participated in regional workshops, which was a good foundation for awareness and initial buy-in, but this did not consistently translate into national implementation or signing of SSFAs. The MTR noted that several countries did not move from regional engagement to functioning national projects, partly due to limited follow-up by the PMU and weak in-country communication, indicating shallow ownership in those contexts. The PIRs and interviews indicate that this weakness seems to have continued during the rest of the implementation period.
190. At the same time, a substantive subset of countries clearly treated BCH-III as an opportunity to advance nationally owned biosafety priorities. These countries often already had, or were implementing, National Biosafety Frameworks and integrated BCH tasks into national plans and budgets. Where biosafety legislation exists and reflected in national plans and budgets, the ownership is evident, including updated portals, clear institutional roles and dedicated focal points. This was confirmed during missions to the Republic of Türkiye, Mongolia and South Africa. The PIR 2025 reported that by the project end, 41 countries had completed the national activities and developed BCH sustainability plans, 40 had formal procedures for biosafety data flow aligned with their NBFs, and 37 had developed or upgraded BCH portals, which are concrete signs that, in these countries, BCH-III was nationally driven rather than purely donor-driven. The evaluator has however not had access to all these documents for verification.
191. The deeper country ownership is however uneven and closely tied to national political and financial commitment to biosafety. Many countries in Africa, the LDC and SIDS lack fully enacted biosafety laws, dedicated budgets, or sustained demand for LMO-related information, which limits the extent to which BCH functions become a national obligation rather than an externally funded activity. In these cases, the project largely drove activities through workshops and technical support without triggering strong national driven-ness to institutionalize and finance BCH functions beyond the life of BCH-III.

4.9.6 Communication and Public Awareness

192. The BCH-III project implemented a comprehensive programme of communication and public awareness activities to increase visibility, understanding, and effective use of the BCH at national, regional, and global levels. This included the development and dissemination of multilingual outreach products such as a communication strategy, social media toolkit, animated and lessons-learned videos, feature articles, and interactive webinars, complemented by updated training materials and tutorials hosted on the VLE. Together with regional workshops, these efforts reached a global audience, strengthened awareness of biosafety obligations under the CPB, and expanded public access to BCH information, with communication platforms and materials likely to remain accessible beyond project completion. See also 4.4.

Findings Statements on Factors Affecting Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues:

193. **UNEP provided effective overall supervision as the IA** and ensured fiduciary and strategic oversight, but execution efficiency was constrained by weaknesses at the EA level, partly due to deficient original design, and including limited outcome-focused monitoring, management transitions, and incomplete documentation.
194. **Stakeholder Participation was a major strength** of the project, with broad and inclusive engagement across national, regional, and global levels that expanded significantly after mid-term, though participation by the private sector and non-state actors remained limited.
195. **BCH-III effectively improved women's participation** compared with previous phases. While the project lacked an explicit human-rights or gender strategy at design stage, it integrated gender-responsive and inclusive practices during implementation, achieving near gender parity and improving equitable access to biosafety information.
196. **Country ownership and driven-ness were uneven**, with a subset of countries demonstrating strong institutional uptake and sustainability of BCH functions, while others remained project-driven.

Rating for Factors Affecting Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues: Satisfactory (S)

Rating for Quality of Project Management and Supervision: IA Satisfactory (S); EA – Moderately Satisfactory (MS)

Rating for Stakeholders Participation and Cooperation: Satisfactory (S)

Rating for Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality: (S)

Rating for Environmental and Social Safeguards: Highly Satisfactory (HS)

Rating for Country Ownership and Driven-ness: Satisfactory (S)

Rating for Communication and Public Awareness: Satisfactory (S)

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

197. Overall, BCH-III performed at a **satisfactory level**, consolidating and scaling achievements from earlier BCH phases while remaining highly relevant to the CPB and UNEP's environmental governance mandate. The project addressed a clear global need for strengthened, inclusive, and sustainable participation in the BCH through national capacity building, regional collaboration, and global knowledge platforms. Its strongest performance was in delivering outputs and outcomes at scale, particularly in training, institutional strengthening, and digital knowledge management. It exceeded several targets, including extensive national workshops and stakeholder training, supported by an improved post-MTR results framework, an effective RA network, and the Virtual Learning Environment, which emerged as a key global public good enabling continuous learning beyond project closure.
198. At the institutional level, BCH-III contributed to clearer roles for National Focal Points and Competent National Authorities, improved biosafety data flows, and better integration of BCH functions into national governance frameworks, particularly in countries with established legislation and budgetary support. These changes underpin moderate to likely sustainability prospects, although impacts vary by national context. The project's ToC from improved access to quality biosafety information to better decision-making on LMOs and longer-term biodiversity benefits, is coherent and plausible, even if the direct environmental contribution is inherently limited for capacity-building interventions.
199. Performance and efficiency were constrained by the prolonged implementation period, institutional turnover, and external disruptions, which affected continuity, monitoring, and documentation. While UNEP oversight ensured fiduciary compliance and strategic alignment, weaknesses in early planning tools, outcome-level monitoring, and archiving reduced operational efficiency. Despite the absence of an explicit human rights or gender strategy at design, the project demonstrated inclusive practices during implementation, achieving near gender parity in training participation and supporting access to information and participation in environmental decision-making. Overall, BCH-III delivered durable platforms, strengthened institutions, and expanded networks for biosafety information exchange, providing a solid foundation for future initiatives while highlighting the need for stronger outcome planning, institutional ownership, and explicit integration of rights-based considerations.

Responses to Key Strategic Questions

200. *Q1: To what extent has the project evolved across the phases over time and to what extent did the project incorporate lessons learned from the previous phase of the project (BCH I and BCH II) and any recommendations from its own Mid Term Review into the project design/implementation?* The BCH programme shows a clear evolutionary trajectory, with each phase responding to gaps and limitations identified in the preceding one: **BCH phase I** (2004–2009) focused primarily on basic awareness raising, foundational training, and provision of hardware and connectivity, addressing countries' initial inability to access and use the BCH due to limited infrastructure and technical skills. While Phase I was successful in developing high-quality training materials and raising awareness, its Terminal Evaluation highlighted weak sustainability, limited enabling environments, and insufficient integration with national biosafety frameworks. **BCH Phase II** (2010–2013) deliberately shifted emphasis toward deepening technical

competencies, refining training packages, expanding stakeholder groups, and strengthening regional cooperation through RAs. However, the Phase II Terminal Evaluation found that capacity building remained fragmented, with limited institutional anchoring, weak sustainability planning, and insufficient integration with broader national governance systems. **BCH Phase III** (2016–2025) represents a qualitative evolution from training-centric interventions toward more institutionalization, sustainability, inclusiveness, and system-level functionality. This progression reflects a deliberate response to recurring weaknesses identified in BCH I and II, particularly regarding sustainability, ownership, and institutional embedding.

201. The BCH III project explicitly acknowledged and integrated lessons from TEs of BCH I and II, particularly regarding sustainability risks, fragmented approaches, and weak institutional anchoring, focusing on: (i) the need to move beyond one-off training toward continuous learning systems, addressed through the development and expansion of the VLE and multilingual e-learning content; (ii) recognition that technical capacity alone is insufficient without institutional mandates, addressed through support for national procedures, sustainability plans, and clearer role definition for BCH focal points and authorized users; (iii) scaling-up of the Regional Advisor System (RAS) to improve effectiveness; and (iv) addressing regional peer learning through sub-regional workshops and roadmaps. The BCH III MTR identified several issues requiring corrective action, including: (i) over-complexity of the original results framework; (ii) insufficient clarity in the ToC; (iii) uneven regional performance; (iv) continued sustainability risks at national level; and need for stronger monitoring of institutional uptake and long-term use. In response, the project reconstructed its ToC, clarifying causal pathways and aligning components more closely with outcomes; refined regional roadmaps to better reflect sub-regional realities; strengthened mentoring and follow-up by RAs; and increased attention to national institutional procedures and sustainability planning.
202. *Q2: What mechanisms were established to ensure that the skills and knowledge gained from the workshops and training were retained and transferred over time?* The project put in place several mechanisms to support retention and transfer of knowledge beyond individual training events, including the expansion of the VLE to provide continuous, multilingual access to standardized BCH training materials for current and newly appointed staff, and the continued use of a ToT approach to enable national replication of capacity-building activities. Knowledge transfer was further reinforced through the RA system, which provided ongoing mentoring, technical backstopping, and peer-learning opportunities across countries. In parallel, the project promoted institutionalization of BCH functions by supporting the formal designation of focal points and authorized users, integration of BCH responsibilities into institutional procedures, and development of sustainability plans. Together, these measures were intended to embed BCH competencies within national systems, although their effectiveness varied depending on levels of national ownership, staff continuity, and availability of domestic resources.
203. *Q3: What changes were made to adapt to the effects of COVID-19 and how might any changes affect the project's performance?* In response to COVID-19–related travel restrictions and disruptions, the BCH-III project adapted by shifting many planned in-person workshops to virtual or hybrid formats, expanding the use of online training, webinars, and remote technical assistance. The VLE became a central delivery platform, while the RA system was adapted to provide mentoring and support largely through online modalities. Workplans and timelines were adjusted to accommodate delays and changes in delivery methods. These adaptations helped sustain implementation momentum and allowed most outputs to be delivered, while also increasing

accessibility and cost-efficiency for some participants. However, virtual delivery limited opportunities for hands-on learning and peer interaction and was constrained by connectivity challenges in certain countries. While COVID-19 affected implementation timelines and the depth of some capacity-building activities, the project's adaptive measures mitigated more severe performance impacts and strengthened the role of digital learning tools for longer-term sustainability.

204. *Q4: To what extent did the country take the installed BCH Capacity in their national biosafety measures to facilitate biosafety decision making?* There is clear evidence that many participating countries improved their technical ability to use the BCH and increasingly incorporated BCH-related information into national biosafety processes, particularly for under the CPB. Countries made use of installed capacity to upload national decisions, risk assessments, and regulatory information; to consult BCH records from other Parties; and to support administrative functions such as advance informed agreement procedures and reporting obligations. BCH data were also used as a reference input for regulatory review processes and inter-agency coordination. However, the extent to which BCH capacity directly informed substantive biosafety decision-making (e.g. risk management choices or policy decisions) varied considerably. Use was strongest where national biosafety frameworks were operational, institutional mandates were clear, and trained staff remained in their positions.
205. *Q5: What long lasting effects of the project can be observed over time and what persistent or recurring challenges have hindered the sustainability across the phases?* The most enduring effects of BCH-III are observed primarily at the system and network level, rather than uniformly within national institutions. These include the sustained availability of the VLE as a global resource for continuous learning and staff onboarding, a lasting increase in the volume and quality of information available on the BCH, and strengthened regional networks supported by the RA system to facilitate ongoing technical exchange and peer learning. At the same time, documentation from BCH-III confirms that several sustainability challenges identified in earlier phases persist, notably high turnover of trained personnel, weak institutional anchoring of BCH responsibilities, limited and inconsistent national budget allocations for biosafety functions, and uneven enforcement of national biosafety frameworks. These factors have continued to constrain the full institutionalization of BCH use within national decision-making systems, resulting in durable global and regional gains but uneven sustainability at the country level.
206. *Q6: To what extent has the project performance been affected by the integration / absence of gender considerations during project implementation?* Project documentation indicates that gender considerations were present but limited in scope, with the project setting an explicit objective of achieving balanced participation (50/50 women and men) in capacity-building activities. The project achieved approximately 45% female participation in national workshops, reflecting a generally inclusive approach to beneficiary selection and indicating progress toward gender balance, although the target was not fully met. The MTR and PIRs do not identify gender-related barriers that significantly constrained participation or delivery of outputs, nor do they indicate that gender imbalances negatively affected implementation effectiveness. Beyond participation targets, gender was not systematically mainstreamed into project design, monitoring, or outcome frameworks. The project did not include gender-specific outcomes or analysis of differentiated benefits, limiting the ability to assess whether women and men benefited equally from capacity development or whether gender dynamics influenced institutional uptake and sustainability. As a result, while inclusive participation supported equitable access and avoided adverse gender impacts, gender considerations did not materially shape implementation strategies or performance

outcomes. Overall, BCH-III can be characterized as gender sensitive but not gender responsive. The project's near-balanced participation contributed positively to inclusiveness without significantly affecting effectiveness or efficiency, but the absence of deeper gender integration meant that gender considerations had a neutral rather than transformative influence on overall project performance.

Table 19. Summary of project findings and ratings

Criterion	Summary assessment	Rating
Strategic Relevance	Overall score: Satisfactory	S
1. Alignment to UNEP MTS, PoW and Strategic Priorities	The UNEP MTS and PoW were considered in the project design and implementation. The project is strongly aligned with the strategic priorities reflected in the MTS and partially aligned with the PoW.	HS
2. Alignment to UNEP Donor/GEF/Partner strategic priorities	Highly relevant to CPB obligations and GEF/UNEP strategies, addressing critical global needs for biosafety information exchange.	HS
3. Relevance to global, regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities	Fully aligned with CBD, CPB, GEF, regional and national priorities, as well as South-South Cooperation.	S
4. Complementarity with existing interventions/ Coherence	Complementary with other UNEP interventions, SCBD, and some other UN organisations. The project made strong and substantive contributions to UNEP's Environmental Governance subprogramme by significantly improving countries' capacity to implement the CPB information-sharing and strengthening national frameworks for environmental governance. Complementarity with other agencies is more limited and include some support to government biosafety units by regional programmes.	MS
Quality of Project Design	Variable with overall score 4.73 – Satisfactory. Project design strengths include Partnerships, Financial Planning, Efficiency, and Learning, Communication and Outreach. Design weaknesses included Monitoring, and to certain degree Project Preparation, Risk Identification and Safeguards, Logical Framework and Causality.	S
Nature of External Context	The project was constrained by external factors, most important being COVID-19. Other significant factors were armed conflict and instability in Afghanistan, Myanmar, Ukraine, Mali, Niger and Cameroon, international sanctions in Belarus, and natural disasters in Pakistan, Bangladesh, Mozambique, Malawi, Bahamas, Fiji, and Solomon Islands.	MU¹⁸
Effectiveness	Overall score : Satisfactory	S
1. Availability of outputs	Most of the Outputs were achieved. The project delivered extensive outputs (workshops, training materials, regional cooperation) and strengthened BCH use.	S
2. Achievement of project outcomes	Most of the Outcome indicators were achieved though outcomes were uneven across countries. The project contributed to meaningful outcomes such as institutional and behavioural change in how biosafety information is governed and used under the CPB.	S
3. Likelihood of impact (use 'likely' scale)	The expected impact is moderately likely, variable between the countries. The long-term impact would be achieved by reinforcement of national and regional capacities and contribution to a more coherent and inclusive global biosafety information system.	ML
Financial Management	Overall score : Moderately Satisfactory	S

¹⁸ For the nature of the external context, "MU" here refers to "Moderately Unfavourable."

Criterion	Summary assessment	Rating
1. Adherence to UNEP's financial policies and procedures	The project generally adhered to UNEP's Financial Policies, Procedures and rules for budgeting, disbursement, procurement, and financial oversight, with no evidence of ineligible expenditures or significant fiduciary non-compliance identified, despite some constraints related to delays and reporting gaps.	S
2. Completeness of project financial information	Core financial figures were reported and reconciled but completeness of financial information was constrained by inconsistencies in final expenditure reporting, incomplete national co-financing documentation, and missing evidence such as detailed expenditure summaries.	MS
Efficiency	Implementation duration was more than double of what was designed due to delays in SSFA signing, frequent turnover of UNEP PM and in the national partners, as well as variable national capacities that affected timeliness.	MU
Monitoring and Reporting	Overall score : Moderately Satisfactory	MS
1. Monitoring of project implementation	Weak in the beginning, improved after MTR, but with gaps in national-level documentation. Monitoring systems were largely output-focused and inconsistent across countries.	MS
2. Project reporting	Met formal requirements but weak evidence of institutional outcomes limited outcome-level tracking, follow-up and evaluability.	MS
Sustainability (use 'likely' scale)	Overall score : Moderately Likely	ML
1. Socio-political sustainability	Strong political support for the project outcomes from many governments, weaker from others.	L
2. Financial sustainability	Ensured national budget financing in many project countries but long-term continuity in other countries is constrained by limited national budgets and reliance on project-driven finance and RA support, especially in LDCs and SIDS.	ML
3. Institutional sustainability	Improved expectations of institutional sustainability due to strong capacity gains, but long-term sustainability is affected by weaknesses in project policies and regulations and frequent staff turnover.	L
Factors Affecting Performance	Overall score : Satisfactory	S
1. Quality of project management and supervision	Overall rating of 1.1 and 1.2 is Satisfactory	S
1.1 UNEP/Implementing Agency:	Overall satisfactory despite insufficient involvement of the PSC.	S
1.2 Partners/Executing Agency:	Only moderately satisfactory, mostly due to challenges in relation with frequent changes of PM and insufficient institutional control of project documentation	MS
2. Stakeholders' participation and cooperation	Stakeholder participation was a core strength of the project, characterised by broad and increasingly institutionalised engagement across national, regional, and global levels. National public sector engagement was generally satisfactory, though responsiveness varied and inclusiveness of non-traditional stakeholders such as private sector remained limited.	S
3. Responsiveness to human rights and gender equality	Gender participation of 45% was an improvement from previous phases. Responsiveness to human rights was not considered in the design but however not compulsory due to the approval year.	S
4. Environmental and social safeguards	The Environmental and Social Safeguards Assessment found no safeguard issues, and BCH-III was consistently classified as a "No/Low Risk" project throughout its lifecycle, with no risks, complaints, or safeguard-related impacts identified in the ProDoc, PIRs, MTR, or related reviews.	HS

Criterion	Summary assessment	Rating
5. Country ownership and driven-ness	Country ownership and driven-ness was moderate overall, with a clear group of “champion” countries showing strong national leadership and a larger group remaining more project-driven or passive. Only 44 countries carried out national activities and 40 countries organised national BCH workshops, indicating shallow ownership. At the same time, a substantive subset of countries treated BCH-III as an opportunity to advance nationally owned biosafety priorities.	S
6. Communication and public awareness	The project implemented a comprehensive communication and public awareness programme that increases visibility, understanding, and effective use of the BCH at national, regional, and global levels, including multilingual outreach products, interactive webinars, and tutorials hosted on the VLE.	S
Overall Project Performance Rating	Weighted rating: 4.41 (Satisfactory)	S

5.2 Lessons Learned

Lesson Learned #1:	A blended delivery model combining national, regional, and global platforms can substantially extend the reach and durability of capacity-building interventions.
Context/comment:	BCH-III demonstrated that combining in-country workshops with regional peer networks and a global Virtual Learning Environment creates reinforcing learning pathways that reach far beyond what stand-alone national activities can achieve. This could be applied also in other global and regional capacity building projects with multiple countries.
Cross-reference(s) to relevant paragraphs	4.4, 4.8 and Conclusions

Lesson Learned #2:	Regional advisory networks are most effective when they are institutionalized early and embedded in clear accountability and sustainability arrangements.
Context/comment:	The Regional Advisor system emerged as a critical success factor in BCH-III, providing consistent support, peer learning, and technical backstopping across regions. However, the evaluation shows that the system’s full potential was realized only after clearer roles, certification, and sustainability planning were established later in implementation. Future projects can benefit from defining institutional anchoring, performance expectations, and post-project continuity for such advisory mechanisms at design stage, rather than relying on gradual consolidation during implementation.
Cross-reference(s) to relevant paragraphs	4.4.3, 4.8, 4.9

Lesson Learned #3:	Strong output delivery does not automatically translate into outcomes unless monitoring systems explicitly track institutional and behavioural change.
Context/comment:	While BCH-III delivered outputs at scale and often exceeded numerical targets, the evaluation found that monitoring focused predominantly on outputs, with limited outcome-level indicators and inconsistent documentation of institutional uptake. This constrained the ability to assess the depth and durability of change, especially across different country contexts. Similar projects should invest early in outcome-

	oriented M&E frameworks—even for capacity-building interventions—to better capture learning, adaptation, and long-term effects.
Cross-reference(s) to relevant paragraphs	4.6, 4.7

Lesson Learned #4:	Country ownership is strongest where project activities align with existing legal mandates, budgetary commitments, and national policy priorities.
Context/comment:	BCH-III achieved deeper ownership and sustainability in countries with established biosafety legislation and institutional mandates, where BCH functions were integrated into national procedures and budgets. In contrast, in countries lacking such foundations, participation often remained project-driven and weakened sustainability prospects. This highlights the importance of tailoring engagement strategies to national readiness levels and linking capacity-building support to concrete institutional incentives and policy frameworks
Cross-reference(s) to relevant paragraphs	4.8, 4.9.5 and Conclusions

Lesson Learned #5:	Gender and human rights considerations are more effective when they move beyond participation to explicit analytical monitoring frameworks. Gender balance targets can however yield meaningful and measurable gender outcomes even when they are introduced without a formal gender strategy.
Context/comment:	While BCH-III contributed positively to equitable access to biosafety information and inclusive participation - consistent with human-rights principles such as transparency and non-discrimination - the absence of explicit indicators and analytical tools limited systematic reflection on differential impacts. Future projects could strengthen learning and accountability by embedding gender and human-rights considerations more explicitly in design assumptions, monitoring indicators, and evaluation questions. Although BCH-III did not include a stand-alone gender action plan at design stage, the consistent application of a 50% gender participation target in trainings led to near parity in actual participation and strengthened women's technical roles in biosafety governance. Inclusive training formats and open-access digital tools lowered participation barriers for women across regions. This suggests that simple, enforceable gender-responsive measures can generate tangible results, even in technically oriented capacity-building projects.
Cross-reference(s) to relevant paragraphs	4.9.3, 4.9.4, Conclusions and Annex VI

Success stories and good practices

- The Republic of Türkiye has a strong national biosafety legislation and regulation, and its own biosafety website. Institutional biosafety capacity strengthened under BCH-III has been integrated in the national system (source: Mission interviews). See 4.8.2 and 4.9.5.
- Maldives used BCH-III support to draft its national biosafety law 2021-2022 (source PIR 2023), a strong example of integrating BCH information into policy processes. See 4.4.3, 4.6 and 4.9.5.

- In Mongolia, the NGO Mongolian Biotechnology Association was in charge of an efficient BCH-III process. It has membership of both public and private sector organisations and functions as a forum for inter-sectoral dialogue (source: Mission interviews). See 4.6 and 4.9.3.
- Barbados carried out the first national workshop dedicated to decision-makers (Permanent Secretaries, Directors of Agencies, Chief Environmental Officer and Chief of Customs) that are all politically appointed. That resulted in improved awareness on political level and strong support for the project implementation, as well as high interest for participation in the second and third workshop (source Online interview). See 4.9.2.

5.3 Recommendations

Recommendation #1:	Strengthen outcome-level monitoring and reporting in global capacity-building projects. UNEP (Implementing and Executing Divisions) should ensure that all future BCH-related or similar global capacity-building projects include a limited set of clearly defined <i>outcome-level indicators aligned with UNEP result definitions and means of verification</i> at design stage, and report progress against them systematically in PIRs and terminal reporting, starting from project inception. UNEP should also require all participating countries in future BCH or similar projects to prepare <i>context-specific sustainability and ownership pathways</i> to facilitate monitoring differentiated by national readiness (e.g. legal framework, budget allocation, institutional mandate) and validate these plans no later than mid-term review.
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	Monitoring and reporting under BCH-III focused primarily on outputs, limiting the ability to assess institutional and behavioural change and to demonstrate outcome-level results consistently across countries.
Cross-reference(s) to relevant paragraphs	Sections 4.6 (Efficiency), 4.7 (Monitoring and Reporting), 4.8 (Sustainability), 4.9.5 (Country Ownership), 5.1 (Conclusions).
Priority Level:	High
Type of Recommendation	UNEP-Wide and Project
Responsibility:	UNEP GEF Coordination Office; UNEP Ecosystems Division; UNEP Law Division; Policy and Programme Division
Proposed implementation timeframe:	Immediate (for all new projects and revisions to be approved within 12 months)

Recommendation #2:	Formalize continuity of knowledge-transfer mechanisms and systems. UNEP should maintain the VLE as a central asset for BCH capacity and e-learning. Future capacity-building should continue to be done jointly for Access & Benefit Sharing and BCH focal points. UNEP should also strengthen and control the <i>mandatory handover, archiving, and knowledge-transfer procedures</i> , including standard institutional documentation repositories and transition briefings - for all projects that undergo Project Management (PM) or Financial Management (FM) staff transitions.
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	Extended implementation, staff turnover, and incomplete documentation affected continuity, efficiency, and institutional memory during BCH-III.
Cross-reference(s) to relevant paragraphs	Sections 2.4 (Limitations), 4.6 (Efficiency), 4.9.1 (Project Management), 5.1 (Conclusions)
Priority Level:	Medium
Type of Recommendation	Project
Responsibility:	Division Chiefs and Project Managers

Proposed implementation timeframe:	Immediate (decision to be taken by UNEP management in 12 months after the TE)
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Recommendation #3:	Strengthen engagement of non-state actors where relevant to biosafety governance. UNEP should design future BCH-related interventions with targeted entry points for non-state actors (e.g. private sector, academia, civil society), including tailored outreach, incentives, and participation modalities with national biosafety mandates supported by the RA Network.
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	Despite strong overall stakeholder participation, engagement of private sector and other non-state actors remained limited, potentially constraining broader uptake and use of BCH information.
Cross-reference(s) to relevant paragraphs	Section 4.9.2 (Stakeholder Participation), Sections 4.4, 4.8, 5.1 (Conclusions)
Priority Level:	Medium
Type of Recommendation	Partners
Responsibility:	UNEP Law Division; Regional Advisors; National Executing Agencies
Proposed implementation timeframe:	Medium term within 12 months

Recommendation #4:	Explicitly integrate human rights and gender frameworks into project design and monitoring. UNEP should ensure that future biosafety and environmental governance projects incorporate an explicit human rights and gender analysis, including clear indicators, targets, and monitoring arrangements, building on BCH-III's positive gender participation.
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	Although BCH-III achieved meaningful gender results and supported access-to-information principles, human rights and gender considerations remained largely implicit and insufficiently tracked.
Cross-reference(s) to relevant paragraphs	Section 4.9.3 (Gender Equality), 4.9.4 (Human Rights and Safeguards), 5.1 (Conclusions)
Priority Level:	High
Type of Recommendation	UNEP-Wide
Responsibility:	UNEP Ecosystems Division; UNEP Evaluation Office; Policy and Programme Division
Proposed implementation timeframe:	Immediate - short term (applied at concept and ProDoc design stages within 12 months)

Recommendation #5:	Use performance-based financing: Prioritize a smaller number of countries with demonstrated commitment and require a minimum % of cash co-financing in future biosafety interventions. UNEP and partners should design any future biosafety project or project phase to <i>prioritize countries demonstrating sustained interest and institutional commitment</i> and require a <i>minimum level of verified cash co-financing</i> (scaled to national capacity) as an eligibility or continuation criterion. Only the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Development States (SIDS) would be able to deliver only in-kind co-financing. UNEP should adopt a <i>phased participation model</i> in future biosafety (and other) projects, under which continued technical support and access to advanced capacity-building activities are <i>conditional on meeting agreed milestones</i> , including submission of national outputs and delivery of committed co-financing.
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	BCH-III engaged a large number of countries, but depth of implementation, ownership, and sustainability varied widely, with many countries remaining project-driven and providing limited or unverified co-financing, which constrained effective use of resources and long-term

	institutionalization. The capacity of UNEP for follow-up was challenged by the large number of countries and delays at national level.
Cross-reference(s) to relevant paragraphs	Sections 4.6 (Efficiency), 4.7 (Monitoring), 4.8 (Sustainability), 4.9.5 (Country Ownership and Driven-ness), 4.10 Co-financing, 5.1 Conclusions)
Priority Level:	High
Type of Recommendation	Project
Responsibility:	UNEP Ecosystems Division; UNEP GEF Coordination Office and Partners
Proposed implementation timeframe:	Short term (to be applied within 12 months if a new project phase is being prepared)

ANNEX I. RESPONSE TO STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS

Response to stakeholder comments received but not (fully) accepted by the evaluator, where appropriate

Page Ref	Stakeholder comment	Evaluator's Response	UNEP Evaluation Office Response
Page 3 Table 2	The ratings in Table 2 especially references to Marginally unsatisfactory does not match with the text and evidence provided. In addition, the ratings is at variance with what is in pages 61 and 62 of the report. Also, due to the COVID situation and national bureaucracies, it is virtually impossible for UNEP to meaningfully impact or cause a change of the external context. I suggest a revision of rating to Moderately Satisfactory at the least	Not accepted. The ratings are following the evaluation criteria rating matrix (04 TE Evaluation Criteria Ratings Matrix 05.05.25.docx) shared and guided by the evaluation office. The reasons and analysis for rating are specified in the text. Please note that ratings are of the project, not of the PMU, considering all factors. COVID-19 has been considered but would not fully justify the extended (102 months) implementation compared with the 48 months planned. Furthermore, Pages 61 and 62 of the report do not present ratings but recommendations.	The evaluation consultant has responded to the comment.
Page 5, Para 27	Per the nature of the project which responds to a treaty obligation and a COP-MOP Decision which usually sets the criteria to the funding mechanism, UNEP does not have the locus to undertake the recommendation. It is not feasible. This is a party driven process, where parties always cite inequalities and national governance measures, the recommendation will therefore impact rather negatively on some GEF eligible parties in complying to their BCH obligation as enshrined in Article 20 of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and more so for a "no reservation" as per the obligations to the Protocol.	Not accepted. This is a recommendation that it would be up to future UNEP design teams to comply with. It is expected that UNEP would discuss with the SCBD if it is feasible and considering future BCH project designs in light of the findings on the current project's effectiveness and efficiency.	The evaluation consultant has responded to the comment.
Page11, para 41	Could read – Cofinancing was expected from the 76 countries, cofinancing was received from 62 countries?	Not accepted, but the text was still updated to give more detail: 61 countries presented co-financing letters, and of these, only 14 countries had provided co-financing report until the moment of the TE through Anubis (see Annex XII).	The evaluation consultant has responded to the comment and made edits for clarification in Para 41.
Page14, para 51	"we do not know how many of them actually participated in the project." But there is a need to find out how many countries did not participate in the project" In Tanzania side, the participating institution in the project were the Focal Point (Vice Presidents Office) and the competent authorities including Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education Science and Technology, Ministry of Healthy, Ministry of Livestock, Ministry of Justis and Constitution Affaire, Ministry of Industries and Trade. Research Institutions are Tanzania Agriculture Research Institute (TARI), National Institute for Medical Research (NIMR) , Sokoine University if	Not accepted. This section is about data collection and the text refers to the people that were invited to participate in the survey. Also, the evaluation document does not mention all the organisations that participated in each of the 76 countries.	The evaluation consultant has responded to the comment and provided clarification through footnote 10.

Page Ref	Stakeholder comment	Evaluator's Response	UNEP Evaluation Office Response
	Agriculture (SUA), University of Dar es salaam (UDSM) and Biotechnology Society of Tanzania (BST).		
Page 14, para 53	Gender inclusion should be measured through participation in the project per se, not through survey interview. Modern Biotechnology is new which need much aware of awareness to the community should involve all group of society equally through project implementation.	Not accepted. This section is about data collection. Information from the PMU about gender participation is included in other parts of the document.	The evaluation consultant has responded to the comment.
Page 22, para 82	You could also refer to the BCH help link as a definite step to make availability material for self-training either through UNEP Learning Environment or the BCH help link	Not accepted. Paragraph 82 deals with national level only. The issues mentioned in the comment are included in several other parts of the document.	The evaluation consultant has responded to the comment.
Page 25, Para 91	Please take a look possible at para 91 and consider reframing, GEF is the funding mechanism for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, no other donor presently to the best of my knowledge is interested in support so the multi donor support so as rightly indicated there will not be any coordination. Rightly the GEF is obligated to support due to its role as a funding mechanism to the Protocol	Not accepted. The paragraph does not refer to multi-donor support for the BCH project, but to "similar goals funded through other agencies, and where appropriate, work with these agencies". This is mentioned in the ProDoc 4.2 Project Steering Committee.	The evaluation consultant has responded to the comment.
Page 28, section 4.3, para.96; Page 3 Table 2	As mentioned by Alex, the rating "moderately unsatisfactory" for nature of external context is difficult to understand. The evaluation notes that the BCH III project was one of the projects that most easily carried out all activities (through VLE and other virtual modalities) and demonstrated strong adaptive management. It would be helpful to either justify further the current rating and/or consider a "moderately satisfactory" to "satisfactory" rating.	Not accepted. Please note that "Nature of external context" is treated differently than other criteria. Here "moderately unfavourable" refers to the context – not to the project. The moderately unfavourable context during part of the implementation period was mostly due to COVID-19 and was considered during the evaluation. In other words, the project rating could have been slightly lower without this context.	The evaluation consultant has responded to the comment.

ANNEX II. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

EVALUATION QUESTIONS	INDICATORS/CRITERIA	SOURCES OF INFORMATION
Strategic Questions		
To what extent has the project evolved across the phases over time and to what extent did the project incorporate lessons learned from the previous phase of the project (BCH I and BCH II) and any recommendations from its own Mid-Term Review into the project design/implementation?	• Evolvement of the project phases over time. • Incorporation of lessons learned from BCH I and II in BCH III. • Compliance with recommendations from the MTR of BCH III in project design and implementation.	• Project Documents for BCH I, II and III • Terminal evaluations of BCH I and BCH II • MTR document for BCH III • Results Framework • PIRs • Evaluation of project design • PPG Report • Baseline study • Risk matrix • Individual consulting reports • Interviews with project partners • Online survey
What mechanisms were established to ensure that the skills and knowledge gained from the workshops and training were retained and transferred over time?	Retention and transference of skills and knowledge gained in project workshops and training.	• Project Document • Results Framework • PIRs • Reports and reviews of workshops, courses and other training. • Baseline study • Mid-term Review Report • Individual consulting reports • Interviews with project partners • Interviews with Governments and other public officials • Workshops and interviews with local stakeholders • Online survey
What changes were made to adapt to the effects of COVID-19 and how might any changes affect the project's performance?	• Adaptive management done due to COVID-19 • Effect of these changes on the project performance	• Results Framework • PIRs • Mid-term Review Report • Risk matrix • Individual consulting reports • Interviews with project partners • Interviews with Governments and other public officials • Workshops and interviews with local stakeholders • Online survey • Internet sources

EVALUATION QUESTIONS	INDICATORS/CRITERIA	SOURCES OF INFORMATION
To what extent did the countries take the installed BCH Capacity in their national biosafety measures to facilitate Biosafety decision making? What long-lasting effects of the project can be observed over time and what persistent or recurring challenges have hindered the sustainability across the phases?	• Biosafety national decision making based on installed BCH capacity. • Observed long-lasting effects of the BCH projects. • Challenges to sustainability across the phases.	• Project Documents for BCH I, II and III • Terminal evaluations of BCH I and BCH II • MTR document for BCH III • Results Framework • PIRs • Baseline study • Risk matrix • Individual consulting reports • Interviews with main international/national partners • Interviews with Governments and other public officials • Workshops and interviews with local stakeholders • Online interviews
To what extent has the project performance been affected by the integration / absence of gender considerations during project implementation?	The effect of gender considerations on project performance.	• Project Document • Results Framework • Evaluation of project design • Environmental and Social Issues Checklist • Gender strategy • EIAs or environmental screening reports (if available) • PPG Report • Baseline study • Mid-term Review Report • Risk matrix • Individual consulting reports • Interviews with main international/national partners • Interviews with Governments and other public officials • Workshops and interviews with local stakeholders • Online survey • Observations during country visits
Strategic Relevance		
Are the objectives and outcomes of the project consistent with UNEP's MTS and PoW, and GEFs' global policies, priorities and planning?	Consistency of project objectives and outcomes with UNEP's MTR and PoW, and GEF policies, priorities and work plans	• Project Document • Results Framework • Evaluation of project design • Theory of Change (ToC) • UNEP Policies, MTS and PoW • GEF policies and strategies • CEO Endorsement documents • GEF STAP Reviews • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff
Are the objectives and outcomes of the project consistent with global, regional, sub-regional and national environmental policies and priorities?	Consistency of project objectives with global, regional, sub-regional and national environmental policies and priorities	• Project Document • Results Framework • Evaluation of project design • ToC • CEO Endorsement documents • GEF STAP Reviews • PPG Report • Baseline study • Mid-term Review Report

EVALUATION QUESTIONS	INDICATORS/CRITERIA	SOURCES OF INFORMATION
		• Project website and websites for main partners • Country statistics (Internet) • Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) • Interviews with Governments and other public officials • Online survey
Are the objectives and outcomes of the project complementary and coherent with existing relevant interventions?	Consistency of project objectives and outcomes with partners' and beneficiaries' priorities	• Project Document • Results Framework • Evaluation of project design • ToC • PPG Report • Baseline study • Mid-term Review Report • Training materials and tools • Project website and websites for main partners • Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) • Interviews with main international/national partners, and governments and other public officials • Local workshops and interviews with local stakeholders
What was the value added of UNEP's and GEF's involvement in this project (additional to funding) in light of the organisations thematic and political strengths?	Value added of UNEP and GEF involvement	• Project Document, incl. Incremental Cost Analysis • Results Framework • Evaluation of project design • UNEP Policies, MTS and POW • GEF policies and strategies • CEO Endorsement documents • GEF STAP Reviews • PPG Report • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff, and Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM
Quality of Project Design		
Stakeholder participation		
Have all stakeholders who are affected by or who could affect (positively or negatively) the project been identified and explained in the stakeholder analysis?	Stakeholders identified in ProDoc and Stakeholder analysis compared with information from other sources	• Project Document • Results Framework • Evaluation of project design • Stakeholder analysis • Interviews with main international/national partners, and Governments and other public officials • Local workshops and interviews with local stakeholders
To what extent were Human Rights, ethnic minorities and Gender Equality integrated in ProDoc and Results Framework of the project and planned with allocated budget?	Integration of Human Rights, ethnic minorities and Gender Equality in ProDoc and Results Framework	• Project Document • Results Framework • Evaluation of project design

EVALUATION QUESTIONS	INDICATORS/CRITERIA	SOURCES OF INFORMATION
Monitoring & Evaluation System in project design		
Did the project have a sound M&E system and plan including guidelines, and adequate budget to monitor results and track progress towards achieving project outputs, outcomes and impacts?	Quality of M&E system, including quality of indicators and methods of measurement of outputs, outcomes and impacts	• Project Document • Results Framework • M&E system and tracking tools • Evaluation of project design • ToC • PPG Report • Baseline study • Work plans and budgets • PIRs • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff, BCH-III PROJECT TEAM, and Main international/national partners
How well was the project results framework (original and possible updates) designed as a planning and monitoring instrument with SMART indicators?	• Existence of baseline indicators for M&E • Existence of SMART indicators for all outputs, with quality, quantity and deadline for compliance • Definition of how to measure outcomes • Definition of how to measure impacts	• Results Framework • M&E system and tracking tools • Evaluation of project design • PPG Report • Baseline study • Work plans and budgets • PIRs • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff, BCH-III PROJECT TEAM, and Main international/national partners
Risks and Safeguards		
Was a high quality risk matrix and a safeguard management instrument completed in time for approval and based on UNEP guidelines for Environmental, Social and Economic Safeguards?	• Date of completion and quality of risk matrix / risk monitoring system • Date of completion of the safeguard management monitoring system • Compliance of the safeguard instrument with UN guidelines	• Project Document with all annexes • UNEP Policies, MTS and PoW • CEO Endorsement documents • GEF STAP Reviews • PPG Report • Baseline study • PIRs • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff, and BCH-III PROJECT TEAM
Nature of External Context		
Has the external context affected the project results positively or negatively (and if so, for which countries and issues?	List of major factors where the external context affecting the project results has changed after project approval (for each country)	• Project Document • Results Framework • Evaluation of project design • UNEP Policies, MTS and PoW • GEF policies and strategies • PPG Report • Baseline study • Work plans and budgets • PIRs • Mid-term Review Report • Risk matrix • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff • Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM • Interviews with Main international/national partners

EVALUATION QUESTIONS	INDICATORS/CRITERIA	SOURCES OF INFORMATION
		• Interviews with Governments and other public officials • Workshops and interviews with local stakeholders • Online survey
Has the project been able to mitigate the effects of changes in the external context (on international or national levels)?	List of changes in external context that was mitigated	• PPG Report • Baseline study • Work plans and budgets • PIRs • Mid-term Review Report • Risk matrix • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff, BCH-III PROJECT TEAM, Main international/national partners , and Governments and other public officials, Workshops and interviews with local stakeholders • Online survey
Were the mitigation measures results of risk monitoring, as provided for in the Risk Matrix?	Number of the changed external factors that were included in the Risk Matrix, with pre-defined mitigation measures	• Evaluation of project design • PPG Report • Work plans and budgets • PIRs • Risk matrix • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff, and BCH-III PROJECT TEAM
Effectiveness (questions that cover Outputs, Outcomes and Impact are only mentioned under Outputs)		
Availability of Outputs		
Were the project's outputs being achieved with the required quality and on time during the implementation period?	% of outputs achieved during the implementation	• Results Framework • Evaluation of project design • Work plans and budgets • M&E system and tracking tools • PIRs • Mid-term Review Report • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff, BCH-III PROJECT TEAM, and Main international/national partners , Workshops and interviews with local stakeholders • Online survey
Which factors have defined success or affected achievements of outputs?	List of factors affecting positively or negatively the degree of success of outputs (in general, with examples from countries)	• Results Framework • Evaluation of project design • M&E system and tracking tools • PPG Report • Baseline study • Work plans and budgets • PIRs • Mid-term Review Report • Risk matrix • Individual consulting reports • Project website and websites for main partners • Country statistics (Internet) • Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff, BCH-III PROJECT TEAM, Main international/national partners , and Governments and other public officials, Local workshops and interviews with local stakeholders • Online survey

EVALUATION QUESTIONS	INDICATORS/CRITERIA	SOURCES OF INFORMATION
What are the achieved results (outputs) compared with the original results framework and any new versions of this framework? (calculating effectiveness for each output)	- Indicators for number and % of outputs achieved in relation to the targets in the results framework - Indicators for effectiveness of results for each component based on achievement of output targets	- Results Framework - Evaluation of project design - M&E system and tracking tools - ToC - Baseline study - Work plans and budgets - PIRs - Interviews with UNEP PM and staff - Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM
Are there major differences in effectiveness between different participating countries (and which factors have given these differences)?	% compliance with output targets for each country (if data are available) - Definition of factors that have given these differences	- Results Framework - Evaluation of project design - Stakeholder analysis - PPG Report - Baseline study - Work plans and budgets - PIRs - Mid-term Review Report - Risk matrix - Individual consulting reports - Project website and websites for main partners - Country statistics (Internet) - Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) - Interviews with UNEP PM and staff, BCH-III PROJECT TEAM, Main international/national partners , and Governments and other public officials, Local workshops and interviews with local stakeholders - Online survey
Have there been any unanticipated positive or negative outputs of the project?	Unanticipated outputs produced by the project	- Results Framework - Evaluation of project design - M&E system and tracking tools - PIRs - Risk matrix - Individual consulting reports - Project website and websites for main partners - Interviews with UNEP PM and staff, BCH-III PROJECT TEAM, Main international/national partners , and Governments and other public officials, Local workshops and interviews with local stakeholders - Online survey
Achievement of Project Outcomes		
Were the project's outcomes being achieved during implementation?	% of outcomes achieved during the implementation	- Results Framework - Evaluation of project design - Work plans and budgets - M&E system and tracking tools - PIRs - Mid-term Review Report - Interviews with UNEP PM and staff, BCH-III PROJECT TEAM, and Main international/national partners , Workshops and interviews with local stakeholders

EVALUATION QUESTIONS	INDICATORS/CRITERIA	SOURCES OF INFORMATION
Have there been any changes in main partners, NEAs or activities that have positively or negatively affected effectiveness on outcome level, and what were the reasons for these changes?	Changes that have positively or negatively affected achievement of outcomes, and their reasons	• Project Document (original and after change of 1 Vietnam site) • Results Framework • Evaluation of project design • Stakeholder analysis • CEO Endorsement documents • PPG Report • Work plans and budgets • PIRs • Mid-term Review Report • Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff, BCH-III PROJECT TEAM, Main international/national partners , and Governments and other public officials, Local workshops and interviews with local stakeholders • Online survey
What are the achieved results (outcomes) compared with the original results framework and any approved updated versions of the framework?	• Indicators for number and % of outcomes achieved in relation to the targets in the results framework • Indicators for effectiveness of results for each component based on achievement of outcome targets	• Results Framework (all approved versions) • Evaluation of project design • M&E system and tracking tools • ToC • Baseline study • Work plans and budgets • PIRs • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff, and BCH-III PROJECT TEAM
What has been UNEP's and BCH-III's contribution to develop NEAs institutional capacity and their use of knowledge, products and expertise generated through the project (demonstrated in service to partners and target groups)?	• UNEO and project effect on NEA's capacity • Knowledge, products and expertise generated through the project that is used by the NEAs (in their service to partners/ target groups)	• Results Framework • M&E system and tracking tools • Evaluation of project design • Stakeholder analysis • ToC • Work plans and budgets • PIRs • Project website and websites for main partners • Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff, BCH-III PROJECT TEAM, and Main international/national partners Local workshops and interviews with local stakeholders • Online survey
Has the project created opportunities for institutions, companies or individuals ("champions") to catalyse change, without which the project would not have achieved all of its results?	New opportunities for change created thanks to the project	• Results Framework • M&E system and tracking tools • Evaluation of project design • Stakeholder analysis • Work plans and budgets • PIRs • Mid-term Review Report • Individual consulting reports • Project website and websites for main partners • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff, BCH-III PROJECT TEAM, Main international/national partners , and Governments and other public officials, Local workshops and interviews with local stakeholders • Observations during country visits

EVALUATION QUESTIONS	INDICATORS/CRITERIA	SOURCES OF INFORMATION
		Online survey
Likelihood of impact		
What is the likelihood of the project's impact being achieved (during implementation or ex-post)?	Impacts being achieved during the implementation, and/or expected to be achieved ex-post	- Results Framework - Evaluation of project design - Work plans and budgets - M&E system and tracking tools - PIRs - Mid-term Review Report - Interviews with UNEP PM and staff, BCH-III PROJECT TEAM, and Main international/national partners , Workshops and interviews with local stakeholders
What is the project impact achieved or expected to be achieved?	Expected Impact for each component based on achievement of outputs and outcomes	- Results Framework - Evaluation of project design - M&E system and tracking tools - ToC - Baseline study - Work plans and budgets - PIRs - Interviews with UNEP PM and staff, and BCH-III PROJECT TEAM
Have the project impacts affected all relevant stakeholder groups (and if not, why)?	List of the relevant stakeholder groups and for each group how they have been affected positively or negatively by the project impacts	- Results Framework - Evaluation of project design - Stakeholder analysis - ToC - M&E system and tracking tools - PPG Report - Baseline study - Work plans and budgets - PIRs - Mid-term Review Report - Risk matrix - Individual consulting reports - Project website and websites for main partners - Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) - Interviews with UNEP PM and staff, BCH-III PROJECT TEAM, Main international/national partners , and Governments and other public officials, Local workshops and interviews with local stakeholders
What has been the effect on NEA's institutional capacity and their use of knowledge, products and expertise generated through the project?	- Project effect on NEA's capacity - Expertise generated through the project that will be used by the NEAs (in their service to partners/target groups)	- Results Framework - M&E system and tracking tools - Evaluation of project design - Stakeholder analysis - ToC - Work plans and budgets - PIRs - Project website and websites for main partners - Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) - Interviews with UNEP PM and staff, BCH-III PROJECT TEAM, and Main international/national partners , Local workshops and interviews with local stakeholders

EVALUATION QUESTIONS	INDICATORS/CRITERIA	SOURCES OF INFORMATION
Are there any positive or negative, primary or secondary, unintended impacts of the Project, directly or indirectly (with particular reference to the environment/biodiversity and the most vulnerable groups)?	Unintended positive or negative impact on the environment/biodiversity or vulnerable groups produced by the project	• Project Document • Results Framework • M&E system and tracking tools • Evaluation of project design • Stakeholder analysis • ToC • PIRs • EIAs or environmental screening reports (if available) • Risk matrix • Project website and websites for main partners • Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff, BCH-III PROJECT TEAM, Main international/national partners , and Governments and other public officials, Local workshops and interviews with local stakeholders
Financial Management		
Did the project financial management follow UNEP's financial policies and procedures (clarity, transparency, audit etc.) and timeliness of financial planning, management and financial reporting (on international and national level)?	• Financial management standards required for UNEP BCH-III PROJECT TEAM • Financial management standards required for NEAs • Audited financial statements and auditor comments to the statements	• Financial statements and audits for the international project • Financial statements and audits on national level (NEAs) • Meeting Memos for PSC • Interview with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM, BCH-III and BCH-III PROJECT TEAM financial officer(s), and NEAs and NEAs financial officers • Work plans and budgets
Did procurement of goods and services (including staff recruitment and consultancies) follow transparent routines, and were there any irregularities or intents/pressure from external agents to influence the results of the procurement processes?	• Approved procurement rules for BCH-III PROJECT TEAM and NEAs • Degree of compliance with these rules • Irregularities or external pressure detected in regard to project procurement processes	• Evaluation of project design • UNEP Policies, MTS and PoW • Meeting Memos for PSC • M&E system and tracking tools • PIRs • Project publications • Training materials and tools • Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff, BCH-III PROJECT TEAM +procurement staff, NEAs +procurement staff, and consultants and service providers
Have there been any measures taken by UNEP to prevent or correct irregularities in procurement or financial management? (and were the adequate measures taken?)	Measures taken by UNEP to prevent or correct irregularities in the project's procurement or financial management	• Evaluation of project design • UNEP Policies, MTS and PoW • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff, , BCH-III PROJECT TEAM +procurement staff, NEAs +procurement staff, and consultants and service providers • Meeting Memos for PSC • PIRs
To what extent has co-financing materialized compared with what was promised at project approval?	% of co-finance disbursed compared with promises at the moment of project approval	• Project Document • Evaluation of project design • CEO Endorsement documents • PPG Report • Memos from workshops during PPG • Work plans and budgets • Financial statements and audits • PIRs • Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing)

EVALUATION QUESTIONS	INDICATORS/CRITERIA	SOURCES OF INFORMATION
Is the Financial Information on international and national level complete and adequately reported/updated?	Completeness and updating of financial information in BCH-III PROJECT TEAM and NEAs	- Interviews with UNEP PM and staff, BCH-III PROJECT TEAM, and Main international/national partners , officials, - Project Document - Work plans and budgets - Financial statements and audits - PIRs - Meeting Memos for PSCs - Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) - Interviews with UNEP PM and staff, , BCH-III PROJECT TEAM +financial officer(s), and NEAs +financial officers
Efficiency		
Has the project delivered the maximum results for the given resources?	Assessment of the cost-effectiveness and timeliness of the project execution	- Project Document with original budget - Any adjusted global budgets - Results Framework (and new versions, if any) - M&E system and tracking tools - Evaluation of project design - ToC - Work plans and budgets - Financial statements and audits - PIRs - Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) - Interviews with UNEP PM and staff - Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM and financial manager(s) - Interviews with NEAs and their financial managers
Which components have been most efficient (considering % progress in outputs divided by % of original budget used), at planned end date and end date?	Indicator of efficiency (outputs/budget) for each component	- Project Document with original budget - Any adjusted global budgets - Results Framework (and new versions, if any) - M&E system and tracking tools - Evaluation of project design - ToC - Work plans and budgets - Financial statements and audits - PIRs - Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) - Interviews with UNEP PM and staff - Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM and financial manager(s) - Interviews with NEAs and their financial managers
What are the explanations for the different efficiency between components (time, human resources, equipment, budget, etc.)?	Reasons for different efficiency between components, and countries	- Project Document with original budget - Any adjusted global budgets - Results Framework (and new versions, if any) - M&E system and tracking tools - Procurement system (planning and tracking) - Evaluation of project design - ToC - Work plans and budgets - Financial statements and audits - PIRs - Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing)

EVALUATION QUESTIONS	INDICATORS/CRITERIA	SOURCES OF INFORMATION
What has been the efficiency of resource use in relation to number of direct and indirect beneficiaries (incl. training)?	- Project cost (US\$) per direct and indirect beneficiaries - Project cost (US\$) per person trained	- Interviews with UNEP PM and staff - Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM and financial manager(s) - Interviews with NEAs and their financial managers - Project Document with original budget - Any adjusted global budgets - Results Framework (and new versions, if any) - M&E system and tracking tools - Procurement system (planning and tracking) - Evaluation of project design - ToC - Work plans and budgets - Financial statements and audits - PIRs - Memos from workshops and seminars - Training materials and tools - Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) - Interviews with UNEP PM and staff - Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM and financial manager(s) - Interviews with NEAs and their financial managers
Which factors have improved or reduced the execution efficiency?	List of factors that have improved and reduced project execution efficiency	- Project Document with original budget - Any adjusted global budgets - Results Framework (and new versions, if any) - M&E system and tracking tools - Procurement system (planning and tracking) - Evaluation of project design - ToC - Work plans and budgets - Financial statements and audits - PIRs - Meeting Memos for PSC - Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) - Interviews with UNEP PM and staff - Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM and financial manager(s) - Interviews with NEAs and their financial managers
Monitoring and Reporting		
Monitoring of project implementation		
How were the project activities planned and monitored, and did it use the results framework as a planning and monitoring tool?	- Activities included in BCH-III PROJECT TEAM and NEA work plans - Monitoring of activity realization by BCH-III PROJECT TEAM and NEAs - Relation between activities and outputs in the M&E system	- Results Framework - M&E system and tracking tools - PPG Report - Baseline study - Work plans and budgets - PIRs - Interviews with UNEP PM and staff - Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM - Interviews with Main international/national partners
Were the risks regularly and appropriately monitored and documented, mitigation measures taken, and (if necessary)	Regularity of indicator monitoring, in accordance with defined methods	- Project Document - Results framework

EVALUATION QUESTIONS	INDICATORS/CRITERIA	SOURCES OF INFORMATION
the Risk Matrix updated?	- Mitigation measures taken, in accordance with risk matrix and/or other measures - No of risk matrix updates and the reasons	- M&E system and tracking tools - Evaluation of project design - ToC - PIRs - Risk matrix - Country statistics (Internet) - Interviews with UNEP PM and staff - Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM - Interviews with Main international/national partners - Interviews with Governments and other public officials
To what extent did the project engage key stakeholders (identified in the inception report) in the implementation of monitoring, and what were their roles? If any stakeholder groups did not participate in the project monitoring, what was the reason for this?	Stakeholders participating in monitoring, and their roles	- Project Document - Results Framework - M&E system and tracking tools - Evaluation of project design - Stakeholder analysis - ToC - PPG Report - Baseline study - Work plans and budgets - PIRs - Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) - Interviews with UNEP PM and staff - Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM - Interviews with Main international/national partners - Interviews with consultants and service providers for M&E - Interviews with Governments and other public officials - Online survey
Was sufficient information collected on specific indicators to measure progress on Human Rights, Ethnic minorities, People with disabilities, empowerment and Gender Equality (including gender-disaggregated data)?	- Quantity and quality of indicators for project progress on Human Rights, Ethnic minorities, Disabilities, and Gender Equality; and frequency of measurements - Degree of gender-disaggregated data for Human Rights, Ethnic minorities and Equality	- Project Document - Results Framework - M&E system and tracking tools - Evaluation of project design - Stakeholder analysis - ToC - PPG Report - Baseline study - Work plans and budgets - PIRs - Mid-term Review Report - Risk matrix - Individual consulting reports - Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) - Interviews with UNEP PM and staff - Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM - Interviews with Main international/national partners - Local workshops and interviews with local stakeholders
Did the M&E system track positive and negative social, economic and environmental impacts, and did the project (if necessary) take measures to mitigate potential negative	Positive and negative impacts tracked by the M&E system	- Project Document - Results Framework - M&E system and tracking tools

EVALUATION QUESTIONS	INDICATORS/CRITERIA	SOURCES OF INFORMATION
impacts?	Measures taken to mitigate potential negative impacts	- Evaluation of project design - Stakeholder analysis - ToC - EIAs or screening of potential environmental / social impacts - Baseline study - Work plans and budgets - PIRs - Risk matrix - Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) - Interviews with UNEP PM and staff - Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM - Interviews with Main international/national partners
Project reporting		
Was the results-based project management (monitoring and reporting on outputs/outcomes) of high quality, realistic and based on the indicators and targets in the results framework?	Quality and realism of BCH-III results based project management and relation to the results framework	- Project Document - Results Framework - M&E system and tracking tools - Evaluation of project design - Meeting Memos for PSC - Baseline study - Work plans and budgets - PIRs - Individual consulting reports - Country statistics (Internet) - Interviews with UNEP PM and staff - Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM - Interviews with Main international/national partners
Were the targets in the PIR reports realistic, considering the results reported in the following PIR reports?	Realism of targets in PIR reports based on compliance	- Results framework - Work plans and budgets - M&E system and tracking tools - Procurement system (planning and tracking) - PIRs - Risk matrix - Interviews with UNEP PM and staff - Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM - Interviews with Main international/national partners
Were the half-yearly Progress & Financial Reports complete, accurate and on time?	- Completeness and accuracy of progress- and financial reports - Timeliness of finalization (date) for progress and financial reports	- Results Framework - Evaluation of project design - Work plans and budgets - PIRs - Interviews with UNEP PM and staff - Interviews with Project team - Interviews with NEAs and staff
Sustainability		
Socio-political sustainability		
Are local communities, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, rural organizations, women and youth integrated in the project implementation?	% participation of ethnic minorities, rural organizations, women, and youth in the project activities, disaggregated by	- Project Document - Results Framework - Evaluation of project design

EVALUATION QUESTIONS	INDICATORS/CRITERIA	SOURCES OF INFORMATION
	stakeholder group and country (and if not relevant – explain why)	• UNEP Policies, MTS and PoW • GEF policies and strategies • CEO Endorsement documents • GEF STAP Reviews • PPG Report • Baseline study • Work plans and budgets • PIRs • Mid-term Review Report • Risk matrix • Individual consulting reports • Project publications • Training materials and tools • Project website and websites for main partners • Country statistics (Internet) • Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff • Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM • Interviews with Main international/national partners • Interviews with Governments and other public officials • Local workshops and interviews with local stakeholders • Observations during country visits
What is the degree of ownership and political support for the results of the project in the participating countries, and is it expected to last (or increase) beyond the project period?	Support for the results of the project expressed on political level	• Project Document • Results Framework • Evaluation of project design • Stakeholder analysis • ToC • UNEP Policies, MTS and PoW • Policies and political priorities in the countries (Internet) • GEF Focal point endorsement letters • PPG Report • PIRs • Risk matrix • Project website and websites for main partners • Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff • Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM • Interviews with Main international/national partners • Interviews with Governments and other public officials • Online survey
Are there any social or political factors that may influence positively or negatively the sustainability of project results and progress towards impacts?	Definition of social and political factors that may impact the process from outcomes to impacts, positively (drivers) or negatively (risks)	• Results Framework • Evaluation of project design • ToC • Stakeholder analysis • PIRs • Risk matrix • Project website and websites for main partners • Country statistics (Internet)

EVALUATION QUESTIONS	INDICATORS/CRITERIA	SOURCES OF INFORMATION
		• Interviews with UNEP PM and staff • Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM • Interviews with Main international/national partners • Interviews with Governments and other public officials • Local workshops and interviews with local stakeholders • Observations during country visits • Online survey
Financial sustainability		
What are the costs and benefits of the project outcomes and impacts within a long-term perspective?	Cost/benefit of project outcomes in a long-term perspective, considering expected ex-post benefits	• Project Document and all appendixes • Results Framework • Evaluation of project design • ToC • Work plans and budgets • PIRs • Project website and websites for main partners • Country statistics (Internet) • Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff • Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM • Interviews with BCH-III Board members • Interviews with Main international/national partners • Interviews with Governments and other public officials
Would BCH activities and the institutions in charge of BCH be economically sustainable in the future without project donations?	Future economic/financial sustainability of BCH activities	• Project Document • Evaluation of project design • Stakeholder analysis • ToC • PIRs • Project website and websites for main partners • Country statistics (Internet) • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff • Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM • Interviews with BCH-III Board members • Interviews with Main international/national partners • Interviews with Governments and other public officials
Are there any financial risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project results and onward progress towards impact?	Financial risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project results between outcomes and impacts	• Project Document • Results Framework • Financial statements and audits • Evaluation of project design • ToC • PIRs • Project website and websites for main partners • Country statistics (Internet) • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff • Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM • Interviews with BCH-III Board members • Interviews with Main international/national partners • Interviews with Governments and other public officials

EVALUATION QUESTIONS	INDICATORS/CRITERIA	SOURCES OF INFORMATION
Has the project contributed to sustained follow-on financing from Governments, private sector, donors etc.?	Sustainable financing for scaling up of project activities after project termination	• Project Document and budget • Results Framework • Evaluation of project design • ToC • PIRs • Project website and websites for main partners • Country statistics (Internet) • Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff • Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM • Interviews with BCH-III Board members • Interviews with Main international/national partners • Interviews with Governments and other public officials • Online survey
Sustainability of the Institutional Framework		
What was the degree of participation and ownership of the main partner organisations in the project implementation process and what is their capacity for continuing it?	NEAs' and partner organizations' degree of participation and ownership of the project implementation process	• Project Document • Evaluation of project design • Stakeholder analysis • ToC • PPG Report • Baseline study • PIRs • Websites for main partners • Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff • Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM • Interviews with Main international/national partners • Interviews with Governments and other public officials • Local workshops and interviews with local stakeholders • Online survey
How robust are the institutional achievements such as governance structures and processes, policies, sub-regional agreements, legal and accountability frameworks etc. required to sustaining project results and to lead those to impact on human behaviour and environmental resources, goods or services?	Institutional achievements as result of the project that would impact on human behaviour and environmental resources, goods and services	• Project Document • Results Framework • Evaluation of project design • Stakeholder analysis • ToC • Project website and websites for main partners • Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff • Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM • Interviews with Main international/national partner • Interviews with Governments and other public officials
To what degree did the governments and public sector agencies participate or collaborate with the project? (review to be made for main public agencies mentioned in the stakeholder analysis)	Degree of public sector participation or collaboration with the project	• Project Document • Results Framework • Evaluation of project design • Stakeholder analysis • ToC • Project website and websites for main partners • Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing)

EVALUATION QUESTIONS	INDICATORS/CRITERIA	SOURCES OF INFORMATION
		• Interviews with UNEP PM and staff • Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM • Interviews with Main international/national partners • Interviews with Governments and other public officials • Online survey
Has the project contributed to long-term institutional changes, e.g. institutional responsibilities for BCH, uptake of project-demonstrated tools, practices or management approaches?	Long-term institutional changes (beyond implementation period) as a result of project contribution	• Project Document • Results Framework • Evaluation of project design • Stakeholder analysis • ToC • Project website and websites for main partners • Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff • Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM • Interviews with Main international/national partners • Interviews with Governments and other public officials • Online survey
Replication and scaling up		
Has replication or scaling up of project results already happened, and what are the factors that may influence it happening in after the project has ended?	Factors that influence replication and scaling up of project results during or after the project implementation	• Project Document • Evaluation of project design • Stakeholder analysis • ToC • Meeting memos for PSCs • PIRs • Project website and websites for main partners • Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff • Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM • Interviews with BCH-III Board members • Interviews with Main international/national partners • Interviews with Governments and other public officials
Is the project expected to play a catalytic role in terms of use and application of tools and methods produced, and capacities developed?	Examples of the project's catalytic role through the use of tools, methods and capacities developed	• Project Document • Evaluation of project design • Stakeholder analysis • ToC • Meeting memos for PSCs • PIRs • Project website and websites for main partners • Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff • Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM • Interviews with BCH-III Board members • Interviews with Main international/national partners • Interviews with Governments and other public officials
Factors affecting project performance and cross cutting issues		
Quality of project management and supervision		

EVALUATION QUESTIONS	INDICATORS/CRITERIA	SOURCES OF INFORMATION
To what extent have the project implementation mechanisms outlined in the project document and its appendixes been followed, and were they effective in delivering project milestones, outputs and outcomes?	- Degree of compliance with ProDoc's implementation mechanisms - Effectiveness of the implementation mechanisms in delivering milestones, outputs and outcomes	- Project Document - Results Framework - Evaluation of project design - M&E system and tracking tools - ToC - PPG Report - Work plans and budgets - PIRs - Risk matrix - Interviews with UNEP PM and staff - Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM - Interviews with Main international/national partners - Local workshops and interviews with local stakeholders
Were adaptative project management approaches carried out, and regarding what issues?	Adaptative management and the issues that required it	- Project Document (all versions) - Results Framework - Evaluation of project design - ToC - PPG Report - Work plans and budgets - PIRs - Risk matrix - Interviews with UNEP PM and staff - Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM
Has the organisation and monitoring of the project affected the timeliness in compliance with the results and the cost compared with what was initially planned?	- Project management's effect on timeliness of outputs and outcomes - Project management's effect on cost of outputs and outcomes	- Project Document - Results Framework - M&E system and tracking tools - Evaluation of project design - Stakeholder analysis - ToC - PPG Report - Work plans and budgets - PIRs - Risk matrix - Interviews with UNEP PM and staff - Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM
What were the roles, performance and frequency of meetings for the Project Steering Committees PSC?	- Main roles for PSC specified and approved - Average no of PSC meetings per year - Performance of PSC according to UNEP, BCH-III PROJECT TEAM and national stakeholders	- Project Document - Evaluation of project design - Stakeholder analysis - Meeting Memos for PSC - Work plans and budgets - PIRs - Project website and websites for main partners - Interviews with Main international/national partners
What was the effectiveness of collaboration and interactions between the various project partners and stakeholders during implementation of the project?	Effectiveness of project outputs and outcomes achieved based on interactions with project partners and main stakeholders (disaggregated for the main stakeholder groups identified in the	- Project Document - Evaluation of project design - Stakeholder analysis - Work plans and budgets - PIRs

EVALUATION QUESTIONS	INDICATORS/CRITERIA	SOURCES OF INFORMATION
	Stakeholder Analysis)	• Mid-term Review Report • Meeting Memos for PSCs • Individual consulting reports • Project website and websites for main partners • Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff • Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM • Interviews with Main international/national partners • Interviews with Governments and other public officials
Stakeholders' participation and cooperation		
Have all stakeholders who are affected by or who could affect (positively or negatively) the project been identified and explained in the stakeholder analysis?	Stakeholders identified in ProDoc and Stakeholder analysis compared with information from other sources	• Project Document • Results Framework • Evaluation of project design • Stakeholder analysis • Interviews with main international/national partners • Interviews with Governments and other public officials • Local workshops and interviews with local stakeholders
Did the main stakeholders participate in the design phase of the project and did their involvement and influence on the project design?	Main stakeholders participating in the design phase, and their roles	• Project Document • Evaluation of project design • Stakeholder analysis • Baseline study • Mid-term Review Report • Project website and websites for main partners • Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff • Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM • Interviews with main international/national partners • Interviews with Governments and other public officials
Are the specific roles and responsibilities of the key stakeholders documented in relation to project delivery and effectiveness?	Documented roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders in producing outputs and outcomes	• Project Document • Results Framework • Evaluation of project design • PPG Report • Baseline study • Mid-term Review Report • Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff • Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM • Interviews with Main international/national partners • Interviews with Governments and other public officials
To what extent did Governments and public agencies promise political, technical or financial support to the project before its approval?	• US\$ documented co-financing from public agencies • Number of letters of political and technical support from public agencies	• Project Document • CEO Endorsement documents • PPG Report • Work plans and budgets • Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff • Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM
Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity		

EVALUATION QUESTIONS	INDICATORS/CRITERIA	SOURCES OF INFORMATION
To what extent has the UN Common Understanding on the HRBA been applied during the project implementation?	Integration of Human Rights, ethnic minorities and Gender Equality in ProDoc and Results Framework	• Project Document • Results Framework • Evaluation of project design
To what extent were Human Rights, Ethnic minorities and Gender Equality allocated specific and adequate budget in relation to the results achieved?	• Project budget (US\$) for Human Rights, ethnic minorities and Gender Equality • Indicators on demand for these issues in the framework of the project	• Project Document with budget • Results Framework • Evaluation of project design • Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM • Interviews with Main international/national partners
Are the economic, social and environmental impacts to the key stakeholders identified, with particular reference to the most vulnerable groups (women, indigenous peoples, ethnic minorities, people living with disabilities)?	Economic, social and environmental impacts on the key stakeholders (including most vulnerable groups) identified in project document and appendixes	• Project Document • Results Framework • Evaluation of project design • PPG Report • Baseline study • Mid-term Review Report • Risk matrix • Individual consulting reports • Interviews with main international/national partners • Interviews with Governments and other public officials • Workshops and interviews with local stakeholders • Observations during country visits
Environmental and social safeguards		
Was the safeguard management instrument completed in time for approval and based on UNEP and GEF guidelines for Environmental, Social and Economic Safeguards?	• Date of completion of the safeguard management monitoring system • Is the safeguard instrument in compliance with UN guidelines?	• Project Document • UNEP Policies, MTS and PoW • CEO Endorsement documents • GEF STAP Reviews • PPG Report • Baseline study • PIRs • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff • Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM
Were the potentially negative environmental, economic and social impacts of projects identified during design and monitored during implementation?	• EIA or environmental- and social impact screening designed and monitored • Potential negative environmental, economic or social impacts of the project defined and monitored • Mitigation measures for these potential negative impacts defined and applied	• Project Document • Evaluation of project design • CEO Endorsement documents • GEF STAP Reviews • PPG Report • Baseline study • Risk matrix • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff • Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM • Interviews with Main international/national partners • Interviews with Governments and other public officials • Workshops and interviews with local stakeholders
Country ownership and driven-ness		
How and how well did the project achieve country ownership of project outputs and outcomes in the participating countries?	Strength of country ownership of project outputs and outcomes in the participating countries	• Project Document • Results Framework • Evaluation of project design • Stakeholder analysis

EVALUATION QUESTIONS	INDICATORS/CRITERIA	SOURCES OF INFORMATION
		• ToC • Project website and websites for main partners • Signed agreements with partners (collaboration and financing) • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff • Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM • Interviews with Main international/national partners • Interviews with Governments and other public officials • Online survey
Communication and public awareness		
What has been the effectiveness of the project's knowledge management and public awareness activities to communicate objectives, progress, results and lessons learned?	Effectiveness of project's knowledge management and public awareness campaigns	• Project Document • Results Framework • Evaluation of project design • PIRs • Individual consulting reports • Project publications • Training materials and tools • Project website and websites for main partners • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff • Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM and staff in charge of outreach • Interviews with NEAs and staff in charge of outreach • Interviews with Governments and other public officials • Interviews with BCH-III staff members
Did the project identify and make use of existing communication channels and networks of the BCH, Government and other key stakeholders?	Project's use of BCH and Government communication channels (as well as others) that existed before project approval	• Project Document • Results Framework • Evaluation of project design • ToC • PIRs • Individual consulting reports • Project publications • Training materials and tools • Project website and websites for main partners • Publications/bulletins of BCH-III and NEAs mentioning the project • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff • Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM and staff in charge of outreach • Interviews with partners and staff in charge of outreach • Interviews with some BCH-III staff members
Did the project provide feedback channels?	Which channels exist for stakeholder feedback or grievance, and have they been used?	• Project Document • Results Framework • Evaluation of project design • ToC • Work plans and budgets • Meeting Memos for PSC • PIRs • Mid-term Review Report • Project website and websites for main partners • Interviews with UNEP PM and staff • Interviews with BCH-III PROJECT TEAM • Interviews with Main international/national partners

EVALUATION QUESTIONS	INDICATORS/CRITERIA	SOURCES OF INFORMATION
		Interviews with Governments and other public officials

ANNEX III. JUSTIFICATIONS FOR RTOC REFORMULATIONS

Annex III a. Justification for reformulation of results statement

Formulation in original project document 21/06/2016	Formulation recommended by MTR December 2019	Revised result framework 2020 ¹⁹	Formulation for reconstructed ToC at evaluation inception (RTOC)	Justification for reformulation and/or consultant's explanatory notes on the interpretation of the result
IMPACT				
Overall project goal To provide support to eligible parties for GEF funding in order to sustain and build capacity for effective participation in the BCH" in line with COP/MOP Decisions, specifically BS VI/5 paragraph 2f Two main objectives: Effective participation to the BCH: Participating countries to set up portals that are inter-operative with the Central portal of the BCH including sub-regional or regional portals and where appropriate hosted by the CBD Secretariat in Montreal. Stakeholders' inclusiveness: key stakeholders will be identified and involved in decision-making and interpretation.	Goal: Enhanced conservation of biological diversity Purpose: Safe and effective use of modern biotechnology	Goal: Not mentioned Main Objective: Not mentioned	Impact: MTR formulation adopted	MTR formulation is the most appropriate at impact level.
INTERMEDIATE STATES				
Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	1. Enhanced access and use of information on LMOs in biosafety decision making. 2. Enhanced sustainability of BCH Mechanisms for effective and inclusive participation	

¹⁹ The latest PIRs (2024, 2025) are aligned with and were reported against the revised result framework (2020), except for output 3.5, 3.6, and 3.7.

PROJECT OUTCOMES				
1.1: Improved institutional expertise in registering and retrieving BCH data 1.2: Streamlined knowledge exchange within & between national, regional/sub-regional and international institutions and experts to assure the best use of the technologies and understanding of the needs. 1.3: Increased effective regional networking for information sharing and using lessons learned by one country to enhance the systems in others. 2.1: Enhanced sustainability of national and regional BCH through continued capacity building after the completion of the project 2.2: Institution of a BCH e-learning environment 3.1: RAs acquainted with new training methodologies (webinars, Virtual Learning Environments) whilst maintaining and improving access to ensure all who want to can get access. 3.2: Project countries assisted by Regional Advisors (RAs) to meet the requirements of Article 23 as well as the formal requirements of Article 20 of the Protocol. 3.3: Enhanced sustainability of the RAs System 4.1: Enhanced expertise in technical aspects of a BCH for information providers; Enhanced party participation and quality of records on the BCH 4.2: National capacity for developing BCH training events or courses established 5.1: Improved national awareness, intersectoral coordination and institutional expertise in technical aspects of a BCH for decision makers and key stakeholders 5.2: Sustainability of national BCH systems ensured 5.3: A global supportive mechanism put in place to assist in BCH activities at national	<i>[Ultimate, intermediate, and immediate outcomes were proposed at the MTR]</i> Ultimate outcomes 1. Enhanced access and best use of scientific, technical, legal, environmental information and experiences on Living Modified Organisms in biosafety decision making; 2. Enhanced sustainability of BCH Mechanisms and effective and inclusive participation in BCH Intermediate outcomes 1. Enhanced publication of quality biosafety records and information on BCH portals and increased access and use in decision making 2. Enhanced regional and sub-regional collaboration and exchange of knowledge and experience sharing, informing biosafety decision making 3. An established, effective, updated and inclusive BCH system sustainably managed informing the biosafety decision making in line with the national biosafety systems 4. Strengthened and Institutionalized BCH Regional Advisory system supporting parties to effectively participate in Biosafety Information Sharing Mechanisms	<i>[After the MTR, result framework was revised, and the outcomes below was presented as Project Outcomes. There are no ultimate, immediate and intermediate outcomes.]</i> Outcome 1. Enhanced access and use of BCH data, effective and inclusive participation in the BCH system Outcome 2. Strengthened national BCH systems and organizational procedures for biosafety information Outcome 3. Enhanced regional networking and knowledge sharing for effective management of the BCH Outcome 4. Strengthened and Institutionalized BCH Regional Advisory system supporting parties to effectively participate in biosafety information sharing mechanisms	Project Outcomes Adopted from the intermediate Outcomes in the MTR and labelled 'Project Outcomes' Outcome 1. No change from MTR Outcome 2. No change from MTR Outcome 3. No change from MTR Outcome 4. An institutionalized sustainable Regional Advisory system of the UNEP Certified RAs providing technical backstopping on the BCH & other biodiversity-related MEAs.	Project outcomes Outcomes were defined and adopted after the MTR. The project team reported against these outcomes for the rest of the project, through the PIR reports. The evaluator agrees with the ToC analysis done at MTR. Note that the text is taken from the ToC figure in the MTR, not from an updated logframe

and regional levels while overseeing a coordinated approach for capacity building on the BCH				
DIRECT OUTCOMES:				
Not mentioned	Labelled as Immediate Outcomes 1. Capacitated, designated CNAs and National Focal points (CPB, BCH, and Article 17) the registration and publishing of biosafety decisions and mandatory biosafety information on the BCH. In addition, all Stakeholders across the biosafety value chain able to continue self-capacitating on the BCH, through the VLE, and competently accessing, analysing and using biosafety information in decision making [combining Outcomes 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3] 2. Regularly updated and interoperable BCHs with mandatory national and regional biosafety information [combining 2.1, 2.2] 3. National biosafety systems supportive of locally adapted trainings on BCH, generation, endorsement and registration of biosafety information [combining 4.1, 4.2] 4. Sustainable system of UNEP Certified RAs with knowledge on BCH and biodiversity related MEAs available to train others [combining 5.1, 5.2, 5.3]	Not mentioned.	Adopted from the Immediate Outcomes in the MTR and labelled 'Direct Outcomes' 1. Enhanced access and use of BCH data, effective and inclusive participation in the BCH system 2. Strengthened national BCH systems and organizational procedures for biosafety information 3. Enhanced regional networking and knowledge sharing for effective management of the BCH 4. Strengthened and Institutionalized BCH Regional Advisory system supporting parties to effectively participate in biosafety information sharing mechanisms	The TE Consultant agrees with the combination of few outcomes into four done during the MTR. Further reformulation is done based on the content of the project and UNEP's Glossary of Results Definitions (Dec. 2023): <i>an Outcome is a change at institutional level, or changes in behaviours, attitudes or conditions achieved from the use (i.e., uptake, adoption, application) of outputs by intended beneficiaries.</i>
OUTCOME INDICATORS (comments if relevant)				
(The indicators were only at output level)	No outcome level indicators were proposed at the MTR	<i>[The indicators and targets were changed in the revised result framework 2020, based on the MTR. But none of them are on outcome level]</i>	1a). A substantial and significant number of beneficiary countries (e.g. 70) have enhanced access to and use BCH data. 1b) A substantial and significant number of beneficiary countries (e.g. 70) have effective and inclusive participation in the BCH system	The TE evaluator has identified proposed indicators at Outcome level, in line with the project content. However, <i>since these were not approved before or during implementation, they are for reference only and will only be used, if data are available, as an additional source of information to analyse</i>

				compliance with Outcomes. They refer only to countries that are beneficiaries of BCH-III.
	No outcome level indicators were proposed at the MTR		2. A substantial and significant number of beneficiary countries (e.g. 70) have strengthened their national BCH systems and organizational procedures for biosafety information	Same justification and explanatory note as above.
	No outcome level indicators were proposed at the MTR		3. At least 5 out of the 6 regions have enhanced their regional networking and knowledge sharing for effective management of the BCH	Same justification and explanatory note as above. Also, note that the project was divided in 6 regions.
	No outcome level indicators were proposed at the MTR		4. At least 5 regional advisory systems for BCH is strengthened and institutionalized, supporting parties to effectively participate in biosafety information sharing mechanisms	Same justification and explanatory note as above. Note that the project was divided in 6 regions.
OUTPUTS				
1.1.1. BCH National Focal Points and designated CNAs trained in technical BCH responsibilities to ensure common understanding of the requirements and to provide the necessary information to stakeholders; 1.1.2. Clear understanding <i>[by BCH NFP]</i> of the common formats of BCH records and their impact on the institutional processes for creating and registering BCH information and making biosafety related decisions (e.g. registering and publishing decisions); 1.1.3. Sharing and exchange of experiences <i>[by BCH NFPs]</i> and analysis of lessons learned in BCH management at national level (case studies from advanced countries in the region). Invite BCH-2 countries to share their experience. 1.2.1. A Regional/Global roster <i>[names of whom provided by countries]</i> of experts and stakeholders established by region to assure the best use of technologies and understanding of the needs; 1-2 experts invited to participate in regional WS; CNAs invited to designate experts and key stakeholders that will have to supervise public awareness workshop to operationalize national BCH in line with national NBF and biosafety policy. 1.2.2. Structural Training and awareness Systems identified by Parties, including BCH-II countries trainers and assistants, specific training requests and new target stakeholders; 1.3.1. Regional institutions recognized as	<i>[The outputs were suggested by reframed intermediate outcomes suggested at the MTR]</i> Outputs under Intermediate outcome (IO) 1 1.1.1. BCH National Focal Points and designated CNAs trained in technical BCH responsibilities to ensure common understanding of the requirements and to provide the necessary information to stakeholders; 1.1.2. Clear understanding of the common formats of BCH records and their impact on the institutional processes for creating and registering BCH information and making biosafety related decisions (e.g. registering and publishing decisions); 1.3.2. BCH electronic and online forums, and webinars organized for regional and global participation with BCH-NFPs, experts and key stakeholders; 2.1.1. BCH Training modules developed in 6 UN languages and	Output 1.1 National training activities organized and delivered Output 1.2: Key national Biosafety stakeholders trained in registering and finding information on the BCH Output 1.3: BCH capacity building and e-participation of NFPs and CNAs strengthened and enhanced Output 1.4: Interactive e-learning environments comprising courses and webinars in the 6 UN languages are established Output 1.5: Outreach materials on success stories and lessons learnt produced and disseminated Output 2.1 National knowledge on the BCH is improved Output 2.2 Enhanced number of countries who have organized and delivered their third national workshop on their own	UNEP results definitions emphasize that for outputs to trigger the intended change process, an intended beneficiary must have access to the outputs. Therefore, we emphasize the availability of outputs rather than simply their production. The Terminal Evaluation adopts the outputs as presented in the MTR as they are more comprehensive than the abbreviated forms reflected in the revised version of the Results Framework used in the PIRs from 2020 onwards. Outputs under IO 1: 1.1.1 No change from MTR 1.3.2. No change from MTR 2.1.1 BCH Training modules in 6 UN languages globally available through the VLE and easily downloadable 2.1.2 Specific training modules according to countries' requests made publicly available for concrete target audiences like producers, farmers, custom officers, phytosanitary officers, seed associations, seed traders, etc. 2.2.1 Complete Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) made available.	Updated version of the reformulation done at MTR, formulated with emphasis in line with the UNEP Glossary of Results Definitions (Dec. 2023): <i>an Output is the availability (for intended beneficiaries/ users) of new products and services and/or gains in knowledge, abilities, and awareness of individuals or within institutions.</i>

coordinator of the regional activities and regional BCH nodes interoperable with Global BCH established using where appropriate SCBD built-in sites and maintained by the recognized institutions, for regional exchange between national, regional and inter-national institutions; [in line with Updated Action Plan for building capacities for the effective implementation of the Biosafety Protocol. 1.3.2. BCH electronic and online forums, and webinars organized for regional and global participation with BCH-NFPs, experts and key stakeholders; 2.1.1. BCH Training modules [for use by BCH NFPs] developed in 6 UN languages are updated and made globally available and easily downloadable via internet on the BCH website; 2.1.2. Specific training modules designed at countries' requests and made publicly available 2.2.1. A BCH e-learning environment is setup and uses online BCH courses, training packages and Webinars for continuous and self-learning; Training Materials to be placed where appropriate on the central portal of the BCH or available on national or regional Clearing Houses; 2.2.2. Electronic and online Forums are setup and operationalized wherever appropriate in collaboration with SCBD allowing national and regional stakeholders to share experiences on a regional and global scale; item to synergy with SCBD and BCH related activities where possible; 3.1.1. 20-25 RAs trained to effectively use new online training methodologies (webinars, Virtual Environment) and increasing the awareness of who should be 'targeted' and how this is best achieved; 3.1.2. RAs' experiences in training needs and challenges are documented and made accessible to all project countries via appropriate media and the BCH; 3.2.1. Technical assistance provided to countries, including design, preparation and delivery of national, regional (at BCH-III Regional Workshops) and global (at COP/MOPs 7 and 8) BCH training workshops to countries as needed to fulfil their national training plans and prepare to COP/MOPs; 3.2.2. Education materials, including electronic and online courses and conferences and webinars, prepared, finalized and translated where appropriate (related to component 2);	made globally available through the VLE, easily downloadable; 2.1.2. Specific training modules designed at countries' requests and made publicly available for concrete target audiences like producers, farmers, custom officers, phytosanitary officers, seed associations, seed traders, etc. Outputs under IO 2 1.1.3. Sharing and exchange of experiences and analysis of lessons learned in BCH management at national level (case studies from advanced countries in the region). Invite BCH-2 countries to share their experience; 1.2.1. A Regional/Global roster of experts and stakeholders established by region to assure the best use of technologies and understanding of the needs; 1-2 experts invited to participate in regional WS; CNA invited to designate experts and key stakeholders that will have to supervise public awareness workshop to operationalize national BCH in line with national NBF and biosafety policy; 1.2.2. Structural Training and awareness Systems identified by Parties, including BCH-II countries trainers and assistants, specific training requests and new target stakeholders; 1.3.1. Regional institutions recognized as coordinator of the regional activities and regional BCH nodes interoperable with Global BCH established using where appropriate SCBD built-in sites and maintained by the recognized institutions, for regional exchange between national, regional and international institutions; [in line with Updated Action Plan for building capacities for the effective	Output 2.3 National BCH trainings and materials developed Output 2.5 The number of new BCH portals created is increased Output 2.6 National procedures to gather information are established, and roles of CNA NFPs clearly identified Output 2.7 National policies and legal frameworks are strengthened Output 3.1 Regional trainings organized and delivered Output 3.2 Regional training of trainer's workshops for NFPs and NAUs organized and delivered Output 3.3 Tailored regional training materials developed and disseminated Output 3.4 Additional key stakeholders and experts identified for national implementation Output 3.5 Regional stakeholders and institutions identified Output 3.6 Capacity building activities' material available after national, regional and global workshops Output 3.7 Cooperation is enhanced on BCH nodes Output 4.1 Trainings at the national, regional, and global levels facilitated through the Regional Advisors' Network Output 4.2 Expertise and visibility of the Regional Advisors (RA) Network	2.2.2 Electronic and online Forums operationalized wherever appropriate in collaboration with SCBD, allowing national and regional stakeholders to share experiences on a regional and global scale in synergy with SCBD and BCH related activities where possible. 3.2.2. Education materials available in 6 UN languages, including electronic and online courses and conferences and webinars. 5.1.1 Stakeholders able to identify technical national BCH responsibilities, with a clear understanding of the common formats of BCH records and their impact on the institutional processes for creating and registering BCH information and making biosafety related decisions. 5.1.2 National procedures and operational linkages available to gather information on BCH in line with NBFs implementation and sustainability and training plan. 5.2.1. BCH and Biosafety e-learning training modules available on the BCH Central portal, project VLE, and national and regional BCH portals where appropriate; non-electronic materials available on demand to maintain understanding and acceptance by stakeholders. Outputs under IO 2: 1.1.3. Experience sharing and analysis of lessons learned in BCH management available at national level (case studies from advanced countries in the region). 1.2.1. A Regional/Global roster of BCH experts available to assure the best use of technologies and understanding of the needs. 1.2.2. Structural Training and awareness Systems available for Parties, including BCH-II country trainers and assistants for specific training requests and new target stakeholders. 1.3.1. Interoperable Regional-Global BCH nodes with BCH SCBD built-in sites maintained by recognized institutions, and	
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3.3.1. 15-20 RAs acquainted with BCH and biodiversity related MEAs to be prepared for global capacity building; 4.1.1. BCH NFP and NAUs receive training on BCH use, maintenance and management in line with NBF implementation; 4.1.2 National website enhanced to make available a BCH national portal interoperable with Regional and/or Central BCH portals using where appropriate SCBD free website hosting system; 4.1.3. National records entered efficiently onto the BCH at the very beginning of their use; increased usage of BCH for daily decision-making operations, both in public and private sectors (item related to component 5); 4.2.1. National BCH training workshops facilitated by national competencies; engagement of education sectors in national biosafety and BCH training 5.1.1. Stakeholders trained in identifying technical national BCH responsibilities and have a clear understanding of the common formats of BCH records and their impact on the institutional processes for creating and registering BCH information and making biosafety related decisions (e.g. registering and publishing decisions); 5.1.2. National procedures and operational linkages established to gather information to be put on BCH in line with NBFs implementation and sustainability and training plan; 5.2.1. BCH and Biosafety e-learning training modules are made available on the BCH Central portal, on project Virtual Environment, and on national and regional BCH portals where appropriate; non-electronic materials will be available on demand to maintain understanding and acceptance by stakeholders; 5.3.1. National, regional and international cooperation enhanced where appropriate with international agencies, especially UN agencies, that have a stake in BCH and biosafety Projects; 5.3.2. Cooperation with Regional 'Centres of Excellence' that may cater regional capacity building initiatives.	implementation of the Biosafety Protocol (UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/3/15, para. 5.2.b)] 4.1.1. BCH FP and NAUs receive training on BCH use, maintenance and management in line with NBF implementation; 5.3.2. Cooperation with Regional Centres of Excellence' that may cater regional capacity building initiatives. Outputs under IO 3: 1.3. Sharing and exchange of experiences and analysis of lessons learned in BCH management at national level (case studies from advanced countries in the region). Invite BCH-2 countries to share their experience. 1.2.1. A Regional/Global roster of experts and stakeholders established by region to assure the best use of technologies and understanding of the needs; 1-2 experts invited to participate in regional WS; CNAs invited to designate experts and key stakeholders that will have to supervise public awareness workshop to operationalize national BCH in line with national NBF and biosafety policy. 1.2.2. Structural Training and awareness Systems identified by Parties, including BCH-II countries trainers and assistants, specific training requests and new target stakeholders; 4.1.1. BCH FP and NAUs receive training on BCH use, maintenance and management in line with NBF implementation.	enhanced via capacity building activities and UNEP certification Output 4.3 Sustainability of the VLE is assured beyond project duration Output 4.4 Participation of key regional and global organizations in regional and national training activities is increased Output 4.5 Centres of Excellence that are available to undertake biosafety capacity-building activities after the project has ended are identified and approached	regional exchange available between national, regional and international institutions, coordinated by recognized regional institutions (in line with Updated Action Plan UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/3/15, para. 5.2.b) 4.1.1. BCH FP and NAUs trained on BCH use, maintenance and management in line with NBF implementation; 5.3.2. Cooperation with Regional Centres of Excellence available to cater regional capacity building. Outputs under IO 3: 1.3. Experiences and analysis of lessons learned on BCH management shared at national level (case studies from advanced countries in the region). 1.2.1. A Regional/Global roster of BCH experts available to assure the best use of technologies and understanding of the needs. 1.2.2. Structural Training and awareness Systems available for the Parties, including BCH-II countries trainers and assistants, specific training requests and new target stakeholders; 4.1.1. BCH FP and NAUs trained on BCH use, maintenance and management in line with NBF implementation. Outputs under IO 4: 3.1.1 20-25 RAs trained and with increased awareness of effective use of new online training methodologies (webinars, VLE). 3.1.2 RAs' experiences on training needs and challenges documented and made accessible to all project countries via appropriate media and the BCH. 3.3.1. 15-20 RAs acquainted with BCH and biodiversity related MEAs available for global capacity building.	
OUTPUT INDICATORS				
The Output indicators used in the PIRs follow, with only minor text variance, the indicators proposed in the MTR, which are considered of good quality. They are mostly 'SMART' indicators, with the exception of Time (T) because the only timeframe is the project duration and there are not any yearly or mid-term targets.				

Annex III b. Justification for reformulation of drivers and assumptions

Formulation in original project document 21/06/2016	Formulated in the MTR document	Formulation for reconstructed ToC at evaluation inception (RTOC)	Justification for reformulation and/or consultant's explanatory notes on the interpretation of the driver or assumption
DRIVERS			
Drivers on Intermediate States and Impact level	1.		1. Implementation of good governance principles as per the CPB 2. Existence of willing lead champions for promotion of informed decision making 3. Active sub-regional networks implementing the road map 4. Availability of relevant tools to sustain an inclusive stakeholder participation in BCH
Outcome drivers:	2. Implementation of good governance principles as per the CPB 3. Existence of willing lead champions for promotion of informed decision making 4. Active sub-regional networks implementing the BCH road maps 5. Availability of relevant tools to sustain an inclusive stakeholder participation in BCH 6. Existence if relevant and quality training materials for capacity building 7. Sustained inclusive stakeholder participation	1. Implementation of good governance principles as per the CPB 2. Existence of willing lead champions for promotion of informed decision-making 3. Active sub-regional networks implementing the road maps 4. Availability of relevant tools to sustain an inclusive stakeholder participation in BCH, promoting human rights, gender equality, persons with disabilities and marginalised/vulnerable groups 5. Existence of quality training materials for capacity building 6. Sustained inclusive stakeholder participation.	Driver 4: Specified meaning of "inclusive stakeholder participation". Driver 5: Words "if relevant" was taken out.
Human rights and gender equality			

Human Rights: Specific guidance will be given in training-of-trainer workshops to raise awareness of social, cultural and linguistic sensitivities and teach participants how to exercise principles of fairness and inclusivity for all (PRODOC 3.11 par. 251, 2016)	Indirectly included in drivers 4, and 6	Driver: Awareness of social, cultural and linguistic sensitivities raised through TOT workshops.	Human rights awareness strengthened through TOT workshops' focus on social, cultural and linguistic sensitivities
Human Rights: To ensure that specific social groups are not marginalized due to language constraints, all training materials will be translated into the UN languages.	Indirectly included in drivers 4, and 6	Driver: Translation of all training material into the UN languages.	Improved access of broad stakeholder groups to project training material due to translation into the UN languages
Gender: To deal with gender in the context of the BCH, it is necessary to outline vision, design and content (PRODOC 2.6 par. 84, 2016)	Indirectly included in drivers 4, and 6	Driver: Vision, design, and content on gender equality outlined.	Improved gender mainstreaming due to outlining of the project's vision, design and content on gender
Gender: A training package will be developed and delivered in gender and socio-economically sensible way since not all women and men have the same needs, roles and responsibilities (PRODOC 3.3 par. 174, 2016)	Indirectly included in drivers 4, and 6	Driver: The diverse roles of men and women in different socio-economic status incorporated in the gender sensible training package	- Expected higher interest and participation of women in training due to gender sensible training package and material - Expected improved results of training package and participation in training due to focus on the diverse roles of men and women in different socio-economic status
Gender: Encourage the training package and trainees to look at the diverse roles of man and women in different socio-economic status (PRODOC 3.3 par. 174, 2016)	Indirectly included in drivers 4, and 6		
ASSUMPTIONS			
Assumptions on Intermediate States and Impact level	1.		1. National Biosafety Frameworks operational and nationally supported with a budgetary allocation 2. Decision makers will use relevant biosafety information from the BCH 3. An enabling politically will of the key stakeholders at national level 4. Regional and Sub-Regional networks institutionalized and functional
Assumptions on project outcome level	2.National Biosafety frameworks operational and nationally supported with a budgetary allocation. 3.Decision makers will use relevant biosafety information from the BCH 4.An enabling political will of the key stakeholders at national level 5.Regional and sub-regional networks institutionalised and functional		
Human rights and gender equality			

(No assumptions on human rights and gender equality)		Translation of all training materials into the UN languages will increase participation of broader stakeholder groups	The assumption is valid if parts of the stakeholders would not use English training material
		Gender-sensible training package will ensure gender balance among trainees	The assumption is valid if the trainees have information about the content of the training package before signing up for training

ANNEX IV. OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES TABLES

Annex IV a. Project Outputs

Output	Narrative Assessment	Sources of Information/Evidence
Performance against Indicators and Targets	See detailed information on the topics and targets in the Outcome table. A = Achievement percentage. Baseline for all project outputs is zero except 2.4.	
Output 1:	Results statement: National BCH Institutional Capacity Development including Effective and Inclusive Participation, Production and Sharing of Information	
1.1 National training activities organized and delivered	Target: 150 national workshops Achievement: PIRs and the Final Report confirm that 137 national workshops were organized and delivered. A 91.3.	PIRs 2019-2025. Project Final Report, Country Final reports, National workshop reports, Stakeholder interviews, project final survey, and online TE survey.
1.2: Key national Biosafety stakeholders trained in registering and finding information on the BCH0	Targets: 38 countries, 50% women Achievement: Key national stakeholders in 40 countries (target 38) were trained in national workshops on registering and finding information on the BCH. Public institutions accounted for 78% of the 2,122 workshop participants, ensuring strong government representation, while women were 45% (target 50). A 95.	PIR 2019-2025. National workshop reports, Stakeholder interviews, project final survey, and TE online survey.
1.3: BCH capacity building and e-participation of NFPs and CNAs strengthened and enhanced	Targets: 76 countries, VLE in use. Achievement: The BCH capacity and e-participation of NFPs and CNAs were strengthened and enhanced. The final project survey confirmed that a diverse range of stakeholders benefited from the trainings, including CNAs trained during national workshops. BCH III countries participated in the VLE, accessed by 2,360 participants in 181 countries (50% women – Source PIR 2025). Training material is still available online. A 100.	PIR 2019-2025. Workshop reports. Project Final Report. Stakeholder interviews. Final project survey and TE online survey.
1.4: Interactive e-learning environments comprising courses and webinars in the 6 UN languages are established	Target: 1 e-learning course, training material in 6 languages, 30 webinars Achievement: Interactive e-learning environments with courses and webinars available in the 6 UN languages. A 100.	PIRs 2019-2025. Project Final Report, Country reports, Stakeholder interviews, project final survey, and online TE survey.
1.5: Outreach materials on success stories and lessons learnt produced and disseminated	Target: 1 success story publication available in 6 languages Achievement: Success stories and lessons learnt documented, produced and disseminated through extensive communication and outreach materials to enhance BCH awareness and capacity building.: 18 webinars, including 10 multilingual sessions, were delivered, and a training video kit provided step-by-step guidance on BCH functionalities. A communication strategy and social media toolkit were finalized with ICGEB. A 4-minute animated video, subtitled in 5 UN languages (target 6), showcased BCH's practical use through real-life case studies. 2 feature articles and lessons-learned video highlighted project outcomes and national implementation. The material is still available in VLE, BCH websites, YouTube, etc. A 95.	PIRs 2019-2025. Project Final Report, Outreach materials, Country reports, Stakeholder interviews, project final survey, and online TE survey.
Level of delivery 1:	The project delivered the five outputs for institutional capacity development that are expected to lead to effective and inclusive participation, production and information sharing. Achievement 96.3%.	
Output 2:	Results statement: National Sustainability of BCH Mechanisms through the Establishment of Effective National Procedures	
2.1 National knowledge on the BCH is improved	Target: At least 25% increase in knowledge on the CPB and BCH after 1st and 2 nd workshops. Achievement: National BCH knowledge was improved, especially among participants in the national workshops. Test results before and after workshops gave an average improvement of 11.7% through 2022 (source: RA reports). Improvement was confirmed by interviews and the TE survey where 61% of respondents consider that the project improved institutional capacity in their country. A 95.	PIRs 2019-2025, Project Final Report, Country reports, Workshop reports, Statistics provided by RAs to PMU, Stakeholder interviews, project final survey, and online TE survey.
2.2 Enhanced number of countries who have organized and delivered their third national workshop on their own	Target: 50% of countries (38) organize and deliver their 3rd workshop Achievement: 28 out of the countries organized and delivered a 3rd national workshop by themselves, confirmed by workshop reports. A 73.7.	PIRs 2019-2025, Project Final Report, Workshop reports, Stakeholder interviews, project final survey, and online TE survey.
2.3 National BCH trainings and materials developed	Target: 2-4 high-quality training materials developed and disseminated. Achievement: Currently, there are 85 VLE training courses (global, regional, and national) available in 6 languages in the VLE. These include nationally accessible training modules containing training material from the countries that carried out national level activities. A 100.	PIRs 2019-2025, Project Final Report, Country reports, Workshop reports, Stakeholder interviews, project final survey, and TE survey. VLE platform

2.4 The number of BCH national records reported on in the BCH Central Portal is increased	Target: At least 5% increase of national records in the BCH Central Portal Baseline: 1,813 Oct 2016 Achievement: There was 86% increase in national records since October 2016 and currently 3,370 national records on the BCH for the 76 participating countries. A 100.	PIRs 2019-2025, Project Final Report, Data on national records on BCH portal
2.5 The number of new BCH portals created is increased	Target: At least 10 countries develop a new national BCH portal. Achievement: The project reported that 37 project countries have BCH national portals, but not how many existed before BCH-III. Triangulation of different sources indicate that the number was increased but not the degree of increase. A N/A.	PIRs 2019-2025, Project Final Report, Country reports, Workshop reports, Stakeholder interviews, project final survey, and online TE survey.
2.6 National procedures to gather information are established, and roles of CNA NFPs clearly identified	Target: 50% of project countries (38) have established national procedures to gather information and put on to the BCH consistent with their NBFs and national biosafety policy Achievement: The project supported 137 national workshops in 40 countries (53% of participating countries) to establish national procedures for collecting and uploading biosafety information to the BCH in line with National Biosafety Frameworks and policies. The 44 SSFAs included the requirement that one of the first two national workshops should address the establishment or strengthening of national procedures. The 2nd workshops were to review/revisit the roles & responsibilities for CNAs, BCH-NFP, and NAUs. A 100	PIRs 2019-2025, Project Final Report, Country reports, Workshop reports. Stakeholder interviews, project final survey, and online TE survey.
2.7 National policies and legal frameworks are strengthened	Target: 10 countries have strengthened or developed policies and legal frameworks as a direct/indirect result of national BCH capacity building activities. Achievement: Some countries demonstrated concrete policy actions related with support from the project. Kenya, Botswana, Maldives and Nicaragua reported advance of specific regulations or policy, while the project final survey showed that 4 countries had increased policy actions to improve BCH participation and information flow. Examples include Uruguay updating Cartagena Protocol information on ministry website, Nicaragua using remaining project funds to support the implementation of Law 705 on LMO risks, Solomon Islands investing in data collection for the BCH, and Rwanda's Biosafety and Biosecurity Organization planning regional workshops to build biosafety capacity in East Africa. A 70.	PIRs 2019-2025, Project Final Report, Country reports, Workshop reports. Stakeholder interviews, project final survey, and online TE survey.
Level of delivery 2:	More effective national procedures to elevate the expectation of BCH sustainability on national level, however with great variation between the countries. Achievement 89.8%	
Output 3:	Regional Networking, Experience and Knowledge Sharing	
3.1 Regional trainings organized and delivered	Target: 6 regional workshops delivered in 6 regions to introduce the BCH III project and enhance capacities of countries Achievement: 9 regional/sub-regional workshops were held across 6 project regions,. A 100.	PIRs 2019-2025, Project Final Report, Country reports, Workshop reports. Stakeholder interviews, project final survey, and online TE survey.
3.2 Regional training of trainer's workshops for NFPs and NAUs organized and delivered	Target: 4 regional ToT workshops for NFPs and NAUs in 4 regions developed and organized Achievement: The PIR 2024 and the Final Report mention that 4 regional Training of Trainers (ToT) workshops for NFPs and NAUs were developed and organized, focusing on countries without SSFAs, including the Pacific and CEE workshops held in late 2023 and early 2024. The EC has reviewed 3 workshop reports that were specified as ToT and reports from the other regional workshops that were not organised as ToT. A 75.	PIRs 2019-2025, Project Final Report, Country reports, Workshop reports, and ToT training reports. Stakeholder interviews, project final survey, and online TE survey.
3.3 Tailored regional training materials developed and disseminated	Target: 2-4 new specific and high-quality training materials are developed and disseminated. Achievement: The Final Report lists the updated training manual, video tutorials, facilitator guides, and updated BCH SOP materials, verified online. A >100.	PIRs 2019-2025, Project Final Report, Country reports, Workshop reports. Stakeholder interviews, project final survey and online TE survey.
3.4 Additional key stakeholders and experts identified for national implementation	Target: A minimum of 2 new regional experts identified per region to be listed in the BCH roster of experts (12 regional experts in total). Achievement: During the regional workshops in Africa and Asia, 14 regional experts were identified for <i>potential</i> inclusion in the BCH register; and 54 experts were identified and registered in national, regional, global rosters during the national workshops (<i>or in process</i>), including the CPB Roster. However, the project has ended, and the RA Network is currently composed of 16 RAs including 7 women (44%). The total exceeds the minimum of 12, but most are not new and the documentation does not confirm that each of the 6 regions has at least 2 experts. A 90.	PIRs 2019-2025, Project Final Report, Country reports, Workshop reports. Stakeholder interviews, project final survey, and online TE survey.
3.5 Regional stakeholders and institutions identified	Target: 4 regional institutions with a coordinating role identified for registration on the portal. Achievement: A total of 130 stakeholders were identified by countries participating in the regional workshops, to <i>potentially</i> enhance the network of actors involved in biosafety information exchange.	PIRs 2019-2025, Project Final Report, Country reports, Workshop reports, Stakeholder interviews, project final survey, and online TE survey.

	Additionally, at least 7 institutions were identified for <i>eventual</i> registration on the BCH, further strengthening institutional engagement and collaboration at the regional level. See Outcome 3.10. A 100.	
3.6 Capacity building activities' material available after national, regional and global workshops	Target: 1 accessible virtual learning platform (VLE) developed and maintained, containing all material shared during national, regional, ToT and global workshops. Achievement: The VLE has a RA forum which is linked to the training, however so far mostly training materials are available after the migration to the new VLE platform, and not the actual working documents from the training. Some other materials were migrated but hidden for corrections, editing, etc. The triangulation of sources indicates that compliance with the target is plausible. A 100.	PIRs 2019-2025, Project Final Report, Country reports, Workshop reports, Stakeholder interviews, project final survey, and online TE survey.
3.7 Cooperation is enhanced on BCH nodes	Target: 4 new regional BCH nodes established (using SCBD built-in sites when possible). Achievement: 3 regional BCH nodes were established for CEE, Caribbean, and Asia. The UNEP PMU team reached out to an institution in Africa with an invitation to consider hosting a node for the Africa Region but it was not successful. The PMU hosted a webinar to inform participants of the nodes and introduce them to new tools from the CBD Secretariat to facilitate development of national and regional BCH websites. A 75.	PIRs 2019-2025, Project Final Report, Country reports, Stakeholder interviews, project final survey, and online TE survey.
Level of delivery 3:	Improved regional networks, experience- and knowledge sharing. Achievement 91.4%	
Output 4:	Results statement: Global Sustainability of BCH and other Multilateral Environmental Agreements' sharing Mechanisms through the Regional Advisors System	
4.1 Trainings at the national, regional, and global levels facilitated through the Regional Advisors' Network	Target: 20 RAs deliver national, regional and global workshops. Achievement: Out of 20 BCH RAs planned, 19 successfully conducted national workshops, demonstrating strong engagement in capacity-building efforts. 15 RAs also delivered regional training workshops, while 5 contributed to global workshops. Furthermore, 8 RAs were actively involved in the design, preparation, and translation of training materials, ensuring that the resources were tailored, accessible, and relevant to diverse regional and linguistic contexts. A 95.	PIRs 2019-2025, Project Final Report, Country reports, Workshop reports, Stakeholder interviews, project final survey, and online TE survey.
4.2 Expertise and visibility of the Regional Advisors (RA) Network enhanced via capacity building activities and UNEP certification	Target: At least 15 RAs have obtained UNEP certification. Achievement: The project strengthened the RA network by expanding its roster of advisors. 24 RAs were initially trained in a 2015 ToT workshop (before BCH-III) and 15 were certified by UNEP in 2022 (16 are currently active, including 7 women). 10 virtual interactive discussions and training sessions were organized, ensuring RAs remained updated and equipped to deliver high-quality capacity-building activities. A 100	PIRs 2019-2025, Project Final Report, Country reports, Workshop reports, Stakeholder interviews, project final survey, and online TE survey.
4.3 Sustainability of the VLE is assured beyond project duration	Target: The VLE platform is sustainable beyond project completion by ensuring continuity through UNEP ownership. Achievement: To ensure the long-term sustainability of the BCH Virtual Learning beyond the project's completion, the BCH Virtual Learning Platform was migrated to the standard UNEP E-Learning server. The migration will assist in addressing the recurring technical issues frequently reported by BCH RAs and other stakeholders since the standard UNEP E-Learning server is regularly maintained. A 100.	PIRs 2019-2025. Project Final Report, Country reports, Workshop reports, Stakeholder interviews, project final survey, and online TE survey.
4.4 Participation of key regional and global organizations in regional and national training activities is increased	Target: 40% of national and regional training workshops entailed collaboration with regional and/or global initiatives and organisations. Achievement: 38% of the national training workshops entailed collaboration with global or regional institutions. See details under Outcome 4.11. A 95.	PIRs 2019-2025, Project Final Report, Country reports, Workshop reports, Stakeholder interviews, project final survey, and online TE survey.
4.5 Centres of Excellence that are available to undertake biosafety capacity-building after the project has ended are identified and approached	Target: At least 1 centre of excellence per region (6 centres in total) is identified and approached to continue biosafety capacity building activities after the project. Achievement: PIRs and the Final Report state that over 20 regional institutions were identified at workshops, some of which could serve as "centres of excellence". Of these, 18 CBD centres were approached to inform them of the work done and they were invited to use the project material in their biosafety related tasks, but no list of the centres has been provided to the EC. However, triangulation of different sources indicates that compliance with the target is plausible. A 100.	PIRs 2019-2025, Project Final Report, Country reports, Workshop reports, Stakeholder interviews, project final survey, and online TE survey.
4.6 Agreements governing institutional support arrangements developed and signed	Target: 2 agreements concluded with SCBD to provide support on the migration of the BCH to its new platform and to reduce barriers that make it more difficult for users to use BCH. Achievement: An agreement was signed with SCBD to move the BCH platform in line with the COP decisions, (CP-9/2, NP-3/3), covering both topics that are included in the target. A 100.	PIRs 2019-2025, Project Final Report, Country and Workshop reports, Stakeholder interviews, project final survey, TE survey.
Level of delivery 4:	Stronger RA system including interaction with other multilateral environmental actors, giving improved	

	expectation of BCH global sustainability. A 98.3%
TOTAL ACHIEVEMENT	94%

Annex IV b. Project Outcomes

Outcome 1:	Revised Outcome (PIR): Enhanced access and use of BCH data, effective and inclusive participation in the BCH system ROTC project outcome: Enhanced publication of quality biosafety records and information on BCH portals and increase access and use in decision making
Performance against Indicators and Targets:	
1.1 150 national workshops on mandatory national BCH information	Partially achieved. PIRs and the Final Report confirm that 137 national workshops were delivered under SSFAs, and additional regional activities covered mandatory BCH topics. The Evaluation Consultant (EC) reviewed all SSFAs and most workshop reports. The PMU argue that >100% was achieved because only 44 countries were involved, however all 76 countries were eligible, and the project could have increased the number of countries nationally involved. A 91.3.
1.2 50% of countries (38 countries) complete national BCH capacity building activities and develop sustainability plans.	Partially achieved. 40 countries have carried out national workshops (>100% of target). Reports from completed national workshops in 40 countries were reviewed. The 3rd workshops were expected to develop BCH sustainability plans; however such plans are not mentioned in the sample of workshop reports that were reviewed. The topics of these workshops were often BCH capacity building and sustainability beyond the project's duration, but they did not deliver concrete national plans. Although plans were not shared with the evaluator, information from stakeholder interviews indicates that at least 50% of the 40 countries developed what could be considered sustainability plans (53% of target) Overall achievement: A 76.5.
1.3 At least 50% of the total number of participants in the 1st and 2nd national workshops are from public institutions.	Achieved. PIR 2025 reports >70% public-sector participation. The EC confirmed that >50% of participants in the national workshops were from the public sector (source workshop reports), most likely 70-80%. The final project survey supports high participation by public institutions but does not provide breakdowns. A >100.
1.4 At least 50% of the participants in the 1st and 2nd national workshops are women.	Partially achieved. PIR 2025 reports 45.05% women overall in national training workshops Gender-disaggregated data are available in some workshop reports, not all, but stakeholder interviews indicate that the figure of 45% is plausible. A 90.1.
1.5 At least 10 members of staff from the CNAs (public sector) are trained in BCH use per country.	Partially achieved. PIR 2025 refers to that the final project survey indicated a wide variety of stakeholders benefiting from the trainings, including multiple CNAs among the 2,122 trained during the country workshops. These data are extracted from the mission reports submitted by the RAs who facilitated the BCH workshops. However, only 40 countries carried out national workshops. With the assumption that all these countries trained at least 10 public sector staff members and the other 36 did not, A 52.6.
1.6 At least 50% of countries (38) are registered and participate on online forums and courses on the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).	Achieved. PIR 2025 states that 41 of 76 countries (54%) used the VLE, which was verified with the list of all BCH platform users (>100% of target). The TE Survey was sent to all those from project countries that are registered on the BCH site and responded by people in 41 project countries. A 100.
1.7 At least 1 BCH E-learning course is available in 6 UN languages (EN, FR, AR, SP, RU, CH)	Achieved. The VLE content demonstrates availability in all 6 UN languages. A 100.
1.8 5 webinars are available in the 6 UN languages on the VLE (30 webinars in total).	Partially achieved. 18 webinars organized since the beginning of the project of which 10 were organized in 5 different languages (ENG, FR, AR, ES, RU) for a total of 58 webinars, verified in the VLE (>100% of webinar target, 83.3% of language target). Final project survey confirms usage. Total A 91.7.
1.9 2 to 4 new specific and high-quality training materials are developed and disseminated.	Achieved. The Final Report lists the updated training manual, video tutorials, facilitator guides, and updated BCH SOP materials, verified online. A 100.
1.10 One communication strategy and social media toolkit with 10-15 messages.	Achieved. https://trello.com/b/in6N7Rk3/bchiii-communication-strategy Announced by the SCBD with link to the strategy of the CBD. The messages were verified. A 100.

1.11 One video-clip is publicly available in the 6 UN languages on the VLE.	Partially achieved. A 4 min video-clip with subtitles in 5 UN languages available on the VLE (100% of video target, 83.3% of language target). Total A 91.7 .
1.12 One success story publication on BCH III project impact at the national level is produced.	Achieved. The final report considers 2 articles accompanying the video below (Target 1.13) as the "success story publication". A 100 .
1.13 One communication medium on lessons learnt from national workshops is produced.	Achieved. A 2022 CBD notification on the BCH-III social media kit mentions that "additional training materials and videos on success stories and lessons learned are under development", but no public link to a finished "lessons learnt from national workshops" product has been found. The Project Final Report mentions that a video was produced over the course of the project highlighting lessons learned following project implementation. This has not yet been shared with the EC, but its existence confirmed. A 100 .
Sources of Information / Evidence:	• PIRs, Final Report, workshop reports, and other documents • Websites and project products • Interviews and additional information from PMU/UNEP • Interviews with national beneficiaries, including during missions • Project final survey and Terminal Evaluation survey.
Narrative Assessment 1:	Nearly all the project targets under Outcome 1 were achieved, however some are not possible to fully verify and were assessed through triangulation of different sources (see above). The project has led to improved decision-making regarding GMOs due to increased access to publication of biosafety records and information on the BCH portals, however the degree of involvement of politicians is highly variable between the countries. Average target achievement is approx. 91.8% .
Level of Achievement:	Partially (close to fully)
Outcome 2:	Revised outcome (PIR): Strengthened national BCH systems and organizational procedures for biosafety information ROTC outcome: An established, effective, updated and inclusive BCH system sustainably managed informing the biosafety decision making in line with the national biosafety systems
Performance against Indicators and Targets:	
2.1 At least 25% increase in participants' knowledge on the CPB and BCH after workshops at the national level (1st and 2 nd workshops).	Not achieved. Even though PIR 2024 and the Final Report state that "on average, there is a 26% relative knowledge increase among participants who participated in the national workshops", statistics presented by the RAs based on the knowledge tests before and after the workshops show an average knowledge increase of 11.7% through 2020, coinciding more or less with the moment of most 2nd workshops interviews, final project survey and TE survey confirm learning gains but do not provide quantitative test data. A 46.8 .
2.2 50% of countries (38) organize and deliver their 3rd workshop by themselves.	Partially achieved. 28 of the countries organized and delivered their 3rd workshop by themselves, confirmed by workshop reports. A 73.7 .
2.3 60% of countries (46) disseminate training materials via the national BCH portal, national e- learning courses, or any other means of publication.	Partially achieved. The PIR 2025 reported that national training modules containing available training material from 51 countries are accessible in the VLE, considered as part of "any other means of publication", however only 37 national BCH portals are reported (80.4% of target). PIR 2025 and the Final Report state that there are 85 VLE training courses (global, regional and national) directly linked to the BCH. The documentation does not provide a country or specify which dissemination channel (portal, VLE, another website) each one used. Stakeholder interviews however indicate that approx. A 80% is plausible
2.4 At least 5% increase of national records in the BCH Central Portal Baseline: 1,813 Oct 2016	Achieved. The Final Report and PIR 2025 confirm an increase from 1,813 to 3,370 (85.9%) of national records on the BCH for the participating countries since October 2016. The large increase is consistent with the project's extensive training in national workshops where training on the central portal was common. A >100 .
2.5 At least 10 countries develop a new national BCH portal.	The PMU reports that 37 BCH national portals exist in 2025 but without a baseline for how many existed in 2016. Since the PIRs, MTR and other docs do not specify national BCH websites established under BCH-III, it is not possible to say if the project met the target of 10 new portals. A = N/A
2.6 50% of project countries (38) have established national procedures to gather information and put on to the BCH consistent with	Achieved. The project supported more than 137 national workshops in 40 Countries (53%). The SSFAs signed with each participating country included the requirement that one of the first two national workshops should address the establishment or strengthening of national procedures for collecting biosafety information and submitting it to the BCH, in line with the country's National Biosafety Framework or national biosafety policy. Determination of the number

their NBFs and national biosafety policy.	of countries that established or strengthened these national procedures was based on the RAs mission reports that recorded whether a national procedure had been reviewed, updated, or newly proposed. A >100.
2.7 50% of project countries (38) have established clear responsibilities for BCH-NFPs and CNA staff.	Achieved. The Final Report and PIR 2025 inform that 40 countries (53%) have established clear responsibilities for BCH-NFPs and CNA. CNA and NFP responsibilities were most often reviewed and discussed during the 2 nd workshop in each country. The EC confirmed that SCBD for the moment has registered NFPs in 59 of the 76 countries (77.6%). The RAs verified during national workshops in 40 countries that formal responsibilities for NFPs and CNAs existed. A 100.
2.8 60% of countries (46) adopt a training system for BCH capacity building, in keeping with national policies.	Partially achieved. The Final Report and PIR 2025 state that 51 countries (67%) established and adopted a national BCH training course in the project VLE. The evidence, however, is given in aggregate form and does not specify the national policy linkages country by country. The figure 51 seems contradictory to the 40 countries (87% of 46) that had national training workshops, which is considered the level of achievement. A 87.
2.9 At least 10 countries have strengthened or developed policies and legal frameworks as a direct/indirect result of national BCH capacity building activities.	Partially achieved. The Final Report states that this target is completed and provides examples from Kenya, Botswana, Maldives and Nicaragua, plus further policy-related actions from Uruguay, Nicaragua, Solomon Islands, Rwanda (e.g. updating ministry websites, using BCH funds to operationalize Law 705 in Nicaragua, investing resources in data collection). The project final survey found that 61% reported increased policy actions related to BCH. Together, these examples suggest movement toward the target of 10 but mostly as indirect results where the project capacity building went in parallel with the national process. 7 country examples were confirmed. A 70.
Sources of Information / Evidence:	• PIRs, Final Report, workshop reports, MTR, and other documents • Statistics provided by RAs to PMU. • Websites and project products • Interviews and additional information from PMU/UNEP • Interviews with national beneficiaries, including during missions • Project final survey and Terminal Evaluation survey.
Narrative Assessment 2:	It is confirmed that the project has strengthened national BCH systems and organizational procedures for biosafety information. There are however much variations country by country and one target is not possible to assess. The project has led to adoption of national decision making informed by the BCH system in many of the project countries, mostly at government level, including a more inclusive and participatory approach than before. Estimated average for eight targets is 82.2%
Level of Achievement:	Partial
Outcome 3:	Revised outcome (PIR): Enhanced regional networking and knowledge sharing for effective management of the BCH ROTC outcome: Enhanced regional and sub regional collaboration and exchange of knowledge and experience sharing, informing biosafety decision making
Performance against Indicators and Targets:	
3.1 6 regional workshops delivered in 6 regions to introduce the BCH III project and enhance capacities of countries therein to effectively participate in the BCH and promote Public Awareness and Education to facilitate sustainable implementation of the CBP by 2020	Achieved. PIR 2024 and 2025 report that 9 sub-regional workshops were delivered in the 6 project regions over the course of the project, exceeding the target of 6 regional workshops. This has been verified by workshop reports. The workshops introduced the BCH-III project and strengthened capacities for BCH participation and public awareness in line with the CPB. However, several workshops took place after 2020, so the timeframe in the original target was not met. A 100.
3.2 6 regional roadmaps (strategies) developed to enhance the availability and exchange of information between countries from the same region for improved BCH implementation and compliance with national and international obligations under the CPB.	Partially achieved. The 9 regional and sub-regional workshops resulted in 5 corresponding regional roadmaps (strategies) mentioned in the workshop reports, considering one strategy per region. However, the Africa regional workshop in 2017 contained some regional planning elements but no single compiled roadmap/strategy. The 2024 Joint Africa BCH-ABSCH ToT workshop did not produce any regional BCH roadmap or regional strategy. A 83.3.

3.3 4 regional Training of Trainers (ToT) workshops for NFPs and NAUs in 4 regions developed and organized, focusing on countries that have not signed SSFAs for national activities.	Partially achieved. The PIR 2024 and the Final Report mention that 4 regional Training of Trainers (ToT) workshops for NFPs and NAUs were developed and organized, focusing on countries without SSFAs, including the Pacific and CEE workshops held in late 2023 and early 2024. The EC has reviewed 3 workshop reports that were specified as ToT, but other regional workshops were not organised as ToT. A 75.
3.4 2 national capacity building activities organized per region as a result of Training of Trainers (ToT) workshops for NFPs and NAUs.	Not achieved. Was however partially achieved against the “per region” wording. The PIR 2025 reports that 2 national capacity building activities were organized in Bhutan, following the Asia ToT, and national workshops were organized in Jamaica in June 2022 following the Caribbean ToT, with the help of Regional Advisors. Considering 2 such national activities in 2 regions, only 33.3% of the target was achieved. A 33.3
3.5 At least 10 regional ToT participants have shared knowledge or skills acquired during the ToTs with other stakeholders or colleagues at the national level.	Achieved. The target is fully met. The final project survey shows that 17 out of 24 ToT participants reported having shared the knowledge or skills gained during the ToT events with colleagues or other stakeholders at the national level. According to the TE survey, 41% of the respondents consider that the project’s ToT had a high or very high quality. A 100.
3.6 A minimum of 2 new case studies developed for each of the 6 regions (12 case studies in total).	Achieved. The Final Report states that 10 new case studies were developed during the 6 regional BCH workshops, plus 31 additional case studies during national workshops (verified in workshop reports). The target is not clear about if the case studies should be regional or only 2 per region. The target is considered as achieved with the understanding that it means “12 new case studies in 6 regions”. A 100.
3.7 A minimum of 2 new regional experts identified per region to be listed in the BCH roster of experts (12 regional experts in total).	Partially achieved. The PIR 2025 reported that 14 regional experts were identified during the regional workshops in Africa and Asia that could <i>potentially</i> be listed in the BCH; and that 54 experts were identified and registered in national, regional, global rosters during the national workshops (<i>or in process</i>), including the CPB Roster. However, the project has ended, and the Regional Advisors Network is currently composed of 16 RAs. The total exceeds the minimum of 12, but documentation does not show that <i>each</i> of the 6 regions has at least 2 new experts. A 90.
3.8 At least 50 new NFPs are trained in finding and registering BCH information at the regional level.	Achieved. 60 BCH NFPs were trained in finding information and registering BCH information during the regional workshops and 37 NFPs were trained at the Global Workshop in COP/MOP-10, confirmed by workshop reports. There is no information about if the NFPs are new (i.e. not previously trained under BCH-I/II), but considering the high institutional turnover it is likely. A >100.
3.9 At least 100 new key stakeholders and experts are identified by countries, who will collaborate with the BCH III and participate in national public awareness workshops.	Achieved. The project did not compile a single consolidated global list of newly identified stakeholders because stakeholder engagement is country specific. The information is found in the mission reports for each national workshop. Based on samples of national workshop reports in the 44 countries it is considered that the target of more than 100 new key stakeholders was achieved. However, this does not mean that they necessarily will collaborate with BCH-III and participate in national public-awareness activities. A 100.
3.10 4 regional institutions with a coordinating role identified for registration on the portal.	Achieved. The PIR 2025 reports that over 20 institutions were identified during the regional workshops for <i>eventual</i> registration on the BCH. The EC considers that 20 regional institutions with a coordinating role seems more than was achieved. Only 7 such regional institutions were identified (sources workshop reports): African Biosafety Network of Expertise (AUDA-NEPAD/ABNE); KBCH; Asian BCH Family Network; Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP); University of the South Pacific (USP); CEE Regional Biosafety Coordination Mechanism; CARICOM - Biosafety Desk, but this is still above the target of 4. A >100.
3.11 1 accessible virtual learning platform (VLE) developed and maintained, containing all material shared during national, regional, ToT and global workshops.	Partially achieved. PIR 2024 confirms that one VLE was developed and maintained; it includes an RA forum and is linked to all training materials from national, regional, ToT and global workshops. The Final Report states that all materials are available through the VLE, but the working documents from national workshops have not yet been migrated to the VLE platform. Considered A 90.
3.12 4 new regional BCH nodes established (using SCBD built-in sites when possible).	Partially achieved. 3 regional BCH nodes were established, for CEE, Caribbean, and Asia. Attempts to secure a node host for South Africa were unsuccessful, according to mission interview in South Africa because it was not a good institutional fit. A 75.

Sources of Information / Evidence:	• PIRs, Final Report, workshop reports, and other documents • Websites and project products • Interviews and additional information from PMU/UNEP • Interviews with national beneficiaries, including during missions • Project final survey and Terminal Evaluation survey.
Narrative Assessment 3:	Regional networking and knowledge sharing were enhanced through exchange of national experiences and lessons learned in regional events, as well as support from regional advisors, which improved effectiveness of BCH management in the participating countries. Estimated average of target achievement is 87.2% .
Level of Achievement:	Partially
Outcome 4:	Revised outcome (PIR): Strengthened and Institutionalized BCH Regional Advisory system supporting parties to effectively participate in biosafety information sharing mechanisms RTOC project outcome: An institutionalized sustainable regional Advisory system of the UNEP Certified Ras providing technical backstopping on the BCH & the biodiversity-related MEAs.
Performance against Indicators and Targets:	
4.1 20 Regional Advisors (RAs) deliver national workshops.	Partially achieved. The PIR 2025 and Final Report informed that 19 RAs have delivered national workshops, verified by national workshop reports. The PIRs, workshop reports and interviews confirm that the RAs supported delivery of national workshops across the regions and were central to workshop quality. 56.4% of the respondents to the TE survey consider that the technical advisory from the RAs had a high or very high quality. 77% of the respondents to the TE survey consider that the workshops had a high or very high quality. A 95.
4.2 15 RA deliver regional workshops.	Achieved. 15 RAs delivered regional training workshops, which is confirmed by the workshop reports. A 100.
4.3 5 RAs deliver global workshops at CBD COPs.	Achieved. 5 RAs supported global workshops and/or delivered presentations during workshops held in connection with the global workshops at CBD COP/MOPs. Examples mentioned by the Final Report, PIRs and workshop reports are support from BCH-III for participation of NFP and RAs at COP/MOP 10, and RAs contribution to global BCH training sessions hosted during COP meetings. A 100.
4.4 1 RA per region (6 RAs in total) contribute to the design, preparation, and translation of training materials.	Achieved. The Final Report informed that 8 RAs contributed to development, testing, and translation of training materials and SOP updates across regions. This does not confirm compliance with the target as other relevant sources were not shared with the EC, but it is plausible due to the RAs different language skills. A 100.
4.5 20 RAs listed on the UNEP website, with their resumes and contact information.	Partially achieved. Currently 16 RAs are listed on the UNEP website with CVs and contact information. A 80.
4.6 2 global Training of Trainers (ToT) workshops organized for RAs.	Achieved. PIRs reported about delivery of global ToT activities for RAs, including the Dubai ToT, the global workshop at COP/MOP 10 and related online ToT sessions. Although documents do not explicitly call them “global ToTs,” the target is considered as achieved because the workshop reports show that training of the RAs was included and they are expected to train other stakeholders. A 100.
4.7 10 virtual interactive discussions and training sessions organized for RAs.	Achieved. PIRs reference multiple virtual coordination meetings, interactive sessions, and training events for RAs and regional implementation teams, confirmed by VLE and Anubis documents. A 100.
4.8 20 RAs acquainted with new training methodologies (webinars, VLE)	Partially achieved. Even though currently 16 RAs are registered, during the project period 19 RAs were acquainted with new training methodologies (webinars, VLE). The RAs are documented as having participated in the VLE development, webinar production, and regional/national online training formats (Final Report, PIR 2025, workshop reports, VLE). A 95.
4.9 13 At least 15 RAs have obtained UNEP certification.	Achieved. According to “BCH Regional Advisers” on the UNEP website, the RA Network comprises 16 RAs, of which 15 were certified by UNEP in June 2022. A 100.
4.10 VLE platform is sustainable beyond project completion by ensuring continuity through UNEP ownership.	Partially achieved (in process). To ensure long-term sustainability of the BCH VLE Virtual Learning Platform it was migrated to the standard UNEP E-Learning server. This will assist in addressing the recurring technical issues and bugs frequently reported since the standard UNEP E-Learning server is regularly maintained. The VLE remains functional, is integrated with BCH training materials and hosted under UNEP-supported infrastructure, indicating steps toward sustainability. However, accessibility is not permanent and longer-term hosting and maintenance are not documented. Preliminary achievement: A 100.

4.11 40% of national and regional training workshops entailed collaboration with regional and/or global initiatives and organisations.	Partially achieved , not yet confirmed. The Final Report states that a high proportion of workshops involved collaboration with regional networks, SCBD, FAO, regional biosafety institutions, and other initiatives, verified by workshop reports. The PIR 2025 mentions that 38% of the national training workshops entailed collaboration with global or regional institutions, but no numeric breakdown is provided. The triangulation of sources, including stakeholder interviews, indicates that this figure is plausible. A 95.
4.12 At least 1 centre of excellence per region (6 centres in total) is identified and approached to continue biosafety capacity building activities after the project.	Partially achieved. The target is quite weak since it does not include any written agreements. PIRs and the Final Report state that over 20 regional institutions were identified at workshops, some of which could serve as centres of excellence. Of these, 18 CBD centres were approached to inform them of the work done and were invited to use the project material in their biosafety related work. The information of institutions with willingness to assume the role as centre of excellence has not been provided to the EC. KII with UNEP staff indicates that achievement of the target is plausible. A100.
4.13 2 agreements concluded with SCBD to provide support on the migration of the BCH to its new platform and to reduce barriers that make it more difficult for users to use BCH.	Achieved. It was verified that the agreement signed between UNEP and SCBD includes both issues (migration and reducing barriers). The BCH was moved to its new platform as per COP decisions, (CP-9/2, NP-3/3), and the BCH now operates on the same platform as the ABSCH (100% of target). A 100.
Sources of Information / Evidence:	• PIRs, Final Report, workshop reports, and other documents • Websites and project products • Interviews and additional information from PMU/UNEP • Interviews with national beneficiaries, including during missions • Project final survey and Terminal Evaluation survey.
Narrative Assessment 4:	The BCH RA system was technically strengthened and institutionalised with the goal to support the CP Parties and their effective participation in mechanisms for effective biosafety information sharing. There are however challenges for the sustainability of the system. Level of achievement 97.3%.
Level of Achievement:	Partially (close to fully)
TOTAL ACHIEVEMENT	89.6% (however with achievement on sub-target 2.5 is N/A)

ANNEX V. STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED DURING THE EVALUATION

Stakeholders consulted during the evaluation

Organization and/or country	Title	Role in the project	Gender
UNEP	Manager	Task manager (Implementation)	Male
UNEP	MEA Support Manager	Former Project Manager EA	Female
UNEP	Evaluation Officer	Evaluation Manager	Female
UNEP	Programme Officer	Former Project Manager EA	Male
UNEP	Programme Officer	Former Project Manager EA	Male
UNEP	Finance Management Officer	Project's finance management	Male
UNEP	Finance and Budget Assistant	Administrative and financial support	Female
UNEP	Finance Officer	Financial management	Male
UNEP	Senior Programme Assistant	Programme support	Male
UNEP	Administrative Officer	Newly appointed in charge of BCH-III	Male
UNEP	Finance and Budget Officer	Financial oversight	Female
UNEP	Finance Assistant	Financial and budgetary support	Male
UNEP	Programme Management Officer	Potential oversight functions	Female
UNEP	Senior Programme Management Officer	Senior programme oversight role	Female
UNEP	Associate Programme Management Officer	Project implementation support	Female
UNEP Consultant	Regional Adviser LAC, BCH	BCH III Project Technical Support	Female
RAEIN-Africa	CEO	MTR Reviewer	Female
Secretariat of the CBD	Head, Biosafety Unit	Technical Backstopping	Female
Secretariat of the CBD	BCH Officer	Technical Backstopping	Male
Secretariat of the CBD	Senior Programme Management Assistant – BCH Biosafety Unit	Setting up Global meetings, and follow up of convention related matters	Female
Secretariat of the CBD	Associate Public Information Officer	Setting up Global meetings, and follow up of convention related matters	Female
Government of Barbados, Ministry of Environment and National Beautification, Green and Blue Economy	Deputy PS	National Implementing Partner	Male
Government of Barbados, Ministry of Environment and National Beautification, Green and Blue Economy	Permanent Secretary	National Implementing Partner	Female
Government of Grenada, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries	Chief Agricultural Officer	National Implementing Partner	Male
Government of Grenada, Ministry of Mobilisation, Implementation and Transformation	Senior Technical Officer	National Implementing Partner	Female
Government of Paraguay, Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development	Director of Strategic Planning	National Implementing Partner	Female
Government of Trinidad & Tobago, Environmental Management Authority	Managing Director	National Implementing Partner	Male
Government of Trinidad & Tobago, Environmental Management Authority	Senior Project Officer	National Implementing Partner	Female
Mongolia Ministry of Environment & Climate Change	Director General, Department of Policy and Planning	National Implementing Partner	Male
Mongolia Ministry of Environment & Climate Change	Director General, Department of Protected Areas Policy	National Implementing Partner	Female
Mongolia Ministry of Environment & Climate Change	Director General of the Department of Natural Resources Policy and Sustainable Uses	National Implementing Partner	Male
Mongolia Ministry of Environment & Climate Change	Senior Officer of Biosafety and Genetic Resources	National Implementing Partner	Female
Mongolia Ministry of Environment & Climate Change	Consultant	Project Coordinator	Male
Mongolia General Agency for Specialized Inspection	State Senior Inspector for Hygiene and Infection Control	Project stakeholder – Public sector	Female
Mongolia General Intelligence Agency	Officer	Project stakeholder – Public sector	Male
Mongolia Customs Agency	Customs senior officer, Customs offence prevention department	Project stakeholder – Public sector	Female

Organization and/or country	Title	Role in the project	Gender
Mongolia National Emergency Management Agency	Scientist in Chemistry, Disaster Research Institute	Project stakeholder – Public sector	Female
Mongolian Academy of Sciences & President Mongolia Biotech. Ass.	President of Mongolian Biotechnology Association	President of the organisation that organised the project workshops	Female
Mongolian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Biology	Senior research fellow and national expert	Project stakeholder – Academia & Research	Male
Mongolian University of Life Science	Professor and national expert on biosafety	Project stakeholder – Academia & Research	Female
National University of Mongolia	Associate Professor	Project stakeholder – Academia & Research	Female
Mongolian University of Science and Technology	Research fellow, Mongolia-China Laboratory of Molecular biology	Project stakeholder – Academia & Research	Male
Mongolian National University of Medical Sciences	Head of Center for Biotechnology, Institute of Biomedicine	Project stakeholder – Academia & Research	Female
Mongolia National Center for Zoonic Diseases	Scientific Secretary and Trainer	Project stakeholder – Academia & Research	Male
Mongolian Institute of Biology	Director	N/A	Male
Mongolian Biotechnology Association	CEO	Project stakeholder – NGO. Organised the three national workshops	Male
Mongolia Biosafety Research Institute	Biosafety Expert	Project stakeholder – NGO.	Female
Mongolia Biosafety Research Institute	CEO	Project stakeholder – NGO.	Female
Korea Dept. of Food and Nutrition, Hanyang University	Visiting professor to Mongolia	N/A	Male
South Africa Department of Forestry, Fisheries & Environment	Director of Biodiversity Risk Management	National Implementing Partner	Male
South Africa Department of Forestry, Fisheries & Environment	Project Manager, Directorate of: Biodiversity Risk Management	National Implementing Partner	Female
South Africa Department of Agriculture	Registrar of GMO Act	National Implementing Partner	Female
South Africa Department of Agriculture	Biosafety Officer, GMO Act	National Implementing Partner	Male
South Africa Department of Agriculture	Biosafety Control Officer, GMO Act	National Implementing Partner	Female
South Africa Department of Agriculture	Biosafety Officer, GMO Act	National Implementing Partner	Female
Republic of Türkiye, Ministry of Agriculture. & Forestry	Head of Department of Animal Health, Food and Feed Research	Current National Focal Point	Male
Republic of Türkiye, Ministry of Agriculture. & Forestry	Project manager	National Implementing Partner	Female
Republic of Türkiye, Ministry of Agriculture. & Forestry	Member of PMU	National Implementing Partner	Male
Republic of Türkiye, Ministry of Agriculture. & Forestry	Member of PMU	National Implementing Partner	Female
Republic of Türkiye, Ministry of Agriculture. & Forestry	Project manager	National Implementing Partner	Female
Republic of Türkiye, Ministry of Agriculture. & Forestry	Member of PMU	National Implementing Partner	Male
Republic of Türkiye, Ministry of Agriculture. & Forestry	Deputy General Director	National Implementing Partner	Male
Republic of Türkiye, Field Crops Research Inst.	Professor, Field crops genetics	National stakeholder, Research	Female
Republic of Türkiye, Ankara University	Professor, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine	National stakeholder, Research	Male
Republic of Türkiye, Ankara University	Professor, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine	National stakeholder, Research	Male
Republic of Türkiye, Ankara University	Professor, Faculty of Agriculture	National stakeholder, Research	Female
Republic of Türkiye, Ankara University	Professor, Faculty of Agriculture	National stakeholder, Research	Female
Republic of Türkiye, Başkent University	Professor, Department of Molecular Biology and Genetics	National stakeholder, Research	Female
Turkish Feed Manufacturer's Association	Manager	National stakeholder, Private sector	Male
Association of Poultry Meat Producers and Breeders	Manager	National stakeholder, Private sector	Female
Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Agriculture. & Forestry	Project Manager	Local BCH PMU project staff	Male

Organization and/or country	Title	Role in the project	Gender
Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Agriculture. & Forestry	Project Manager	Local BCH PMU project staff	Female
Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Agriculture. & Forestry	Project Manager	Local BCH PMU project staff	Male
Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Agriculture. & Forestry	Biosafety Officer	Biosafety Unit	Female
Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Agriculture. & Forestry	Biosafety Officer	Biosafety Unit	Female
Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Agriculture. & Forestry	Biosafety Officer	Biosafety Unit	Female
Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Agriculture. & Forestry	Researcher, General Directorate of Food Control, Food Reference Lab.	Food Control Unit	Male
Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Agriculture. & Forestry	Biosafety Officer	Biosafety Unit	Male

ANNEX VI. KEY DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

Project planning and reporting documents

- UNEP BCH-III Project document with 18 appendixes
- CEO Endorsement letter
- Internal Cooperation Agreement (ICA) between UNEP-DEPI and UNEP-DELC and 6 amendments
- GEF review sheet (2 documents)
- PIF request
- PPG request
- STAP review
- BCHIII Stakeholder mapping (2021)
- List of countries (BCH I, II and III)
- BCH-III co-finance letter KBCH
- BCH-III co-finance letter SCBD
- 61 national endorsement letters with pledged co-financing
- Global BCH Outlook – Complied Report
- BCH-III Workplans
- Project documents and appendixes for BCH-I and II.

Project outputs – Overall

- 10 BCH-III PM mission reports 2018-2022
- Regional Advisors reports
- National workshop reports from 40 countries
- 9 Regional / sub-regional workshop reports
- Country project reports
- Case studies, including success story documents
- Social media kit with documents and video
- PIRs 2016 – 2025
- Project Final Report (2025)
- Multiple documents in Anubis: 51 country specific documents for BCH-III, mission documentation (budgets, clearance, reports, etc), certification of payments, documents from BCH I and BCH II. Sampled documents from Botswana, Colombia, Cote D'Ivoire, Eritrea, Gabon, Maldives, Mali, Mongolia, Nicaragua, Rwanda, South Africa, Uruguay, Zambia and global mission.
- Multiple documents in the UNEP WeLearn (formerly in the BCH-III Virtual Learning Environment): Reviewed sample of BCH-III learning material in 6 UN languages
- Training materials
- Reports on centres of excellence
- Project brochures
- Guide to central portal
- PowerPoint presentations from Republic of Türkiye and Mongolia
- Financial documents: BI reports, expenditure reports, sub-allotments, disbursement tables, etc.

- 2 Minutes from Project Steering Committee meetings
- Summary of Informal Advisory Committee of BCH activities and 3 meetings
- 3 PM handover notes

Previous evaluations

- BCH-III Mid-term Review report

Surveys

- MTR Survey results
- Final project survey results
- Terminal evaluation survey results

Reference documents

- UNEP Evaluation Manual
- UNEP Evaluation Office Tools and Templates
- UNEP Medium-Term Strategies (MTS) 2014-2017, 2018-2021, 2022-2025
- UNEP Program of Work (PoW) 2016-2017, 2018-2019, 2020-2021, 2022-2023, 2024-2025

Online sources:

- The GEF <https://www.thegef.org>
- UNEP <https://www.unep.org>
- UNEP BCH under the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE): <https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/biosafety>
- BCH WeLearn <https://elearning.unep.org/course/index.php?categoryid=21>
- Biosafety Clearinghouse <https://bch.cbd.int>
- Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety <http://bch.cbd.int/protocol>
- BCH-III project <https://unenvironment.org/explore-topics/biosafety>
- BCH project on Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/sustainablebch3>

ANNEX VII. EVALUATION ITINERARY

Remote interview period: 30 July – 11 November 2025.

Mission to Ankara, Republic of Türkiye 14-17 September 2025

Travel Spain - Republic of Türkiye 14.09

15.09 Meetings at In Tarımsal Araştırmalar ve Politikalar Genel Müdürlüğü - TAGEM, (General Directorate of Agricultural Research and Policies).

Meetings with Deputy Director General, Head of Department of Animal Health, Food and Feed Research, Project Management Unit.

Focus Group: Academy/Research,& Focus Group: Private Sector.

16.09. Meetings with TAGEM staff/PMU. Focus Group Research Institutes and Laboratories.

17.09 Travel Republic of Türkiye - Mongolia

Mission to Ulanbaataar, Mongolia 17-19 September 2025

17.09 Arrival at Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

18.09. Meetings at Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MECC) with MECC PMU, General Agency for Specialized Inspection (GASI), General Intelligence Agency of Mongolia, Customs Agency, National Emergency Management Agency, Mongolian Academy of Sciences, Mongolia University of Life Science, National University of Mongolia, Mongolian University of Science and Technology, Mongolian National University of Medical Sciences, National Center for Zoonotic Diseases, Biosafety Research Institute (NGO), Mongolian Biotechnology Association (NGO).

19.09. Field trip with MECC PMU and Mongolian Biotechnology Association, including part-time participation in International Biological Conference (60th anniversary of Institute of Biology, Mongolian Academy of Sciences).

20.09 Travel Mongolia – Spain.

Mission to Pretoria, South Africa 8-11 October 2025

8-9.10 Travel Spain South Africa

9.10 Meeting with MTR Consultant. Meetings with Project PMU - Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, Directorate of Biodiversity Risk Management.

10.10 Meetings Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (staff involved in the project).

10-11.10 Travel South Africa - Spain

ANNEX VIII. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS ASSESSMENT

Assessment of the Management of Environmental and Social Safeguards²⁰ by the Evaluand

ESS PLANNING AT PROJECT DESIGN	
List any ESS issues identified at project design (e.g. SS 1.7, SS 2.3, etc.)	None
For any ESS issues identified at project design, were <u>mitigation strategies</u> developed (Y/N)? (If yes, briefly describe)	No
Were any <u>gaps</u> in ESS issues identified at the evaluation inception phase (Y/N)? (If yes, briefly describe)	No

ESS MONITORING AT PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION	
Is there evidence that the potential emergence of ESS issues was actively <u>monitored</u> during project implementation (Y/N)? (If yes, briefly describe)	Yes. There is evidence in the PIRs of <i>active monitoring</i> , but no new ESS risks emerged, no grievances or complaints were received, and the project remained in compliance with UNEP's safeguard requirements.
Is there a justification for the absence of ESS monitoring (Y/N)? (If yes, briefly describe)	N/A. The ESS were monitored.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSIVENESS DURING PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION	
Identify the ESS issues/events <u>triggered</u> by the project.	None
Describe <u>consequences</u> of ESS issues/events during project implementation.	N/A
Describe the management response and identify supporting documentation.	N/A
Were negative ESS effects offset by management response (Y/N)? (If yes, briefly describe)	N/A

²⁰ GEF Policy on Environmental and Social Safeguards was approved in 2018 (updated in 2019), for identifying and addressing environmental and social risks and impacts in GEF-financed projects and programs. UNEP established its safeguard policy in early 2015 and operationalized it in 2017. In UNEP, the Environmental and Social Sustainability Framework (ESSF) helps to promote human well-being and the protection of the environment. UNEP screens and categorizes proposed programme and project activities using the Safeguard Risk Identification Form (SRIF), introduced in 2019, to identify potential environmental and social risks and impacts. The ESSF was revised in 2020; subsequently, tools, templates, guidance notes and reference materials have been developed.

ANNEX IX. COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH TOOLS

Supporting documentation available upon request:

Introduction of Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. Arvinbayar, Mongolian Biotechnology Association. PowerPoint.

Documents archived in UNEP project files:

Terminal Evaluation of the project “Biosafety Clearinghouse III”. GEF Project ID 5688, SMA 30436, 2016-2025. Preliminary findings (based on interviews and mission). Trond Norheim, PhD. UNEP Consultant, 6 November 2025.

ANNEX X. BRIEF CV OF THE EVALUATOR

Name	Trond Norheim
Profession	Manager, Environment & Climate Change, Scanteam trondn@scanteam.no / CEO Dimes-Global AS trondn@dimes-global.com
Nationality	Norwegian
Country experience	• Africa: Algeria, Comoros, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda • Americas: Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago, Uruguay, USA, Venezuela • Asia & Pacific: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Kiribati, Korea, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tonga, Republic of Türkiye, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Vietnam
Education	PhD Forest Ecology; Postgrad Meteorology and Rural Sociology; MSc Forestry.

Short biography

Dr Trond Norheim is an environmental specialist with main strengths on project design, implementation, monitoring & evaluation. He has 30+ years' international experience in 82 countries on all continents, for the UN, development banks and bilateral agencies. Accredited expert for UNFCCC.

Key specialties and capabilities cover: Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation, Land Use Planning, Forestry, Energy, Biodiversity, Environment, Protected Areas, Disaster Risk Management, Sustainable Agriculture, Soil & Water Conservation, Watershed Management, Small Island Development States, Gender, and Indigenous Peoples.

Selected assignments (from 2017):

UNEP: (i) MTR of GEF 'Inclusive Sustainable Rice Landscapes' in Thailand; (ii) Harmonization of the project review process in UNEP; (iii) Terminal evaluation (TE) of GEF 'Strengthening biodiversity and forest carbon stock in Cambodia's Protected Areas System'; (iv) MTR of 'Climate-Smart Rice', Myanmar; (v) MTR of 'Sustainable Rice Platform' and 'Low Emission Rice Technologies', Pakistan and Thailand; (vi) MTR of EU 'Caribbean Biological Corridor'; (vii) TE of GEF 'Mainstreaming agrobiodiversity 'Conservation and use of Sri Lankan agro-ecosystems for climate change adaptation'; (viii) TE of GEF 'Mainstreaming Sustainable Management of Tea Production Landscapes in Asia'; (ix) TE of GEF 'Expanding FSC certification at landscape level through incorporating additional ecosystem services'.

UNDP: (i) Final Evaluation of GCF 'Integrated Flood Management in Vaisigano Catchment', Samoa; (ii) TE of GEF 'Resilience for Peace & Stability, Food and Water Security' Sudan, Uganda, (iii) MTR of AF-EU 'Innovation Small Grant Aggregator Platform' (global); (iv) TE of GEF 'Sustainable, renewable biomass-based charcoal for the iron and steel industry in Brazil'; (v) MTR of GEF 'Mainstreaming Natural Resource Management and Biodiversity Conservation Objectives into Socio-Economic Planning of Biosphere Reserves', Vietnam; (vi) MTR of GEF 'Facilitation of the Achievement of Sustainable National Energy Targets in Tuvalu'; (vii) TE of GEF 'Enhancing Capacity to Develop Global and Regional Environmental Projects in the Pacific'; (viii) MTR of GEF 'Economy-wide Integration of Climate Change Adaptation & Disaster Risk Management to Climate Vulnerability of Communities in Samoa'; (ix) TE of GEF 'Capacity for Implementing the Rio Conventions in Samoa'.

World Bank-GEF Evaluation Office: Senior Consultant for (i) Evaluation of the GEF SIDS project portfolio (global); (ii) Evaluation of integrated interventions in the Pacific SIDS; (iii) Evaluation of GEF Programs and Regional projects in the Caribbean SIDS.

World Bank-FCPF: Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) Expert for review of the Colombia and Uruguay REDD+ Readiness Packages.

EU: Team Leader, Ex-post Evaluation, 'Support to the Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA) through Capacity Building, Community Engagement and applied Research in the Pacific', Phases I and II.

ANNEX XI. GEF PORTAL INPUTS

The following table contains text to be uploaded to the GEF Portal. **It will be drawn from the Evaluation Report, either as copied or summarised text.** In each case, references should be provided for the paragraphs and pages of the report from which the responses have been copied or summarised.

Question: What was the performance at the project's completion against Core Indicator Targets? Response: Only Core Indicator 11 (direct beneficiaries) is really applicable to BCH-III, and performance against it was strong and likely above any plausible target, while Core Indicators 1–10 are N/A and can only be linked <i>indirectly</i> via strengthened biosafety governance. The following beneficiary figures that can be mapped to CI-11: National training workshops (1st and 2nd workshops): ○ 2,122 participants across 44 implementing countries. ○ 78.2% (1,660) from public institutions (government / public sector). ○ 45% women, just below the 50% gender target. Virtual Learning Environment (VLE): ○ All 76 BCH-III countries participated. ○ 2,360 individual participants from 181 countries used the VLE platform. Regional ToTs and regional workshops: ○ 4 regional ToT workshops for NFPs and NAUs delivered in the project regions. ○ 9 sub-regional / regional workshops in 6 regions, producing 5 regional roadmaps and training dozens of NFPs and other key stakeholders. Global trainings (COP-MOP events): ○ Global BCH training workshops for NFPs at CPB COP/MOP 13 and 14, plus a later RA ToT, brought additional direct beneficiaries, although these are not fully quantified in the PIRs. Sources: 4.4; 4.9.2; 4.9.3; 4.9.4; 4.4.2
Question: What were the progress, challenges and outcomes regarding engagement of stakeholders in the project/program as evolved from the time of the MTR? Response: Stakeholder engagement strengthened substantially after the MTR, becoming broader, deeper and more institutionalized across national, regional and global levels. Participation expanded significantly, with more than 2,000 national-level trainees, predominantly public-sector duty-bearers and nearly half women, alongside increased involvement of NFPs, CNAs, customs officials, researchers and universities, supported by the rapid growth of the VLE, which reached more than 2,300 users from 181 countries. Regional cooperation intensified through updated regional roadmaps, establishment of three BCH regional nodes, identification of regional institutions and experts, and expanded ToT participation, including at COP/MOP 10. These gains were tempered by COVID-19 disruptions, NFP/CNA turnover, uneven regional readiness and limited participation of non-state actors including the private sector. Nevertheless, by project completion, stakeholder engagement had led to strengthened national procedures, greater peer-to-peer learning, more active regional collaboration and a higher likelihood of sustained BCH use, representing a marked improvement over the engagement level at mid-term. Source: 4.9.2
Question: What were the completed gender-responsive measures and, if applicable, actual gender result areas? Response: The project effectively promoted and implemented gender-responsive measures that resulted in meaningful gender outcomes across national, regional and global levels. A consistent 50% gender-balance target guided the nomination process for all workshops, resulting in 45% female participation across national trainings—substantially strengthening the representation of women in biosafety information management roles. Inclusive training design, hybrid learning formats and open-access e-learning tools reduced structural barriers to women's participation, while targeted engagement ensured that women in NFP, CNA, NAU and related technical roles gained practical skills in BCH data entry, validation and use. Women also benefited from increased visibility and professional exchange through regional workshops, case-study development, and COP/MOP training

events, contributing to broader networks of biosafety practitioners. As a result, the project not only met its gender-responsive commitments but also produced tangible gender results, expanding the pool of technically skilled women supporting biosafety governance in participating countries. Source: 4.9.3

Question: What was the progress made in the implementation of the management measures against the Safeguards Plan submitted at CEO Approval?

Response: Based on the Safeguards Plan at CEO Approval, the PIR 2025 risk ratings, the ProDoc, and the MTR evidence, implementation of environmental and social management measures under BCH-III has progressed largely as expected for a non-infrastructure, capacity-building project with minimal direct E&S risks. The Safeguards Plan (ProDoc Appendix 17) identified no significant environmental or social impacts, with most items rated N/A and only a few social aspects flagged as relevant—namely stakeholder participation, respect for human rights and cultural property, institutional strengthening, and avoidance of corruption. These were addressed through the project’s extensive programme of global, regional, and national trainings, the establishment of national procedures and sustainability plans, and wide stakeholder engagement, having reached over 2,100 stakeholders with 45% women’s participation, strengthened national BCH portals, and enhanced transparency through public-facing information systems. The Social and Environmental Safeguard Management section of the PIR reports no non-compliance cases and confirms that activities remained low-risk and aligned with UNEP safeguards requirements. Risk ratings—which were “Low” for many consecutive years—were raised to “Moderate” in the final PIR, reflecting residual institutional and operational risks rather than E&S concerns; these classifications are consistent with the project’s documented challenges around country uptake, staff turnover, and uneven institutional capacity, as outlined in the MTR and subsequent PIR analysis. Overall, the management measures envisioned at CEO Approval were effectively implemented: stakeholder inclusion mechanisms functioned, transparency and information-access safeguards were strengthened through national BCH portals, and fiduciary safeguards (including anti-corruption measures) were applied through UNEP systems. Evidence from the MTR and PIRs also indicates that the project generated relevant lessons, particularly the need for: (i) sustained institutional capacity to maintain BCH systems; (ii) better integration of BCH functions into national biosafety frameworks; and (iii) adaptive management to address high turnover and uneven technical capacity across countries. As a result, the current “Moderate” overall risk rating is justified, and the safeguards-related measures can be assessed as *largely effective* in managing low inherent risks while contributing to long-term institutional sustainability. Source: 4.9.4

Question: What were the challenges and outcomes regarding the project's completed Knowledge Management Approach, including: Knowledge and Learning Deliverables (e.g. website/platform development); Knowledge Products/Events; Communication Strategy; Lessons Learned and Good Practice; Adaptive Management Actions?

Response: The project’s KM Approach—originally defined in the ProDoc through components on global and sub-regional networking, production of multilingual educational materials, and strengthening the Regional Advisors system—was broadly implemented but faced several structural and operational challenges that shaped its outcomes. At CEO Approval, the project committed to producing BCH education packages in all UN languages, establishing virtual learning tools, generating knowledge products, supporting sub-regional experience sharing, and creating mechanisms for sustainability through national and regional systems. These commitments translated into an extensive suite of KM deliverables: the project developed a multilingual VLE, published more than 55 webinars and multiple online courses, and created 65 virtual courses before the MTR in 2019; it also supported 137 national workshops and 9 regional/sub-regional workshops that produced regional roadmaps to facilitate cross-country knowledge exchange. In addition, the development or upgrading of national BCH portals, along with a significant increase (187%) in national records on the BCH Central Portal, constituted major KM outputs tied to strengthened information management systems. However, implementation was slowed by several challenges: delays in launching the harmonized BCH portal and in migrating training materials, limited digital literacy and poor Internet connectivity in some participating countries, and high turnover among national focal points that required repeated training. The MTR found that the project’s results-oriented KM pathways were not clearly articulated in the original logical framework, reducing the ability to monitor how KM products translated into learning outcomes and decision-making improvements. Despite these constraints, the project generated a strong body of lessons learned and good practices, such as the importance of regional champions (e.g., the “Asian BCH Family”),

the value of nationally contextualized training, and the critical need to institutionalize knowledge systems beyond focal point turnover. Adaptive management actions included shifting several workshops to virtual modalities (even prior to COVID-19), developing printed and asynchronous guidance for countries with low bandwidth, and migrating the VLE to UNEP's institutional server to ensure long-term accessibility and institutional ownership. Overall, the KM approach delivered substantial, multilingual learning assets, expanded BCH participation, and strengthened information systems globally, even as structural IT limitations, uneven country capacity, and delays in global platform upgrades constrained the full realization of the knowledge-to-impact pathways envisioned at CEO Approval. Source: 4.4.2

Question: What are the main findings of the evaluation?

Response:

Relevance: Highly relevant to CPB obligations and GEF/UNEP strategies, addressing critical global needs for biosafety information exchange. Sources: 4.1, 5.1

Effectiveness: Delivered extensive outputs (workshops, training materials, regional cooperation) and strengthened BCH use, though outcome achievement was uneven across countries. Sources: 4.4, 5.1

Efficiency: Implementation generally efficient with strong global coordination, but delays in SSFA signing and variable national capacities affected timeliness. Sources: 4.6, 5.1

Monitoring & Reporting: Monitoring systems were largely output-focused and inconsistent across countries, limiting outcome-level tracking and evaluability. Sources: 4.7, 5.1

Sustainability: Moderately likely due to strong capacity gains, but long-term continuity is constrained by limited national budgets, staff turnover, and reliance on project-driven finance of RA support. Sources: 4.8, 5.1

Factors Affecting Performance: Project management and stakeholder engagement were generally satisfactory, though responsiveness varied and inclusiveness of non-traditional stakeholders remained limited. Overall, 45% women participation in project workshops. Sources: 4.9, 5.1.

ANNEX XII. PROJECT CO-FINANCING TABLE

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Cofinancing	Investment Mobilized*	Amount (\$) at CEO*	Amount (\$) at TE
Recipient Country Government	Albania	In-Kind	\$30,000	\$30,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Angola	In-Kind	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Armenia	In-Kind	\$52,000	\$50,000	\$52,000
Recipient Country Government	Azerbaijan	In-Kind	\$25,000	\$25,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Bahamas	In-Kind	\$20,000	\$20,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Bangladesh	In-Kind	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
Recipient Country Government	Barbados	In-Kind/Cash	\$38,400	\$38,400	-
Recipient Country Government	Belarus	In-Kind	\$35,000	\$35,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Bosnia-Herzegovina	In-Kind	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
Recipient Country Government	Botswana	In-Kind	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$22,100
Recipient Country Government	Burundi	In-Kind	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
Recipient Country Government	Cameroon	In-Kind	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$5,298
Recipient Country Government	Cape Verde	In-Kind	\$50,000	\$50,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Colombia	In-Kind	\$42,000	\$42,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Congo	In-Kind	\$3,500	\$3,500	-
Recipient Country Government	Cote d'Ivoire	In-Kind	\$40,000	-	-
Recipient Country Government	Djibouti	In-Kind	\$5,000	\$5,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Dominica	In-Kind	-	\$30,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Egypt	In-Kind	\$28,000	\$28,000	-
Recipient Country Government	El Salvador	In-Kind	\$20,361	\$20,361	-
Recipient Country Government	Eritrea	In-Kind	\$2,000	\$2,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Fiji	In-Kind	\$300,000	\$300,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Gabon	In-Kind	\$30,000	\$30,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Gambia	In-Kind	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$5,000
Recipient Country Government	Georgia	In-Kind	\$40,000	\$40,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Grenada	In-Kind	\$25,000	\$25,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Guinea Bissau	In-Kind/Cash	\$28,000	\$48,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Iran	In-Kind	\$50,000	-	-
Recipient Country Government	Jamaica	In-Kind	\$40,000	\$40,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Kazakhstan	In-Kind	\$20,000	\$20,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Kenya	In-Kind	\$8,000	\$8,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Kiribati	In-Kind	\$60,000	\$60,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Kyrgyzstan	In-Kind	\$2,000	\$2,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Latvia	In-Kind	-	\$20,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Malawi	In-Kind	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Recipient Country Government	Maldives	In-Kind	\$10,000	\$10,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Mali	In-Kind	\$10,000	\$10,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Marshall Islands	In-Kind	\$154,000	\$154,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Mexico	In-Kind	\$27,370	\$50,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Mongolia	In-Kind	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
Recipient Country Government	Montenegro	In-Kind	\$20,000	\$20,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Morocco	In-Kind	\$15,000	\$15,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Mozambique	In-Kind	\$25,000	\$25,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Namibia	In-Kind	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Nauru	In-Kind	\$10,000	\$10,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Nicaragua	In-Kind	\$150,000	-	-
Recipient Country Government	Niue	In-Kind	\$50,000	\$50,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Pakistan	In-Kind	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000
Recipient Country Government	Palau	In-Kind	\$10,000	\$10,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Papua New Guinea	In-Kind	\$30,000	\$30,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Paraguay	In-Kind	\$35,000	-	-
Recipient Country Government	Rwanda	In-Kind	\$20,000	\$20,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Samoa	In-Kind	\$10,000	\$10,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Seychelles	In-Kind	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
Recipient Country Government	Solomon Islands	In-Kind	\$34,000	\$34,000	\$4,200
Recipient Country Government	South Africa	In-Kind	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$249,300
Recipient Country Government	Sri Lanka	In-Kind	\$20,000	\$20,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Suriname	In-Kind	\$15,000	-	-
Recipient Country Government	Tajikistan	In-Kind	\$50,000	\$50,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Tanzania	In-Kind	\$48,000	\$48,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Trinidad & Tobago	In-Kind	-	\$20,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Republic of Türkiye	In-Kind	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
Recipient Country Government	Uganda	In-Kind	\$36,000	\$36,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Uruguay	In-Kind	\$25,000	\$25,000	-
Recipient Country Government	Zambia	In-Kind	\$30,270	\$30,270	-
Recipient Country Government	Zimbabwe	In-Kind	\$10,000	\$10,000	-
Other	SCBD	In-Kind	\$596,640	\$596,640	\$478,038
Recipient Country Government	KBCH	In-Kind	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
Other	UNEP Law Div.	In-Kind	\$585,320	\$585,320	\$324,620
Total Co-financing			\$8,919,861	\$8,720,491	\$1,929,556

*The evaluator considers that having the 'investment mobilized' and the 'amount \$ at CEO endorsement' most often as the same figures is counter-intuitive and needs further exploration and clarification from UNEP

ANNEX XIII. QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF THE EVALUATION REPORT

Quality Assessment of the Evaluation Report

Evaluand Title: "Sustainable Capacity Building for Effective Participation in the BCH (BCH-III), and GEF Project ID: 5688, SMA ID: 30436" (2016.02 – 2025.03)

All UNEP evaluations are subject to a quality assessment by the Evaluation Office. This is an assessment of the quality of the evaluation product (i.e. evaluation report) and is dependent on more than just the consultant's efforts and skills.

Report Quality Criteria	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final Report Rating
Section A: Executive Summary	Assessment	
1. Does the <i>Executive Summary</i> act as a concise, accurate standalone section, especially to inform decision-making? Consider how clearly and concisely the report presents: - a clear summary of the evaluation object - evaluation objectives, scope and methodology - the overall project evaluation rating - a summary of main evaluation findings, including key features of performance (strengths and weaknesses) - summary responses to key strategic evaluation questions - summary of main conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations	<u>Coverage/omissions:</u> All required elements are addressed in the executive summary. <u>Strengths/weaknesses:</u> The section is succinctly articulated, covering all key elements. A summary of main findings is presented, including both strengths and constraints.	5.5
Section B: The Project	Assessment	
2. Does the report clearly describe the <i>key parameters, scale and complexity of the evaluand</i>? Consider how well the report presents: - an overview of the main issue that the project is trying to address - timeline, including dates of project approval, duration and number of phases (where appropriate) - geographic coverage (regions/countries) - total secured budget and project financing, including a table with funding sources - implementing and funding partners - institutional context (i.e. UNEP sub-programme, Division, Branch etc.) - implementation structure with diagram - UNEP results frameworks to which it contributes (e.g. PoW Direct Outcome) - summary of results framework as stated in the ProDoc (or as officially revised) - stakeholder groups organised according to relevant common characteristics - whether the project has been evaluated in the past (e.g. mid-term, by an external agency, etc.) - substantive or significant changes in design during implementation	<u>Coverage/omissions:</u> The section covers all key elements to describe the project. <u>Strengths/weaknesses:</u> The report clearly articulates the project and addresses key information, supported by relevant maps and diagrams. The section also presents a strong stakeholder analysis. In addition, the section presents the project financing comprehensively, including the co-financing details, with a status of co-financing report through the system, and a detailed breakdown provided in Annex.	5.5
Section C: Evaluation Methods and Theory of Change	Assessment	

3. Does the report present a clear, comprehensive and adequate description of the <i>evaluation methodology</i>? Consider how well it presents the following elements, and their adequacy based on the scope of the evaluation: • statement of the purpose of the evaluation and the key intended audience for the evaluation findings • data collection methods and information sources • justification for methods used (e.g. electronic/face-to-face interviews, qualitative/quantitative analysis) • criteria and sampling strategies used to select stakeholders for consultations, and for sites/countries visited • number and types of respondents (<i>including in a table broken down by gender</i>) • strategies used to increase stakeholder engagement and response rate • methods used to include the voices/experiences of different and potentially excluded groups (e.g. women, marginalised) • data verification methods (e.g. triangulation) • data analysis methods (e.g. scoring, thematic analysis) • evaluation limitations and mitigation measures (e.g. how these were addressed by the evaluator) • consideration for ethics and human rights issues, including how anonymity and confidentiality were protected	<u>Coverage/omissions:</u> The evaluation methods section covers all key elements. <u>Strengths/weaknesses:</u> The report outlines the comprehensive methodologies applied in the evaluation, including data collection methods, source of data, associated limitations, and ethical considerations. The report also presents detailed analytical approaches employed (e.g. triangulation, efficiency index, output and outcome achievement calculations), along with the various mitigations measures undertaken to address identified limitations.	5.5
4. Does the report describe an assessment and reformulation of the <i>Theory of Change</i>, and present an adequate articulation of the TOC causal pathways that were used to assess project performance (<i>narratively and diagrammatically</i>)? Consider how well the report presents: • whether the project design included a TOC • how the <i>TOC at Evaluation</i>²¹ was designed (e.g. who was involved, etc) • confirmation/reconstruction of results in accordance with UNEP definitions (<i>including reformulation table, which may have initially been presented in the Inception Report and should appear in the Main Evaluation report.</i>) • articulation of causal pathways • identification of drivers and assumptions • identification of key actors in the change process	<u>Coverage/omissions:</u> The report includes most primary elements for the ToC section, except for identification of key actors in the change process . <u>Strengths/weaknesses:</u> The section clearly articulates how the ToC at evaluation was designed in line with UNEP's definitions, as well as the identification of drivers and assumptions. The reformulation process is transparently documented, with justifications provided in Annex III. However, while Figure 4 presents the causal structure diagrammatically and Para 73 shortly explain the outcome pathways, a more explicit but succinct narrative articulation of the pathways at all level- from outputs through outcomes to intermediate states and impact-would strengthen the analytical foundation of the section.	4.5

²¹ During the Inception Phase of the evaluation process a *TOC at Evaluation Inception* is created based on the information contained in the approved project documents (these may include either logical framework or a TOC or narrative descriptions), formal revisions and annual reports etc. During the evaluation process this TOC is revised based on changes made during project intervention and becomes the *TOC at Evaluation*.

Section D: Evidence and Analysis	Assessment	
5. Is the report based on <i>sufficient and adequate data</i> and <i>clear and credible evidence</i>? Consider how well the report presents: • sufficient evidence that is consistent throughout the report • evidence that is supported by data sources (e.g. quotes, reports, etc) • evidence that is explicitly triangulated, unless noted as having a single source • gaps in data are explained and justified • data sources that are reliable, adequate, sufficient for the scope of the evaluation	<u>Coverage/omissions:</u> The section assesses all criteria in line with UNEP guideline. <u>Strengths/weaknesses:</u> Overall, the triangulated evidence supports the findings, and the multiple sources are reliable and adequate. Data gaps and limitations are clearly identified and explained.	5
6. Does the report include <i>rigorous analysis</i> and <i>logical findings</i>? Consider the extent to which the findings are: • supported by clear analysis that is consistent with the evidence presented • logical, clear and coherent • aligned with UNEP's Criteria Ratings Matrix • aligned with the evaluation framework • more than descriptions and provide insights into 'how' and/or 'why' the project performed a certain way • balanced, presenting both successes and weaknesses	<u>Coverage/omissions:</u> The section covers assessment of all evaluation criteria. <u>Strengths/weaknesses:</u> Overall, the report is articulated in line with the evaluation framework and provided analysis on 'why'. In addition, the presentation of weaknesses and strengths is balanced. However, more detailed analysis on certain criteria such as monitoring and reporting would strengthen the section.	5
Section E: Evaluation Findings	Assessment	
7. Does the report present evidence and analysis of project <i>Strategic Relevance</i> with respect to UNEP, partner and geographic policies and strategies at the time of project approval? Consider how well the report addresses: • Alignment to the UNEP Medium Term Strategy (MTS), Programme of Work (POW) and Strategic Priorities • Alignment to Donor/GEF/Partners Strategic Priorities • Relevance to Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities • Complementarity with Existing Interventions: complementarity of the project at design (or during inception/mobilisation²²), with other interventions addressing the needs of the same target groups.	<u>Coverage/omissions:</u> The report includes key elements to explain strategic relevance. <u>Strengths/weaknesses:</u> The section provides a concise summary assessment supported by figures, and summary tables. The justifications for the overall rating are well presented, notwithstanding partial alignment with certain priorities.	5
Does the report present a summary of the strengths and weaknesses of the <i>Quality of Project Design</i>, based on the detailed assessment presented in the Inception Report?	<u>Coverage/omissions:</u> The section covers all sub-criteria of the Quality of Project design. <u>Strengths/weaknesses:</u> The section succinctly outlines the strengths and weaknesses of the project design quality as well as the	*NOT RATED

²² A project's inception or mobilization period is understood as the time between project approval and first disbursement. Complementarity during project implementation is considered under Efficiency, see below.

	explanation of how the BCH III has evolved and designed over phases to respond the identified gaps and limitations.	
Does the report recognise and describe, when appropriate, key features of the Nature of the External Context under which the project was implemented that limited the project's performance (e.g. conflict, natural disaster, political upheaval ²³), and how they affected performance?	<u>Coverage/omissions:</u> The section describes the external context of the project. <u>Strengths/weaknesses:</u> The report comprehensively explains the external context of the project such as COVID-19 at global level and other context in certain participating countries, how the project was affected by this context, and how the project addressed and overcame these challenges.	*NOT RATED
8. Does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of the Availability of Outputs to the intended beneficiaries? Consider how well the report presents: - a convincing, evidence-supported and clear presentation of the outputs made available by the project compared to its approved plans and budget - assessment of the nature and scale of outputs versus the project indicators and targets - assessment of the timeliness, quality and utility of outputs to intended beneficiaries - identification of positive or negative effects of the project on disadvantaged groups, including those with specific needs due to gender, vulnerability or marginalisation (e.g. through disability).	<u>Coverage/omissions:</u> The section includes all key elements required for the assessment of the availability of outputs. <u>Strengths/weaknesses:</u> The summary of availability of the output is presented. Supported by the detailed narrative and analysis in Annex IV, the analysis is based on evidence triangulated from the multiple sources, demonstrating the delivery level against identified targets, including assessment in quality and utility of outputs. Furthermore, the section also describes the identified weaknesses and areas to be improved.	5.5
9. Does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of the Achievement of Outcomes, as a result of the uptake, adoption and/or implementation of outputs by the intended beneficiaries? This may include behaviour changes at an individual or collective level. Consider how well the report presents: - a convincing and evidence-supported analysis of the uptake of outputs by intended beneficiaries - assessment of the nature, depth and scale of outcomes versus the project indicators and targets - discussion of the contribution, credible association and/or attribution of outcome level changes to the work of the project itself - any constraints to attributing effects to the projects' work - identification of positive or negative effects of the project on disadvantaged groups, including those with specific needs due to gender,	<u>Coverage/omissions:</u> The report covers most key elements. <u>Strengths/weaknesses:</u> The section demonstrates the strong evidence-based analysis on achievement of outcomes against available indicators and targets, along with identification of relevant drivers and assumptions. It also examines uptake, as well as behavioural and institutional changes drawing on available evidence. The analysis further identifies key constraints and their effects. However, a more explicit identification on the most important outcomes among outcomes would be beneficial. In addition, contribution analysis could be relocated to this section rather than being placed in	5

²³ Note that 'political upheaval' does not include regular national election cycles, but unanticipated unrest or prolonged disruption. The potential delays or changes in political support that are often associated with the regular national election cycle should be part of the project's design and addressed through adaptive management of the project team.

vulnerability or marginalisation (e.g. through disability).	the subsection of likelihood of impact.	
10. Does the report present an integrated analysis, guided by the causal pathways represented by the TOC, of all evidence relating to Likelihood of Impact? Consider how well the report presents: - an explanation of how causal pathways emerged and the resulting change processes - an explicit discussion of how drivers and assumptions played out - an explanation of roles played by key actors and change agents - identification of any unintended negative effects of the project, especially on disadvantaged groups, including those with specific needs due to gender, vulnerability or marginalisation (e.g. through disability).	<u>Coverage/omissions:</u> The report covers most of the key elements required for the assessment. <u>Strengths/weaknesses:</u> The report demonstrates a structured analysis of the likelihood of impact through the ToC, supported by a summary table of drivers and assumptions at each stage. The section also presents unintended effects identified during the evaluation. In addition, the section explicitly provides detailed contribution analysis to the impact by strongly triangulating multiple sources in narrative. However, the analysis would benefit from a more in-depth examination of roles of key actors/change agents.	5
11. Does the report present an integrated analysis of all dimensions evaluated under Financial Management and include a completed 'financial management' table? Consider how well the report addresses the following: <i>adherence</i> to UNEP's financial policies and procedures <i>completeness</i> of financial information, including the actual project costs and actual co-financing used and explanation of any variances between planned and actual expenditures	<u>Coverage/omissions:</u> The report covers all key sub-criteria for the assessment of the financial management. <u>Strengths/weaknesses:</u> The section provides evidence-based findings including strengths and weaknesses in financial management.	5.5
12. Does the report present an integrated analysis of all dimensions evaluated under Efficiency? Consider how well the report presents: - cost-effective or time-saving measures put in place to maximise results within the secured budget and agreed project timeframe - implications of any delays and no cost extensions - discussion of making use, during project implementation, of/building on pre-existing institutions, partnerships and complementarities with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. - the extent to which the management of the project minimised UNEP's environmental footprint.	<u>Coverage/omissions:</u> The analysis includes all dimensions evaluated under the criteria. <u>Strengths/weaknesses:</u> The section presents evidence-based analysis and findings covering key dimensions for efficiency. The report explicitly identifies the weakness and additional factors in various countries that affected efficiency. The details of the efficiency ratio presented in the section supports findings triangulated by multiple sources.	5.5
13. Does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of the project's Monitoring and Reporting? Consider how well the report addresses the following: - the quality of <i>monitoring of project implementation</i> (including use of monitoring data for adaptive management) - the quality of <i>project reporting</i> (e.g. PIMS and donor reports)	<u>Coverage/omissions:</u> The report covers key sub-criteria in the section. <u>Strengths/weaknesses:</u> The report demonstrates a well-balanced analysis on implementation and its quality of monitoring and reporting, identifying some gaps.	4.5

	A more detailed analysis on an adequate, planned monitoring budget, availability of substantial amounts of baseline data, and collaboration and communication with appropriate UNEP colleagues for M&E would strengthen the section.	
14. Does the report present an integrated analysis of all dimensions evaluated under Sustainability (i.e. the endurance of benefits achieved at outcome level)? Consider how well the report addresses the following: • socio-political sustainability • financial sustainability • institutional sustainability	<u>Coverage/omissions:</u> The section covers all key dimensions for the assessment of sustainability. <u>Strengths/weaknesses:</u> The section demonstrates an adequate level of sustainability analysis across the three sub-criteria, supported by triangulated evidence and a coherent narrative. However, the section would be strengthened by explicitly stating the level of mechanism in place to adapt to changes in the socio-political context, clarifying the secured future funding status across participating countries, and indicating whether exit strategies have been developed at project and country level.	4.5
15. Does the report present a well-evidence analysis of the Factors Affecting Performance, <u>either in this section or in cross-referenced sections?</u> <i>These factors are not always discussed in stand-alone sections and may be integrated in the other performance criteria as appropriate. However, if not addressed substantively in this section, a cross reference must be given to where the topic is addressed, and that entry must be sufficient to justify the performance rating for these factors.</i> Consider how well the report addresses the following cross-cutting issues: • quality of project management and supervision²⁴ • stakeholder participation and co-operation • responsiveness to human rights and gender equality • environmental and social safeguards • country ownership and driven-ness • communication and public awareness	<u>Coverage/omissions:</u> The report includes all standard sub-criteria. <u>Strengths/weaknesses:</u> Overall, the analytical findings, triangulated using multiple sources, support the ratings assigned to each sub-criterion. The report clearly demonstrates how these factors influenced performance and identifies key gaps across the countries. However, further analysis on project's efforts to minimise its environmental footprint, non-cost complementary activities related to country ownership would strengthen the section.	5
Section F: Conclusions, Lessons Learned and Recommendations	Assessment	
16. Do the Conclusions present a summative assessment of the evaluand as a whole, reflecting on prominent aspects of the project's performance? Consider how well the conclusions: • provide a compelling narrative and integrated assessment of project project's	<u>Coverage/omissions:</u> The conclusion includes summative assessment of the evaluand as a whole.	5

²⁴ In some cases 'project management and supervision' will refer to the supervision and guidance provided by UNEP to implementing partners and national governments while in others, specifically for GEF funded projects, it will refer to the project management performance of the executing agency and the technical backstopping provided by UNEP. This includes providing the answers to the questions on Core Indicator Targets, stakeholder engagement, gender responsiveness, safeguards and knowledge management, required for the GEF portal.

performance (i.e. achievements and limitations) • add deeper insights and analysis beyond the findings under each individual criterion • are derived from the synthesized analysis of evidence gathered during the evaluation process • provide clear and succinct response to the key strategic questions • address the human rights and gender dimensions of the intervention explicitly (e.g. how these dimensions were considered, addressed or impacted on) • provide lessons that are rooted in real project experiences, describe the context from which they are derived, and do not duplicate recommendations	<u>Strengths/weaknesses:</u> The conclusion includes a balanced summative narrative addressing strengths and constraints and includes summary responses to the strategic questions with cross-references. Lessons learned are well-grounded in the project experience and clearly distinguished from recommendations. However, the addition of a summary paragraph explicitly linking the overall performance rating would strengthen the section.	
17. Does the report present Recommendations for specific action to be taken by identified people/position-holders to resolve concrete problems affecting the project or the sustainability of its results? Consider how well the recommendations: • are clearly formulated and logically derived from the findings and/or conclusions • are feasible to implement within the timeframe and resources available (including local capacities) and specific in terms of who would do what and when • include at least one recommendation relating to strengthening the human rights and gender dimensions of UNEP interventions • represent a measurable performance target in order that the Evaluation Office can monitor and assess compliance with the recommendations. <u>NOTES:</u> (i) In cases where the recommendation is addressed to a third party, compliance can only be monitored and assessed where a contractual/legal agreement remains in place. Without such an agreement, the recommendation should be formulated to say that UNEP project staff should pass on the recommendation to the relevant third party in an effective or substantive manner. The effective transmission by UNEP of the recommendation will then be monitored for compliance. (ii) Where a new project phase is already under discussion or in preparation with the same third party, a recommendation can be made to address the issue in the next phase.	<u>Coverage/omissions:</u> The section presents the recommendations using the standard template. <u>Strengths/weaknesses:</u> The proposed recommendations are logically derived from evaluation findings, action-oriented, and cover the required human rights and gender dimension. R5 would benefit by specifying the minimum level of cash co-financing required.	5.5
Section G: Report Structure and Presentation	Assessment	
18. Is the report well-structured and complete? Does it: • follow the Evaluation Office structure and formatting guidelines • include all required sections and annexes, as applicable • not exceed 50 pages in length from the Executive Summary to the end of the Conclusion Does the report present information clearly and appropriately? Is it written:	<u>Coverage/omissions:</u> The report is structured following the standard guidance in line with the UNEP's evaluation report template including key Annexes. <u>Strengths/weaknesses:</u> The report is written in clear language, a professional tone as well as visual aids such as figures, and graphs. Due to the large number of	5

• in clear and accessible language • largely free from grammar, spelling and punctuation errors • in an adequate and professional tone • with the use of visual aids, such as maps, graphs tables and photos	outputs and outcomes, the report exceeds 50 pages although the detailed analysis tables for outputs and outcomes are attached as an Annex.	
OVERALL REPORT QUALITY RATING	Satisfactory	5

A number rating 1-6 is used for each criterion, with half-point increments allowed (e.g., 3.5 or 4.5). Highly Satisfactory = 6, Satisfactory = 5, Moderately Satisfactory = 4, Moderately Unsatisfactory = 3, Unsatisfactory = 2, Highly Unsatisfactory = 1. The overall rating is based on a simple average of the ratings for each criterion.

* This criterion was not rated to avoid giving it disproportionate weight in calculating the overall score, as this section is typically brief. The remaining criteria are comprehensive and substantial enough to provide a balanced and meaningful overall rating for the report.

Rating the Report Quality Criteria

Rating (1-6)	Description
6	Provides all content with high quality.
5	Provides all content with minor weaknesses.
4	Provides most content with minor weaknesses.
3	Provides most content with significant weaknesses.
2	Omits substantive content with significant weaknesses.
1	Omits almost all content with major weaknesses.

At the end of the evaluation, compliance of the evaluation process against the agreed standard procedures is assessed, based on the table below. *All questions with negative compliance must be explained further in the table below.*

Evaluation Process Quality Criteria	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Consultant's independence:		
1. Were possible conflicts of interest of proposed Evaluation Consultant(s) appraised and addressed in the final selection?	x	
2. Was the Evaluation Consultant given direct access to identified external stakeholders?	x	
3. Did the Evaluation Consultant raise any concerns about being unable to work freely and without interference or undue pressure from project staff or the Evaluation Office?		x
4. If Yes to Q3: Were these concerns resolved to the mutual satisfaction of both the Evaluation Consultant and the Evaluation Manager?		
Project's engagement and support:		
5. Did the project make available all required/requested documents?		x
6. Did the project make all financial information (and audit reports if applicable) available in a timely manner and to an acceptable level of completeness?		x
7. Was adequate support provided by the project to the evaluator(s) in planning and conducting evaluation missions?	x	
8. Were the project team, relevant UNEP senior staff, partners and interviewed stakeholders given an opportunity to provide comments on key deliverables, as appropriate (e.g. Terms of Reference, Inception Report and Draft Evaluation Report)?	x	
Quality assurance of key deliverables:		
9. Were the Terms of Reference peer-reviewed?	x	
10. Was the inception report peer-reviewed, including the Theory of Change?	x	
11. Were evaluation preliminary findings presented to the project team in a format allowing discussion, before drafting the report?	x	
12. Was the draft report peer-reviewed?	x	
Transparency and commenting:		
13. Was the inception report, including the (reconstructed) TOC, sent to the project team, relevant UNEP senior staff and partners, with a minimum of eight working days to comment?	x	
14. Was the draft evaluation report sent directly by the Evaluation Consultant to the Evaluation Office?	x	

15. Were all stakeholder comments to the draft evaluation report sent directly to the Evaluation Office	x	
16. Did the Evaluation Consultant(s) respond adequately to all factual corrections and comments?	x	
17. Did the Evaluation Office share substantive comments and Evaluation Consultant responses with those who commented, as appropriate?	x	
Financial Resources:		
18. Was the evaluation budget approved at project design available for the evaluation? If not, comment in the table below on the sufficiency of the funds made available.	x	
19. Were the agreed evaluation funds readily available to support the payment of the evaluation contract throughout the payment process? If not, comment in the table below.	x	
Timeliness:		
20. If a Terminal Evaluation: Was the evaluation initiated within six months after project operational completion and not more than three months prior? (Or, if a Mid Term Evaluation: Was the evaluation initiated within a six-month period prior to the project's mid-point?)	x	
21. Was the inception report delivered and reviewed/approved prior to commencing any travel?	x	
22. Were all submission and commenting deadlines met as set by the Evaluation Manager and as far as unforeseen circumstances allowed? If not, comment in the table below on exceptional delays.	x	

Provide comments / explanations / mitigating circumstances below for any non-compliant process issues.

Evaluation Process Criterion Number	Evaluation Office Comments
5	As noted in the evaluation report, not all project documents were migrated from the BCH-III website to the VLE, and some documents were lost during project management transitions. As a result, some documents were not accessible to the evaluator for review. This is acknowledged as a limitation in the report and other multiple sources were triangulated for the assessment.
6	As the report clearly addresses, some countries provided co-finance reports, but not all was given to the evaluation. In addition, a summary expenditure report by project component were not fully provided to the evaluator. This is acknowledged as a limitation in the report and other multiple sources were triangulated for the assessment.