United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP)
Global Environment Facility (GEF)

Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP GEF project on Support for the Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework of Costa Rica

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October 2014

CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

BS	Biosafety
CAN	Certified National Authority
CPB	Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
CTNBio	National Technical Biosafety Commission
FFP	LMO intended for Food, Feed or Processing
FMO	Fund Manager officer
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GM	Genetically Modified
IICA	Inter American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture
LMO	Living Modified Organism
L&R	Liability and redress
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAG	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock
MINAE	Ministry of Environment, Energy and Seas
MEP	Ministry of Public Education
MICIT	Ministry of Science and Technology
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
MS	Ministry of Health
NBF	National Biosafety Framework
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NPC	National Project Coordinator
NEA	National Executing Agency
NCC	National Coordination Committee
OIRSA	International Regional Organism for Animal and Plant Health
ONS	National Seed Office
PMU	Project Management Unit
RCB	Biodiversity Coordination Network
SENASA	National Animal Health Service
SFE	State Phytosanitary Service
TE	Terminal Evaluation
ToC	Theory of Change
TM	Task Manager
UCR	University of Costa Rica
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
UNON	United Nations Office at Nairobi

This report presents the findings of the evaluators and does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Government of Costa Rica, UNEP or GEF. The evaluators would like to express their appreciation to Dr. Alex May Montero, CTNBio President, Dr. Jorge Madriz, National Project Coordinator, Marcela Jimenez Peralta of the SFE, and the various project participants and stakeholders who generously contributed their time and ideas. Thank you!

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. "Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework of Costa Rica" was implemented over a 42 month-period between October 2010 and March 2014. The project was executed by the Government of Costa Rica through the National Technical Biosafety Commission (CTNBIo), constituted by Competent National Authorities (CNAs) with biosafety responsibilities established by national legislation. UNEP provided technical guidance in its capacity as designated UN implementing agency. The US$ 1.481,105 budget was funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) with in-kind government co-financing.

2. The project aimed to consolidate the biosafety management capacities needed to implement the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB). This was approached through four components that combined institutional and systemic-level support for policy and regulatory proposals, capacity building, education and public awareness, and improved operational procedures for LMO applications and information management. Project design was relevant to the national context and addressed gaps and threats that were identified during the preparatory PDF phase.

3. The project was successful in delivering almost all planned outputs despite a slow start-up, national elections and a change of government. The fundamental elements of a functional and comprehensive biosafety framework were designed and are now in place. Several outputs are of recognized technical quality and have high impact potential. CNA capacities for LMO risk analysis and other biosafety functions were strengthened through training workshops and visits to biosafety institutions in selected countries that offered first-hand exposure to operational systems. Policy and regulatory proposals were drafted that extend biosafety practices to food, feed and processing (FFPs) and environmental LMOs, with consideration of health and environmental risks. A draft biotechnology education and information strategy was proposed for Costa Rica's formal education system. CTNBio risk management capabilities were strengthened with the incorporation of the Ministry of Health and National Animal Health Service as members; and CNAs have designated focal points with biosafety responsibilities to the Commission.

4. The project made a valuable contribution to operational efficiency by developing a digitized system for online LMO applications and information management. The system shortens the time and steps required to evaluate applications, and brings improvements in efficiency, transparency, institutional coordination and security; users can readily access the system and track the progress of individual applications. While there are a few technical problems that need to be resolved, i.e. compatibility with user firewall security programs, the availability of the system resolves a key systemic need.

5. Partial success was achieved towards the planned outcomes and objectives (of at least two components) in spite of efficient project performance and a six-month extension granted by GEF to compensate for initial delays. The partial success was influenced by factors outside the project's control: The final year of implementation overlapped with national elections and a change of government. The political juncture undermined opportunities to socialize and transfer key policy/regulatory proposals and a national education strategy. As a result, their formal approval and implementation by the new government authorities is pending. This has direct bearing on the impact and sustainability of project results, as the approval of the proposed regulations and action plan are essential

to extend biosafety practices to new generation LMOs, incorporate health and environmental risk assessments, and formalize the inclusion of the Ministry of Health and National Animal Health Service within Costa Rica's biosafety framework.

6. The likelihood that project results will be adopted and implemented in the coming months is uncertain. At the time of the evaluation, the new government had not articulated a policy position on LMOs or biosafety. There are legislative proposals to approve an indefinite moratorium on the cultivation and release of agricultural LMOs, and to declare the unconstitutionality of current risk management practices based on their perceived incompatibility with national environmental impact assessment legislation. The majority of Costa Rica's municipalities are declared themselves transgenic-free zones and public opinion is highly polarized on this issue. The project's contributions to institutional capacities, policy and regulatory frameworks, expanded CNA involvement and operational procedures cannot be fully implemented until these issues are resolved. Although several project deliverables have a high sustainability potential, there is concern that capacity improvements and the momentum generated by the project will decline if they are not applied.

7. The project experience provides an interesting case study on how good performance can fall short of achieving its ultimate objectives when the intermediate states that link outputs to outcomes and impacts are not reached. Substantive outputs have been designed and are in place, yet are not being applied. As a result, the expected impacts on Costa Rica's national biosafety framework have not been realized to date.

8. A series of contributing factors and implementation "drivers" influenced project performance. These included (i) high levels of preparedness supported by the technical capacity of key CNAs and the overall institutional stability of Costa Rica's public sector; (ii) an efficient Project Management Unit headed by a technically competent NPC with extensive biosafety experience, and (iii) high levels of a national ownership that were reinforced by CTNBio's inter-institutional and cross-sector composition. The contracting of OIRSA to manage the GEF contribution was another contributing factor that enabled the timely availability of funds.

9. There were also missed opportunities that affected project performance and impact, such as the (i) neglect of advisory/oversight functions assigned to the National Coordination Committee (NCC), (ii) insufficient attention to knowledge dissemination and public awareness , and (iii) the absence of an "exit strategy" to guide the transfer of project results and their appropriation by new government authorities. UNEP and UNON support was satisfactory following initial communication problems that were aggravated by the absence of a Task Manager, unfamiliarity with reporting formats and disbursement delays.

10. The recommendations that emerge from the Terminal Evaluation underscore the need to devote more attention to outreach and communication efforts, in order to inform public opinion and encourage dialogue between stakeholder groups with polarized views. The planning and oversight of project work plans and budgets need to be more inclusive through the proactive involvement of National Coordination Committees or similar mechanisms**.** Given the present polarization of different stakeholder groups, CTNBio must project a neutral image and positioning in order to protect its credibility and ability to convoke a wide range of stakeholders. Indeed, there were attempts to invite critical stakeholder groups to project meetings and events with little success, partially because CTNBio is perceived by some to have a pro-transgenic position. For such reasons, CTNBio must make an effort to avoid any actual or perceived conflict of interest with its regulatory

state functions, originating from the private views of personnel linked to national technical or project management. Finally, several issues need to be resolved before further support from GEF or other donors is viable: Decisions must be reached on the proposed legal moratorium and unconstitutionality of current LMO risk management practices. The new government must position itself on LMO and biosafety issues in general, adopting the proposed regulations and policies through legislative action and executive decree. Capacity improvements and other project contributions must be applied so that subsequent projects can build on these achieved advances.

Table 1 – Summary of Evaluation ratings

CRITERION	RATING
A. Strategic Relevance	HS
B. Achievement of Outputs	HS
C. Effectiveness: Achievement of Project Objectives and Results	MS
1. Achievement of Direct Outcomes	MS
2. Likelihood of Impact	MS
3. Achievement of Project Goal & Planned Objectives.	MS
D. Sustainability & Replication	ML
1. Financial	ML
2. Socio-Political	ML
3. Institutional Framework	ML
4. Environmental	HL
5. Catalytic Role & Replication	ML
E. Efficiency	S
F. Factors Affecting Project Performance	HS
1. Preparation & Readiness	HS
2. Project Implementation & Management	S
3. Stakeholder Participation & Public Awareness	MS
4. Country Ownership & Driven-ness	HS
5. Financial Planning & Management	S
6. UNEP Supervision & Backstopping	S
7. Monitoring & Evaluation	HS
Overall Project Rating	S

I. INTRODUCTION

11. The UNEP/GEF project "Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework of Costa Rica" was funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) for a three-year period and executed by Costa Rica's National Technical Commission for Biosafety (CTNBio), with technical guidance provided by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as designated UN implementing agency. The project was hosted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG) through the State Phytosanitary Service's (SFE) Biotechnology Programme (national focal point for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and Secretariat to CTNBio), which supported the project technically and logistically. A National Coordination Committee (NCC) was created to provide oversight and facilitate the participation of stakeholder groups not represented within CTNBio. The project's implementation was linked to a World Bank/GEF sub-regional biosafety project for Central America; there has been collaboration between both initiatives, i.e. applied research and dissemination activities through the University of Costa Rica (UCR).

12. The project aimed to consolidate the biosafety management capacities that are required to implement the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB). It also sought to strengthen the national legal and regulatory frameworks, improve communications between

institutional partners, enhance public awareness and participation, and establish a digitized information system for risk assessment and monitoring. The project was implemented over a 42-month period (October 2010 to March 2014) following an approved extension, with a total budget of US$ 1,498,105 that included a US$ 718,883 GEF contribution and US$ 762,232 in co-financing.

II. THE EVALUATION

13. The project was scheduled to undergo a Terminal Evaluation (TE) on completion of project activities, in line with UNEP evaluation policy and GEF guidelines for implementing agencies. The TE was intended to assess project performance according to evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and stakeholder participation among others. Through this assessment, the evaluation would provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements. Likewise, it was expected to contribute to learning, feedback and knowledge sharing between UNEP, GEF and national partners through findings/lessons that are operationally relevant for future initiatives.

14. The evaluation started with the preparation of an inception report, which took stock of the project's background and performance based on the desk review. The Inception report includes a section based on UNEP's "theory of change" (ToC) that identifies (i) the causal pathways linking outputs to outcomes and objectives; (ii) the impact drivers and assumptions that affect project performance; and (iii) the intermediate states that need to be reached to achieve impact and the project's objectives.

15. The evaluation's approach combined the desk review of the project's documentation[1] with a one-week country visit to interview the project team, CNA representatives to CTNBio, the director and technical staff of the State Phytosanitary Service's biotechnology programme's, the Vice-Ministers of Environment and Agriculture & Livestock, the IICA focal point and UCR biotechnology faculty and researchers among others. This was followed by skype interviews with important participants who were unavailable during the evaluator's visit (Ministry of Health, the National Biodiversity Network) There were also online conversations with the UNEP Task Manager before and after the country visit, and the UNEP DEPI/GEF Fund Management Officer. The findings of the interviews with the project team were triangulated with the views of other project stakeholders and beneficiaries, UNEP and the desk review. This also helped the evaluator to understand how the various "contributing factors" (internal and external) had influenced project performance.

16. The evaluation was guided by key questions that were based on the planned outcomes and included in the Terms of Reference:

- *How and to what extent did the project succeed in developing and implementing a framework for biosafety? To what extent is this leading to an active involvement of the NCAs in the implementation of the CPB?*
- *To what extent has the project had an impact on the development of capacity for the consideration of cases of liability and redress and the implementation of a coexistence regime?*
- *How and to what extent did the project build administrative capacities to handle requests, make informed decisions and communicate them to applicants and the BCH? To what extent has the project ensured that decisions on LMOs are based on risk*

[1] These included the project document, Mid-Term Review report, Project Implementation Review (PIR) reports, minutes of NCC meetings, budget revisions and documented products generated by the project (draft biosafety action plan and regulations, educational strategy).

assessments that are timely, transparent and coordinated to avoid duplicity or unnecessary bureaucracy?

- *To what extent did the project increase the capacity to monitor and ensure regulatory compliance? Are sufficient technical and human capacities being put in place for risk assessment and management for decision-making, considering both traditional and new-generation LMOs? Are transboundary movements of LMOs occurring in accordance with the CPB and in a manner that is understood and accepted by the private sector (exporters/importers)?*
- *To what extent has a formal education strategy been contributing to increased public awareness? To what extent is this leading to changes in human behaviour? To what extent has the project contributed to increase information sharing through greater access to biosafety information? To what extent did the project succeed in securing the necessary funds to implement the educational strategy?*
- *To what extent did the delay in implementation affect the delivery of project outcomes?*

17. The guiding questions provided the basis for the field interviews and data collection in general. For this purpose, they were expanded into an evaluation questionnaire matrix directed at target respondents/focus groups with identified indicators and data sources. The evaluation matrix is attached to this report under Annex 2.

A. The Context

18. Latin America is one of the richest regions in terms of biological diversity, with natural resources and landscapes that have enabled a large production platform, making it one of the biggest food producing regions of the world. Agriculture still represents a core component of region's economy, producing more than 1 253 million tones in agricultural goods in 2007. Living Modified Organisms (LMOs) are grown in at least 10 Latin American countries, with Argentina and Brazil ahead as the main producers.

19. Given the adoption rate of agricultural LMOs and growth in traded commodities and agricultural goods in Latin American countries, biosafety has become an important means for competing more effectively and responsibly in the international market. Several Central American countries, including Costa Rica, have become aware of the costs and benefits of protecting their natural resource base from potential threats to biodiversity, particularly considering potential of biotechnology and likelihood that further developments will gradually include animals and tropical crops. As an agricultural country that is environmentally conscious and has a dynamic ecological tourism sector, yet is also largely dependent on commodity imports, Costa Rica has pursued its development goals in a manner that benefit both the agricultural sector and preserves its natural resource base.

20. Costa Rica signed the Cartagena Protocol for Biosafety (CPB) in May 2000, in anticipation of increased internal LMO production (the first application had been received in 1991 for the testing of genetically modified varieties of cotton, soya and maize). To implement the CPB, Costa Rica began to develop a national biosafety framework through the UNEP-GEF project "Development of a National Biosafety Framework" (NBF) in 2003, leading to the formulation of a draft biosafety law and the ratification of the CPB in 2007. This was followed by a second UNEP-GEF project to establish a national Biosafety Clearing House (BCH) in 2006 with the participation of National Competent Authorities (NCAs) and key stakeholders. These initiatives were instrumental in consolidating the inter-institutional National Technical Commission (CTNBio, established in 1992) and Ministry of Agriculture and

Livestock's Biotechnology Programme as the principal coordination mechanisms for biosafety.

21. At present, the main cultivated LMOs are cotton and soya, none of which are commercialized nationally. Genetically modified crops are currently permitted only for seed production or for field-testing. To date, releases for commercial production or for internal use as food or feed have not taken place. As Costa Rica is not the center or origins of any of the liberated species (excepting three wild rice varieties that are removed from principal rice producing areas) and GM sowings are not realized on a commercial scale, there is limited possibility of genetic transfer. As such, the sowing of cotton and soybean GM crops does not represent a significant environmental risk.

22. Costa Rica, together with international collaborators, research partners and private companies, has invested significant resources in LMO development and evaluation. Having first become a winter nursery for seed markets, the country now performs local research with LMOs. Costa Rica has the facilities, equipment and scientifically trained staff to perform genetic engineering in plant breeding of locally important species, or to solve local phytosanitary issues. Indeed, one of the main research lines currently focuses on banana diseases, given its agricultural, economic and environmental importance on a national scale.

23. As a result of these endeavors, the CTNBio has accumulated substantial knowledge in LMO management and risk assessment, and has gained experience in making biosafety decisions since its creation. Indeed, Costa Rica is considered a regional leader in terms of biosafety, and sees GM technology as an important source of potential economic, social and environmental benefits provided it is managed in accordance with the NBF.

24. However, several challenges remained that, taken together, provided the rationale for the present project:

- Much of CTNBio's work was focused on agriculture and seed-production, with comparatively less attention devoted to biosafety within the pharmaceutical, medical or biotechnology sectors. The continued use, up-scaling, diversification and possible commercialization of LMOs would undoubtedly put the country's biosafety system to further test. Costa Rica needed to achieve a more comprehensive and coordinated biosafety framework to manage the demands of increased agricultural diversification, local biotechnology applications and food safety, ensuring that GM food consumption is innocuous to human health.
- At the time of the project's design, the lack of a comprehensive biosafety framework was considered a disabling condition for the diversification of agriculture and search for solutions to sectoral or productive problems, such as the deforestation resulting from agricultural expansion. Costa Rica imported (and probably continues to import) 99% of maize, soybean and cotton destined for human consumption and animal feed, mainly from countries that produce LMOs. In order to consider the commercialization and consumption of locally produced LMOs, Costa Rica's regulatory system would need to incorporate their evaluation as part of the safeguards that must be in place for greater consumer confidence and safety. Likewise, the increased production and marketing of drugs produced or derived from recombinant DNA technology for application in humans or animals, would also require a new range of capacities to understand and manage the risks associated with novel or non-agricultural LMOs. Strengthening the national biosafety risk assessment and management systems were highlighted concerns by CTNBio.

- CTNBio and several NCAs had prioritized the importance of having a longer-term strategic vision to guide the development of the NBF to meet future challenges.

25. The project's rationale was based on several threats and barriers that are described in the project document:

26. *Unauthorized releases or poor (unprepared) decision-making.* Although Costa Rica had been performing risk assessments for agricultural LMOs since 1991, there were still legal gaps that allowed the unregulated importation of LMOs intended for Food, Feed or Processing (FFPs). The unintended liberation of any LMO (animal, microorganism, etc) could represent a threat to biodiversity, particularly if the responsible CNA had yet to develop its legal and administrative capacity for performing risk assessments and responding promptly to mitigation measures. The root causes of this threat were attributed to incomplete regulatory and policy frameworks, poor enforcement and coordination, and low budgetary and priority levels assigned to biosafety. These factors had prevented CNAs from developing adequate biotechnology regulation capabilities. Likewise, the absence of an enforced policy or law establishing the obligations of all CNAs vis-à-vis CPB regulations had created an unbalanced and in some cases weak baseline for a coordinated and appropriate NBF.

27. *Capacity limitations among National Competent Authorities*. Capacity development for Costa Rican NCAs had been uneven. Most of the capacities and know-how in biosafety relate to GM crops; particularly winter nursery dynamics and seed production. The institutions that have interacted the most with LMOs are therefore within the Ministry of Agriculture & Livestock, i.e. the Quarantine and Exportation Depts. of the Phytosanitary Service (SFE), which have the responsibility of controlling transboundary movements of plant species and thus coordinate closely with the Biotechnology Program and CTNBIO; and the National Seed Office (ONS) which supervises the handling of seeds (GM or otherwise), in coordination with the SFE. As agriculture LMOs were the only kind that had been evaluated in Costa Rica, capacities for evaluating food safety, animal, environmental, human health and industrial LMOs were considerably lower.

28. *Threats from the foregone opportunity of using GM technology to increase the efficiency of agricultural and bioremediation methods*. Costa Rica is a mega-diverse country that produces and trades in LMOs while recognizing the value of its natural resource base and acknowledging that biotechnology carries potential risks in addition to benefits. Biosafety measures therefore must be managed carefully in order to comply with CBP requirements without undermining trade and agricultural production. This should be approached in a manner that minimizes the opportunity costs and environmental risks associated with non-action as well as over-regulation, which represent potential threats to Costa Rica's biodiversity as well as the country's sustainable development model. The root causes that were associated to this threat included insufficient research and development (R&D) and technology renewal, misinformation about modern biotechnology, and negative perceptions concerning GMOs and their impact on agriculture and ecotourism, which are vital sectors of the Costa Rican economy.

B. Project Objectives and Components

29. "Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework" was designed to mitigate these threats and barriers, by strengthening and applying the national capacities needed to fully implement the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB). This included broadening the

regulatory and policy framework, implementing an online risk assessment and information management system; better institutional coordination; and raising public awareness via Costa Rica's public school network.

30. The main objective of the project was to have "...a national biosafety framework feasible and transparent for Costa Rica by the year 2012, according to national development priorities and international agreements". [2]

31. This was articulated in three specific objectives:

- Establishing legal or administrative mechanisms for inter-ministerial coordination and decision-making at the national level for the safe environmental release, commercial production and trans boundary movements of LMOs, in compliance with the Cartagena Protocol.
- Establishing a core capacity in biosafety to enhance decision-making in each of the participating ministries and related institutions.
- Establishing an information sharing mechanisms involving the educational system in order to raise public awareness on biosafety matters.

32. These objectives would be reached through four project components and their associated outcomes:

- *Component 1: Putting in place and applying national biosafety regulation and promoting a biosafety policy in accordance with the CPB.* Activities and outputs were focused on developing technical guidelines and support tools for NCAs to apply biosafety regulations. An initial step involved conducting an evaluation of the effectiveness of Costa Rica's NBF, followed by training on LMO risk management and other issues highlighted by the evaluation. A key task was the preparation and adoption of a unifying biosafety policy with which to bring on board new National Competent Authorities. The combination of these actions would strengthen inter-institutional technical capacities for assessing environmental risks; this would help to consolidate a comprehensive regulatory framework while providing the architecture for an integrated administrative and management system.
- *Component 2: Making operational and administrative system to fulfil CPB obligations and strengthen decision-making mechanisms.* This component was designed to work at a systemic level by developing the guidelines, procedures and information-sharing mechanisms that are essential for a working NBF. Procedures for the application and authorization of LMOs would be simplified and harmonized across NCAs, and processed online for greater efficiency. NCAs would develop the administrative capacity to handle requests, make informed decisions, and communicate these decisions to applicants and the BCH with transparency.
- *Component 3: Building technical capacity in NCAs and related institutions for comprehensive biosafety management* The third project component targeted NCA institutional capacity needs for monitoring regulatory compliance, performing risk assessments and making decisions on traditional and new-generation LMOs. Capacity building would be delivered by training NCA technicians, auditors and civil observers, producing educational material (i.e. leaflets on risk assessment), and by standardizing formats. Transboundary movements of LMOs were also addressed by training customs and quarantine personnel.

[2] Project document, pg. 33

- *Component 4: Improved communication, education, public perception and participation in biosafety of all relevant stakeholders* This component focussed on the transfer of information, awareness-raising and participation of non-NCA stakeholders from the academic and private sectors, NGOs and civil society in general. Formal and non-formal educational approaches would be incorporated into a Draft Education Strategy (TEACH) in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, NCAs, government agencies and international organizations. Outputs were also directed at improving the design and user-friendliness of the biosafety web portal to facilitate public access; and in developing public participation mechanisms. By the end of the project, the educational strategy and related action plans were expected to be designed, approved and ready for implementation by the concerned parties. The implementation of this component was subcontracted to IICA.

33. A summary version of the project's Results Framework is presented below:

Figure 1

Project Objectives, Expected Outcomes and Outputs

Components / objectives	Outcomes	Outputs
1. Putting in place and applying a national biosafety legal framework and promoting a biosafety policy in accordance with the CPB	1.1. A comprehensive regulatory framework for biosafety is in place, providing the architecture of an integrated administrative and management system. 1.2. New policy in biosafety and its action plan is translates into ongoing NCA involvement in CPB implementation. 1.3. Legal and sectorial capacity is built for considering cases of liability and redress (L&R) and implementing a co-existence regime.	1.1.1 Biosafety regulation (/technical norms) for LMOs use in food, feed and processing, 1.1.2 Biosafety regulation (/technical norms) for LMOs in trans boundary movements (transit, identification, etc) 1.2.1 National Policy and Action Plan (submitted) 1.2.2 National Reports to the CPB, prepared involving at least 2 NCAs 1.2.3 National position paper for COP/MOP-5 1.2.4 Units and personnel in charge of biosafety are identified 1.3.1 List of agricultural companies and farmers known to use LMOs in the country, or that are potentially affected by LMO use. 1.3.2 Survey analysis on sectorial knowledge regarding coexistence and L&R 1.3.3 Analysis on the implications of liability and redress (L&R) from the perspective of different LMO users 1.3.4 Draft guidelines for LMO users on agricultural coexistence 1.3.5 Regulatory proposal for L&R 1.3.6 Workshops and informative materials on coexistence, with takes into account CPB decisions related 1.3.7 Position documents on L&R for COP/MOP-5 and COP/MOP-6
2. Making operational and administrative system to fulfil obligations to the CPB and strengthen the decision-making base and its mechanisms.	2.1 NCAs needs are addressed so that administrative capacities are in place to handle requests, make informed decisions, and communicate decisions to applicants and the BCH 2.2 Decisions on LMOs are based on risk	2.1.1 Permanent administrative structures in all NCAs for handling LMOs requests and notifications 2.1.2 Forms and formats for LMOs requests and notifications 2.1.3 Biosafety measures and standards established for each sector 2.1.4 BCH informed of national decisions, new procedures and standards 2.1.5 Information available upon request on procedures,

	assessments, timely, transparent and coordinated, and avoid duplicity or unnecessary bureaucracy.	requirements, standards and ongoing processes 2.1.6 Financial mechanisms to support the administrative system 2.1.7 Simplified procedures for LMOs authorization 2.2.1 Coordinated and consolidated LMOs evaluation and decision-making mechanisms 2.2.2 LMOs requests processed efficiently 2.2.3 Biosafety decision-makers and advisory structures appointed 2.2.4 Periodic administrative evaluation of LMOs sectorial authorization processes 2.2.5 Procedures for review of decisions
3 Building technical capacity in NCAs and related institutions for comprehensive biosafety management	3.1 Capacity to monitor and ensure regulatory compliance is increased. 3.2 Sufficient technical and human capacities are put in place for risk assessment and management for decision-making, considering both traditional and new generation LMOs. 3.3 Transboundary movements of LMOs will occur in accordance with the CPB, and in a manner that is understood and accepted by the private sector (exporters /importers)	3.1.1 NCA-specific lists of personnel to be trained 3.1.2 Mechanisms to encourage the integration of civil observers into official monitoring and inspection plans – 3.1.3 Official auditors and civil observers selected and trained 3.1.4 Annual inspection Plan for authorized LMOs is approved. 3.2.1 NCA-specific lists of personnel to be trained 3.2.2 Collaboration agreements for design and implementation of training activities 3.2.3 NCA professionals trained in specific areas of biosafety such as risk assessment and management of LMOs 3.2.4 Decision-makers briefed on the basics of biosafety and ongoing progress of the CPB 3.2.5 Leaflet for risk-benefit analysis and LMO management is available on decision-making process. 3.3.1 NCA-specific quarantine and customs personnel selected and trained 3.3.2 Approved forms for identifying LMOs subject to transboundary movements
4 Improved communication, education, public perception and participation in biosafety of all relevant stakeholders	4.1 Public awareness regarding the safe use of LMOs in Costa Rica is augmented through a formal educational strategy 4.2 Public information sharing is promoted through greater access to biosafety information. (BCH)	4.1.1 Draft Education Strategy on LMOs and biosafety (TEACH: Training and Education in AgrobioteCHnology) and its Action Plan for carrying out long-term formal and informal educational actions for dissemination of biosafety 4.1.2 Cooperation agreements between NCAs, biotechnology industry, international organizations and/or other governments agencies 4.1.3 Improved knowledge and understanding of Ministry of Education advisors regarding safe use of biotechnology. 4.2.1 Internal tracking system for LMO requests 4.2.2 Informative dissemination material by sector 4.2.3 Mechanisms for public participation prior to granting LMOs authorizations is augmented 4.2.4 Biosafety guidelines, protocols, and updated data on national biotechnology and LMOs use (especially in the agricultural sector) are on the National Biosafety Webpage and/or BCH 4.2.5 Media tools and other informal education initiatives reproduced and expanded for other sectors

Source: Evaluation Terms of Reference

C. Target Areas/Groups

34. The project was oriented to various groups or sectors that are involved in biosafety, a multi-disciplinary area that requires integrating different entities. The main target group were the Competent National Authorities (CNAs) on CTNBio, for which most of the capacity building and policy/regulatory support was directed. They included the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Telecommunications (MINAET); the State Phytosanitary Service (SFE), National Seed Office (ONS) and National Animal Health Service (SENASA) that are under the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG); the Ministry of Public Health; and the Ministry of Public Education (MEP) for the project component supporting biotechnology education. Secondary target groups included academia (the University of Costa Rica and the national school system), private companies that import, certify and audit LMOs, NGOs working for environmental conservation, politicians and legislators, and the media.

35. While the project intended to have national impact and was not directed at a particular geographic area, it had particular relevance for Guanacaste province in Costa Rica's northwestern region, where all transgenic crops are sown to produce seed for export.

D. Institutional Framework

37. The government of Costa Rica executed the project through the National Technical Commission on Biosafety (CTNBio), which served as national executing agency. CTNBio is hosted by the State Phytonsanitary Service's (SFE)) biotechnology programme, which provided office space and efficient technical and logistical support. Competent National Authorities (CNAs) linked to CTNBio and the project included the ministries of agriculture and livestock, environment, health and science and technology, the National Seed Office, National Animal Health Service, SFE and two NGOs in representation of civil society. The full range of project partners are described in Section II.

38. Financial management of the GEF contribution was contracted to the International Regional Organization for Plant and Animal Health (OIRSA), which has provided such services to various projects as an efficient alternative to managing the budget from within the public sector. UNEP was in charge of authorizing and managing disbursements, recruitments and procurement. The Inter-American Institute for Agricultural Training (IICA), which is headquartered in Costa Rica, assumed responsibility for implementing the fourth project component on biotechnology and biosafety education for the school system.

39. The project's institutional arrangements were one of the project's strengths. The decision to implement the project through CTNbio was important to ensure communication and coordination among NCAs (and with other biosafety stakeholders), and to manage a complex process that involved various sectors and institutions. Each member of the CTNBio was (and is) a stakeholder in the biosafety system, with risk management functions that several are now better prepared to assume. Liaising with them would have been more difficult had the project been executed by a line ministry and had to work separately with each institution.

40. A Project Management Unit (PMU) was based within CTNBio and was responsible for the day to day coordination of project activities, drafting of annual work plans and budgets, and drafting ToRs for consultants and contracted entities such as IICA. The PMU followed instructions and directives of the CTNBio. It consisted of a Project Manager with

recognized technical competence and experience in Costa Rica's biosafety process, and support staff provided by the SFE Biotechnology Programme.

41. The National Coordination Committee (NCC) was created to provide oversight and steering committee functions, and to facilitate coordination and access to groups not represented in CTNBio. The project document stated that the NCC was expected to hold a session on a quarterly basis. This actually happened once a year, and largely to receive information on project progress and decisions made by the PMU and CTNBio. Based on the views expressed by several of its members, the NCC does not seem to have had much deliberation or incidence in work plans, budget decisions, the planning of training activities or recruitments. On the other hand, the NEA has noted that the participation and contributions of some of the civil society representatives were very limited, which may have influenced their perceptions concerning the levels of consultations involved.

E. Project Financing

42. The total project budget was US$ 1,481,105 of which US$ 718.873 represented GEF's contribution. Through its contributions to the PDF-A and PDF-B preparatory phases, the government co-financing surpassed the initial target by almost US$ 64,000, raising the total project budget. Figure 2 provides a breakdown of the co-financing and other resources that were mobilized, based on the following contributions:

Figure 2

In-kind Cofinancing and Resources mobilized

Partner	Contribution (In-kind) ($)
Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG)	$32,001.00
Phytosanitary Service of the State (SFE)	$357,524.00
National Service of Animal Health (SENASA)	$46,351.00
Ministry of Environment, Energy and Telecommunications (MINAET)	$25,683.00
Ministry of Health (MS)	$43,545.00
Ministry of Science, Technology and telecommunications	$6,800.00
CTNBio	$187,011.00
Ministry of Economy, Industry and Trade.	$9,446.00
Academy sector	$11,607.00
Private Industry	$72,884.00
IICA	$17,350.00
OIRSA	$3.309.00
CANADA (International training course on risk analysis)	$11,000.00
NGOs (fecon, red, etc)	$5,100.00
Ministry of Education	$7,000.00
National Seed Office (ONS)	$5,500.00

Source: Final Project Report

F. Project Partners [3]

[3] This section is based on the description of project partners in the *Final Project Report.*

43. As mentioned elsewhere, the **National Technical Commission on Biosafety** (CTNBio) acted as NEA of the project. Its performance was critical and decisive in the delivery of outputs that often had high technical quality. As the inter-institutional mechanism for implementing the national biosafety framework and CPB, it facilitated communications and coordination with a broad range of institutions and groups. The PMU was located within CTNBio and followed its guidelines. CTNBio also approved all consultancies and activities programmed into the project.

44. The **Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock** (MAG) was the parent ministry to the project. It provided technical and political support, and enabled its attached institutions to participate in different project activities and contribute in-kind cofinancing. It supported the project in developing guidelines for the coexistence between different production technologies and the transit of LMOs.

45. The **State Phytosanitary Service** (SFE) is the MAG agency mandated to safeguard plant health and regulates plant movements in Costa Rica. Its biosafety responsibilities are supported by a national law that regulates LMOs for agricultural use. The project was hosted in the SFE, which actively participated as partner in its design and development. SFE provided logistical and communications (phone, Internet, basic services, IT technical support and transport when needed. The digitized LMO risk management and information system was designed with the direct involvement of technical staff from SFE, which will continue to host the system with the hardware acquired, and pay for its functioning.

46. The **National Seed Office** (ONS) is a MAG agency and the CTNBio member legally responsible for supervising GM seeds. It has conducted most of the LMO risk analysis in Costa Rica to date. ONS was involved in training activities and provided feedback to the project.

47. The **National Service of Animal Health** (SENASA) is an agency of the MAG, that has the responsibility of guarding against animal diseases, and maintains standards of conventional and GM food (for human consumption) and feed (animal consumption) safety in the market. When the project began, SENASA had no administrative or legal procedures for implementing the provisions of the PC. The senior management of SENASA provided the political and technical support needed to implement an Institutional Biosafety Committee. It also allowed the participation of its staff in training activities at national and international level, and actively participated in the preparation of a final draft of regulations for the import of LMOs intended for FFPs. In addition, they have included forms and procedures established in the digital system for the management of information. Finally, they are officially integrated as members of CTNBio.

48. The **Ministry of Environment, Energy and Seas** (MINAE) is the institution in charge of executing CBD agreements and its purpose is to manage natural resources in a sustainable and rational manner, in order to preserve biodiversity, maintain healthy ecosystems and benefit future generations. Being the GEF operational focal point within the MINAE, it provided CTNBio with the necessary administrative support to solve problems that were presented at the beginning of the project.

49. The **Ministry of Health** (MS) was a targeted project partner that is now formally a part of CTNBio as a result of the project. General Health law (N° 5395) from 1973 regulates food imports and drugs registration in general in Costa Rica, including the regulation of Food for human consumption, and its responsibility of regulation in Costa Rica. The Ministry

participated in the training provided by the project to other CNAs and a study tour to Brazil. It also supported the elaboration of draft regulations for the importation of LMOs for use in FFPs. However, the level of participation declined over time as its attention was re-focused towards pressing health issues (dengue, H1N1) and the proposed legislation was not approved.

50. The **Ministry of Science and Technology** (MICIT) is responsible for promoting the scientific and technological development in Costa Rica. Participation of MICIT, as the leading institution, has been very important in providing the necessary and appropriate political support for decision making in the political sphere with their colleagues in other ministries. In addition, the participation of its representative in the CTNBio favored the discussion and approval of products produced by the project.

51. The **academic sector** participated, as part of the NCC, in the project activities, giving information and guidance in the project. Also, as the lead partner of the WB-GEF project, it had to establish synergies and complementarities with this project. The National Academy of Science is officially integrated as a member of CTNBio. The **private sector,** as a user of biotechnology, and subject to the regulations issued in Costa Rica, has been an important subject in various project activities, being consulted in cases where it was necessary. The project tried not to put more requirements than already exist, and to establish requirements when not in place, so that the private sector could work within a stable legal framework**.**

52. **IICA** (the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture) is a regional agency specializing in agriculture and rural welfare. IICA works very closely with the Ministry of Agriculture in Costa Rica and provided support to several training courses. It also managed the development of the fourth project component.

53. The functions of the International Regional Organization for Plant and Animal Health **(OIRSA)** included managing technical aspects and administering the funds provided by external donors. In this case, it managed the GEF contribution in coordination with UNEP.

54. According to the final project report, **NGOs** participated in few activities and had practically no presence to the project. On the other hand, the National Biodiversity Network (one of two NGOs on CTNBio) felt that its intentions to contribute to the revisions for the draft educational strategy were overlooked. Beyond the project, this underscored the communications problem between the various biosafety stakeholders that is reinforced by polarized views.

55. The **Ministry of Education** participated in elaborating the draft strategy on Biotechnology Education with the consultants recruited by IICA. With IICA, the Ministry reviewed school and college programs and offered their expertise. If the strategy is adopted and funded, the Ministry would assume an important role in the biosafety framework. However, this appeared unlikely at the time of the evaluation.

57. Other organizations and institutions from countries of the region - Mexico (CIBIOGEM-SAGARPA-SENASICA-COFEPRIS), Brazil (CTNBio) and Argentina (INTA-CONABIA) - invited Costa Rican biosafety officials to visit their facilities and sent experts to give lectures and hold risk management workshops.

G. Changes in Design during Implementation

58. The project's design did not undergo substantive changes during implementation. The Terms of Reference and remuneration levels of the Project Coordinator were adjusted, and the project extended by 6 months to compensate for initial start-up delays. These changes involved transfers of funds between budget lines that were reflected in approved budget revisions, without alterations to the GEF contribution. The project had initially contemplated a more robust approach towards public awareness under Component 4, applying communications and non-formal education methodologies. However, this aspect was largely assumed – with limited impact - by the sub-regional World Bank/GEF biosafety project; and activities under the fourth component were focused on the design of a biotechnology education strategy for the formal school curriculum.

H. Reconstructed Theory of Change

59. As applied to UNEP evaluations, the "Theory of Change" (TOC) depicts the logical sequence of desired changes (called "causal / impact pathways" or "results chains") to which the project is expected to contribute. It shows the causal linkages between changes at different results levels (outputs, outcomes, intermediate states and impact) and identifies the factors influencing those changes. The reconstruction of a TOC can help identify linkages between outputs and outcomes, and the intermediary states between outcomes and intended impact. It identifies the "impact drivers" that move implementation forward, and the "external assumptions" in project design that affect performance yet are often outside the project's ability to influence. Likewise, it identifies "intermediate states" that must be reached in order to achieve the project objectives.

60. As illustrated in Figure 3, project design and performance can be interpreted through the analysis of causal pathways and the extent to which related outputs and outcomes are connected sequentially, both in project design and during implementation. The analysis of causal pathways for this project indicates that most outputs lead to their respective outcome with several examples of cross-linkages between project components. An exception to this is output 1.2 which is more closely related to outcome 1.3 than 1.2. There may be duplicity in design between Outcomes 3.1 and 3.2, which support capacity building in different technical areas; a question to consider is whether their segregation has been cost-effective or required additional time and resources to implement.

61. An interesting feature of project design is the degree of articulation between different outcomes from the four project components, connected by shared causal pathways. As illustrated in Figure 2, outcome 1.3 contributes directly to outcome 3.1 while outputs 3.1-4 feed into outcome 3.2. Most of the outputs are directly linked to their respective outcomes. However, several are also shared causal pathways with outputs or outcomes from other project components. Examples include Outputs 2.1.1-7 "Permanent NCA administrative structures, guidelines, procedures and financial mechanisms for LMO authorizations" that feed into Outcome 1.1 "Comprehensive regulatory framework and integrated administrative and management system." Another pathway connects actions supporting NCA training and capacity building to higher-order outputs and outcomes addressing improved biosafety performance at a systems level: Outcome 2.1 and Outputs 3.1.1-4 , 3.2.1-5 and 3.3.1-2 (trained NCA and technical personnel; approved inspection plans) provide inputs to Outcome 1.2 (growing NCA involvement in implementing biosafety plans) as well as to Outcomes 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3, which address the application of strengthened capacities in LMO risk management, trans boundary movements and biosafety decision-making in general.

62. Central to project impact are the outcomes addressing the establishment of a revised regulatory framework, harmonized procedures and regulated transboundary LMO movements. The combination of systemic and institutionally-oriented outcomes in turn feed into outcomes 1.2 "New policy in biosafety and its action plan is translated into ongoing NCA Involvement in CPB implementation" and – ultimately – outcome 2.2 "LMO Decisions are based on risk assessment, are timely, efficient and transparent" represents the key intermediate state that needs to be reached in order to achieve the ultimate project objective.

63. The fourth project component addresses biosafety awareness and education, emphasizing basic and intermediate school levels. The strategy and educational materials that were designed are largely "stand alone" outputs that have little connection with the other components that were directed at improving Costa Rica's operational biosafety capabilities and policy/regulatory framework. It was also the only component not implemented through CTNBio, having been subcontracted to IICA. However, the absence of linkages with other outputs or outcomes does not detract from its relevance or from the quality of its products, which have yet to be formally adopted by the Ministry of Education.

64. This analysis underscores the importance of sequencing the implementation of activities and outputs between the four project components on the basis of their causal pathways and linkages, to maximize synergies and raise the project's cumulative impact. This is clearly a difficult task to achieve within a three-year period. Finally, project design, causal pathways and ultimately project performance are influenced by impact drivers that can be managed, and by assumptions that are outside the project's control. They are listed below:

65. ***Impact Drivers****:*

- Costa Rica's adhesion to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.
- Existence of a National Biosafety Framework with a designated Technical Commission (CTNBio) and baseline CNA capacities developed through prior UNEP/GEF initiatives.
- Thematic and operational linkages with the regional WB/GEF Biosafety project.
- Coordination is facilitated by the CTNBio's inter-institutional composition and designation as national executing agency.
- Project design has been participatory and reflects the actual situation and national biosafety priorities.
- The project starts in a timely manner.
- As national executing agency, CTNBio streamlines coordination with CNAs and other biosafety stakeholders and facilitates administrative/financial management.
- Participatory and collaborative implementation
- Commitment of project leaders, technical knowledge and good connections
- Competent National Authorities (CNAs) are motivated to participate fully in the project through CTNBio, assigning institutional personnel and resources.
- Project timeframe and resources are sufficient to deliver all outputs and achieve intended outcomes.
- Private sector understands and accepts system
- Adequate backstopping by UNEP

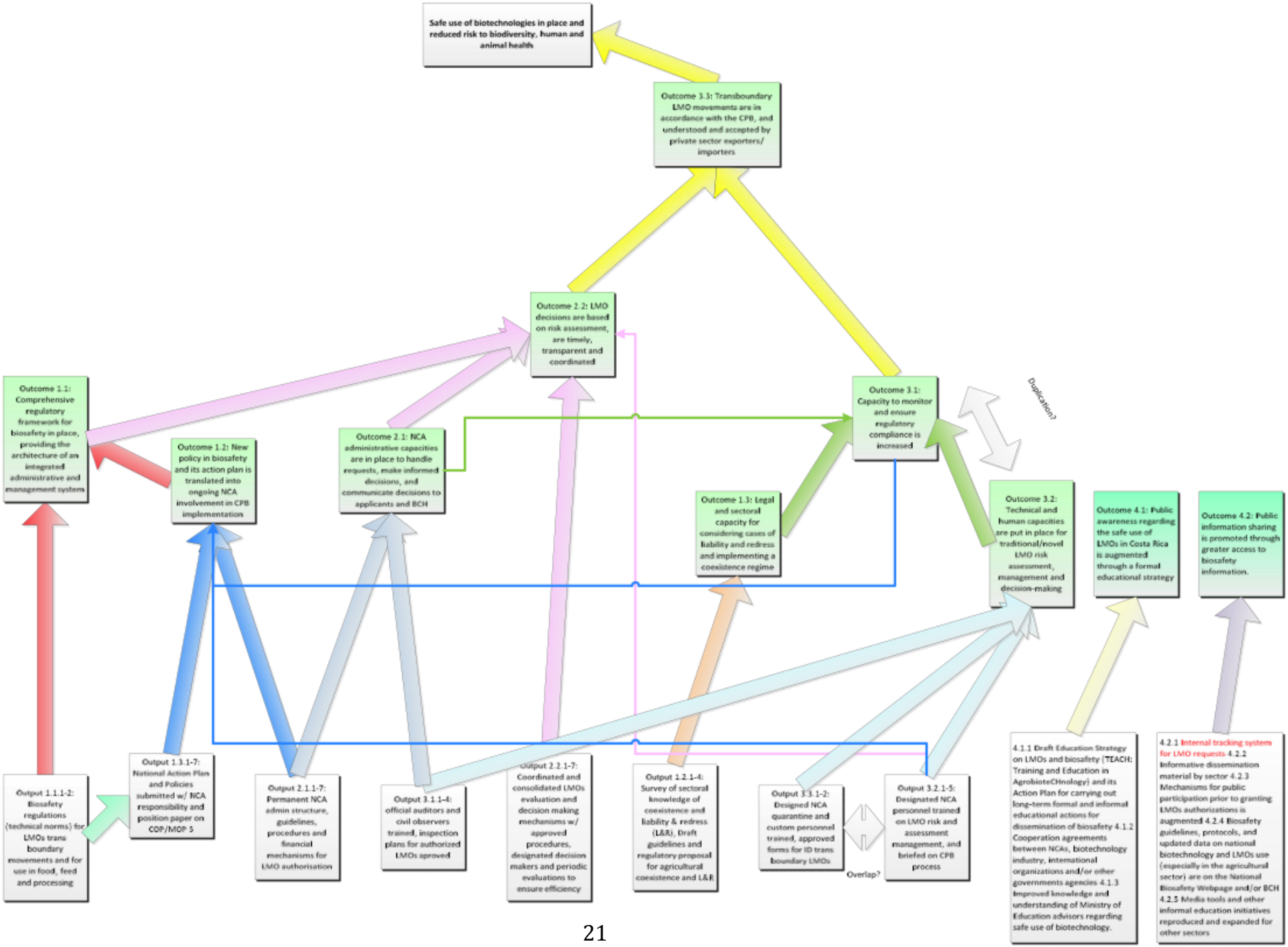
66. ***Assumptions***:

- The newly elected government has the political will to approve and apply proposals modifying the policy, regulatory and legal frameworks for biosafety.
- The proposed moratorium on transgenics in Costa Rica does not affect the operationalization of the capacities, regulations and other improvements generated through the project.
- International discussions and experiments on LMOs inform and influence national opinion.
- Civil society support for the regulated introduction of LMOs.

67. ***Intermediate States required to achieve the immediate and general objectives***

- Comprehensive regulatory framework is in place (Outcome 1.1)
- New policy in biosafety and its Action Plan is translated into ongoing NCA involvement in CPB implementation (Outcome 1.2)
- LMO decisions are based on risk assessments, timely, transparent and coordinated (Outcome 2.2)
- Inclusion of the Ministry of Health and SENASA as active members of CTNBio and Costa Rica's NBF with risk assessment functions.
- Operation of a digital platform for the processing and tracking of applications, based on solid methodology and promoting transparency, hosted by the SFE, and sustained as a government initiative with resources allocated to its maintenance
- The Education Ministry has the political will to support the educational strategy for biosafety awareness and mobilizes resources to implement it in schools.

Figure 3: Theory of Change – Causal Pathways linking Outputs to Outcomes



III. EVALUATION FINDINGS

A. Strategic Relevance

68. "Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework of Costa Rica" aimed to consolidate the biosafety management capacities that are required to implement the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB). It also sought to strengthen the national legal and regulatory frameworks, improve communications between institutional partners, enhance public awareness and participation, and establish an operational system for risk assessment and monitoring.

69. The project objectives and implementation strategies were found to be highly relevant and consistent with national environmental policies and legislation, building on the achievements of prior UNEP/GEF initiatives. In this respect, the project was part of a cumulative process that has incrementally strengthened the country's capacities to implement its obligations to the CPB. Costa Rica signed the Protocol in 2000, in anticipation of increased internal LMO production (the first application had been received in 1991 for the testing of genetically modified varieties of cotton, soya and maize).

70. To implement the CPB, Costa Rica started developing a national biosafety framework through the UNEP-GEF project "Development of a National Biosafety Framework" (NBF) in 2003, leading to the formulation of a draft biosafety law and the ratification of the CPB in 2007. This was followed by a second UNEP-GEF project to establish a national Biosafety Clearing House (BCH) in 2006 with the participation of National Competent Authorities (NCAs) and key stakeholders. These initiatives were instrumental in establishing CTNBio and the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock's Biotechnology Programme as the principal coordination mechanisms for biosafety.

71. The project objectives were consistent with – and contributed to - UNEP's Environmental Governance sub-programme, a priority focal area within UNEP's 2010-2013 Medium Term Strategy (MTS) and included in its bi-annual Programmes of Work (POWs). The project also contributed to the Ecosystem Management sub-programme. It should however be noted that the UNEP PoW and MTS do not specifically refer to biosafety as a priority and the project document does not establish a direct link to the PoW and the MTS. The project was additionally linked to the GEF's Biodiversity priority area.

72. Project design focused on gaps and threats that were identified during the preparatory PDF phase in consultation with CTNBio and several CNAs. (i) Unauthorized releases or poor decision-making, (ii) capacity limitations among National Competent Authorities, and (iii) threats from the foregone opportunity of using GM technology to increase the efficiency of agricultural and bioremediation methods (they are described under Section II).

73. The implementation approach was integrated and sought synergies between the various components (less so in the case of the fourth component). The project components combined internal technical and organizational needs with an educational strategy intended to inform and "demystify" biosafety issues that are often misunderstood. Project activities influenced both institutional and systemic dimensions by levelling capacities among CNAs; broadening CTNBio's ability to analyze risks and take decisions on new generation LMOs; harmonizing guidelines, procedures and formats; and raising operational efficiency with a digitized system for LMO applications and information management.

74. UNEP and GEF supported consultations with CNAs for the project's formulation under a preparatory PDF phase. Several workshops were held with CTNBio members and targeted institutions, incorporating their views into the project's design. The PDF phase was key for facilitating stakeholder participation and improving the project's relevance.

75. However, the following aspects of the project resulted unrealistic in terms of time, budget and institutional context:

- The three-year project timeline was extremely ambitious – and insufficient – for the project's objectives and outcomes. The causal pathways connecting project outputs to outcomes and objectives required the sequencing of baseline assessments, training activities and the design of operational procedures and policy/regulatory frameworks, in order to generate the right conditions for their application. While the implementation of the various components would have been difficult under any circumstances, the project was also affected by delays, uneven CNA participation and national elections. This combination of factors prevented the project from fully achieving the outcomes and "intermediate states" (see Sec. IV.C) required to reach its objectives.
- Insufficient attention was given to influencing public attitudes, and a greater emphasis on non-formal education and outreach would have been desirable. Although initially foreseen, this aspect was assumed by the sub-regional World Bank-GEF project to avoid duplications; however, the project had little effect on public opinion in Costa Rica.
- The Terms of Reference and allocated budget for the Project Coordinator post was based on GEF guidelines and not consulted during the PDF stage. The PC's administrative profile and remuneration was inconsistent with what was very much a technical project. This led to misunderstandings and delays during the project's first year (leading to the resignation of the first PC and threatened departure of his substitute) that affected implementation, and were finally corrected with new ToRs and a budget revision.

B. Achievement of Outputs

76. The project was successful in producing almost all planned outputs despite start-up delays and national elections. Many outputs are of high technical quality, such as the digitized LMO application and information system; the proposed regulations to expand biosafety practices to FFPs and new generation LMOs with health and environmental risk assessments; and the various training events that were highly rated by interviewed participants. The combination of capacity improvements, streamlined operational procedures, proposed regulatory changes, and participation of key CNAs have definitely raised national capabilities for implementing the CPB. The project approach is well designed and in most cases there was direct correspondence between project outputs and their respective outcomes.

77. The planed outcomes and objectives were only partially reached, despite efficient output delivery and overall project performance. In this respect, the project provided an interesting case study on how good performance could fall short of project objectives when the intermediate states are not reached for reasons outside the project's control (and UNEP's responsibility). Capacity improvements are now in place, administrative procedures have been streamlined, enabling regulations were formulated, and an Action Plan drafted. Yet none of these can be implemented unless approved by government decree. As shown in the Theory of Change analysis, the various causal pathways converge on outcomes 2.1 "New policy in biosafety and its Action Plan is translated into ongoing CNA involvement in

CPB implementation" and 3.1 "LMO decisions are based on risk assessments that are timely, transparent and coordinated". However, these outcomes will not be achieved until new regulations, policies and procedures are approved and operational.

78. At the time of the evaluation there were uncertainties regarding the position of the newly elected government and governing coalition on biosafety and cultivation of transgenic crops in particular. Public opinion is presently very polarized and there is a robust anti-transgenic movement with considerable influence at different levels of society. Due to these factors, the proposed regulations and Action Plan have yet to be approved and new LMO applications are on hold until new government policies are known and pending legal issues (a motion of unconstitutionality against current risk analysis practices and an indefinite moratorium on the release of LMOs) have been resolved. Given the present political juncture and robust anti-transgenic movement, it is unlikely that the proposed regulations, plans, operating systems or strategies will be appropriated and applied by the new government during the coming months. Although these outputs may not be aligned with the future national laws and regulations, they have contributed towards strengthening Costa Rica's capacity to fulfil CPB requirements.

A more detailed analysis of outputs by project component follows:[4]

<u>Component 1</u>: Putting in place and applying National biosafety regulation and promoting a biosafety policy in accordance with the CPB

- *Approved biosafety regulations that include administrative and management procedures.*

79. The output was partially met. New regulations were designed for food, feed and processing (FFP) and environmental LMOs. This is a very important advance that would expand the scope of risk analysis to "new generation" LMOs and formalize the role of the Ministry of Health, MINAE and National Service for Animal Health (SENASA) in the analysis of health and environmental risks. Because existing biosafety regulations fall under national phytosanitary legislation, biosafety assessments cannot be extended to non-agricultural LMOs unless an expanded framework is approved by ministerial decree (or new legislation drafted). The proposed regulations are highly relevant as Costa Rica imports large quantities of GM grains for human and animal consumption that aren't evaluated. According to the project's final report, the new regulations would improve flexibility of the approval of FFP events and allow companies to use data from previous risk assessments in other countries. One of the main private sector associations (*Cámara de Productores*) expressed concern over the effects of the proposed regulations on the economy and considers that further discussion is needed. Their approval will now depend on the new government authorities.

- *Representatives of SENASA and the Ministry of Health have been officially integrated as members of CTNBio by project month 8.*

80. The Ministry of Health and the National Animal Health Service (SENASA) have been formally incorporated to CTNBio by executive decree. This is an important advance that could expand the scope of CTNBio's risk analysis to FFPs, considering health aspects. Both

[4] This section draws on the information documented in the Final Project Report (March 2014) and stakeholder interviews.

SENASA and Ministry of Health have established internal biosafety committees that have been approved by internal Directive. In addition, the Ministry of Environment (MINAE) appointed the Technical Secretary of the National Commission for Biodiversity and National System of Conservation Areas as liaison to CTNBio.

- *Action plan in biosafety involves at least 2 CNAs and is endorsed.*

81. A draft Action Plan that focuses on agriculture and livestock biosafety was formulated and delivered to the Ministries of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG) and Science, Technology and Telecommunications (MICIT). The Action Plan provides an overview of biotechnology and biosafety policy/regulatory frameworks in a global context, assesses Costa Rica's present situation, and proposes a National Plan for the Development of Biotechnology and Biosafety (PNDBB) that includes the following strategic objectives and priority actions:

- Expanding the application of biosafety regulations to new generation LMOs in areas of R&D (industrial biotechnology, vaccines, bio fuels, agricultural and forestry biotechnology, veterinary biotechnology, food sciences and molecular biology among others)
- Establishing a regulatory body that is national in scope and not linked to a sectoral ministry as is presently the case in relation to MAG and the SFE.
- Direct collaboration in R&D with the private and productive sectors.
- Mechanisms for public awareness and participation, applying formal and non-formal educational methods.

82. The Action Plan was submitted for consideration to the National Commission for Science and Technology and Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, and approval by the newly elected government authorities is pending.

- *Costa Rica prepares a national position for COP/MOP-5 with the participation of the main CNAs.*

83. This was not achieved due to timing factors. The project had recently started when the meeting took place. Instead, Costa Rica prepared a national position on topics discussed at the COP-MOP 6 through MINAE and MICIT.

Costa Rica is able to present an official position regarding L&R at COP/MOP-5

84. Not done for the same reasons.

- *One legal proposal on Liability and Redress (L&R) for LMOs is submitted for discussion*

85. Project activities focused more on informing CNAs and encouraging initial discussions on liability/redress and co-existence issues. Attention was given to the legal and administrative implications of not approving the Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur supplementary Protocol. One of the conclusions reached was the need for further dissemination of the Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur supplementary Protocol to inform the public and enable its consideration for approval as legislation.

- *At least 50% of the agricultural companies and farmers known to use LMOs, or that are potentially affected by LMO use, are better informed about co-existence rights and responsibilities, including L&R.*

86. Agricultural enterprises and audit companies working with LMOs were exposed to information on coexistence and liability and redress, "knowing your rights" and the responsibilities established in the existing legislation. Again, this was done at an introductory level for information purposes. The extent to which the target groups assimilated this information is uncertain; further dissemination and follow-up is recommended. [5] An informative booklet was published, and UCR conducted research on the coexistence of GM and non-GM crop varieties with support from the sub-regional World Bank-GEF project.

Component 2: Operationalizing an administrative system to fulfill obligations to the CPB

- *The administrative pathway which an LMO request must take in order to derive at a decision is officially established within each CNA by identifying: staff /Units involved and their roles, files to be kept, forms and formats to be used, procedures to be followed, reports to be generated and fees to be* charged.

87. The administrative pathway for LMO requests has been streamlined through the creation of a digitized system for LMO applications and information management that can be accessed at website http://www.ovm.go.cr. The online system presents the requirements, formats and procedures that need to be applied for all LMO activities excepting FFPs for animal and human consumption (yet can be expanded to include this category). The website and online system provide "one stop" access to all necessary information regarding LMO applications and their handling, with potential gains in terms of efficiency, inter-institutional coordination and time reduction. This is one of the project's most valuable outputs and represents a significant step forward in operationalizing the NBF.

88. All CNAs have assigned focal points to CTNBio with responsibilities for biosafety risk assessments. This is another significant advance that expands Costa Rica's NBF risk management capabilities, although the proposed regulations that mandate health and environmental risk analysis by the Ministry of Health, SENASA and MINAE need to be formalized by executive decree.

- *Office equipment is provided to CNAs and an information management system is set up and operational in 1 CNA that allows: electronic reception, exchange and internal processing of confidential LMO dossiers; web site management for on-line availability of forms and formats, and posting regulatory requirements and procedures; periodic preparation and submission of information to the BCH; and on-line access to data on status of requests submitted.*

89. The equipment was provided, was used as intended and is now in the process of being transferred. CNA representatives raised the question of the equipment's destination during the evaluator's visit. There have not been discussions on this subject, and NCC members have not seen the inventory list. SENASA is interested in receiving some of the project equipment to consolidate the internal biosafety unit. However, it appears that all

[5] It is not clear how the project would have been able to measure the percentage of "better informed" farmers with the resources at hand, particularly if pre-project baseline surveys were not conducted.

project equipment will remain within the State Phytosanitary Service (FSE), which hosts CTNBio.

90. As mentioned above, the information system and website were designed, tested and activated in June 2013. The online system significantly improves the processing of LMO applications and has been praised by various respondents. It processes applications for GM seed projects, renewals and field audits; and facilitates LMO geo-referencing and mapping. The website contains a user guide with step-by-step instructions, and tracks the stages of the application and time involved. Access is confidential and limited to those with authorized digital signatures.

91. The system's functionality rests on the following advantages:

- Users can apply for LMO authorizations online
- CNAs are able to process applications in coordination with other government institutions, auditing firms and external auditors
- As noted above, access to applications and management information is restricted by the use of authorized digital signatures, ensuring confidentiality
- Users and designated institutions are able to track the status and progress of applications
- CTNBio and CNAs are able to reach decisions on LMO authorizations in a cost-effective and timely manner

92. The percentage return of applications is expected to fall sharply as the system does not process incomplete applications. The system has been used by GM seed importers and is considered to streamline the application process, yet there are continuing concerns regarding confidentiality and security. It is a comprehensive system that can be expanded to include new generation LMOs (environmental, medical and FFP categories) in anticipation of proposed changes to the present regulatory framework.

93. The system has demonstrated benefits, yet there are pending operational issues that must be resolved. Interviewed applicants have noted that they must re-install their "firewall" security programs in order to access the system; this has created incompatibilities with the firewall devices used by partner and parent companies. As noted earlier, regulatory proposals for the issue of FFPs and environmental LMOs were drafted and are presently under consideration; if approved, the new regulations and procedures would subsequently be incorporated to the digital system.

94. The system is presently "on hold" and new applications are not being processed, due to the motion of unconstitutionality that was presented against the current LMO risk assessment system (based on its supposed incompatibility with environmental impact assessment legislation). The outcome of this measure – and that of a proposed law that seeks to establish an indefinite moratorium on LMO applications – is uncertain and may not be resolved in the near future. There are also concerns, expressed by NGO representatives to CTNBio, that present biosafety information management practices are inconsistent with the Law 8591 for the Promotion of Organic Agricultural Production, which mandates an updated public register of locations devoted to LMO production. These locations are indeed mapped out and can be accessed through the digital system, yet the data is restricted to those who have access with e-signatures.

- *At least one LMO request (either mock or real) has been processed by each CNA, evaluating: quality of risk assessment data, information management, coordination, time required, and communication requirements, and resulting in a single joint decision (mock or real) in less than 270 days.*

95. The online system was tested through a simulation that involved a real LMO dossier with information on risk analysis. The evaluation was intended to measure response time, management information sharing between CNAs, the handling of missing data and the monitoring of the application's approval. Deficiencies were identified and corrected prior to the system's formal activation in June 2013.

Figure 4

Digital System for Managing LMO Applications and Information: Options Menu for Applicants

Source: Sistema Digital para el Manejo de Información de Organismos Vivos Modificados (OVMs)

- *The annual % of LMO requests that are returned to applicants, due to incomplete information or dossiers, is reduced by half by project month 36*

96. The online system processes information on GM seed projects, renewals and matters relating to field audits, and development of binnacles (*bitacoras*) on farm visits. According to the project's final report, the percentage of returned applications has significantly reduced because the system doesn't process information if the application is not complete.

<u>Component 3</u>: Building technical capacity in CNAs and related institutions for comprehensive biosafety management

- *15 CNA professionals and 5 official auditors trained to increase their knowledge on monitoring and coexistence issues by at least 60%*
- *10 regulators trained to increase their knowledge of LMO risk assessment and management for decision-making by at least 5%*
- *40 Customs and quarantine officers been trained to process documentation for import/export of 2 of the 3 types of LMOs considered by the CPB.*
- *CNAs and border control authorities agree on LMO transit procedures or requirements.*

97. The training outputs were met and several events surpassed the targeted number of trainees. Capacity building was a central theme and considerable planning and resources went to a training programme that offered participants direct exposure to best practices in selected countries of the region. There were study tour visits to Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, Colombia and Italy to observe operational aspects of NBFs first-hand. This was combined with in-country training workshops led by experts from these countries and IICA. In both cases the topics covered were tailored to the needs of CNAs and other biosafety stakeholders. Training activities were valued by interviewed participants and have helped to level CNA technical capacities and encourage their commitment to CTNBio and the project.

98. Training participants praised the international scope, technical quality and direct exposure offered by the project's training approach, and appreciated the opportunities that were offered. Some had constructively critical observations that can be considered for future projects. For example, several felt that capacity-building impacts could have been broader and more cost-effective if they had focused more on in-country training. This would have extended training to a "critical mass" of public sector trainees and build institutional commitment. The observation is extremely pertinent, yet needs to be considered against the availability of international experts to conduct workshops abroad; and clear advantages of viewing *in situ* how a successful system functions. The NCC and CNAs did not participate in designing training activities, with the exception of the Ministry of Education under the fourth component; nor were there participant evaluations of workshops and other training activities. It was also noted that in some cases, training demand exceeded the available places and some participants felt that they were excluded from in-country training without a clear reason when there was space for additional trainees.

99. Co-existence between GM and non-GM plants was the topic of an introductory workshop on liability and redress (L&R). An illustrated booklet on co-existence measures and prescribed distances between different GM and non-GM plants (*Convivencia entre Cultivos que utilizan diferentes Tecnologías de Producción Agrícola)* was printed in 2013; it is based on the international standards that are supported by the CPB. Some respondents felt that insufficient attention was given to co-existence issues and socio-economic risk assessments. Both topics are extremely relevant for Costa Rica.

Figure 5

Training Events and Study Tours

Training Course/Workshop	***Participating Institutions***	***Number of Participants***
Risk Management and Assessment of LMOs Module 1: Introduction to Biotechnology and Biosafety	MAG, SENASA, MINAE, MICITT	43
Risk Management and Assessment of LMOs Module 2: Risk assessments in plants, animals and the environment	MAG, SENASA, MINAE, MICITT	37
I Training Module on global positioning systems (GPS) and geographic information systems (GIS)	Auditing and audited companies, NCAs	**22**
II Training Module on global positioning systems (GPS) and geographic information systems (GIS): Module on monitoring and vigilance in Costa Rica	Auditing and audited companies, NCAs	**20**
Risk Assessment of Non-conventional LMOs	Regulators of Belize, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panamá, Republican Dominican, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela, Bolivia, Canada, Colombia and Cuba.	58
Risk Assessment of FFPs	Ministry of Health, SENASA	6
Regional Training on Biotechnology and Biosafety	Regional officers of Ministry of Health, SENASA, SFE and other institutions like INDER, CNP, local governments, chambers of agricultural farmers and putative civilian communitarian auditors.	258
Study Tour/Scientific Visit/Congress	***Country***	
Assistance to Latin American Course on Risk Analysis of LMOs	Cuba	
Participation in VII and VIII Brazilian Biosafety Congress	Brazil	
Hands-on Training in Comision Tecnica Nacional de Bioseguran̤a	Brazil	
Hands- on Training in CIBIOGEM-SAGARPA-SENASICA	Mexico	
Hands-on Training in INTA-CONABIA	Argentina	
Participation in National Forum on genetically modified maize	Mexico	
Training on Standards and procedures for the monitoring and approval of applications for agricultural LMOs	Argentina	
International Course on Risk Analysis, using the methodology of problem analysis	Italy	
“Hands on” training in CTNBIO-	Brazil	

Brazil on dossier analysis from the environmental point of view, and visit GM eucalyptus tree fields		
In-service training on LMOs seeds monitoring.	Argentina	
VIII Latin-American and Caribbean meeting on Biotechnology REDBIO 2013	Argentina	
Training course on Regulatory Analysis for the Commercialization of Genetically Engineered Crops	Argentina	
Introduction to the ICGEB Biosafety webpages and informatics tools.	Italy	
Biotechnological techniques used in the food industry and medical pharmaceutical	Brazil	
Training in identification, quantification and detection of genetically modified organisms	Colombia	
Risk Assessment: The role of the Science on GMO decision-making	Italy	

Source: Final Project Report (March 2013)

<u>Component 4:</u> Improved communication, education, public perception and participation in biosafety of all relevant stakeholders

- *At least 90% of the components of a draft education strategy on LMOs and biosafety (TEACH: Training and Education in Agrobiotechnology) and its action plan have been agreed between NCAs involved.*

100. A draft biotechnology communications and education strategy (*Estrategia de Comunicación y Educación de la Biotecnología para Costa Rica*) and action plan (based on *TEACH: Training and Education in Agrobiotechnology*) were submitted to the Ministry of Education. The draft was developed by biotechnology and pedagogic consultants who were contracted and supervised by IICA. The draft strategy is accompanied by three introductory textbooks[6] on biotechnology directed at primary and intermediate school levels.

101. The strategy is built on the premise that Costa Rica can use biotechnology as a driver of sustainable development. For this to happen, knowledge must be developed starting at primary school levels through the "learning science by practicing science" (*aprender ciencia haciendo ciencia*) approach. The strategy is interdisciplinary and consulted with the ministries of Education (MEP), Science and Technology (MICIT), Environment and Energy (MINAE), and Agriculture and Livestock (MAG) in addition to CTNBio. Its purpose is to provide accessible information on the application of biotechnology in agriculture, industry, technology, science and medicine. By incorporating biotechnology into the national science

[6] *"La Biotecnología. Herramienta de la humanidad para lograr calidad de vida con ética y seguridad. Versión amigable para madres, padres o tutores de estudiantes de II, III ciclo y educación diversificada"; "La Biotecnología. Calidad de vida para la humanidad y el ambiente. Versión amigable para estudiantes de III ciclo y educación diversificada";* and *"La biotecnología. Calidad de vida para la humanidad y el ambiente. Para niñas y niños estudiantes de II ciclo".*

curriculum, the strategy has medium-term vision and aims to ensure that "...different social actors may conceptualize biotechnology in a manner that is clear, necessary, interesting, practical, feasible, useful and applicable to different aspects of life; with bioethical responsibility and respecting biosecurity norms." [7] This is articulated through the following specific objectives:

- Creating a management team to guide the strategy's implementation and ensure consistency with biotechnology/biosecurity policies and operations.
- Encourage the production of didactic material for both formal and non-formal educational use.
- Train pedagogic staff from the Ministry of Education and other partners in biotechnology, communications management, implementation methods and other topics that support of the strategy's implementation.
- Promote diffusion of key messages and successful biotechnology experiences through the media to influence public opinion.
- Position biotechnology as a permanent topic for communicators, media and other spaces that shape public opinion, so that they are informed and able to support the strategy's implementation. [8]

102. The communications and education strategy provides a vehicle for implementing the CPB's Article 23 on public awareness and participation. It proposes synergies with the media, educational and biotechnology sectors through the (i) inclusion of biotechnology within the existing national school science programme; (ii) production, distribution and use of multi-media knowledge products; (iii) web-based biotechnology e-learning; (iv) and preparing teachers.

103. The strategy has 13 components that articulate the various objectives:

- Economic cooperation and funding
- Production of educational materials
- Distribution of educational materials
- Web e-learning and new technologies for interactive learning and information dissemination
- Strengthening of pedagogic staff capacities
- Training for biotechnology communicators
- Presentation of biotechnology through expositions
  Promotion of biotechnology
  Strengthening of scientific fairs
- Community –based projects
- Massive communication campaigns
- Targeted communication campaigns
- Youth network

104. The output was achieved insofar as the strategy was formulated, and endorsed by the Ministry of Education under the previous government administration. However, formal approval (and budgeting) requires an executive decree that is pending. The commitment of the new Ministry authorities to the strategy was uncertain at the time of the evaluation visit. Costa Rica's National Biodiversity Network (CNB), one of two CTNBio members representing

[7] *Estrategia de Comunicación y Educación de la Biotecnología para Costa Rica (2012),* pg. 9

[8] Idem, pg. 13

civil society, made critical observations regarding the strategy and its perceived pro-transgenic stance that were forwarded to MEP. The CNB communication contends that the strategy and educational materials are biased because the importance and benefits of biotechnology emphasized in a doctrinal manner ("…following the approach of publicity campaigns used to promote commercial products..."[9]), yet fail to mention the risks and controversies, in particular those associated with the release of agricultural LMOs and FFPs. This is considered a "transcendental omission" that undermines the intent of CPB Article 23 on public awareness and participation.

105. The evaluator agrees that the strategy and educational texts are explicitly pro-biotechnology position, which in itself is logical and unarguable. Yet the documents do overlook concerns that are at the heart of the anti-transgenic movement and shared by a growing segment of Costa Ricans. Although the contents are consistent with Costa Rica's present legal and policy framework, statements such as "...biotechnology contributes towards guaranteeing the exercise and enjoyment of human rights in health, nutrition and a healthy environment that enable a better quality of life" [10] are unlikely to inform the debate surrounding LMOs, encourage dialogue or help to build consensus within a highly polarized environment. A more balanced approach acknowledging the controversies surrounding GM products for human and animal consumption - that have led a number of countries to forego imports of GM grains, restrict the liberation of agricultural LMOs (Costa Rica being one of them) and require GM labelling - might have been more appropriate and user-friendly. Tactically, a more balanced and subdued treatment of the issues might have generated less resistance without weakening the fundamental messages, raising the likelihood of the strategy's approval and implementation.

106. The strategy has an indicative chronogram, timeline and budget. The estimated cost of implementing the strategy – US$ 1.5 million – is an obstacle unless external funding is secured. In 2013, IICA held several meetings with donors and other potential supporters to promote the strategy, yet resource mobilization efforts have been unfruitful thus far. The new biosafety project proposal that was prepared by CTNBio foresees further support for the strategy's dissemination and fundraising efforts. However, a firm policy and budget commitment by the Ministry of Education needs to be in place before this can move forward.

- *Increase of 40% in BCH users of the national portal*

107. This increase was not confirmed and does not appear to have been measured. However, project reports note that a "visit counter" was introduced to the national BCH web to measure user visit hits.

C. <u>Effectiveness: Attainment of Project Objectives and Outcomes</u>

108. As stated in the project document, the main objective was to consolidate a feasible and transparent national biosafety framework, in line with national development priorities, the Cartagena Protocol and related agreements. There was also reference to an over-arching objective aiming to "...develop the national capacities required to implement the evaluation and strengthening of the evaluation framework, to establish an operational

[9] Letter of the National Biodiversity Network to the Ministry of Public Education, 19/8/2013

[10] *Estrategia de Comunicación y Educación de la Biotecnología para Costa Rica (2012),* pg. 9

system for risk assessment and monitoring, and to improve public perception and participation in biosafety of all relevant stakeholders." [11]

109. This was supported by the following specific objectives:

- Establish mechanisms, either legal or administrative, for inter-ministerial coordination and decision making at the national level that will permit the safe environmental release, commercial production and transboundary movement of LMOs in compliance with the obligations of the Cartagena Protocol.
- Establish a core capacity in biosafety to enhance decision-making in each of the participating ministries and their related institutions.
- Establish information sharing mechanisms involved along the educational system in order to raise public awareness on biosafety issues.

110. These objectives intended to mitigate the gaps and threats identified during the preparatory PDF phase. According to the diagram of the project's causal pathways (Figure 4), they are well articulated (both horizontally in terms of cross-linkages, and vertically with their outcomes and outputs.

C.1 Outcomes from the reconstructed Theory of Change (ToC)

111. This section assesses the achievement of outcomes and impacts from the perspective of the Theory of Change, which is based on the analysis of impact or causal pathways that link outputs to outcomes, intermediate states and objectives; and the analysis of impact drivers and assumptions that influence project performance yet (in the case of latter) are often outside f the project's control. The analysis follows the pathways and project linkages illustrated under Figure 3 (Section II.H).

112. A positive finding was the level of articulation between different outcomes of the four project components, which are connected by shared causal pathways. These relationships are graphically illustrated in Figure 3: Outcome 1.1 "Comprehensive regulatory framework in place, providing the architecture of an integrated system" was linked to Outcome 1.2 "Biosafety policy and action plan translate into ongoing CNA involvement in the Protocol's implementation", underscoring the connection between a comprehensive policy/regulatory framework and functional national biosafety system that fully involves the key institutions. Likewise, the consolidation of legal and sector capabilities for liability and redress (L&R) under Outcome 1.3 contributed to Outcome 3.1 "Increased capacity to monitor and ensure regulatory compliance". Outcome 1.3 does not appear to have been a major project endeavor and could have been re-conceptualized as an output under the third component. There may have been duplicity in the design of Outcomes 3.1 and 3.2, both of which supported capacity building in different technical areas. However, their segregation does not appear to have raised costs or required additional implementation time.

113. The fourth project component addressed biosafety education at school levels and had little connection to the other components; in Figure 4 it is illustrated as a "stand alone"

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[11] *Terms of Reference for the Terminal Evaluation of "Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework in Costa Rica*, pg. 2. It is worth noting that different documents offer different objectives and goals that do not alter the substantive purpose. This may be due in part to the inclusion of a main objective (and not a goal) under Section 3.2 "Project Goal and Objectives" of the project document.

initiative that does not have impact pathways or linkages with other components. This does not detract from its importance or long-term impact potential. However, greater emphasis on informing and raising the awareness of more the immediate biosafety stakeholders (newly elected ministry officials and congress members, municipal governments, private sector, NGOs) would have brought this component closer to the rest of the project.

114. As noted earlier, performance and impact were influenced by "impact drivers" that were within the project's control, and by a set of assumptions that were not controlled by the project. Implementation was managed by a highly competent Project Coordinator and efficient support staff, as evidenced by the project's satisfactory delivery (in spite of initial delays) and high technical quality of various outputs. Project performance also benefited from impact drivers related to (i) CTNBio's inter-institutional composition, which facilitated coordination with a wide range of stakeholders; (ii) the commitment and technical competence of the PMU, augmented by the SFE's institutional support; and (iii) the financial management services provided by OIRSA. Satisfactory technical backstopping was provided by UNEP once initial problems (the absence of a Task Manager, communication problems between the PMU and UNEP) were overcome. Other impact drivers such as an adequate project timeframe and timely, well-organized start up were not in place. Their absence affected project performance.

115. The assumption that the new government authorities would adopt and implement project's outputs has not come to pass thus far. As a result, the planned outcomes and objectives haven't been fully achieved. Given the polarized views on LMOs and transgenic crops in particular, the project team has faced difficulties in informing public opinion through the dissemination of international discussions and scientific information, as planned in the project document. The proposed moratorium on the cultivation and release of agricultural LMOs is pending until a decision is made by Costa Rica's legislators. If approved, the moratorium would have a major impact on the implementation of Costa Rica's national biosafety framework.

C.2 Likelihood of impact using RoTI and based on reconstructed ToC

116. The project had a high likelihood of impact according to the RoTL/Toc analysis. Most outputs led directly to their respective outcomes, with causal pathways linking different project components. Outputs 2.1.1-7 "Permanent CNA administrative structures, guidelines, procedures and financial mechanisms for LMO authorizations" fed into Outcome 1.1 "Comprehensive regulatory framework and integrated administrative and management system." Outputs 1.2 was functionally linked to Outcome 1.3. There was also connectedness between the outcomes of the first three project components, which are logically sequenced along their respective pathways.

117. Almost all pathways connected outputs supporting CNA capacity building to systemic outcomes of improved biosafety performance. Perhaps the most important finding was the identification of three higher-order outcomes that proceed - and connect directly to - the main project objective, and to which all other outputs and outcomes (except those of the fourth component) lead. They are:

- Outcome 3.1 "Increased capacity to monitor and ensure regulatory compliance"
- Outcome 2.2 "LMO decisions are based on risk assessments, are timely, transparent and coordinated"
- Outcome 3.3 "Transboundary LMO movements are in accordance with the CPB and understood by private sector exporters/importers"

118. These outcomes represent intermediate states that need to be in place to achieve the project objectives and associated impacts. Other intermediate states that were identified through the ToC analysis include:

- Formal incorporation and participation of the Ministry of Health and SENASA within the national biosafety framework
- The digital LMO application and information management system is operational, hosted by the SFE and sustained with funding and technical support.

119. These intermediate states are essential to implement the transparent and feasible national biosafety framework envisioned by the main objective. The pathways that link project outputs and outcomes to intermediate states and impacts underscore the importance of sequencing the implementation of project activities to fully exploit synergies and raise the project's cumulative impact. This was clearly an ambitious task to accomplish within the three-year implementation period.

C.3 Achievement of project goal and planned objectives

120. The project goal and objectives were partially achieved in spite of efficient performance (aided by the aforementioned "impact drivers" [12]) and the delivery of high-quality outputs. This was largely due to factors that were outside the project's control, and which were reflected in assumptions that shaped project design and implementation approach.[13]

121. The project was able to produce practically all of its planned outputs, albeit against time constraints and start-up delays (described in Section IV.E). The six-month extension granted by UNEP was essential in enabling the project to complete its work plan. However, the final year of implementation overlapped with national elections and the preceding political campaigns. This juncture undermined opportunities to socialize and approve key policy/regulatory proposals and a national strategy for biotechnology education. These proposals were strategic to comply with the health and environmental risk assessment requirements within the National Service for Animal Health (SENASA) and Ministries of Health (MSP) and Environment (MINAE).

122. As a result, the higher-order outcomes (2.2, 3.1, 3.3) that represent intermediate states that must be reached to generate the impacts foreseen by the project objectives, remain unfulfilled. The revised regulatory and policy framework must be approved by executive decree before they can be implemented. The election of an opposition political party that appeared to support an anti-transgenic platform during the political campaign, combined with the turnover of national authorities, have placed the approval process on hold until new Ministers have assumed their functions and the new government's policy positions are known. Until they are formally adopted, the regulations, policies, strategies

[12] The exceptions being "timely and well-organized project start-up" and "project timeframe and resources are sufficient to deliver all outputs and achieve intended outcomes".

[13] Including the follwing assumptions: (i) The newly-elected government and congress approves the biosafety action plan and proposed regulatory frameworks. (ii) The Ministry of Health approves the conformation of an internal unit responsible for biosafety risk assessments, as proposed by the project. (iii) The Education Ministry approves the educational strategy for biosafety awareness and mobilizes funds to implement it in schools. (iv) International discussions and experiments with LMOs are documented and disseminated to inform national opinion.

and action plans will not become "established" as foreseen by the project objectives, nor can a "consolidated" national biosafety framework be implemented. They are also necessary to raise public perception and enable the participation of "all relevant stakeholders" in biosafety matters.

123. The project has terminated and funds are lacking to support the socialization, transfer and appropriation of project results. Following elections, an informative meeting was held with the newly-elected legislators to acquaint them with project activities and products. However, this process must be given time to mature. CTNBio is taking the correct approach by waiting until (i) the incoming Ministers have fully assumed their functions and are in a position to focus on policy issues; and (ii) decisions are reached on the proposed moratorium legislation and motion of unconstitutionality.

D. Sustainability and Replication

124. Costa Rica's institutional stability, capacity levels and biosafety precedents offer adequate conditions for post-project sustainability. The country leads Central America in the application of LMO risk assessments and the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol. Costa Rica signed the CPB in 2000 and ratified the Protocol in 2007. Since 1992, it has regulated the importation and reproduction of LMO agricultural seed for export. The government has invested time and resources over the years in CTNBio, which is hosted by the State Phytosanitary Service - a competent institution that provided quality technical and logistical support to the project. Institutional stability is a very important sustainability driver and there is continuity of technical staff within Costa Rica's public sector, beyond the periodic changes of government.

125. The project has also created conditions for the sustainability of its achievements. All CNAs are now formally represented within CTNBio and have designated technical personnel for LMO risk assessments according to their mandates. Through study tours and training, institutional biosafety capacities have been strengthened and leveled between institutions. The SFE, the Oficina de Semillas, MINAE, SENASA andthe Ministry of Healt are now better positioned to analyze health and environmental risks associated with FFPs and new generation LMOs. The digitized LMO application and information management system is a qualitative advance that is likely to have extended utility, and can be adapted to future needs.

126. The proposed new regulations and action plan, if approved, will affect Costa Rica's NBF in terms of functions and institutional configuration, influencing future biosafety activities. The draft plan for biotechnology education is directed at elementary and intermediate school levels, and if implemented, may influence civil society attitudes in the medium term. A follow-up PIF proposal [14] that builds on the advances of this project was formulated and has been submitted to GEF for initial review.

127. Yet despite the sustainability potential, Costa Rica is in the midst of a political transition following national elections that could undermine the application and continuity of project results. The proposed regulations that would extend biosafety risk analysis to FFPs with the involvement of SENASA and the Ministry of Health must be approved by government decree. As noted, however, the policies of the new government towards LMOs

[14] *"Strengthening of biosafety capacities for Central America and the Dominican Republic through South-South cooperation and cost-effective approaches"*

are not clear, and some of the designated Ministers have made statements in support of the anti-transgenic movement during the electoral campaign. Professional associations linked to the UCR College of Engineering and National Academy of Science have adopted positions opposing the release of agricultural LMOs. And more than half of Costa Rica's municipalities are declared transgenic-free zones by ordinance, a trend that could affect GM seed production (particularly in Guanacaste province).

128. In particular, post-project sustainability will depend on the outcome of (i) the motion of unconstitutionality presented against current LMO risk analysis practices due to their alleged incompatibility with environmental impact legislation; and (ii) proposed legislation to declare indefinite moratorium on the release of LMOs until health and environmental concerns are addressed. The legality of these initiatives and the municipal ban on transgenic crops needs to be reviewed against international agreements such as the CPB and free trade agreement with the U.S. At present, CTNBio is not processing new LMO applications and ongoing requests are on hold. As noted, the Commission has few options other than waiting until new government policies are defined and decisions are reached on the above-mentioned legal issues. However, the capacity improvements generated through the project will gradually decline if they are not put into practice.

129. Replication is also conditioned by the present juncture. Key project outputs and the digitized LMO application and information management system has generated the interest of national biosafety commissions in Cuba, Argentina and Mexico, and could be replicated under a future regional initiative.

E. Efficiency

130. Project efficiency has followed a rising curve. During much of the project's first year, efficiency was undermined by a combination of factors that were identified by NEA and UNEP participants. There are differing views concerning the influence each has had on project performance; the evaluation has not taken a position in this regard and prefers to acknowledge the issues, which are summarized below:

- The National Project Coordinator (NPC) resigned in January 2011, in disagreement over the remuneration that was established by GEF for the post. The NPC's salary level was based on recently-approved GEF guidelines that placed a 10% ceiling on project management costs against the total budget, yet was considered excessively low in relation to Costa Rican salary scales and equivalent to a half-time commitment. As an exceptional measure, UNEP agreed to re-negotiate the NPCs salary on the basis of new ToRs and a budget revision, and the NPC was eventually re-hired in June 2011 with a 100% salary increase (becoming the highest paid project coordinator in UNEP's biosafety portfolio). However, the project was placed "on hold" during the interim period with very little activity, and the project inception workshop was postponed for several months following the NPC's resignation.
- The UNEP Task Manager (based at the regional office in Panama) left her post shortly after the project's commencement, which remained vacant for several months until the present TM was recruited. During this period, the regional office did not provide back-up support and the NEA communicated directly with UNEP-Nairobi's Biosafety Portfolio Manager and Fund Manager. UNEP was obliged to make disbursement decisions without the quality assurance filter of the Task Manager, who liaises with the NEA and clears expenditures reported for GEF projects. The UNEP Fund Manager noted that considerable time was spent with the Biosafety Portfolio Manager explaining UNEP and

GEF reporting guidelines to the project team. The experience highlighted the importance of UNEP's Task Manager in facilitating communications and coordination between the NEA and IA.

- The NPC considers that project coordination and efficiency declined until a new Task Manager (a Costa Rican national with a technical background in biosafety) was hired and assigned to the regional office.
- The third project disbursement of US$ 60,000 was received in February 2012, almost six months after the prior payment. According to the NPC, the disbursement was delayed and the project operated without funds for much of this period (being unable to pay salaries of some staff during the final month). However, it appears that the disbursement was held up by the excessive project management costs that had been requested, which surpassed the 10% limit established by GEF and therefore could not be processed until the issue was resolved (as finally occurred) following the Latin America NPC meeting in Quito.
- There were shortages of counterpart support staff during the project's initial stages. As noted by the first TM, the efficiency of the project team was affected by the loss of 2 junior staff from the MAG's Biotechnology Program plus the intermittent absence of the CTNBio President who was obligated to take 2 weeks holiday per month due to over-accumulated leave time.

131. These combined factors set project implementation back by approximately 10 months. However, once the initial obstacles were overcome, performance improved significantly in efficiency and delivery. By the end of the project, practically all outputs had been delivered and co-financing commitments surpassed. The approval of a six-month project extension to compensate for start-up delays was important in this respect. In balance, the evaluation rated overall project efficiency as satisfactory.

132. Project implementation proceeded smoothly as of the second year, with the exception of the delayed first cash advance from CTNBio to IICA for the fourth component (resolved with interim financing from IICA's core budget). As noted earlier, the PMU generated almost all planned outputs and the government's in-kind PDF contributions exceeded the amounts initially committed. The contracting of OIRSA to manage project funds contributed to efficient financial management, which would have been difficult to achieve had funds been managed from the government budget.

133. The fact that project activities were implemented within the original budgetary parameters despite delays and an approved extension is an additional indicator of efficiency. The proposal to integrate the biotechnology education strategy within the existing national science curriculum is a cost-effective measure that could raise the likelihood of its approval and application. On the other hand, some CNA respondents felt that capacity building activities would have been more cost-effective - and reached a broader audience – had more emphasis been given to in-country training instead of expensive international tours. However, the same respondents recognized the high quality of the training that was provided.

F. Analysis of Factors affecting Performance

F.1 Preparedness

134. Costa Rica was prepared to implement the project and take full advantage of GEF financing. Costa Rica signed the CPB in 2000 and ratified the Protocol in 2006. The country

is a leader within Central America in terms of installed biosafety capabilities - as evidenced by the State Phytosanitary Service (SFE), National Seed Office (ONS), CTNBio and University of Costa Rica (UCR), among others - and has consistently applied risk analysis practices for the authorization of agricultural LMO seed (for multiplication and export purposes) since 1992. As noted by the Vice-Minister of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG), "...the timing was right for this project, because we needed to demystify biosafety and LMO issues from an "elitist discourse" and reach the broader public. [15]

135. Costa Rica's participation in earlier UNEP-GEF biosafety initiatives triggered a cumulative process that has helped towards consolidating the national biosafety framework and establishing biosafety management capacities within key NCAs such as the SFE and ONS, which are legally responsible for authorizing and supervising the use of agricultural LMOs. The CTNBio President and Project Coordinator are both recognized as competent professionals (including by those opposed to present biosafety practices) who have accompanied the evolution of Costa Rica's biosafety framework since its inception.

136. Likewise, University of Costa Rica has strong biotechnology research capabilities and laboratory facilities. Under the sponsorship of the World Bank-GEF sub-regional biosafety project, it developed a rice variety that is resistant to the white leaf (*hoja blanca*) virus. The UCR is presently developing the "Biotechnology for All" (*Biotecnología para Todos*) initiative that seeks to inform the public on scientific facts surrounding LMOs and co-existence issues, and offer a platform for multi-stakeholder dialogue and collaboration. This proposed initiative is strategically important given the present polarization of public opinion, and addresses a gap in public awareness that was not adequately addressed by the project. [16]

137. The biosafety capacities generated over the years have largely remained in place, thanks to the institutional stability of Costa Rica's public sector. This has enabled the continuity of technical staff despite periodic changes of government, and allowed Costa Rica's NBF to progressively build on the achievements of past projects. The current project was designed to mitigate specific threats and gaps that were identified during preparatory PDF phases.

F.2 Project Implementation and Management

138. The implementation mechanisms outlined in the project document were followed and have proven to be effective in delivering project outputs. The designation of CTNBio as national executing agency was a contributing factor to efficient performance, by linking CNAs with established biosafety functions (such as the SFE and ONS) to others that were targeted to assume a stronger role (i.e. the Ministry of Health, SENASA and MINAE). The implementation strategy combined interventions at both the institutional and systemic levels. This has contributed decisively to the consolidation of the national biosafety framework by leveling capacities, streamlining operational procedures, and expanding policy and regulatory frameworks.

[15] Interview with Tania Lopez Lee, Vice Minister of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG).

[16] At GEF's request, public awareness with non-formal adult educational methods was assumed by the sub-regional World Bank-GEF Biosafety project to avoid duplications. In consequence, "Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework" focused the fourth component on a formal educational strategy and pedagogic materials that were directed at basic and intermediate school levels. Both aspects are of vital importance to ensure a functional and viable national biosafety framework, and require greater attention and support than provided to date.

139. Working through CTNBio also helped in facilitating inter-institutional coordination and consensus building, facilitating access to a broad range of stakeholders and generating group that would have been difficult had the project been inserted within a line ministry. As CTNBio's host institution, the SFE provided effective technical and logistical support – as well as office space – for the project. The comparative advantages of working through CTNBio clearly influenced project coordination and delivery in positive manner, and probably helped to mobilize co-financing resources from different institutions as well.

140. Likewise, the contracting of financial and administrative services to OIRSA (the International Regional Organization for Animal Health) was instrumental to ensure timely disbursements and efficient financial management. This might not have been the case if project funds had entered the government's general budget, in view of the public sector's cumbersome administrative processes and likelihood that resources might have been re-allocated to other needs with delayed reimbursement. OIRSA is recognized in the region for its capacity to manage donor funds for government-executed projects.

141. The revisions made to the original work plan and budget helped project implementation. These included adjustments to the ToRs and remunerative level of the Project Coordinator's post, transfers between budget lines that did not raise the aggregate budget, and the project's extension to compensate for the initial delays. Subcontracting the implementation of the fourth project component to IICA lowered the delivery pressures faced by CTNBio, and allowed the project to recoup its implementation momentum. Without such adjustments, it is unlikely that the project would have reached the levels of delivery and technical quality that were achieved.

142. Project management was entrusted to a technically competent and experienced team of experts, headed by CTNBio's President and the National Coordinator. As noted, both individuals are recognized as highly competent professionals in Costa Rica and have accompanied – indeed, shaped - the evolution of Costa Rica's biosafety framework and trained many professionals currently involved in biosafety issues. Their seniority and technical-academic credentials were instrumental to induce broader institutional participation (i.e. by SENASA and the Ministry of Health) and in mobilizing co-financing resources. [17]

143. These attributes were recognized by interviewed participants as positive factors that enhanced the project's credibility and effectiveness. On the other hand, several respondents have also noted the tendency towards a vertical management approach that restricted CNA participation in project planning and decision-making, affecting their sense of ownership. This was most evident in the underutilization of the National Coordination Committee, which played a largely passive role and did not exercise the consultative or advisory functions expected of a steering committee. Interviewed members noted that the NCC did not have Terms of Reference and met only once a year to receive reports on project progress and decisions taken by the Project Coordinator and CTNBio President. None felt that they had contributed substantively to design of project work plans, capacity building initiatives, the selection of consultants or decision-making in general. As mentioned, this

[17] This is contested by at least two NCC members, who feel that there is a general distrust in how CTNBio is being managed and in the technical capacity of its members. CTNBio might be the best option as an integrated team to manage a project like this one. Nevertheless, CTNBio's competence is limited to a certain area (agriculture) and - according to one NCA representative - and needs to be expanded to ensure knowledgeability and appropriate stewardship in their procedures.

weakened the levels of stakeholder participation and collective ownership that the NCC was intended to encourage.

144. Project implementation met GEF's environmental and social safeguard requirements. According to the project management, the MTR recommendations were useful in guiding project planning and implementation after the initial implementation obstacles were overcome.

F.3 Stakeholder Participation and Public Awareness

145. Stakeholder participation was important to the project's rationale. The project offered an opportunity to expand institutional participation within Costa Rica's NBF (recognized as a gap by the project document) and to "demystify" biosafety issues from a highly technical and somewhat elitist discourse to a wider audience. Both considerations were essential for the project's success within a highly polarized environment, in which professional associations, public opinion and a growing number of municipalities have assumed positions against the cultivation of transgenic crops.

146. The participation of CNAs in project design was facilitated by a preparatory design phase funded by GEF's Project Development Facility (PDF). Several workshops were held to consider needs and inputs of CTNBio members and other stakeholders. During the design phase, additional workshops were organized to sensitize government ministers and encourage political support for the project. The Director of the State Phytosanitary Service acknowledged SFE's active participation in project design.[18] Likewise, the Ministry of Public Education (MEP) was consulted in the design of the fourth project component, according to the IICA focal point. [19] The Mid-term Review noted that the project successfully engaged stakeholders in the development of activities. These included government institutions, academia, technical personnel and representatives of various professional associations. Likewise, the MTR pointed out that information dissemination occurred at various levels, reaching politicians and other decision-makers invited to biosafety forums.[20]

147. However, the participatory dynamics that characterized the design phase appeared to decline somewhat during implementation. This was reflected in the passive role of the National Coordination Committee and limited input of CTNBio members towards the design of annual work plans, training activities, workshop evaluations or selection of consultants. While the technical quality of most outputs was recognized by most participants, several felt that they might could been achieved in a more cost-effective manner – or had broader effect - had the suggestions of CNAs been considered. The final project report noted that the participation and inputs of NGOs to the project were practically nil, a view reiterated by the Project Coordinator and CTNBio President during the evaluator's visit. On the other hand, the Costa Rica' Biodiversity Coordination Network's (*Red de Coordinación en Biodiversidad* one of the two NGOs representing civil society within CTNBio) requests to review the draft education strategy were repeatedly overlooked, until the RCB Director was informed that the draft had been completed and could no longer be revised.[21] The RCB would subsequently send a letter to the Ministry of Public Education explaining their concerns with the draft strategy's content.

[18] Interview with Dr. Magda Gonzales, Director of the State Phytosanitary Service (SFE)
[19] The Ministry of Education representative was not available for interview during the evaluator's visit.
[20] "Implementation of National Biosafety Framework: Mid-Term Review" (M. Araya-Quesada, 2012), p. 20
[21] Skype interview with Jaime Garcia, Representative to CTNBio of the Coordination Network for Biodiversity (RCB)

148. This example underscores the polarized attitudes that prevail in Costa Rica regarding the cultivation of transgenic crops (for seed export) and importation of FFPs. As noted, there are presently legal initiatives to declare the unconstitutionality of biosafety risk analysis practices and establish an indefinite moratorium on the release of LMOs until perceived health and environmental risks are convincingly addressed. There is a growing anti-transgenic movement that is spearheaded by the environmental NGO community and most of Costa Rica's municipal governments, in addition to a significant segment of civil society. This situation has encouraged entrenched attitudes and "mental models" on both sides. Within this divisive scenario, CTNBio is often perceived as "pro-transgenic" and allied to the private companies that import GM seeds (a perception reinforced by the Project Coordinator's association with a audit company that certifies LMO management practices). The CTNBio President and Project Coordinator consider these perceptions to be misinformed and ideologically motivated. Unfortunately, the present divide does not help to clarifying the issues or build consensus. There is presently little dialogue or rapport between CTNBio (and much of its constituency) with the environmental NGO community or network of municipalities.

149. The situation points to a critical project omission that was largely unintentional. In retrospect, more attention should have been given to outreach efforts in order to inform public opinion, stimulate debate based on scientific fact and clarify misconceptions concerning the risks of transgenic crops and other LMOs. According to the CTNBio President and Project Coordinator, this was initially considered under the fourth component during design yet discontinued to avoid duplication with the sub-regional World Bank-GEF biosafety project, which supported research on GM crops and the publication and dissemination of findings through the University of Costa Rica (UCR) and other academic/research institutions in participating countries. A baseline attitudinal survey was implemented and there were plans to measure changes in public opinion at the end of the project. UCR's research was focused on GM rice and its coexistence with non-GM crops. Unfortunately, research results were validated only four months before the project's termination and could not be socialized as originally intended. In view of the present controversies and divided public opinion surrounding transgenic crops in Costa Rica, this was a missed opportunity that might have helped to inform the public and clarify some of the concerns shared by a significant sector of civil society.[22]

F.4 Country Ownership and Driven-ness

150. "Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework of Costa Rica" was country driven with high levels of national ownership throughout the project cycle. National partners assumed full responsibility. This was reflected in the input of CTNBio, SFE and several CNAs to the project's design, and its relevance to the national context and stakeholder needs addressing the gaps and threats described in Section II.a. National ownership was also evidenced in the co-financing provided by the Costa Rican government for the PDF phases, which surpassed the initial target.[23]

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[22] On a positive note, UCR has developed a "Biotechnology for All" project proposal that aims to inform, facilitate dialogue and build consensus between the various stakeholders who are presently leading the national debate on transgenic crops. If approved and implemented, this initiative could contribute significantly to raising public awareness and building a common understanding of biosafety issues.

[23] The final combined PDF contributions totaled US$ 478,222 rather than US$ 414,299 that were initially committed.

151. The changes made to the original project design and budget – adjusting the ToRs and remuneration level of the Project Coordinator, transferring funds between budget lines, extending the project period to compensate for start-up delays – were initially proposed by the PMU and accepted by UNEP and GEF. The designation of CTNBio as national executing agency facilitated the direct participation of key national institutions (MINAE, MAG, Ministry of Health, SENASA) in the implementation of project activities. The inter-institutional dynamics offered by CTNBio were important to ensure adequate coordination between the various stakeholders and deliver outputs in an efficient manner.

152. National ownership was reinforced by the national policy and institutional contexts. Within the sub-region, Costa Rica has advanced significantly in developing its NBF, applying risk analysis practices to GM seed in a consistent manner and implementing its obligations under the CPB. These factors, combined with the existing capacities of key institutions (CTNBio, SFE, National Seed Office, UCR) and institutional stability of Costa Rica's public sector, provided enabling conditions for national ownership.

F.5 Financial Planning and Management

153. There is general consensus that the project was adequately funded to achieve the intended outputs and outcomes. The PMU was able to deliver practically all outputs within the original budget in spite of initial delays and the six-month project extension. Effective financial planning was reflected in the timely approval of revisions that shifted funds between budget lines and re-programmed the project budget into 2014. The initial allocation for the post of Project Coordinator led to conflicts that disrupted the project's activation, yet were subsequently resolved between CTNBio, UNEP and GEF. As noted above, government co-financing contributions to the PDF phases surpassed initial targets.

154. Overall financial management was handled efficiently by UNEP and OIRSA. However, early implementation delays resulted from various factors that included the absence of a Task Manager to serve as interlocutor between the PMU and UNEP during much of the first year (the TM plays an important role in clearing financial requests and providing assurance to UNEP), the resignation of the NPC in January 2011, the PMU's unfamiliarity with reporting formats and the ANUBIS system, and language difficulties that limited communication with the Nairobi-based UNEP Fund Management Officer and support staff. There were also delays by CTNBio in processing the first cash advance payment to IICA under the fourth project component; this could have disrupted the work of the recruited consultants but was resolved with interim financing from IICA's core budget.

F.6 UNEP Supervision and Backstopping

155. Supervision and backstopping was provided by the project's Task Manager, who is based in the UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC). Performance was inconsistent during the project's start-up phase, yet improved over time and in balance was satisfactory. The initial deficiencies were attributed by national partners to the departure of the Task Manager shortly after the project's approval and the post's vacancy during much of the first year. As a result, the national executing agency and Project Coordinator did feel that they received the guidance needed to activate a project of this magnitude, pointing to communication and coordination gaps between the PMU and the UNEP interim Task Manager in Nairobi.

156. The situation improved rapidly with the arrival of the new Task Manager, a Costa Rican national with a biotechnology background who was highly knowledgeable of the project context. The TM provided consistent guidance and support to the PMU that was highly appreciated by interviewed respondents, and personally conducted the Mid-Term Review. In addition, the TM visited the project on an annual basis. In retrospect, the supervision and backstopping support provided by the Task Manager contributed to project efficiency, coordination with UNEP, and overall performance.

157. The financial supervision provided by UNEP and OIRSA was satisfactory and is described in the preceding section.

F.7 Monitoring and Evaluation

158. A Monitoring Plan was included in the project document that complied with the essential UNEP-GEF monitoring requirements. UNEP standard monitoring, reporting and evaluation processes and procedures were to be applied. Outcome indicators applying SMART criteria were annexed to the project document. There is reference to baseline information that would enable the monitoring of changes to the pre-project situation; assessments of existing legislation and policies were considered in the design of project activities. In general, monitoring provisions were satisfactory albeit largely limited to reporting.

159. Monitoring was conducted by the UNEP Task Manager, who visited Costa Rica on a yearly basis to review project progress with the PMU and CTNBio. The Task Manager's inputs were considered to be very useful by the project team, and clearly augmented by her familiarity with the national biosafety context and personal acquaintance with the NPC and CTNBio President.

160. A Mid-Term Review was conducted in 2012 by the Task Manager. The MTR assessed project performance in terms of its relevance, effectiveness and efficiency) and its likelihood of achieving the intended outcomes and impacts in a sustainable manner. The MTR had the primary purposes of (i) providing evidence of results to date and of the likelihood of outcomes and impact in the future, and (ii) identifying the challenges and risks influencing the achievement of the project objectives in order to propose corrective actions. The evaluation methodology focused on questions directed at different stakeholders that addressed the above-mentioned evaluation criteria and systematized their responses to detect trends in performance and perception, as well as the tentative corrective actions.

161. The MTR findings highlighted NCA participation, uneven levels of technical expertise and time constraints as intervening factors that undermined project performance and potential impact. These findings were considered useful by the project team, and contributed to GEF's decision to extend the project by six months.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

162. ***"Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework in Costa Rica" achieved partial success in reaching the desired outcomes and objectives.*** It helped to build a broader and better prepared NBF with a strong capacity building investment and regulatory, policy and educational proposals that must be approved by government executive decree to be implemented. Project design considered both the institutional and systemic dimensions

of capacity development, through four project components that were linked by shared causal pathways. Practically all of the project outputs were achieved. Several – the digitized LMO information management system, training activities, the proposed regulations – are recognized for their technical quality.

163. ***Project performance was satisfactory despite slow start-up, national elections and a change of government.*** The project was implemented efficiently and was able to produce almost all deliverables***.*** Drivers of project performance included:

- A technically competent project team headed by a national Coordinator with an academic background and extended LMO experience;
- CTNBio's inter-institutional composition, which national coordination and ownership;
- The capacity of key partners such as the State Phytosanitary Service (SFE), National Seed Office and the University of Costa Rica, which have conducted LMO research, risk analysis and management over the past 20 years; and
- Co-financing and in-kind support provided by the Government of Costa Rica through MAG and the SFE in particular.

164. ***The fundamental elements of a functional and comprehensive biosafety system are now in place.*** There is greater equilibrium in CNA capacities for LMO risk management. Policies and regulations were proposed that would expand the scope of biosafety practices to LMOs intended for food, feed and processing (FFPs) and "new generation" varieties, with consideration of health and environmental risks. CTNBio's institutional representation and biosafety capabilities have been strengthened by the formal incorporation of the Ministry of Health and National Animal Health Service (SENASA), and designation of CNA focal points with biosafety responsibilities. Operational procedures for LMO applications and data management have been streamlined and digitized, with improvements in efficiency, institutional connectivity and user friendliness. However, the government approval and implementation of regulations, policies and procedures proposed by the project were pending at the time of the evaluation. This has kept the project from fully achieving its outcomes and objectives.

165. ***The project built administrative capacities to handle LMO requests and make informed decisions***. The main improvement is systemic and centred around the new LMO application and information system that can be accessed at website http//www.owm.go.cr. Administrative pathways and timelines for LMO applications have been streamlined and are more transparent. The system provides "one stop" access to all of the steps for LMO applications and users can track the location and status of applications. The system covers all LMO activities except FFPs but can be expanded to include this once the enabling regulations are approved. The system brings important gains in efficiency, coordination and service. It will reduce duplicity and unnecessary bureaucracy in processing applications. User security is guaranteed through digital signatures and access codes. The system was successfully tested with the participation of private sector users, representing transnational corporations that apply rigurous secutiry systems. Several of these representatives noted that there are compatibility problems with the firewall security system that need to be corrected. Nevertheless, the online system is one of the project's outstanding contributions and a significant step forward to operationalize Costa Rica's NBF.

166. ***National capacities to monitor and ensure regulatory compliance were strengthened.*** This combined in-country training with international study tours, new

policies and regulations that expand biosafety management and risk analysis, and the incorporation of the Ministry of Health and National Animal Health Service (SENASA) as CTNBio members. These and other CNAs have assigned technical focal points with biosafety responsibilities; and SENASA has created an internal biosafety unit. LMO monitoring and compliance capabilities have been raised in comparison to the pre-project situation. The cumulative effects of the various project activities showed the links between project components that fed into each other. This reflects positively on the quality of project design.

167. ***Despite satisfactory project performance, the objectives and expected impacts were not fully reached. This was influenced by external factors outside the project's control or responsibility.*** The change in national government and political leadership following presidential elections, pending legal issues and a growing anti-transgenic movement, have postponed the adoption and implementation of various project outputs (which nevertheless remain valid and are ready to be used once the GMO moratorium issue is resolved). At the time of the evaluation, the new government had not assumed a policy position on LMOs and biosafety, although several authorities expressed support for Costa Rica's anti-transgenic movement during the election campaign. At present there are legislative proposals to declare an indefinite moratorium on the release of LMOs, and establish the unconstitutionality of current risk management practices. A majority of Costa Rica's municipal governments are declared transgenic-free zones and public opinion is highly polarized. The project's contributions to institutional capacities, policy and regulatory frameworks, greater CNA involvement and operational procedures cannot be fully implemented until these issues are resolved.

168. ***The project's impact in developing institutional capacities for liability and redress was limited and below expectations.*** The first project component intended to develop legal and institutional capacities for liability and redress (L&R) cases. This would be achieved through surveys of current legislation and public awareness, proposed L&R and coexistence regulations, training and dissemination, and the fomulation of a national policy position for the COP/MOP-5 and C)P/MOP-6. These initiatives would also create the enabling conditions for ratifying the Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur supplementary Protocol.

169. Progress was limited, in part due to the project's delayed start-up and subsquent time constraints. The project was surveyed existing legislation and hosted preliminary discussions on the Protocol's legal and administrative consequences. Agricultural companies engaged in GM seed production were exposed to L&R and coexistence concepts, and co-existence guidelines (drawn from the CPB) were printed and distributed. The final project report acknowledges the need to further analyze the supplementary Protocol's judicial implications and required adjustments to current legislation. Introductory information was provided and more in-depth dissemination and discussions are necessary to better inform CNAs, legislators, agricultural producers, auditors, NGOs and other stakeholders before policies can be proposed or the Protocol's approval considered. Given that coexistence and L&R issues are at the center of Costa Rica's present debate on transgenics, this could have considerable impact on public opinion.

170. ***The project had little effect on public awareness despite the design of a formal education strategy.*** A draft biotechnology communications and education strategy was formulated that includes an Action Plan and pedagogic materials for basic and intermediate school levels. The strategy incorporates biotechnology and biosafety topics within core science curricula. At the time of the evaluation visit, the new authorities of the Ministry of

Education had not approved the strategy and its implementation is uncertain. One obstacle is the significant budget needed to implement the strategy, which would require external funding. There are plans to channel fundraising support through a proposed follow-up biosafety project. The Biodiversity Coordination Network, one of two NGOs representing civil society within CTNBio, has criticized the strategy for its perceived pro-LMO bias.

171. Informative workshops were held and biosafety materials distributed to various stakeholder groups. There were also several press releases. However, the resources and attention devoted to raising awareness were below the levels needed to influence the present situation in which biosafety legislation and practices are being called to question. During the project's design, CTNBio had proposed greater emphasis on public awareness and the dissemination of validated information. This was assumed by the University of Costa Rica under the World Bank-GEF sub-regional biosafety project, albeit with limited impact due to time constraints.

172. ***The project benefitted from high levels of country ownership as a result of CTNBio's designation as national executing agency, yet failed to exploit the advisory and oversight functions assigned to the National Coordination Committee.*** As noted in the main report, CTNBio's role was critical to maximize project relevance and trigger the participation of CNAs in implementing activities. The creation of a National Coordination Committee (NCC) with advisory and oversight attributions was expected to strengthen national ownership by offering a framework for stakeholder input and adaptive management. In practice, the NCC was a passive entity that met yearly and had little incidence in project work planning, budget revisions, the design of training initiatives or recruitment decisions. The underutilization of the NCC reflected a vertical project management approach (as observed by several participants) and passivity of committee members. The NCC represents a missed opportunity that could have consolidated group ownership and improved the cost-effectiveness of some activities, i.e. training.

V. LESSONS LEARNED

173. ***The designation of CTNBio as national executing agency offered comparative advantages in coordination and implementation.*** These were important advantages considering the inter-institutional and cross-sector dynamics that drive biosafety frameworks. Access to the Competent National Authorities (CNAs) represented in CTNBio allowed the project to involve a broader range of institutions and stakeholder groups, build consensus, and streamline LMO application procedures within an integrated system. Institutional coordination would have been more cumbersome to manage if the project had been executed through a line ministry and the various CNAs approached separately. Working through national biosafety commissions seems to offer "economies of scale" that facilitate coordination, communications and consensus building.

174. ***The production of outputs and deliverables does not necessarily ensure the attainment of outcomes or impacts associated with the project objectives.*** According to the Theory of Change (ToC) analysis, the project did not reach some of the intermediate states that link outputs to impacts and which provide the enabling conditions for achieving project objectives. This was influenced by assumptions on the adequacy of the project time period and continued government commitment that did not materialize. The project timeframe was insufficient for the outcomes and objectives it aimed to achieve, and would

have needed an additional six months to transfer project deliverables to the new authorities and gain their approval in order to move forward.

175. The transfer and appropriation of project results is not an easy undertaking. Public opinion is divided on the cultivation and release of LMOd, and there is a strong anti-transgenic movement that has gained momentum at the municipal level. There are legislative proposals for an indefinite moratorium on the release of LMOs and the declaration of unconstitutionality for current risk analysis practices, based on their perceived incompatibility with environmental impact assessment system.

176. As a result, several project contributions that expand the range and efficiency of national biosafety practices have not been formally approved by government and aren't operational. It is hoped that the process will move forward during the coming months, otherwise the capacity improvements and momentum generated may begin to decline if not applied. This would weaken the project's impact and threaten the sustainability of results.

177. ***The timing of projects and inclusion of "exit strategies" are important to enable the transfer of results and their appropriation by national stakeholders.*** This is a recurrent lesson often found in project evaluations. The delivery pressures of the three-year project period were exacerbated by early coordination problems and a delayed first payment. This affected project performance for much of its first year.[24] GEF and UNEP approved a six-month extension that overlapped with national elections and a change in governing party. Some of the most important deliverables were completed shortly before the turnover of government authorities. Their transfer and appropriation were disrupted by elections and the political transition, followed by the project's termination.

178. ***Project implementation needs to be synchronized with governance cycles, and more so when they aim to influence policy/regulatory frameworks and institutional behavior.*** The project experience highlights the importance of considering different political and policy scenarios when planning implementation. It is also important to earmark time and money to socialize results and their implementation. In retrospect, the project would have benefitted from three to six more months for this purpose, once the new authorities were installed. This would have raised the likelihood of sustained impact (which may still happen). Exit strategies also offer opportunity to gradually decrease support levels as project functions are transferred to government partners.

179. ***The project Task Manager plays a crucial role in facilitating communication and coordination between the national executing agency and UNEP.*** This was reflected in the difficulties faced by the project during much of its first year. The vacancy of the Task Manager post slowed project implementation for much of the first year, contributing indirectly to reporting and disbursement delays. While an Interim Task Manager based in Nairobi was assigned to provide guidance to the project team, it seems c;ear that in this case the arrival of a new Task Manager based in the region had an immediate effect that was augmented by her professional background, language proficiency and familiarity with the national context. The experience underscores the importance of the Task Manager as an intermediary and facilitator.

180. ***More attention should have been given to raising public awareness through stakeholder dialogue the dissemination of scientific information. This was a missed***

[24] GEF approval guidelines limit the duration of medium-size projects to three years.

opportunity that could have could affect the implementation and sustainability of project results. As recognized by MAG's Vice Minister, the project offered an opportunity to expand the understanding of LMOs and biosafety issues from a small circle of technical-scientific practitioners to a broader public. Sensitive issues could have been opened to public debate with the benefit of validated information on coexistence and the environmental consequences of cultivating transgenic seed, liability and redress, GM product labeling. This might have encouraged greater convergence between stakeholders with polarized views [25] and mitigated some of present obstacles to the implementation and sustainability of project results.

181. ***National ownership could have been broadened, had the National Coordination Committee (NCC) played an advisory role or provided oversight to project implementation.*** NCC functions were essentially those of a steering committee, providing guidance to the PMU and overseeing project implementation. In practice its role was passive and limited to annual meetings. According to interviewed members, the NCC was not consulted on the design of annual work plans or budget revisions, nor did they have Input in the selection of consultants, training venues or the transfer of project equipment. All respondents were appreciative of the support provided, yet several considered that the project's management was too vertical and considered that their suggestions could have led to more cost-effective training activities and in some cases, better consultants. Although it contributed to institutional coordination, the NCC was underutilized and did not assume the key functions outlined the project document. A more proactive NCC role would have helped project implementation and broadened the ownership base.

182. ***The selection of an independent entity to manage funds for government-executed projects can make a significant difference in delivery and overall efficiency*****.** The contracting of OIRSA as administrative agency facilitated the project's financial management and implementation. As noted in the final report, one of the main advantages of channelling GEF funds through a non-governmental agency was that they were available when needed. It is very likely that this would not have been the case had project funds entered the public sector budget.

183. ***The Terms of Reference and remunerative level for National Project Coordinator did not reflect the technical complexity of the project, nor national salary scales for similar positions.*** This was influenced by GEF guidelines that correctly limit the percentage of the project budget that can be used for management costs. Yet there were misunderstandings over the remunerative level of the NPC post that could have been avoided by carefully planning budgets and making sure that both allocations and supportive guidelines were fully understood by the concerned parties. As noted by the Biosafety Portfolio Manager, the project was developed between late GEF 3 and early GEF 4 and it is possible that the project team may have based expectations on earlier practices. Such misunderstandings over the role and salary of the NPC are surprising for a project that had the benefit of a preparatory PDF phase. The disruption caused by the NPC's resignation affected project inception and set implementation back by several months. National partners (and prospective staff in particular) should ensure that they are well informed of employment conditions before approving budgets or entering into work commitments.

[25] The present debate on transgenic crops and the effectiveness of current biosafety practices involves politicans and legislators, government entities with biotechnology and biosafety mandates, agricultural companies that work with GM seed, municipal government, environmental NGOs, and scientific institutions and university faculties involved in biotechnology research and development.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

184. ***More attention should be given to outreach and communication efforts*** in order to inform public opinion and encourage dialogue between stakeholder groups with polarized views. This is not the role of CTNBio and should be neutrally provided, preferably by entities and/or individuals without clear pro- or against positions on LMOs (real or perceived) and other biotechnology issues. The follow-up regional project proposal that was recently submitted to GEF[26] envisions further dissemination and fundraising support for the draft biotechnology communications and education strategy. This should include a knowledge management component managed for Costa Rica that could involve the University of Costa Rica (UCR), National Academy of Science, Vice-Ministry of Science & Technology or Ministry of Environment (MINAE).

185. An interesting option would be channeling support through CTNBio to the "Biotechnology for All" initiative that is being developed by the University of Costa Rica. The education strategy offers an additional alternative yet needs to be edited in content to soften its perceived pro-LMO bias. Given the diversity of stakeholders, outreach efforts will need to combine different approaches and messages to effectively reach municipal governments, NGOs, LMO audit companies, academia, GM seed producers and farmers in areas where agricultural LMOs are cultivated (i.e. Guanacaste provinces, in addition to government authorities and legislators.

186. ***The planning and oversight of project work plans and budgets needs to be more inclusive.*** The National Coordination Committee received update reports at its yearly meetings but did not provide input or otherwise participate in reviewing work plans or designing project activities. The involvement of CTNBio members in implementing project activities was encouraged and achieved satisfactory levels, but there was limited engagement in project planning, monitoring or oversight. In principle, the NCC is the right suitable vehicle for these functions, but its role needs to be formalized with clear ToRs to strengthen CNA ownership in processes that directly involve them.

187. There are clearly advantages in organizing international study tours that provide "hands on" exposure to participants. GEF funding provided a unique opportunity to visit well-functioning national biosafety commissions and CNAs in several countries of the region. Many would argue that this is as good as training can get. There is need, however, to re-think future training approaches to reach a larger number of participants. The training programme was very well designed in technical content and selection of venues, yet was limited to a closed circle of professionals due to cost and scale factors. The capacity benefits that were derived from visiting international centers of excellence are recognized and appreciated by participants. However, some CNA representatives considered that greater emphasis on in-country training was needed to broaden the trainee base and consolidate a critical mass of capacity and institutional "buy in" to the national biosafety framework. The greater involvement of the NCC in project planning would have helped to flag these concerns and promote a more cost-effective approach. Participant evaluations of training workshops were not considered in planning subsequent events, which should be done in the future u to ensure training relevance and quality.

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26 *"Strengthening of biosafety capacities for Central America and the Dominican Republic through South-South cooperation and cost-effective approaches"* (PIF format)

188. ***CTNBio must project a neutral image and positioning in order to protect its credibility and ability to convoke a wide range of stakeholders. This could make a difference for future initiatives.*** At present, there are very polarized positions on the cultivation of GM crops and release of LMOs. A large segment of NGOs, local governments and civil society support anti-transgenic platforms. There are legal proposals for an indefinite moratorium and unconstitutionality measure that would profoundly affect current biosafety legislation and practices. Within this divide, CTNBio is sometimes (subjectively) perceived as being pro-LMO and close to the companies that import LMOs or audit LMO management. CTNBio must make an effort to avoid any actual or perceived conflict of interest with its regulatory state function, originating from the private views of personnel linked to national partners or project management. This is admittedly difficult to accomplish in divided environment where criticism encourages the polarization of positions.

189. ***The guidance and backstopping support of the UNEP Task Manager is an important driver of project efficiency and delivery, particularly during the inception phase.*** The evaluation findings confirm project start-up is a critical phase that can affect subsequent implementation and delivery. It is therefore important that a qualified Task Manager be in place from the beginning. The profile of the project Task Manager who was recruited to fill the post vacancy was ideal – a Costa Rican national with a biotechnology background who understood the issues – and should be replicated when possible to ensure that project support services are reinforced by technical knowledge. Alternatively, the synchronization of implementation schedules between different biosafety projects could enable regional inception workshops to ensure the preparedness of newly-formed project teams.

190. ***The Terms of Reference and remunerative levels for National Project Coordinators need to be compatible with the technical complexity of the project and national salary scales for similar positions.*** Although GEF guidelines that limit project management costs are important to ensure that adequate resources are allocated for implementation activities, the ToRs and salaries of National Project Coordinators should be consistent with technical complexity in addition to national salary scale and cost-of-living considerations. This could perhaps be approached through a post-adjustment mechanism similar to that used by multi-lateral organizations including the UN. The NPC post carried an administrative profile that was at odds with the technical needs for the NBF (i.e. revision of policy and regulatory frameworks, introduction of online information management systems, technical training in LMO detection and risk assessment), while the salary was excessively low by Costa Rican standards vis-à-vis the required competency level**.** The final project report states that one of the major challenges faced by CTNBio was justifying the need to hire (and budget for) a Coordinator that had technical expertise and LMO experience. As noted, biosafety "...is a topic where there are not many experts, and the technical learning process to coordinate the project could take up to two years, and this was not possible at the time of project execution."[27] The logical conclusion emerging from this observation is that project coordinators should have technical expertise in biosafety, and that this expertise should be recognized in their remuneration to attract qualified candidates.

191. ***At present several issues must be resolved before the enabling conditions are in place to implement follow-up biosafety projects.*** The issues are described in various sections of this report: Legal decisions need to be reached on the proposed moratorium and motion of unconstitutionality for current LMO risk management practices. The new

[27] *Final Report Template* (2014) pg. 20

government must position itself on LMO and biosafety policies in general, and demonstrate commitment by adopting the proposed regulations and policies – whether through legislative actions or executive decree. The results achieved by the project need to be appropriated and implemented with government support so that future projects can build on these achievements and raise Costa Rica's NBF to a new threshold.

ANNEXES

Annex 1

Evaluation Questions, Target Respondents/Focus Groups, Indicators and Data Sources

	Respondents											
EVALUATION QUESTIONS	**PMU**	**CTNBio & CNAs**	**NCC**	**Min. Education**	**Private Industry**	**IICA**	**National Seed Office**	**NGOs**	**UNEP Task**	**UNEP Fiinance Manager**	**Indicators**	**Data Source**
A. Strategic Relevance												
1. To what extent were project objectives and implementation strategies consistent with national environmental issues and needs?											Respondent perceptions, level of achievement of objectives and outcomes	Interviews, Project document, MTE, Final Report
2. To what extent were project objectives and implementation strategies consistent with (i) UNEP's mandate and policies at the time; and (ii) the GEF Biodiversity focal area, strategic priorities and operational programme(s).											Respondent perceptions, project design	Interviews, Project document, MTE
3. Were project objectives realistic, given the time and budget allocated to the project, the baseline situation and institutional context?											Respondent perceptions, project delivery and level of achievement	Interviews, MTE, PIRs and Final Report
4. To what extent did UNEP and GEF engage NCAs and other national biosafety stakeholders in project design, implementation, monitoring and reporting?											Respondent perceptions, project delivery and level of achievement	Interviews, PDF reports
B. Achievement of Outputs												
5. How successful was the project in achieving its planned outputs, considering aspects such as quantity, quality, sequencing, timeliness and usefulness? To what extent have project outputs contributed towards the expected outcomes?											Respondent perceptions, project delivery and level of achievement	Interviews, Final Report
C. Effectiveness: Attainment of Objectives and Expected Outcomes												

6. How and to what extent did the project succeed in developing and implementing a framework for biosafety? To what extent has this strengthened the involvement of the NCAs in the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB)?											Respondent perceptions, continued involvement of Health Min. and other NCAs in NBF	Interviews, Project document, Final Report
7. To what extent has the project had an impact on the development of capacity for the consideration of cases of liability and redress and the implementation of a co-existence regime?		(MAG)									Respondent perceptions, # and outcomes of cases of liability/redress	Interviews, Final Report
8. How and to what extent did the project build administrative capacities to handle requests, make informed decisions and communicate them to applicants and the BCH?											Respondent perceptions, # of applications, communication of decisions	Interviews, Final Report, CTNBio /BCH data
9. To what extent has the project ensured that decisions on LMOs are based on risk assessments, are timely, transparent and coordinated, and avoid duplicity or unnecessary bureaucracy?											Respondent perceptions, # of applications, decisions and processing time	Interviews, Final Report, CTNBio /BCH data
10. To what extent did the project increase the capacity to monitor and ensure regulatory compliance?											Respondent perceptions, trends in enforcement and compliance	Interviews, CTNBio and BCH data, PIR and Final Reports
11. Are sufficient technical and human capacities being put in place for risk assessment and management for decision-making, considering both traditional and new generation LMOs?											Respondent perceptions, CAN agreements w/ CTNBio, TORs and # personnel involved	Interviews, signed agreements w/ CNAs, personnel assigned.
12. Are trans boundary movements of LMOs occurring in accordance with the CPB, and in a manner that is understood and accepted by the private sector (exporters /importers)?											Respondent perceptions, number of documented transboundary movements, enforcement of regulations for tb movement of LMOs	Interviews, # transboundary LMO movements and L&R cases monitored and processed.
13. To what extent has a formal educational strategy been contributing to increase public awareness? To what extent is this leading to a change in human behaviour?											Results from surveys conducted by PMU, IICA or Min. Education on public awareness and attitudes.	Interviews, data from Min. of Education, IICA
14. To what extent has the project contributed to increase											Same as above; access and	Same as above.

information sharing through greater access to biosafety information?											"hits" to online biosafety web page.	
D. Sustainability												
15. *Socio-political:* Are there any social or political factors that influence positively or negatively the sustenance of project results and impacts?											Respondent perceptions, continuity of project-supported initiatives	Interviews, Final Report
16. To what extent did UNEP and GEF engage the participation of national biosafety stakeholders in project design, implementation, monitoring and reporting?											Respondent perceptions, workshops and consultation events during design phase	Interviews, PDF reports
17. Is there sufficient government/stakeholder commitment to enforce and implement the programmes, plans, agreements, monitoring systems etc. prepared and agreed upon under the project?											Respondent perceptions, policies of new government, budget and staff allocations	Interviews
18. *Financial*: To what extent is the continuity of project results and their impact dependent on continued financial support? Will adequate financial resources be made available to ensure the continuity of programmes, plans, agreements, monitoring systems etc. that were prepared and agreed upon under the project?											Same as above.	Same as above.
19. *Institutional:* To what extent is the sustenance of the results and progress towards impact dependent on national institutional frameworks and governance? To what extent are institutional governance structures and capacities in place to sustain processes, policies, agreements and legal/regulatory aspects that were supported by the project?											Same as above	Same as above
20. Did project design and/or work plans include provisions for the transfer of responsibilities and results to national stakeholders by the end of the project?											Respondent perceptions, workplans, signed agreements with CNAs and others, post-project continuity	Interviews, PMU documentation
E. Efficiency												
21. Did the project apply any time or cost-saving mechanisms in order to achieve results within the approved timeframe and budget?											Project expenditure and delivery trends, project workplans and budget revisions	Interviews, PMU documentation, signed budget revisions, MTE, PIRs
22. Did the project face any obstacles (financial,											Respondent perceptions,	Interviews, MTE,

administrative, managerial) and to what extent has this affected its efficiency?											project expenditure and delivery trends, recruitment and procurement timelines	PIRs
23. To what extent did the delay in implementation affect the delivery of the project outcomes?											Respondent perceptions, project delivery trends (recruitment, procurement, contracts) in comparison with planned timelines	Same as above.
24. To what extent did the project succeed in securing the necessary funds to implement the educational strategy?											Co-financing is made available.	Project financial reports.
25. Were the required progress and financial reports prepared satisfactorily and submitted on schedule?											Reports submitted on time and accepted.	PIRs, financial reports
F. Factors affecting Project Performance												
Preparation and Readiness:												
26. Were the project's objectives and components clear, practicable and feasible within its timeframe?											Respondent perceptions, project performance and delivery trends, positive appraisal of project document	Interviews, project document, Quality Assurance assessment, MTE
27. What factors influenced the quality-at-entry of the project design, choice of partners, allocation of financial resources etc.?											Same as above.	Same as above, PDF reports
28. Were the partnership arrangements properly identified and the roles and responsibilities negotiated prior to project implementation? Were counterpart resources (funding, staff, and facilities) and enabling legislation assured? Were adequate project management arrangements in place?											Respondent perceptions, institutional arrangements and counterpart contributions clearly spelt out in project document.	Interviews, project document, PDF reports
Project Implementation and Management:												
29. To what extent were the project implementation mechanisms outlined in the project document effective in delivering project outputs and outcomes? Were adaptations made to the approaches originally proposed											Respondent perceptions, project performance and level of achievement of outputs/outcomes.	PIRs, MTE, Final Report

30. How effective and efficient was project management by CTNBIO and the PMU, and how well did they adapt to changes during the project lifetime?											Same as above.	Same as above.
31. To what extent did the NCC provide guidance and contribute to effective project implementation?											Respondent perceptions, implementation of NCC decisions/recommendations	Interviews, minutes of NCC meetings
32. To what extent did the project management and national partners respond to the guidance/recommendations provided by the NCC , the UNEP Task Manager and Mid-Term Review.											Respondent perceptions, implementation of NCC/UNEP/MTE recommendations by PMU/CNAs	Interviews, minutes of NCC meetings, PIRs, MTE
33. Identify any operational and political / institutional problems and constraints that influenced implementation, and how the project partners tried to overcome these problems.											Respondent perceptions; identified obstacles/constraints and remedial actions taken	Interviews, minutes of NCC meetings, PIRs, MTE, Final Report
Stakeholder Participation and Public Awareness												
34. What approaches were used to identify and engage stakeholders in project design and implementation?											Respondent perceptions, evidence of workshops or other consultation mechanisms	Interviews, PDF reports, PIRs, MTE
35. To what extent have project partners and stakeholders collaborated/interacted effectively during project design and implementation?											Respondent perceptions, documented interactions	Same as above.
36. Did the project promote mechanisms for stakeholder participation in decision-making in the programmes, plans and other initiatives that it generated?											Respondent perceptions, evidence of stakeholder participation in planning and decision-making	Same as above.
Country Ownership and Driven-ess												
37. To what degree has CTN Bio assumed responsibility for the project and provided adequate support to project execution, including the cooperation received from the various public institutions involved and timeliness of counter-part funding ?											Respondent Perceptions, performance of CTNBio and PMU in project implementation, timeliness of project delivery	Interviews, PIRs, MTE, Final Report
38. To what extent have the national and regional political/institutional frameworks facilitated project performance?											Respondent perceptions, consistency of NBFs in Central America, synergies	Same as above

											with other countries through regional WB/GEF biosafety project	
Financial Planning & Management												
39. Were sufficient financial resources made available and disbursed in a timely manner to the project and its partners?											Respondent perceptions, timeliness of disbursements, budget revisions	PIRs, budget revisions, financial reports
40. Were administrative processes such as staff recruitment, procurement of goods and services (including consultants), and preparation/ negotiation of cooperation agreements conducted efficiently and in a timely manner?											Same as above.	Same as above
41. Were co-financing commitments met as programmed and made available in a timely manner?											Same as above.	Same as above.
42. Were additional resources – financial, in-kind – leveraged by the project, beyond those that were already committed prior to the project's approval?											Budget revisions, increased allocations to existing/new budget lines through co-financing	Same as above.
43. Identify irregularities (if any) in procurement, use of financial resources and human resource management, and the measures taken by CTNBIO or UNEP to correct/prevent such irregularities.											Documented irregularities, interrupted procurement/disbursement processes	Interviews, PIRs, MTE, audit reports
UNEP supervision and backstopping:												
44. Assess the quality and efficiency of UNEP's supervision plans, outcome monitoring, PIR reporting and financial/administrative services											Respondent perceptions, timeliness and acceptance of PIR and financial reports; timeliness of disbursements and administrative support services by UNEP	Interviews, PIRs, MTE
Monitoring and evaluation>												
45. Did the project's design include a viable M&E plan that is based on outcomes and includes indicators?											Monitoring Plan is included in the project document.	Project document
46. Did the project's design include a monitoring budget?											Project document includes monitoring budget line.	Project document.
47. Have monitoring findings influenced adaptive management and contributed towards resolving											Respondent perceptions, evidence of	Interviews, monitoring

implementation problems?											technical/management decisions based on monitoring findings	reports
48. Are there specific indicators for each of the project objectives? Are the indicators measurable, attainable (realistic) and relevant to the objectives? Are the indicators time- bound?											Indicators are included in Results Framework for each objective.	Project document.
49. Have the responsibilities for M&E activities been clearly defined? Were the data sources and data collection instruments appropriate? Was the frequency of various monitoring activities specified and adequate? In how far were project users involved in monitoring?											Monitoring activities are conducted periodically by designated parties with inputs from project participants. The monitoring approach is considered methodologically appropriate by the evaluator and most respondents.	Interviews, monitoring reports.

Annex 2

Evaluation Ratings

CRITERION	SUMMARY ASSESSMENT	RATING
A. Strategic Relevance	Project design based on gaps and threats identified during PDF phase, linking systemic and institutional interventions. Project builds on prior GEF/UNEP support initiatives.	HS
B. Achievement of Outputs	Practically all outputs were fully achieved, often with high technical quality	HS
C. Effectiveness: Achievement of Project Objectives and Results	Objectives partially achieved as the formal approval and operationalization of expanded regulatory framework and integrated administrative and risk management procedures by the new government is uncertain. It is important to note that this is influenced by factors external to the project.	MS
1. Achievement of Direct Outcomes	Same as above. Outcomes were partially achieved due to uncertainties concerning the approval and operationalization of project outputs and results by the new government.	MS
2. Likelihood of Impact	Uncertain at this stage for the same reasons mentioned above. The project has created the conditions for impact to occur, however this will depend on the political and budgetary commitment of key CNAs under the new government.	MS
3. Achievement of Project Goal & Planned Objectives.	Same as above. The consolidated NBF has been designed but is presently not operational. The adoption and implementation of results is uncertain and affected by measures of unconstitutionality and a proposed moratorium on the release of GMOs.	MS
D. Sustainability & Replication	Sustainability is uncertain and largely depends on the political and budgetary commitment of the new government.	ML
1. Financial	Same as above.	ML
2. Socio-Political	Same as above. At present there is a highly polarized social and political environment surrounding biosafety issues in general and transgenic in particular.	ML
3. Institutional Framework	The project has contributed to important advances such as the formal inclusion of SENASA and Ministry of Health within CTNBio. However, the formalization of their role in biosafety risk management is uncertain at present.	ML
4. Environmental	The project has improved enabling conditions for expanded and more effective biosafety management.	HL
5. Catalytic Role & Replication	There is a high potential but once again, this depends on the position of the new government. Other countries have expressed interest in replicating the digitized GMO risk analysis and information management system.	ML
E. Efficiency	Despite initial delays, the project has delivered practically all outputs within the original budget. Several are of high technical quality.	S
F. Factors Affecting Project Performance		HS
1. Preparation & Readiness	The combination of installed biosafety risk analysis capacities for agricultural LMOs, combined with the existing legal framework and overall institutional	HS

	stability, offered highly satisfactory conditions for project success. Costa Rica is a leader in the Central America region in terms of its biosafety capabilities and commitment towards its obligations under the CPB. The three-year project period was insufficient in relation to the project's ambitious design.	
2. Project Implementation & Management	Implementation benefitted from the institutional/technical capacities of CTNBio, the Natl. Phytosanitary Office and Natl. Seed Office, in addition to a committed and technically competent project team.	S
3. Stakeholder Participation & Public Awareness	Stakeholder participation high during design phase. NCC was underutilized. Insufficient attention given to public awareness for reasons largely outside the project's control (this was assigned to regional GEF/World Bank project). The fourth component focused on biotechnology/biosafety education directed at basic and intermediate school levels.	MS
4. Country Ownership & Driven-ness	The project was driven by CTNBio. Project design benefitted from PDF phase with input from CNAs. UNEP and GEF supported country ownership throughout.	HS
5. Financial Planning & Management	Following initial delays that undermined project start-up and deficiencies regarding the Project Coordinator's ToRs and remunerative levels (subsequently resolved through budget revisions) financial planning and management were satisfactory and contributed to efficient delivery. Contracting of OIRSA to manage project funds was important in this respect.	S
6. UNEP Supervision & Backstopping	The initial absence of a Task Manager combined with disbursement delays undermined implementation delivery during the start-up phase. Thereafter, both UNEP and UNON provided effective backstopping. The replacement Task Manager turned out to be highly knowledgeable of the national context and technically competent on biosafety issues.	S
7. Monitoring & Evaluation	Effective M&E was provided by the Task Manager, who visited the project on several occasions and conducted the MTR.	HS
Overall Project Rating	The project team has been recognized for its efficient performance and production of high-quality outputs. However, externalities linked to Costa Rica's change of government and strong national anti-transgenic movement undermined the full achievement of planned outcomes. As a result, project objectives and goal were only partially realized, while the operationalization and sustainability of project achievements remain uncertain. The inclusion of a transfer strategy with greater emphasis on outreach and public awareness would have enhanced the likelihood of impact.	S

Annex 3

Assessment of Quality of Project Design

Relevance		Evaluation Comments	Prodoc reference
Are the intended results likely to contribute to UNEPs Expected Accomplishments and programmatic objectives?		MS: No explicit reference to UNEP PoWs or Medium-Term Strategy is made in the project document. However, results are likely contribute to EAs for Ecosystems Management and Environmental Governance	Cover page
Does the project form a coherent part of a UNEP-approved programme framework?		MS: BS not included in UNEP programme framework at time of project. Project complements other national/regional BS projects supporting implementation of CPB, and builds on prior UNEP/GEF biosafety initiatives.	N/A
Is there complementarity with other UNEP projects, planned and ongoing, including those implemented under the GEF?		HS: Project supports implementation of CPB and builds on prior UNEP/GEF biosafety initiatives.	Sec. 2.7
Are the project's objectives and implementation strategies consistent with:	i) Sub-regional environmental issues and needs?	HS: Yes, based on empirical knowledge and past project experiences	Sec. 2.2, 2.7
	ii) the UNEP mandate and policies at the time of design and implementation?	S: Yes, in relation to implementation of CPB and Environmental Governance and Ecosystems Mgmnt. programme themes	Sec. 2.2-2.3, 2.7, 3.1
	iii) the relevant GEF focal areas, strategic priorities and operational programme(s)? (if appropriate)	HS: Yes	Same as above.
	iv) Stakeholder priorities and needs?	S: Supports CTNBio and operational NBF needs.	Sec. 2.3-2.4, 2.5
Overall rating for Relevance		**S (Satisfactory)**	
Intended Results and Causality			
Are the objectives realistic?		S: Yes, although influenced by	Sec. 3.2

	external factors – political, institutional - outside project control	
Are the causal pathways from project outputs [goods and services] through outcomes [changes in stakeholder behaviour] towards impacts clearly and convincingly described? Is there a clearly presented Theory of Change or intervention logic for the project?	U: ToC analysis and causal pathways are not addressed in project document.	N/A
Is the timeframe realistic? What is the likelihood that the anticipated project outcomes can be achieved within the stated duration of the project?	S: Timeframe was realistic assuming efficient start-up and delivery without delays to avoid presidential elections	Appendix 5
Are the activities designed within the project likely to produce their intended results	S: Yes, although further public awareness activities and transfer of results to new authorities was needed.	
Are activities appropriate to produce outputs?	S: Activities are generally well articulated to outputs in general	Sec. 3.3, Appendix 4
Are activities appropriate to drive change along the intended causal pathway(s)	S: Yes, although outcomes and goal depend on external approval and enactment of key project deliverables.	Same as above.
Are impact drivers, assumptions and the roles and capacities of key actors and stakeholders clearly described for each key causal pathway?	U: These are not described I the project document.	N/A
Overall rating for Intended Results and causality		
Efficiency	HS: Most outputs were delivered by end of project. Some are of high technical quality.	Sec. 3.4
Are any cost- or time-saving measures proposed to bring the project to a successful conclusion within its programmed budget and timeframe?	MU: Not apparent.	N/A
Does the project intend to make use of / build upon pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. to increase project efficiency?	HS: Designation of CTNBio as NEA facilitates inter-institutional coordination and collaboration.	Sec. 4
Overall rating for Efficiency	**S (Satisfactory)**	
Sustainability / Replication and Catalytic effects		

Does the project design present a strategy / approach to sustaining outcomes / benefits?		MS: Sustainability considerations are addressed but a specific strategy or approach is not articulated.	Sec. 3.8
Does the design identify the social or political factors that may influence positively or negatively the sustenance of project results and progress towards impacts? Does the design foresee sufficient activities to promote government and stakeholder awareness, interests, commitment and incentives to execute, enforce and pursue the programmes, plans, agreements, monitoring systems etc. prepared and agreed upon under the project?		MU: Not enough attention given to stakeholder awareness or transfer/socialization of project results, partly due to time constraints and not lack of intent. Sustainability depends largely on political commitment and could be affected by change of government.	Sec. 3.8
If funding is required to sustain project outcomes and benefits, does the design propose adequate measures / mechanisms to secure this funding?		MS: Self-sustaining mechanisms are foreseen for online LMO application/information systems through user fees and SFE support. Otherwise dependent on government budgetary commitment and continued GEF support.	Sec. 3.8, Appendix 4
Are there any financial risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project results and onward progress towards impact?		S: Financial risks exist and are identified	Sec. 3.5
Does the project design adequately describe the institutional frameworks, governance structures and processes, policies, sub-regional agreements, legal and accountability frameworks etc. required to sustain project results?		S: Yes, in terms of the government institutions that would assume new biosafety functions under the proposed legislation/policies	Sec. 2.4.2.5, 5
Does the project design identify environmental factors, positive or negative, that can influence the future flow of project benefits? Are there any project outputs or higher level results that are likely to affect the environment, which, in turn, might affect sustainability of project benefits?		HS: Environmental factors are addressed, and project outputs/results are likely to have a positive environmental effect. Environmental and social safeguards are briefly described.	Sec. 3.1,3.11
Does the project design foresee adequate measures to catalyze behavioural changes in terms of use and application by the relevant stakeholders of (e.g.):	i) technologies and approaches show-cased by the demonstration projects;	S: Digitized LMO application and info system demonstrated to importers and audit companies	
	ii) strategic programmes and plans developed	MS: A public awareness and mainstreaming strategy was foreseen. Draft programmes and plans were consulted with policymakers and legislators. Insufficient attention is given to this aspect in view of the highly polarized perceptions on LMOs	Sec. 5

		and transgenics.	
	iii) assessment, monitoring and management systems established at a national and sub-regional level	MU: Not foreseen outside of the digitized LMO application and information mgmnt. system at national level, and creation of project NCC .	Sec. 4, 5
Does the project design foresee adequate measures to contribute to institutional changes? [An important aspect of the catalytic role of the project is its contribution to institutional uptake or mainstreaming of project-piloted approaches in any regional or national demonstration projects]		HS: Project components prioritize legal and policy proposals to formalize/expand biosafety functions among NCAs, combined with capacity building.	Sec. 3.3, 3.4, Appendix 4
Does the project design foresee adequate measures to contribute to policy changes (on paper and in implementation of policy)?		HS: Same as above.	Same as above.
Does the project design foresee adequate measures to contribute to sustain follow-on financing (catalytic financing) from Governments, the GEF or other donors?		MU: Issue not addressed in depth, but is recognized as a risk. It was assumed that if BS legislation is approved, budgeting would follow.	Sec. 3.8
Does the project design foresee adequate measures to create opportunities for particular individuals or institutions ("champions") to catalyze change (without which the project would not achieve all of its results)?		S: To the extent that the new legislation empowers and operationalizes institutional biosafety mandates for NCAs	Sec. 3.9. 4, Appendix 4
Are the planned activities likely to generate the level of ownership by the main national and regional stakeholders necessary to allow for the project results to be sustained?		S: Project implementation arrangements and work plan are conducive towards ownership. Proposed legislation and policies would ensure budgetary support if approved. There is a risk of turnover of government partners given scheduled elections.	Sec. 3.4, 4, 5, Apppendix 4
Overall rating for Sustainability / Replication and Catalytic effects		**S: Satisfactory**	
Risk identification and Social Safeguards			
Are critical risks appropriately addressed?		S: Yes	Sec. 3.5
Are assumptions properly specified as factors affecting achievement of project results that are beyond the control of the project?		S: Political commitment and continuity are identified as assumptions/risks that may affect project achievement.	Sec. 3.4, 3.5
Are potentially negative environmental, economic		MS: Potentially negative social	Sec. 3.5,

and social impacts of projects identified?	scenarios are acknowledged with NGO opposition. Yet the safeguards to prevent this from happening are not developed.	3.11
Overall rating for Risk identification and Social Safeguards	**S: Satisfactory**	
Governance and Supervision Arrangements		
Is the project governance model comprehensive, clear and appropriate?	HS: Institutional arrangements are described in detail	Sec. 4
Are roles and responsibilities clearly defined?	S: Yes, as noted above	Same as above
Are supervision / oversight arrangements clear and appropriate?	MU: Oversight by CTNBio members assumed. Specific ToRs for NCC not included. Reference is made to Monitoring Plan to guide oversight.	Sec. 4, 6
Overall rating for Governance and Supervision Arrangements	**S: Satisfactory**	
Management, Execution and Partnership Arrangements	S: Satisfactory	Sec. 4
Have the capacities of partner been adequately assessed?	HS: Described in detail under Stakeholder Mapping section	Sec. 2.5
Are the execution arrangements clear?	S: Satisfactory	Sec. 3.1, 3.4
Are the roles and responsibilities of internal and external partners properly specified?	MS: Moderately Satisfactory	
Overall rating for Management, Execution and Partnership Arrangements	**S: Satisfactory**	
Financial Planning / budgeting		
Are there any obvious deficiencies in the budgets / financial planning	MU: Budget allocation for NPC unrealistically low (in spite of GEF guidelines concerning management. costs)	Budget
Cost effectiveness of proposed resource utilization as described in project budgets and viability in respect of resource mobilization potential	S: Resource utilization is cost-effective and there is resource mobilization potential	Sec. 3.1, 3.4, 3.7, 3.8

Financial and administrative arrangements including flows of funds are clearly described	MS: Reference is made but not in-depth	Sec. 4, Appendix 8
Overall rating for Financial Planning / budgeting	**MS: Moderately Satisfactory**	
Monitoring		
Does the logical framework: • capture the key elements in the Theory of Change for the project? • have 'SMART' indicators for outcomes and objectives? • have appropriate 'means of verification' • adequately identify assumptions	S: SMART indicators and means of verification are included and are detailed. Elements of ToC are not captured, other than the listing of assumptions that would be included under a ToC analysis	Appendix
Are the milestones and performance indicators appropriate and sufficient to foster management towards outcomes and higher level objectives?	S: Yes. Milestones and performance indicators are conducive towards outcomes and objectives.	Same as above.
Is there baseline information in relation to key performance indicators?	S: Baselines data used under Incremental Cost Analysis can be applied to most performance indicators	Appendix 3
Has the method for the baseline data collection been explained?	S: Baseline data for gene introgression to be collected under Component 1. The public communication strategy developed by the WB is expected to yield baseline data for the proposed BS national education strategy. Further attention not given in project document.	Sec. 2.7
Has the desired level of achievement (targets) been specified for indicators of Outcomes and are targets based on a reasoned estimate of baseline??	S: Outcomes listed in Results Framework include indicators based on baseline knowledge	Appendix 4
Has the time frame for monitoring activities been specified?	S: Timeframe is specified by trimester	Sec. 5, 6
Are the organisational arrangements for project level progress monitoring clearly specified	S: Yes, in the Monitoring Plan	Sec. 6
Has a budget been allocated for monitoring project progress in implementation against outputs and outcomes?	S: Monitoring activities are budgeted and charged to a budget line	Appendix 7

Overall, is the approach to monitoring progress and performance within the project adequate?	S: Yes, combining NCC oversight and UNEP monitoring	Sec. 4, 6
Overall rating for Monitoring	**S: Satisfactory**	
Evaluation		
Is there an adequate plan for evaluation?	HS: Detailed evaluation ToRs are annexed. Consultant to be accompanied by EO focal point.	Sec. 6
Has the time frame for Evaluation activities been specified?	HS: Same as above	Sec. 6
Is there an explicit budget provision for mid term review and terminal evaluation?	S: Budgets are included	Appendix 7
Is the budget sufficient?	S: Budget is adequate.	Same as above.
Overall rating for Evaluation	**HS: Highly Satisfactory**	

Annex 4

Project Costs and Co-financing Tables

Co- financing (Type/Source)	IA own Financing (mill (US$)		Government (US$)		Other US$)		Total (mill US$)		Total Disbursed (mill US$)
	Planned	*Actual*	*Planned*	*Actual*	*Planned*	*Actual*	*Planned*	*Actual*	
– Grants	718,873	718,873					718,873	718,873	718,873
– Loans – Credits									
– Equity investments									
– In-kind support			762,232	851,110			762,232	851,110	851,110
– Other (*)									
Totals							1,481,105	1,569,983	1,569,983

Component	Estimated cost at design (US$)	Actual Cost (US$)	Expenditure Ratio (Actual/Planned)
10. Project Personnel	269,043	294,650.09	1.09
20. Sub-Contracts	67,141	81,000	1.29
30. Training	239,000	I30,176	0.54
40. Equipment & Premises	63,089	83,582.58	1.3
50. Miscellaneous	80,600	129,464	1.6
TOTAL:	**718,873**	**718,873**	1

Source: Anubis
Note: Final expenditures by thematic component are not available.

Annex 5

Review of Outcomes towards Impact (ROtI) Ratings

Likelihood of Achieving Intermediate States and Impacts

Outputs	Outcomes	Ratings	Intermediate States	Ratings	Impacts	Ratings
1.1.1 Biosafety regulation for FFPs 1.1.2 Biosafety regulation) for LMOs trans - boundary movements 1.2.1 National Policy and Action Plan submitted 1.2.2 National Reports to the CPB, prepared 1.2.3 National position paper for COP/MOP-5 1.2.4 Units and personnel in charge of biosafety identified 1.3.1 List of agricultural companies/ farmers known to use LMOs or that are potentially affected by LMO use.	1.1 A comprehensive regulatory framework for biosafety is in place, providing the architecture of an integrated administrative and management system. 1.2 New policy in biosafety and its action plan is translates into ongoing NCA involvement in CPB implementation. 1.3 Legal and sectorial capacity is built for considering cases of liability and redress (L&R) and implementing a co-existence regime.	A A B	Comprehensive regulatory framework is in place New policy in biosafety and its Action Plan is translated into ongoing CNA involvement in CPB implementation Inclusion of the Ministry of Health and SENASA into the project LMO decisions are based on risk assessments, timely, transparent and coordinated	C C A A	Moderately Likely. Moderately Likely. Highly Likely. Moderately Likely	AC AC AA AB
2.1.1 Permanent administrative structures in	2.1 NCAs needs are addressed	A	LMO decisions are based on risk	B	Moderately likely.	AB

all NCAs for handling LMOs 2.1.2 Forms and formats for LMOs requests and notifications 2.1.3 Biosafety measures and standards established for each sector 2.1.4 BCH informed of national decisions, new procedures and standards 2.1.5 Information available on procedures, requirements, standards and ongoing processes 2.1.6 Financial mechanisms to support the administrative system 2.1.7 Simplified procedures for LMOs authorization 2.2.1 Coordinated and consolidated LMOs evaluation and decision-making mechanisms 2.2.2 LMOs requests processed efficiently 2.2.3 Biosafety decision-makers and advisory structures appointed 2.2.4 Periodic administrative evaluation of LMOs sectorial authorization processes 2.2.5 Procedures for review of decisions	so that administrative capacities are in place to handle requests, make informed decisions, and communicate decisions to applicants and the BCH 2.2 Decisions on LMOs are based on risk assessments, timely, transparent and coordinated, and avoid duplicity or unnecessary bureaucracy.	B	assessments, timely, transparent and coordinated Operation of a digital platform for the processing and tracking of applications, based on solid methodology and promoting transparency, hosted by the SFE, and sustained as a government initiative with resources allocated to its maintenance	A	Moderately Likely	BA
3.1.1 CAN -specific lists of personnel to be trained 3.1.2 Mechanisms to encourage the integration of civil observers into official monitoring and inspection plans 3.1.3 Official auditors and civil observers selected and trained 3.1.4 Annual inspection Plan for authorized LMOs is approved. 3.2.1 NCA-specific lists of personnel to be trained	3.1 Capacity to monitor and ensure regulatory compliance is increased. 3.2 Sufficient technical and human capacities are put in place for risk assessment and management for decision-making, considering both traditional and new generation	A A	LMO decisions are based on risk assessments, timely, transparent and coordinated (Outcome 2.2) Inclusion of the Ministry of Health and SENASA in the project.	B A	Moderately Likely Highly Likely.	AB AA

3.2.2 Collaboration agreements for design and implementation of training activities 3.2.3 NCA professionals trained in specific areas of biosafety such as risk assessment and management of LMOs 3.2.4 Decision-makers briefed on the basics of biosafety and ongoing progress of the CPB 3.2.5 Leaflet for risk-benefit analysis and LMO management is available on decision-making process. 3.3.1 NCA-specific quarantine and customs personnel selected and trained 3.3.2 Approved forms for identifying LMOs subject to transboundary movements	LMOs. 3.3 Transboundary movements of LMOs will occur in accordance with the CPB, and in a manner that is understood and accepted by the private sector (exporters /importers)	A	New regulations and procedures are approved and disseminated.	B	Moderately Likely.	AB
4.1.1 Draft Education Strategy on LMOs and biosafety (TEACH: Training and Education in AgrobioteCHnology) and its Action Plan for carrying out long-term formal and informal educational actions for dissemination of biosafety 4.1.2 Cooperation agreements between NCAs, biotechnology industry, international organizations and/or other governments agencies 4.1.3 Improved knowledge and understanding of Ministry of Education advisors regarding safe use of biotechnology. 4.2.1 Internal tracking system for LMO requests 4.2.2 Informative dissemination material by sector 4.2.3 Mechanisms for public participation prior to granting LMOs authorizations is augmented 4.2.4 Biosafety guidelines, protocols, and	4.1 Public awareness regarding the safe use of LMOs in Costa Rica is augmented through a formal educational strategy 4.2 Public information sharing is promoted through greater access to biosafety information.	B	The Education Ministry has the political will to support the educational strategy for biosafety awareness and mobilizes resources to implement it in schools.	A	Moderately Likely	AB

updated data on national biotechnology and LMOs use (especially in the agricultural sector) are on the National Biosafety Webpage and/or BCH 4.2.5 Media tools and other informal education initiatives reproduced and expanded for other sectors						
	Rating Justification: Most outcomes are well designed and directed at specific entities, but are only partially achieved because project results have not been adopted, budgeted or implemented.		**Rating Justification:** Outcomes lead to Intermediate States but IS were only partially met due to assumptions and other factors outside the projects control.		**Rating Justification:** Likelihood of impact is moderate given change of government, uncertainties regarding the commitment of new authorities, legal issues and divided public opinion.	

Outcome Ratings:

*A***:** The project's intended outcomes were delivered, and were designed to feed into a continuing process, with specific allocation of responsibilities after project funding**.**

B: The project's intended outcomes were delivered, and were designed to feed into a continuing process, but with no prior allocation of responsibilities after project funding.

C: The project's intended outcomes were delivered, and were not designed to feed into a continuing process, with specific allocation of responsibilities after project funding**.**

D: The project's intended outcomes were not delivered.

Annex 6

Persons Interviewed

Alex May Montero, CTNBio President, alexmaymontero@gmail.com

Jorge Madriz, National Project Coordinator, madrizj@gmail.com

Magda Gonzales, SFE Director, mgonzalez@sfe.go.cr

Leda Madrigal, SFE Head of Laboratory Department, lmadrigal@sfe.go.cr

Marcela Jimenez, SFE Administrator of LMO Application and Information Management System, majimenez@sfe.go.cr

Tania Lopez, Vice Minister of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG), **personal email not available, not in the government any longer**

Lorena Guevara, Vice Minister of Environment and Energy (MINAE), **personal email not available, not in the government any longer**

Esteban Cerdas, Ministry of Health representative to CTNBio *, ecerqui@gmail.com

Walter Quirós, Director National Seed Office representative to CTNBio, wquiros@ofinase.go.cr

Sylvie Bralbant, SENASA, sbraibant@senasa.go.cr

Roland Mora, SENASA, rmora@senasa.go.cr

Jimmy Ruiz, OIRSA, jruiz@oirsa.or.cr

Marta Valdéz, Biology Faculty., University of Costa Rica, marta.valdez@ucr.ac.cr

Pedro Rocha, IICA focal point, pedro.rocha@iica.int

Renato Joya, IICA Education Consultant, renato.joya@gmail.com

Jaime Garcia, Biodiversity Coordination Network (RCB) *, biodiversidadcr@gmail.com

Marianela Araya, UNEP Task Manager *, marianela.araya@unep.org

Lydia Eibl-Kamolleh, UNEP Fund Manager *, Lydia.eibl-kamolleh@unep.org

Monica Elizondo, Council of Food Industries, melizondo@cacia.org

Graciela Saborío, Bayer S.A., **email not available, not working in Bayer any longer**

Adrian Vargas, DPL Seed Co., adrian.vargas@monsanto.com *skype interview

Annex 7

Evaluation Terms of Reference

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP/GEF project
"Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework of Costa Rica"

I. PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

1. Project General Information

Table 1. Project summary

GEF project ID:	3629	**IMIS number:**	GFL/-2328-2716-4B61
Focal Area(s):	BD1/BD-SP6	**GEF OP #:**	
GEF Strategic Priority/Objective:	Biodiversity	**GEF approval date:**	18 June 2010
UNEP approval date:	8 October 2010	**First Disbursement:**	28 November 2010
Actual start date:	10 October 2010	**Planned duration:**	48 months
Intended completion date:	10 October 2013	**Actual or Expected completion date:**	10 March 2014
Project Type:	MSP	**GEF Allocation:**	US$ 718,873
PDF GEF cost:		**PDF co-financing*:**	US$ 478,222[28]
Expected MSP/FSP Co-financing:	US$ 762,232	**Total Cost:**	US$ 1,498,8825 (with USD 9,320 PPG included)
Mid-term review/eval. (planned date):	March 2012	**Terminal Evaluation (actual date):**	March 2014
Mid-term review/eval. (actual date):	December 2012	**No. of revisions:**	5
Date of last Steering Committee meeting:	April 2013	**Date of last Revision:**	9 May 2013
Disbursement as of 30 June 2013:	US$2,685,195	**Date of financial closure:**	September 2015
Date of Completion:	3 May 2014	**Actual expenditures reported as of 30 June 2013:**	US$ 478,222[29]
Total co-financing realized as 30 June 2013	US$ 612,710	**Actual expenditures entered in IMIS as 30 June 2013:**	US$ 1,498,8825 (with US$ 9,320 PPG included)
Leveraged financing:	US$ 762,232		

2. Project rationale

1. Latin America is regarded as one of the richest regions in terms of biological diversity. Its natural resources and landscapes have allowed the region to build a large production platform and become one of the biggest food producing regions of the world. Since agriculture was broadly adopted in Latin America several centuries ago, it still represents

[28] This represents final PDF-A & PDF-B co-financing ($418,100 + $330,122) which totaled $478,222, rather than $414,299 which was reflected at the time of endorsement. Total Cost has been adjusted upwards accordingly.
[29] This represents final PDF-A & PDF-B co-financing ($418,100 + $330,122) which totaled $478,222, rather than $414,299 which was reflected at the time of endorsement. Total Cost has been adjusted upwards accordingly.

today a core component of region's economy. The region produced in 2007 alone more than 1 253 million tonnes in agricultural goods, across 187.3.

2. Several Central American countries, including Costa Rica, have become aware of the costs and benefits of protecting their natural resources from hypothetical threats to biodiversity, particularly considering the potential of biotechnology and the likelihood that further developments may gradually include more animals and tropical crops. As a widely farming country, but also largely dependent on commodity imports, Costa Rica is convinced of the importance of carefully balancing its development goals in a way that will both benefit agriculture and preserve its natural resource base.

3. The project intended to help consolidate Costa Rica's national capacity for the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on biosafety. The Government of Costa Rica, through its National Technical Commission, stakeholders and national competent authorities identified the elements of a long-term national plan on Biosafety, and placed a high priority on developing a framework, as reflected in its National Development Plan, by promoting research on biodiversity friendly goods, including supplies, demands, barriers and opportunities. This project planned to address short and medium-term aspects of the national biosafety framework related to the trans-boundary movements, in compliance with the context of the Cartagena Protocol and other international agreements.

4. The project was designed to ensure a high level of coordination and synergy with the WB-GEF sub-regional project, and builds on the experience accrued in Costa Rica on public health, plant and animal health and biodiversity conservation efforts, especially the biodiversity enabling activities, and promotes cross-sector synergies.

5. In order to implement Costa Rica's National Biosafety Framework and to fulfil the country's obligations as a Party to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB); Costa Rica began working towards this goal through the UNEP-GEF Project "Development of a National Biosafety Framework" (NBF), as a result of which a draft biosafety law was prepared and the ratification of the Cartagena Protocol was attained. In addition, Costa Rica implemented the Biosafety Clearing House mechanism, through the UNEP-GEF Project "Building Capacity for effective participation in the Biosafety Clearing House" (BCH)

6. As a next step, Costa Rica therefore needed to establish a policy in Biosafety, as well as specific regulations, particularly concerning Living Modified Organisms (LMOs) intended for Food, Feed or Processing (FFPs) in accordance with the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB). It was also necessary to establish regulations in human and animal health. In this field of work, cross-sector regulations as well as in-country coordination needed to be enhanced in order to integrate other Ministries into the processes of evaluation, authorization and inspection of FFPs and other LMOs in the livestock, industrial and bioremediation sectors. In addition, biosafety regulations needed to be harmonized with the legislation, as well as with commercial and social considerations, in line with the CPB.

7. The project aimed not only to allow Costa Rica to conclude efforts initiated through prior initiatives, but also to achieve sustainability for CPB implementation, by creating sufficient capacities, tools, and establishing a permanent mandate in National Competent Authorities (NCAs), which would allow the country to make technical and management decisions that will ensure greater safeguards to the environment as well as human and animal health. At the project development stage, LMOs had been introduced in the agricultural sector at an experimental scale or for seed production purposes, but their continued use, up-scaling or commercial production for food and feed purposes were to be implemented.

3. Project objectives and components

8. The overall **goal** of the Project was to have a feasible and transparent national biosafety framework for Costa Rica in place by the year 2012 (and subsequently moved to 2014), according to national development priorities and international agreements. The goal of the project appeared to have become even more relevant because of the entry into force of various free trade agreements, the growing concern of civil society for the protection of the environment and the country's need to increase agricultural production.

9. The project **objective** was to develop the national capacities in biosafety required to implement the evaluation and strengthening of the legal and regulatory framework, to build capacity and establish an operational system for risk assessment and monitoring and to improve communication, public perception and participation in biosafety of all relevant stakeholders. The development of national capacities in these areas aimed to consolidate the national framework for biosafety management. Specific objectives included:

• The establishment of mechanisms, either legal or administrative, for inter-ministerial coordination and decision making at the national level that would permit the safe environmental release, commercial production and trans boundary movements of LMOs in compliance with the obligations of the Cartagena Protocol.
• The establishment of a core capacity in biosafety to enhance decision making in each of the participating
ministries and their related institutions.
• The establishment of information sharing mechanisms involved along the educational system in order to raise public awareness on biosafety issues.

10. The project **purpose** was to contribute to the safe use of biotechnology and reduce the potential risk associated to LMO use on biodiversity, human and animal health.

11. The structure of this project comprised four components: putting in place and applying a national biosafety legal framework and promoting a biosafety policy in accordance with the CPB (Component 1); Making operational an administrative system adequate to fulfill obligations to the CPB and strengthen the decision-making base and its mechanisms (Component 2); Building technical capacity in NCAs and related institutions for comprehensive biosafety management (Component 3); Improved communication, education, public perception and participation in biosafety of all relevant stakeholders (Component 4).

12. ***Component 1***
This component intended to combine regulatory, training and political tasks. Co-financing resources were planned to be used to carry out an in-depth evaluation of the effectiveness of Costa Rica's current legal framework. Intensive, short-term trainings (funded by collaborators) on the issues and risks surrounding LMO were to be offered to lawmakers. A key task was planned to be the preparation and adoption of a unifying biosafety policy with which to bring on board new National Competent Authorities.

13. ***Component 2***
This component aimed to develop a multiagency mechanism to specifically address administrative procedures in biosafety. This mechanism was intended to integrate personnel from the main NCAs, relying on the legal and institutional base contemplated in Component 1, with an independent budget. The component objective was to facilitate LMOs applications through simplification and standardization.

An important outcome of this component was intended to be the testing of the system through the handling of least one request (either mock or real) by each NCA, to evaluate the

quality of risk assessment data, information management, coordination, deadlines, and communication, to result in a single joint decision (mock or real).

14. ***Component 3:***
This component aimed to train decision-makers and regulators in risk assessment and risk management under the legal framework, which should have included liability and redress measures, and novel LMOs. The capacity developed was planned to increase the national potential to monitor in-country movements of LMOs. More general training was to be imparted to field technicians from the main Ministries, and to customs and quarantine officers.

15. ***Component 4:***
This component aimed to create mechanisms for processing, presenting and analyzing scientific and technical information obtained from international sources, research centres and sub-regional initiatives (especially environmental data and methodologies). It also planned to carry out outreach activities oriented towards rural collaborators, farmers and other LMO user groups, to increase the likelihood of compliance with national legislation. However the project did not plan to carry out many open events or informal activities for raising awareness or for outreach, as these are expected to ensue from WB-GEF project.

The preparation of a strategy, to be implemented after the end of the project, for Training and Education in AgrobioteCHnology (TEACH), should have allowed the country to have a comprehensive programme for carrying out formal and informal, long-term education, capacity-building and awareness-raising in biosafety. Exploring financing options for this strategy was intended to be a key task for this component.

Table 2 summarizes the project components, their objectives and the expected outputs.

Table 2. Project objectives, expected outcomes and outputs

Components / objectives	**Outcomes**	**Outputs**
3. Putting in place and applying a national biosafety legal framework and promoting a biosafety policy in accordance with the CPB	3.1. A comprehensive regulatory framework for biosafety is in place, providing the architecture of an integrated administrative and management system. 3.2. New policy in biosafety and its action plan is translates into ongoing NCA involvement in CPB implementation. 3.3. Legal and sectorial capacity is built for considering cases of liability and redress (L&R) and implementing a co-existence regime.	1.1.1 Biosafety regulation (/technical norms) for LMOs use in food, feed and processing, 1.1.2 Biosafety regulation (/technical norms) for LMOs in trans boundary movements (transit, identification, etc) 1.2.1 National Policy and Action Plan (submitted) 1.2.2 National Reports to the CPB, prepared involving with at least 2 NCAs 1.2.3 National position paper for COP/MOP-5 1.2.4 Units and personnel in charge of biosafety are identified 1.3.1 List of agricultural companies and farmers known to use LMOs in the country, or that are potentially affected by LMO use. 1.3.2 Survey analysis on sectorial knowledge regarding coexistence and L&R 1.3.3 Analysis on the implications of liability and redress (L&R) from the perspective of different LMO users 1.3.4 Draft guidelines for LMO users on agricultural coexistence 1.3.5 Regulatory proposal for L&R 1.3.6 Workshops and informative materials on coexistence, with takes into account CPB decisions

		related 1.3.7 Position documents on L&R for COP/MOP-5 and COP/MOP-6
4. Making operational and administrative system to fulfil obligations to the CPB and strengthen the decision-making base and its mechanisms.	2.1 NCAs needs are addressed so that administrative capacities are in place to handle requests, make informed decisions, and communicate decisions to applicants and the BCH 2.2 Decisions on LMOs are based on risk assessments, timely, transparent and coordinated, and avoid duplicity or unnecessary bureaucracy.	2.1.1 Permanent administrative structures in all NCAs for handling LMOs requests and notifications 2.1.2 Forms and formats for LMOs requests and notifications 2.1.3 Biosafety measures and standards established for each sector 2.1.4 BCH informed of national decisions, new procedures and standards 2.1.5 Information available upon request on procedures, requirements, standards and ongoing processes 2.1.6 Financial mechanisms to support the administrative system 2.1.7 Simplified procedures for LMOs authorization 2.2.1 Coordinated and consolidated LMOs evaluation and decision-making mechanisms 2.2.2 LMOs requests processed efficiently 2.2.3 Biosafety decision-makers and advisory structures appointed 2.2.4 Periodic administrative evaluation of LMOs sectorial authorization processes 2.2.5 Procedures for review of decisions
3 Building technical capacity in NCAs and related institutions for comprehensive biosafety management	3.1 Capacity to monitor and ensure regulatory compliance is increased. 3.2 Sufficient technical and human capacities are put in place for risk assessment and management for decision-making, considering both traditional and new generation LMOs. 3.3 Transboundary movements of LMOs will occur in accordance with the CPB, and in a manner that is understood and accepted by the private sector (exporters /importers)	3.1.1 NCA-specific lists of personnel to be trained 3.1.2 Mechanisms to encourage the integration of civil observers into official monitoring and inspection plans – 3.1.3 Official auditors and civil observers selected and trained 3.1.4 Annual inspection Plan for authorized LMOs is approved. 3.2.1 NCA-specific lists of personnel to be trained 3.2.2 Collaboration agreements for design and implementation of training activities 3.2.3 NCA professionals trained in specific areas of biosafety such as risk assessment and management of LMOs 3.2.4 Decision-makers briefed on the basics of biosafety and ongoing progress of the CPB 3.2.5 Leaflet for risk-benefit analysis and LMO management is available on decision making process. 3.3.1 NCA-specific quarantine and customs personnel selected and trained 3.3.2 Approved forms for identifying LMOs subject to transboundary movements
4 Improved communication, education, public perception and participation in biosafety of all relevant stakeholders	4.1 Public awareness regarding the safe use of LMOs in Costa Rica is augmented through a formal educational strategy 4.2 Public information sharing is promoted through	4.1.1 Draft Education Strategy on LMOs and biosafety (TEACH: Training and Education in AgrobioteCHnology) and its Action Plan for carrying out long-term formal and informal educational actions for dissemination of biosafety 4.1.2 Cooperation agreements between NCAs, biotechnology industry, international organizations and/or other governments agencies 4.1.3 Improved knowledge and understanding of

	greater access to biosafety information. (BCH)	Ministry of Education advisors regarding safe use of biotechnology. 4.2.1 Internal tracking system for LMO requests 4.2.2 Informative dissemination material by sector 4.2.3 Mechanisms for public participation prior to granting LMOs authorizations is augmented 4.2.4 Biosafety guidelines, protocols, and updated data on national biotechnology and LMOs use (especially in the agricultural sector) are on the National Biosafety Webpage and/or BCH 4.2.5 Media tools and other informal education initiatives reproduced and expanded for other sectors

Source: Project document

4. Executing Arrangements

14. The ***Implementing Agency*** for the project was the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). In this capacity, UNEP had overall responsibility for the implementation of the project, project oversight, and co-ordination with other GEF projects.

15. As the government ***executing agency***, CTNBio (National Technical Commission for Biosafety) was responsible for the coordination and management of the project and monitored compliance with work plans as a basis for the execution of the project. The group was to ensure the political oversight of the project, and was to be ultimately responsible for overall project performance and delivery. Among its responsibilities were the approval and review of annual work plans and budgets, the designation of responsible persons or institutions for the execution of different component of the project, and any substantial changes. As secretariat to the CTNBio, and Costa Rica's National Focal Point to the CPB and BCH, the Biotechnology Programme of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG) provided the necessary technical and logistical support for the project and its overall coordination.

16. A ***Project Management Unit*** (PMU) was based within CTNBio to administrate the project. The PMU was responsible for the day to day coordination of project activities, and was required to draft the project´s annual work plan and annual budget, coordinate project implementation with key partners, keep records and files in order, and draft TOR's for project consultants and other consultancies commissioned by the project. The PMU was to follow the instructions and directives of the CTNBio. The PMU was intended to consist of a Project Manager and a Project Junior Staff provided by the SFE- Biotechnology Programme of the MAG.

17. The project's **National Coordination Committee** was intended to fulfil a role in facilitating participation and consultations with groups not represented within the CTNBio, such as other NCAs, representatives from social groups and NGOs, industrial sector representatives, members of the academic world and researchers. Its function as a "steering committee" should have ensured general project oversight, including reviewing the validity of the project and its objectives. This Committee was expected to hold quarterly sessions.

a. Project Cost and Financing

17. The GEF provided 48% of the external financing to the project (US$718,873). This put the project in the Middle-size Project (MSP) category. The project was expected to mobilize another US$762,232 in co-financing, mostly from the Government of Costa Rica. The estimated project costs at design stage and associated funding sources are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Estimated project cost

Project component	UNEP-GEF Budget (USD)	%	Government contribution (USD)	%	Total budget
Putting in place a national biosafety regulation and promoting a biosafety policy in accordance with the CPB.	179,365	51	175,000	49	354,365
Making of an operational and administrative system to fulfill obligations to the CPB and strengthen the decision processes - making base and its mechanisms.	111,394	48	120,000	52	231,394
Building technical capacity in NCAs and related institutions for comprehensive biosafety management.	182,394	46	212,130	54	394,524
Improved communication, education, public perception and participation in biosafety of all relevant stakeholders	108,677	46	126,000	54	234,677
Sub total	581,830		633,130		1,214,960
M&E costs	66,000				66,000
Project management	71,043		129,102		200,145
Total	**718,873**		**762,232**		**1,481,105**

Source: Appendix 1, project document

b. Implementation Issues

19. The Mid Term Review (MTR) was originally scheduled for March and it was carried out in December 2012. In general, according to the MTR, project activities had been undertaken on time and several key outputs had been achieved. However, due to various factors, some of the activities of the work plan had not been carried out. At the time of the MTR, a new work plan was being developed and new dates were proposed. According to the reviewer, the project was going to encounter delays, but not of a considerable magnitude.

20. The MTR noted that the major obstacle in implementing the project had been the slow advance and answer from some of the technical groups of the National Competent Authorities (NCAs) on the proposals on the legal and administrative system. It noted that officials appeared to be in a comfort zone, where more functions would have meant more work and therefore do not assume more responsibilities.

21. According to the MTR, the lack of a regional manager for eight months, who was responsible for guiding the administrative and financial processes, and a delay in the third cash advance requested in October 2011, but sent in February 2012, meant that some activities did not continue normally. The project effectively stopped from January 15 to May 1, 2012. It was therefore proposed that the project be extended to 31 March 2014.

22. Outcome 3 of component 1, the building of Legal and sectorial capacity for considering cases of liability and redress (L&R) and the implementing of a co-existence regime, was ranked as unsatisfactory in the last PIR and it was noted that any discussion and activity on L&R would be postponed until a national discussion could be carried out, outside of the scope of project.

c. Objective and Scope of the Evaluation

1. In line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy[30], the UNEP Evaluation Manual[31] and the Guidelines for GEF Agencies in Conducting Terminal Evaluations[32], the Terminal Evaluation of the Project "Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework of Costa Rica" will be undertaken upon completion of the project to assess project 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 has two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP, the GEF and their executing partners – CTNBIO and the national partners in particular. Therefore, the evaluation will identify lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation and implementation. It will focus on the following sets of **key questions**, based on the project's expected outcomes, which may be expanded by the consultants as deemed appropriate:

(a) How and to what extent did the project succeed in developing and implementing a framework for biosafety? To what extent is this leading to an active involvement of the NCAs in the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB)?

(b) To what extent has the project had an impact on the development of capacity for the consideration of cases of liability and redress and the implementation of a co-existence regime? As mentioned in point 22, this component seems to have encountered major obstacles towards realisation; the evaluation should therefore investigate the causes and provide lessons for future projects.

(c) How and to what extent did the project build administrative capacities to handle requests, make informed decisions and communicate them to applicants and the BCH? To what extent has the project ensured that decisions on LMOs are based on risk assessments, are timely, transparent and coordinated, and avoid duplicity or unnecessary bureaucracy?

(d) To what extent did the project increase the capacity to monitor and ensure regulatory compliance? Are sufficient technical and human capacities being put in place for risk assessment and management for decision-making, considering both traditional and new generation LMOs? Are trans boundary movements of LMOs occurring in accordance with the CPB, and in a manner that is understood and accepted by the private sector (exporters /importers)?

(e) To what extent has a formal educational strategy been contributing to increase public awareness? To what extent is this leading to a change in human behaviour? To what extent has the project contributed to increase information sharing through greater access to biosafety information? To what extent did the project succeed in securing the necessary funds to implement the educational strategy (see point 15)"

(f) To what extent did the delay in implementation affect the delivery of the project outcomes? The evaluation should highlight any lessons for future project management and design to minimise the risk or delay/project interruption.

d. Overall Approach and Methods

2. The Terminal Evaluation of the Project "Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework of Costa Rica" will be conducted by an independent consultant under the overall responsibility and management of the UNEP Evaluation Office (Nairobi), in consultation with the UNEP Task Manager (Panama), and the UNEP Fund Management Officer at UNEP/DEPI (Nairobi).

[30] http://www.unep.org/eou/StandardsPolicyandPractices/UNEPEvaluationPolicy/tabid/3050/language/en-US/Default.aspx

[31] http://www.unep.org/eou/StandardsPolicyandPractices/UNEPEvaluationManual/tabid/2314/language/en-US/Default.aspx

[32] http://www.thegef.org/gef/sites/thegef.org/files/documents/TE_guidelines7-31.pdf

3. It will be an in-depth evaluation using a participatory approach whereby key stakeholders are kept informed and consulted throughout the evaluation process. Both quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods will be used to determine project achievements against the expected outputs, outcomes and impacts.

4. The findings of the evaluation will be based on the following:

(a) A **desk review** of project documents and others including, but not limited to:

- Relevant background documentation, inter alia UNEP and GEF-4 policies, strategies and programmes pertaining to biosafety at the time of the project's approval;
- Project design documents; Annual Work Plans and Budgets or equivalent, revisions to the logical framework and project financing;
- Project reports such as progress and financial reports from the executing partners to the Project Management Unit (PMU) and from the PMU to UNEP; National Coordination Committee meeting minutes; annual Project Implementation Reviews and relevant correspondence;
- Documentation related to project outputs;
- Relevant material published, e.g. in journals and books

(b) **Interviews** with:

- UNEP Task Manager and Fund Management Officer and other relevant staff in UNEP related activities as necessary;
- Interviews with project management, National Coordination Committee and key partners to the extent possible;
- Stakeholders involved with this project, including NGOs, private sector, academia, national organizations and institutes, including National Competent Authorities which are not part of CTNBio but were deemed to have an important role in the planning and further implementation of activities (SENASA, INCOPESCA, CONAGEBIO, and Ministry of Health), regional and international organizations and civil society representatives, including rural communities to the extent possible;
- Relevant staff of GEF Secretariat and
- Representatives of the government and other organisations (if deemed necessary by the consultant).

(c) **Country visits**. The evaluation consultant will schedule a visit to Costa Rica to interview relevant stakeholders and the project team. The project team (national project coordinator and assistant), are employed by the project until 30 march 2014. As far as possible, initial interviews should therefore be scheduled before this date.

e. Key Evaluation principles

5. Evaluation findings and judgements should be based on **sound evidence and analysis**, clearly documented in the evaluation report. Information will be triangulated (i.e. verified from different sources) to the extent possible, and when verification was not possible, the single source will be mentioned. Analysis leading to evaluative judgements should always be clearly spelled out.

6. The evaluation will assess the project with respect to **a minimum set of evaluation criteria** grouped in six categories: (1) Strategic Relevance; (2) Attainment of objectives and planned result, which comprises the assessment of outputs achieved, effectiveness and likelihood of impact; (3) Sustainability and replication; (4) Efficiency; (5) Factors and processes affecting project performance, including preparation and readiness, implementation and management, stakeholder participation and public awareness, country ownership and driven-ness, financial planning and management, UNEP supervision and backstopping, and project monitoring and evaluation; and (6) Complementarity with the UNEP strategies and programmes. The evaluation consultants can propose other evaluation criteria as deemed appropriate.

7. **Ratings.** All evaluation criteria will be rated on a six-point scale. However, complementarity of the project with the UNEP strategies and programmes is not rated. Annex 3 provides detailed

guidance on how the different criteria should be rated and how ratings should be aggregated for the different evaluation criterion categories.

8. In attempting to attribute any outcomes and impacts to the project, the evaluators should consider the difference between *what has happened with and what would have happened without the project*. This implies that there should be consideration of the baseline conditions and trends in relation to the intended project outcomes and impacts. This also means that there should be plausible evidence to attribute such outcomes and impacts to the actions of the project. Sometimes, adequate information on baseline conditions and trends is lacking. In such cases this should be clearly highlighted by the evaluators, along with any simplifying assumptions that were taken to enable the evaluator to make informed judgements about project performance.

9. As this is a terminal evaluation, particular attention should be given to learning from the experience. Therefore, the "*Why?*" question should be at front of the consultants' minds all through the evaluation exercise. This means that the consultants needs to go beyond the assessment of "*what*" the project performance was, and make a serious effort to provide a deeper understanding of "*why*" the performance was as it was, i.e. of processes affecting attainment of project results (criteria under category 3). This should provide the basis for the lessons that can be drawn from the project. In fact, the usefulness of the evaluation will be determined to a large extent by the capacity of the consultants to explain "*why things happened*" as they happened and are likely to evolve in this or that direction, which goes well beyond the mere review of "*where things stand*" today.

f. Evaluation criteria

A. Strategic relevance

10. The evaluation will assess, in retrospect, whether the project's objectives and implementation strategies were consistent with: i) Sub-regional environmental issues and needs; ii) the UNEP mandate and policies at the time of design and implementation; and iii) the GEF Biodiversity focal area, strategic priorities and operational programme(s).

11. The evaluation will also assess whether the project objectives were realistic, given the time and budget allocated to the project, the baseline situation and the institutional context in which the project was to operate. It was already noted during the MTE that the budget appeared limited for the scale of activities proposed.

B. Achievement of Outputs

12. The evaluation will assess, for each component, the project's success in producing the programmed results as presented in Table 2 above, both in quantity and quality, as well as their usefulness and timeliness. Briefly explain the degree of success of the project in achieving its different outputs, cross-referencing as needed to more detailed explanations provided under Section F (which covers the processes affecting attainment of project objectives). The achievements under the regional and national demonstration projects will receive particular attention.

C. Effectiveness: Attainment of Objectives and Planned Results

13. The evaluation will assess the extent to which the project's objectives were effectively achieved or are expected to be achieved.

14. The evaluation will reconstruct the Theory of Change (ToC) of the project based on a review of project documentation and stakeholder interviews. The ToC of a project depicts the causal pathways from project outputs (goods and services delivered by the project) over outcomes (changes resulting from the use made by key stakeholders of project outputs) towards impact (changes in environmental benefits and living conditions). The ToC will also depict any intermediate changes required between project outcomes and impact, called intermediate states. The ToC further defines the external factors that influence change along the pathways, whether one result can lead to the next. These external

factors are either drivers (when the project has a certain level of control) or assumptions (when the project has no control).

15. The assessment of effectiveness will be structured in three sub-sections:

(a) Evaluation of the **achievement of direct outcomes as defined in the reconstructed ToC**. These are the first-level outcomes expected to be achieved as an immediate result of project outputs.

(b) Assessment of the **likelihood of impact** using a *Review of Outcomes to Impacts* (ROtI) approach as summarized in Annex 8 of the TORs. Appreciate to what extent the project has to date contributed, and is likely in the future to further contribute to changes in stakeholder behaviour as a result of the project's direct outcomes, and the likelihood of those changes in turn leading to changes in the natural resource base, benefits derived from the environment and human living conditions.

(c) Evaluation of the **achievement of the formal project overall objective, overall purpose, goals and component outcomes** using the project's own results statements as presented in original logframe and any later versions of the logframe. This sub-section will refer back where applicable to sub-sections (a) and (b) to avoid repetition in the report. To measure achievement, the evaluation will use as much as appropriate the indicators for achievement proposed in the Logical Framework Matrix (Logframe) of the project, adding other relevant indicators as appropriate. Briefly explain what factors affected the project's success in achieving its objectives, cross-referencing as needed to more detailed explanations provided under Section F.

D. Sustainability and replication

16. Sustainability is understood as the probability of continued long-term project-derived results and impacts after the external project funding and assistance ends. The evaluation will identify and assess the key conditions or factors that are likely to undermine or contribute to the persistence of benefits. Some of these factors might be direct results of the project while others will include contextual circumstances or developments that are not under control of the project but that may condition sustainability of benefits. The evaluation should ascertain to what extent follow-up work has been initiated and how project results will be sustained and enhanced over time. The reconstructed ToC will assist in the evaluation of sustainability.

17. Four aspects of sustainability will be addressed:

a) *Socio-political sustainability.* Are there any social or political factors that may influence positively or negatively the sustenance of project results and progress towards impacts? Is the level of ownership by the main national and regional stakeholders sufficient to allow for the project results to be sustained? Are there sufficient government and stakeholder awareness, interests, commitment and incentives to execute, enforce and pursue the programmes, plans, agreements, monitoring systems etc. prepared and agreed upon under the project? To what extent was the project able to reach out to the stakeholders identified in the design phase (academia, private sector, civil society including rural communities etc)?

b) *Financial resources.* To what extent are the continuation of project results and the eventual impact of the project dependent on continued financial support? What is the likelihood that adequate financial resources[33] will be or will become available to implement the programmes, plans, agreements, monitoring systems etc. prepared and agreed upon under the project? Are there any financial risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project results and onward progress towards impact? Was the project successful in identifying resources for the implementation of the of the educational strategy (see component 4, point 15)

c) *Institutional framework.* To what extent is the sustenance of the results and onward progress towards impact dependent on issues relating to institutional frameworks and

[33] Those resources can be from multiple sources, such as the public and private sectors, income generating activities, other development projects etc.

governance? 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? The MTE observed a certain difficulty in obtaining commitment from government authorities, to what extent was the project successful in securing such commitment?

d) *Environmental sustainability.* Are there any environmental factors, positive or negative, that can influence the future flow of project benefits? Are there any project outputs or higher level results that are likely to affect the environment, which, in turn, might affect sustainability of project benefits? Are there any foreseeable negative environmental impacts that may occur as the project results are being up-scaled?

18. **Catalytic role and replication**. The *catalytic role* of GEF-funded interventions is embodied in their approach of supporting the creation of an enabling environment and of investing in pilot activities which are innovative and showing how new approaches can work. UNEP and the GEF also aim to support activities that upscale new approaches to a national, regional or global level, with a view to achieve sustainable global environmental benefits. The evaluation will assess the catalytic role played by this project, namely to what extent the project has:

(a) *catalyzed behavioural changes* in terms of use and application by the relevant stakeholders of: i) technologies and approaches show-cased by the demonstration projects; ii) strategic programmes and plans developed; and iii) assessment, monitoring and management systems established at national and regional level;
(b) provided *incentives* (social, economic, market based, competencies etc.) to contribute to catalyzing changes in stakeholder behaviour;
(c) contributed to *institutional changes.* An important aspect of the catalytic role of the project is its contribution to institutional uptake or mainstreaming of project-piloted approaches in the regional and national demonstration projects;
(d) contributed to *policy changes* (on paper and in implementation of policy);
(e) contributed to sustained follow-on financing (*catalytic financing*) from Governments, the GEF or other donors;
(f) created opportunities for particular individuals or institutions ("*champions*") to catalyze change (without which the project would not have achieved all of its results).

19. *Replication*, in the context of GEF projects, is defined as lessons and experiences coming out of the project that are replicated (experiences are repeated and lessons applied in different geographic areas) or scaled up (experiences are repeated and lessons applied in the same geographic area but on a much larger scale and funded by other sources). The evaluation will assess the approach adopted by the project to promote replication effects and appreciate to what extent actual replication has already occurred or is likely to occur in the near future. What are the factors that may influence replication and scaling up of project experiences and lessons?

20. Considering the regional nature of the project, specific questions to be considered are the extent to which the project team developed an explicit plan for transferring lessons learned throughout the Caribbean and the extent to which the project attracted the attention and buy-in of decision makings in the project countries and at regional level.

E. Efficiency

21. The evaluation will assess the cost-effectiveness and timeliness of project execution. It will describe any cost- or time-saving measures put in place in attempting to bring the project as far as possible in achieving its results within its programmed budget and (extended) time. It will also analyse how delays, if any, have affected project execution, costs and effectiveness. Wherever possible, costs and time over results ratios of the project will be compared with that of other similar interventions. The evaluation will give special attention to efforts by the project teams to make use of/build upon pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. to increase project efficiency all within the context of project execution.

22. The project appears to have encountered efficiency related challenges in the form of a period of inactivity and late disbursement of funds. To what extent was the project efficiently managed and what lessons can be learnt for future projects? To what extent did these challenges have an impact on the delivery of project outcomes and the achievement of the project objective?

F. Factors and processes affecting project performance

23. **Preparation and readiness**. This criterion focusses on the quality of project design and preparation. Were project stakeholders[34] adequately identified? Were the project's objectives and components clear, practicable and feasible within its timeframe? Were the capacities of executing agencies properly considered when the project was designed? Was the project document clear and realistic to enable effective and efficient implementation? Were the partnership arrangements properly identified and the roles and responsibilities negotiated prior to project implementation? Were counterpart resources (funding, staff, and facilities) and enabling legislation assured? Were adequate project management arrangements in place? Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated in the project design? What factors influenced the quality-at-entry of the project design, choice of partners, allocation of financial resources etc.? Were GEF environmental and social safeguards considered when the project was designed[35]? Were sufficient components integrated into the project design to ensure the obtaining of commitment of government representatives? Were sufficient provisions integrated into project design to minimise delays in implementation?

24. **Project implementation and management**. This includes an analysis of implementation approaches used by the project, its management framework, the project's adaptation to changing conditions (adaptive management), the performance of the implementation arrangements and partnerships, relevance of changes in project design, and overall performance of project management. The evaluation will:

(a) Ascertain to what extent the project implementation mechanisms outlined in the project document have been followed and were effective in delivering project outputs and outcomes. Were pertinent adaptations made to the approaches originally proposed?
(b) Evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of project management by CTNBIO and how well the management was able to adapt to changes during the life of the project.
(c) Assess the role and performance of the units and committees established and the project execution arrangements at all levels.
(d) Assess the extent to which project management as well as national partners responded to direction and guidance provided by the National Coordination Committee and UNEP supervision recommendations.
(e) Identify operational and political / institutional problems and constraints that influenced the effective implementation of the project, and how the project partners tried to overcome these problems. How did the relationship between the project management team (CTNBIO) and the national coordinators develop?
(f) Assess the extent to which MTE recommendations were followed in a timely manner.
(g) Assess the extent to which the project implementation met GEF environmental and social safeguards requirements.

25. **Stakeholder participation and public awareness**. The term stakeholder should be considered in the broadest sense, encompassing project partners, government institutions, private interest groups, local communities etc. The TOC analysis should assist the evaluators in identifying the key stakeholders and their respective roles, capabilities and motivations in each step of the causal pathway from activities to achievement of outputs and outcomes to impact. The assessment will look at three related and often overlapping processes: (1) information dissemination between

[34] Stakeholders are the individuals, groups, institutions, or other bodies that have an interest or stake in the outcome of the project. The term also applies to those potentially adversely affected by the project.
[35] http://www.thegef.org/gef/node/4562

stakeholders, (2) consultation between stakeholders, and (3) active engagement of stakeholders in project decision making and activities. The evaluation will specifically assess:

(a) the approach(es) used to identify and engage stakeholders in project design and implementation. What were the strengths and weaknesses of these approaches with respect to the project's objectives and the stakeholders' motivations and capacities? What was the achieved degree and effectiveness of collaboration and interactions between the various project partners and stakeholders during design and implementation of the project?
(b) the degree and effectiveness of any public awareness activities that were undertaken during the course of implementation of the project; or that are built into the assessment methods so that public awareness can be raised at the time the assessments will be conducted;
(c) how the results of the project (strategic programmes and plans, monitoring and management systems, sub-regional agreements etc.) promote participation of stakeholders in decision making.

26. **Country ownership and driven-ness.** The evaluation will assess the performance of national partners involved in the project, as relevant:

(a) In how far has the national partner assumed responsibility for the project and provided adequate support to project execution, including the degree of cooperation received from the various public institutions involved in the project and the timeliness of provision of counter-part funding to project activities?
(b) To what extent has the national and regional political and institutional framework been conducive to project performance?
(c) How responsive were the national partners to CTNBIO coordination and guidance, and to UNEP supervision?

27. **Financial planning and management**. Evaluation of financial planning requires assessment of the quality and effectiveness of financial planning and control of financial resources throughout the project's lifetime. The assessment will look at actual project costs by activities compared to budget (variances), financial management (including disbursement issues), and co-financing. The evaluation will:

(a) Verify the application of proper standards (clarity, transparency, audit etc.) and timeliness of financial planning, management and reporting to ensure that sufficient and timely financial resources were available to the project and its partners;
(b) Appreciate other administrative processes such as recruitment of staff, procurement of goods and services (including consultants), preparation and negotiation of cooperation agreements etc. to the extent that these might have influenced project performance;
(c) Present to what extent co-financing has materialized as expected at project approval (see Table 1, 4 and 5). Report country co-financing to the project overall, and to support project activities at the national level in particular. The evaluation will provide a breakdown of final actual costs and co-financing for the different project components (see tables in Annex 4).
(d) Describe the resources the project has leveraged since inception and indicate how these resources are contributing to the project's ultimate objective. Leveraged resources are additional resources—beyond those committed to the project itself at the time of approval—that are mobilized later as a direct result of the project. Leveraged resources can be financial or in-kind and they may be from other donors, NGO's, foundations, governments, communities or the private sector.

28. Analyse the effects on project performance of irregularities (if any) in procurement, use of financial resources and human resource management, and the measures taken by CTNBIO or UNEP to prevent such irregularities in the future. Appreciate whether the measures taken were adequate.

29. **UNEP supervision and backstopping.** The purpose of supervision is to verify the quality and timeliness of project execution in terms of finances, administration and achievement of outputs and outcomes, in order to identify and recommend ways to deal with problems which arise during project

execution. Such problems may be related to project management but may also involve technical/institutional substantive issues in which UNEP has a major contribution to make. The evaluators should assess the effectiveness of supervision and administrative and financial support provided by UNEP including:

(a) The adequacy of project supervision plans, inputs and processes;
(b) The emphasis given to outcome monitoring (results-based project management);
(c) The realism and candour of project reporting and ratings (i.e. are PIR ratings an accurate reflection of the project realities and risks);
(d) The quality of documentation of project supervision activities; and
(e) Financial, administrative and other fiduciary aspects of project implementation supervision.

30. **Monitoring and evaluation**. The evaluation will include an assessment of the quality, application and effectiveness of project monitoring and evaluation plans and tools, including an assessment of risk management based on the assumptions and risks identified in the project document. The evaluation will appreciate how information generated by the M&E system during project implementation was used to adapt and improve project execution, achievement of outcomes and ensuring sustainability. M&E is assessed on three levels:

(a) *M&E Design*. Projects should have sound M&E plans to monitor results and track progress towards achieving project objectives. An M&E plan should include a baseline (including data, methodology, etc.), SMART indicators and data analysis systems, and evaluation studies at specific times to assess results. The time frame for various M&E activities and standards for outputs should have been specified. The evaluators should use the following questions to help assess the M&E design aspects:

- Quality of the project logframe (original and possible updates) as a planning and monitoring instrument; analyse, compare and verify correspondence between the original logframe in the Project Document, possible revised logframes and the logframe used in Project Implementation Review reports to report progress towards achieving project objectives;
- SMART-ness of indicators: Are there specific indicators in the logframe for each of the project objectives? Are the indicators measurable, attainable (realistic) and relevant to the objectives? Are the indicators time-bound?
- Adequacy of baseline information: To what extent has baseline information on performance indicators been collected and presented in a clear manner? Was the methodology for the baseline data collection explicit and reliable?
- Arrangements for monitoring: Have the responsibilities for M&E activities been clearly defined? Were the data sources and data collection instruments appropriate? Was the frequency of various monitoring activities specified and adequate? In how far were project users involved in monitoring?
- Arrangements for evaluation: Have specific targets been specified for project outputs? Has the desired level of achievement been specified for all indicators of objectives and outcomes? Were there adequate provisions in the legal instruments binding project partners to fully collaborate in evaluations?
- Budgeting and funding for M&E activities: Determine whether support for M&E was budgeted adequately and was funded in a timely fashion during implementation.

(b) *M&E Plan Implementation*. The evaluation will verify that:

- the M&E system was operational and facilitated timely tracking of results and progress towards projects objectives throughout the project implementation period;
- annual project reports and Progress Implementation Review (PIR) reports were complete, accurate and with well justified ratings;
- the information provided by the M&E system was used during the project to improve project performance and to adapt to changing needs.

(c) *Use of GEF Tracking Tools*. These are portfolio monitoring tools intended to roll up indicators from the individual project level to the portfolio level and track overall

portfolio performance in focal areas. Each focal area has developed its own tracking tool[36] to meet its unique needs. Agencies are requested to fill out at CEO Endorsement (or CEO approval for MSPs) and submit these tools again for projects at mid-term and project completion. The evaluation will verify whether UNEP has duly completed the relevant tracking tool for this project, and whether the information provided is accurate.

G. Complementarities with UNEP strategies and programmes

31. UNEP aims to undertake GEF funded projects that are aligned with its own strategies. The evaluation should present a brief narrative on the following issues:

(a) *Linkage to UNEP's Expected Accomplishments and POW 2010-2011 and 2012-2013.* The UNEP MTS specifies desired results in six thematic focal areas. The desired results are termed Expected Accomplishments. Using the completed ToC/ROtI analysis, the evaluation should comment on whether the project makes a tangible contribution to any of the Expected Accomplishments specified in the UNEP MTS. The magnitude and extent of any contributions and the causal linkages should be fully described. Whilst it is recognised that UNEP GEF projects designed prior to the production of the UNEP Medium Term Strategy 2010-2013 (MTS)[37] would not necessarily be aligned with the Expected Accomplishments articulated in those documents, complementarities may still exist and it is still useful to know whether these projects remain aligned to the current MTS.

(b) *Alignment with the Bali Strategic Plan (BSP)*[38]. The outcomes and achievements of the project should be briefly discussed in relation to the objectives of the UNEP BSP.

(c) *Gender*. Ascertain to what extent project design, implementation and monitoring have taken into consideration: (i) possible gender inequalities in access to and the control over natural resources; (ii) specific vulnerabilities of women and children to environmental degradation or disasters; and (iii) the role of women in mitigating or adapting to environmental changes and engaging in environmental protection and rehabilitation. Appreciate whether the intervention is likely to have any lasting differential impacts on gender equality and the relationship between women and the environment. To what extent do unresolved gender inequalities affect sustainability of project benefits?

(d) *South-South Cooperation.* This is regarded as the exchange of resources, technology, and knowledge between developing countries. Briefly describe any aspects of the project that could be considered as examples of South-South Cooperation.

g. The Consultants' Team

32. For this evaluation, the evaluation team will consist of one consultant. The consultant should have experience in project evaluation. A Master's degree or higher in the area of environmental sciences or a related field and at least 10 years' experience in environmental management, with a preference for specific expertise in the area of biosafety and biodiversity is required. Fluency in Spanish is necessary.

33. By undersigning the service contract with UNEP/UNON, the consultants certify that they have not been associated with the design and implementation of the project in any way which may jeopardize their independence and impartiality towards project achievements and project partner performance. In addition, they will not have any future interests (within six months after completion of the contract) with the project's executing or implementing units.

[36] http://www.thegef.org/gef/tracking_tools
[37] http://www.unep.org/PDF/FinalMTSGCSS-X-8.pdf
[38] http://www.unep.org/GC/GC23/documents/GC23-6-add-1.pdf

h. Evaluation Deliverables and Review Procedures

34. The evaluation consultant will prepare an **inception report** (see Annex 2(a) of TORs for Inception Report outline) containing a thorough review of the project context, project design quality, a draft reconstructed Theory of Change of the project, the evaluation framework and a tentative evaluation schedule.

35. The review of design quality will cover the following aspects (see Annex 9 for the detailed project design assessment matrix):

- Strategic relevance of the project
- Preparation and readiness (see paragraph 25);
- Financial planning (see paragraph 30);
- M&E design (see paragraph 33(a));
- Complementarities with UNEP strategies and programmes (see paragraph 34);
- Sustainability considerations and measures planned to promote replication and upscaling (see paragraph 23).

36. The inception report will also present a draft, desk-based reconstructed Theory of Change of the project. It is vital to reconstruct the ToC *before* the most of the data collection (review of reports, in-depth interviews, observations on the ground etc.) is done, because the ToC will define which direct outcomes, drivers and assumptions of the project need to be assessed and measured to allow adequate data collection for the evaluation of project effectiveness, likelihood of impact and sustainability.

37. The evaluation framework will present in further detail the evaluation questions under each criterion with their respective indicators and data sources. The evaluation framework should summarize the information available from project documentation against each of the main evaluation parameters. Any gaps in information should be identified and methods for additional data collection, verification and analysis should be specified.

38. The inception report will also present a tentative schedule for the overall evaluation process, including a draft programme for the country visit and tentative list of people/institutions to be interviewed.

39. The inception report will be submitted for review and approval by the Evaluation Office before the evaluation team travels to the field.

40. **The main evaluation report** should be brief (no longer than 35 pages – excluding the executive summary and annexes), to the point and written in plain English. The evaluation team will deliver a high quality report in English by the end of the assignment. The team will also provide the executive summary and the conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations section in Spanish. The report will follow the annotated Table of Contents outlined in Annex 1. It must explain the purpose of the evaluation, exactly what was evaluated and the methods used (with their limitations). The report will present evidence-based and balanced findings, consequent conclusions, lessons and recommendations, which will be cross-referenced to each other. The report should be presented in a way that makes the information accessible and comprehensible. Any dissident views in response to evaluation findings will be appended in footnote or annex as appropriate. To avoid repetitions in the report, the authors will use numbered paragraphs and make cross-references where possible.

41. **Review of the draft evaluation report**. The evaluation team will submit the zero draft report latest two weeks after conducting the field visits to the UNEP EO and revise the draft following the comments and suggestions made by the EO. Once a draft of adequate quality has been accepted, the EO will share this first draft report with the UNEP Task Manager, who will ensure that the report does not contain any blatant factual errors. The UNEP Task Manager will then forward the first draft report to the other project stakeholders, in particular CTNBIO and the national partners for review and comments. Stakeholders may provide feedback on any errors of fact and may highlight the significance of such errors in any conclusions. It is also very important that stakeholders provide feedback on the proposed recommendations and lessons. Comments would be expected within two weeks after the draft report has been shared. Any comments or responses to the draft report will be

sent to the UNEP EO for collation. The EO will provide the comments to the evaluation team for consideration in preparing the final draft report.

42. The evaluation consultant will submit the final draft report no later than 2 weeks after reception of stakeholder comments. The consultant will prepare a **response to comments**, listing those comments not or only partially accepted by them that could therefore not or only partially be accommodated in the final report. They will explain why those comments have not or only partially been accepted, providing evidence as required. This response to comments will be shared by the EO with the interested stakeholders to ensure full transparency.

43. Submission of the final Terminal Evaluation report. The final report shall be submitted by Email to the Head of the Evaluation Office, who will share the report with the Director, UNEP/GEF Coordination Office and the UNEP/DEPI Task Manager. The Evaluation Office will also transmit the final report to the GEF Evaluation Office.

44. The final evaluation report will be published on the UNEP Evaluation Office web-site www.unep.org/eou. Subsequently, the report will be sent to the GEF Office of Evaluation for their review, appraisal and inclusion on the GEF website.

45. As per usual practice, the UNEP EO will prepare a **quality assessment** of the first draft and final draft report, which is a tool for providing structured feedback to the evaluation consultants. The quality of the report will be assessed and rated against the criteria specified in Annex 4.

46. The UNEP Evaluation Office will assess the ratings in the final evaluation report based on a careful review of the evidence collated by the evaluation consultant and the internal consistency of the report. Where there are differences of opinion between the evaluator and UNEP Evaluation Office on project ratings, both viewpoints will be clearly presented in the final report. The UNEP Evaluation Office ratings are the final ratings that will be submitted to the GEF Office of Evaluation.

i. Logistical arrangement

47. This Terminal Evaluation will be undertaken by an independent evaluation consultant contracted by the UNEP Evaluation Office. The consultant will work under the overall responsibility of the UNEP Evaluation Office and will consult with the EO on any procedural and methodological matters related to the evaluation. It is, however, the consultants' individual responsibility to arrange for their travel, visa, obtain documentary evidence, plan meetings with stakeholders, organize field visits (if any), and any other logistical matters related to the assignment. The UNEP Task Manager and CTNBIO will, where possible, provide logistical support (introductions, meetings, transport etc.) for the country visit, allowing the consultants to conduct the evaluation as efficiently and independently as possible.

j. Schedule of the evaluation (tentative)

Activity	Date (s)
Start of the evaluation	20 March 2014
Inception report	31 March 2014
Comments from Evaluation Office	4 April 2014
Field visits	7 – 10 April 2014
Zero Draft report	5 May 2014
Comments from Evaluation Office	12 May 2014
First draft report	19 May 2014
Comments from stakeholders	2 June 2014
Final report	9 June 2014

48. The consultant will be hired under an individual Special Service Agreement (SSA). There are two options for contract and payment: lumpsum or "fees only".

49. **Lumpsum**: The contract covers both fees and expenses such as travel, per diem (DSA) and incidental expenses which are estimated in advance. The consultants will receive an initial payment covering estimated expenses upon signature of the contract.

50. **Fee only**: The contract stipulates consultant fees only. Air tickets will be purchased by UNEP and 75% of the DSA for each authorised travel mission will be paid up front. Local in-country travel and communication costs will be reimbursed on the production of acceptable receipts. Terminal expenses and residual DSA entitlements (25%) will be paid after mission completion.

51. The payment schedule for the consultant will be linked to the acceptance of the key evaluation deliverables by the Evaluation Office:

- Final inception report: 20 percent of agreed total fee
- First draft main evaluation report: 40 percent of agreed total fee
- Final main evaluation report: 40 percent of agreed total fee

52. In case the consultants are not able to provide the deliverables in accordance with these TORs, in line with the expected quality standards by the UNEP Evaluation Office, payment may be withheld at the discretion of the Head of the Evaluation Office until the consultants have improved the deliverables to meet UNEP's quality standards.

53. If the consultants fail to submit a satisfactory final product to UNEP in a timely manner, i.e. within one month after the end date of their contract, the Evaluation Office reserves the right to employ additional human resources to finalize the report, and to reduce the consultants' fees by an amount equal to the additional costs borne by the Evaluation Office to bring the report up to standard.

54. Submission of the final evaluation report:

The final report shall be submitted by email to:

Mr. Michael Spilsbury, Chief
UNEP Evaluation Office
Email: michael.spilsbury@unep.org

The Head of Evaluation will share the report with the following persons:

Maryam Niamir-Fuller, Director
UNEP/ GEF Coordination Office
Email: maryam.niamir-fuller@unep.org

Lydia Eibl-Kamolleh
Fund Management Officer
UNEP/DEPI-GEF
Email: lydia.Eibl-Kamolleh@unep.org

Marianela Araya
Task Manager
UNEP/DEPI
Email: marianela.araya@unep.org

55. The final evaluation report will be published on the UNEP Evaluation Office web-site **www.unep.org/eou** and may be printed in hard copy.

Annex 8

Evaluator CV Summary

Hugo Navajas
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hnavajas@yahoo.com

EDUCATION:

1984 - Masters Degree (MRP) in Regional Planning - Maxwell School of Citizenship & Public Affairs, Syracuse University USA

1978 - Undergraduate Degree (BA) in Cultural Anthropology - University of Arizona USA

KEY QUALIFICATIONS:

Design, evaluation and technical support for environmental management, sustainable development, poverty reduction and governance projects.

SPECIFIC COUNTRY EXPERIENCE:

Country Missions:

Latin America & Caribbean: Argentina (3/97. 2-3/2011); Belize (9/96); Bolivia (9-10/93, 5/94, 8/94, 12/95, 9/96, 2-6/2011); Brazil (2, 8-9/01, 4/2006); Chile (3/99,7/2001, 7/2003, 4/2006, 9/2006); Colombia (10/95); Costa Rica (8/96, 10/2013, 4/2014) Cuba (4/98, 11-12/2001, 7/2004, 2/2005); Dominican Republic (6/99; 9/2000); Ecuador (10/97, 11/95, 4/2005, 8/2006), El Salvador (10/2014), Guatemala (7/94, 11/95, 11/98 7/94, 4/2003); Guyana (4/2010); Honduras (8/95, 3/96, 4-5,8/2002); Jamaica (3/97, 4/2010); Mexico (5/2000, 9/2004, 4/2005); Nicaragua (8/99, 12/95); Peru (7/97, 9/2006); Tortola, BVI (3/97); Uruguay (10/97); Trinidad & Tobago (9/98); Venezuela (9/98; 9/2003);

Asia & Pacific: Bangladesh (5-7/2006), China (10-11/2000); South Korea (7/2003); Laos (5/2001, 9-11/2002)); Marshall Islands (10/2002); Mongolia (5-6/2003; 7-8/2005); Thailand (4/95; 1/2005).

Africa & Middle East: Egypt (4/99, 2/2000, 3/02); Jordan (7/03); Kenya (4/2005, 3/2006, 11/2011, 4/2012), Mozambique (2/98, 3/99); South Africa (11/97); Syria (2/2000); Tanzania (11/97; 7/2003); Turkey (2/2000; 4-5/2007); Yemen (8/01, 2/2003)

Central & Eastern Europe: Albania (2/2000); Macedonia (4/2004); Slovakia (3-4/2004; 5-6/2005); Slovenia (7/2003); Romania (6/2005), Ukraine (4/2004).

Fixed-Term Employment Contracts:

Bolivia (1/88-12/88); Honduras (7/91-5/93); Kenya (1/89-6/91); Mozambique (12/85-12/87); United States (7/78-6/82)

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE:

10/2013-2/2014 Project Evaluator/Team Leader UN-Habitat. Ex-post evaluation of UN Habitat's Joint Programme for the LAC region, encompassing 9 projects implemented in 6 countries (Brazil, Mexico, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Ecuador and Guatemala) for a combined budget of US$ 6.8 million. The projects address thematic areas of urban slum improvement, water and sanitation, environmental

conservation, democratic governance, race and gender rights, and peace-building/conflict resolution in the context of MDG 7 with financing by the MDG Achievement Fund. The project portfolio was co-implemented with other UN agencies under the joint programme modality. Duties include desk review, preparation of inception report, elaboration of questionnaires, direct/skype interviews, field visits to projects in El Salvador, Costa Rica, Guatemala and Ecuador; and preparation of draft and final evaluation reports.

10/2012-2/2013 Project Evaluator United Nations Environment Programme and Global Enviornment Facility (GEF). Final evaluation of GL4880 "Reducing Pestice Runoff to the Caribbean Sea", a GEF-funded US$ 15 million initiative that was implemented in Colombia, Costa Rica and Nicaragua through the ministries of Environment, in collaboration with cooperative/private producers of banana, plantain and pineapple, CROPLIFE Latin America, national NGOs and other public/private partners. The project supported components for introduction of environmentally sound agricultural practices, integrated pest management (IPM), capacity building and the establishment of a regional pesticide monitoring network with universities and national research institutions. Evaluation activities include (i) interviews with programme stakeholders linked to central and provincial government, NGOs, international organizations; (ii) field visits to targeted cooperatives and private enterprises situated in the Caribbean basin, and interviews with beneficiaries; and (iii) elaboration of the final evaluation report.

11/2011-6/2012 Programme Evaluator United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Nairobi Kenya. Final evaluation of the UNEP Environmental Governance Sub-programme, which is one of four sub-programmes within UNEP's 2010-2013 Medium Term Strategy (MTS). The EGSP involves 5 UNEP Divisions and encompasses 18 outputs and 14 projects, with a total programmed budget of US$ 139 million. Interviews with representatives of UNEP's Divisions, Regional Offices and Executive level; review of Sub-programme and project documentation; and preparation of a final evaluation report in collaboration with UNEP's Evaluation Office.

2-8/2011 Programme Evaluator/Team Leader Global Environment Facility (GEF), Washington DC and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Nairobi Kenya. Final evaluation of the Implementation of the Strategic Program for the Bermejo River Binational Basin, a US$ 11 million initiative encompassing the provinces of Salta, Jujuy, Formosa and Chaco in northern Argentina, and the department of Tarija in southern Bolivia. The programme was funded by GEF and implemented by UNEP, the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Bi-National Commission for the Bermejo Basin (COBINABE), with components addressing institutional strengthening and capacity building, erosion and flood control, biodiversity conservation and environmental education. Evaluation activities include (i) interviews with programme stakeholders at the central and provincial government level, the academic sector, NGOs and beneficiary communities among others, (ii) field visits to a project sampe in both countries, and (iii) elaboration of a final evaluation report and technical report addressing structural measures.

6-11/2010 Programme Evaluator UNDP, New York. Final evaluation of the GEF Country Support Programme (CSP), a US$ 11.8 million initiative offered in 128 countries to build national/sub regional capacities for accessing GEF funds and managing the GEF project cycle. Direct interviews with the project team based at UNDP Headquarters and representatives of the GEF Secretariat and Evaluation Office. Design and implementation of e-surveys directed at national GEF focal points that participated in the programme, followed by in-depth interviews with selected respondents. Review of project documentation, subregional workshop reports and the CSP web page. Drafting of the final evaluation report.

4-5/2010 Programme Evaluator UNDP Jamaica - Kingston Jamaica. Outcome evaluation of UNDP Jamaica's environment and energy portfolio under the 2007-2011 Country Programme. Interviews with UNDP senior management and programme staff, government counterparts and implementing partners. Visits to selected project sites. Review of relevant documentation and preparation of preliminary findings for Stakeholder Meeting. Elaboration of the evaluation report.

3-4/2010 Programme Evaluator/Team Leader UNDP Guyana - Georgetown Guyana. Outcome evaluation of UNDP Guyana's environment, energy and poverty reduction portfolio under the 2007-2011 Country Programme. Interviews with UNDP senior management and programme staff, government counterparts and implementing partners. Visits to selected projects. Review of relevant documentation and preparation of preliminary findings for Stakeholder Meeting. Elaboration of environment and energy components of the evaluation report, and incorporation/editing of sections addressing poverty reduction.

11/2009 – 1/2010 Consultant United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC) – Turin, Italy. Assessment of existing evaluation practices among 7 UN research and training institutes, considering levels of adherence to UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) guidelines, gaps and analysis/recommendations for harmonizing evaluation practices in the context of OneUN/Delivering as One. Elaboration of a report for circulation among the institutes, UNEG and the SG's Office.

9/2009 – 11/2009 Consultant UNDP - New York / UNEP - Nairobi. Assessment of trends and stakeholder perceptions regarding various forms of UNDP - UNEP collaboration, both within and outside the One UN/Delivering as One context. Preparation of a global inventory of UNDP-UNEP collaboration, grouping initiatives by theme/strategic objective, region and country. Consultations with UNDP, UNEP and partner focal points through on-line surveys and questionnaires. Elaboration of inventory and forward-looking assessment reports for the UNDP-UNEP Working Group.

4 – 8/2009 Project Evaluator UNEP, Nairobi. Final evaluation of the Biosafety Clearinghouse Project (BCH Phase I), a US$ 14.9 million capacity development initiative implemented in 112 countries to support the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. Consultations with project staff based in Geneva and Nairobi, review of documentation and country visits to Mongolia, Ethiopia, Albania, Guatemala and Uruguay. Preparation and processing of on-line surveys to national coordinators and regional advisors. Formulation of the final evaluation report.

9-11/2008 Project Evaluator UNEP – Nairobi. Final evaluation of the UNEP/Belgian Partnership covering the 2004-2008 period. Under the partnership, the Government of Belgium provided US$ 12 million to support programmes for implementing the Global Plan of Action (GPA) for marine and coastal zone protection, designing National Action Plans for coastal/river basin conservation and integrated waste management; integrating environmental priorities within Poverty Reduction Strategies; strengthening national legislation and participation to implement Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs); and implementing demonstration projects. The evaluation included the desk review of relevant documentation, interviews with programme managers at UNEP Headquarters, design/dissemination of an on-line survey to programme recipients, and field visits to Peru and Bangladesh. Elaboration of Final Evaluation Report.

6-7/2008 Project Evaluator UNEP – Nairobi. Mid-term evaluation of "Enhancing conservation of the critical network of sites required by Migratory Waterbirds on the African/Eurasian Flyways" (Wings Over Wetlands), a US$ 6 million initiative funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and implemented by UNEP in 12 countries of the African and Eurasian regions. Interviews with the Project Coordination Unit, Steering Committee and institutional partners in Wetlands International, Bird Life International, UNEP, Africa Eurasian Waterbirds Agreement (AEWA) and Government of Germany. Design and processing of on-line surveys targetting stakeholder groups in the participating regions. Desk review of relevant documentation. Elaboration of Mid-Term Evaluation Report.

5-6/2008 Evaluator UNDP – New York. Asessment of the Civil Society Organization Advisory Committee to the UNDP Administrator, which provided policy advice, monitoring and advocacy support to UNDP senior management between 2000 and 2006. The assessment considered Committee performance, influence/impact on policy and programmes, institutional responsiveness and coordination with different levels of UNDP. Interviews and focus group meetings with senior UNDP staff (Office of the Administrator, BPE, RCBP and Regional Bureaux), CSO Division and CSO Advisory Committee members. Design and processing of an on-line survey for committee members and UNDP partners/clients. Desk review of relevant documents. Analysis and presentation of findings at UNDP Headquarters. Preparation of Assessment Report.

8-11/2007 Programme Evaluator UNDP Evaluation Office – New York. Assessment of Development Results (ADR) Study for UNDP-Ecuador covering the 2002-2007 period. The ADR focussed on governance, environment/sustainable development, economic development, HIV/AIDs and other thematic components of the UNDP Country Cooperation Framework. The assignment additionally included an assessment of UNDP Ecuador's energy/ environment portfolio as a component for UNDP's Global Assessment of Energy & Environment report. Activities included the desk review of relevant documents; interviews with UNDP/UN agency and project staff, central/local government officials, NGOs and other stakeholders; and field visits to projects in Quito, Guayaquil and Galapagos. Co-drafting of ADR Study and drafting of the Ecuador component for the Global Assessment of Energy & Environment.

4-5/2007 Country Evaluator Global Environment Facilty (GEF)/World Bank – Washington DC. Country evaluation of GEF Small Grants Program in Turkey, under a joint global evaluation of country SGPs conducted by GEF-World Bank and the UNDP Evaluation Office. Meetings with GEF-SG staff, GEF national focal points, NGO and donor representatives in Turkey. Field visits to small grant projects, review of documentation, and focus group interviews/workshops with grantees and Steering Committee members. Analysis of findings with UNDP Evaluation Office participant, supervision of national consultant and drafting of Country Study.

8/2006-2/2007 Evaluator Gordon & Betty Moore Foundation (GBMF) – San Francisco, USA. Evaluation of the Global Conservation Fund, a US$ 100 million financing facility implemented by Conservation International (CI) that supports the creation/expansion and long-term financing of Protected Areas in wilderness areas and "hot spots." Meetings with GCF-CI staff in Washington DC and Moore Foundation staff in San Francisco. Review of documents and processing of survey findings for GCF´s portfolio of 58 projects. Field visits to GCF projects in Ecuador, Peru and Chile. Analysis of findings and recommendations, and drafting of evaluation report in collaboration with other team members.

5-7/2006 Mission Team Leader UNDP – Dhaka, Bangladesh. Formulation of governance and capacity development components for the Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility, a US$ 30 million initiative funded by UNDP, EU and other donors for the sustainable development of the CHT region, targeting indigenous communities and natural resource management. Review of background documents, design of formulation methodology, supervision of a five-person team, field missions in the CHT, and formulation of an integrated technical assessment report and comprehensive program document with modules on community outreach and support systems, environmental protection and management, disaster preparedness, NGO capacity strengthening and skills development for community management.

3-5/2006 Evaluator United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) and Global Environment Facility (GEF) – Nairobi, Kenya. Final evaluation of the Millennium Ecosystems Assessment (MEA) program, a US$ 6 million global initiative for the design and validation of integrated environmental assessment methodologies based on ecosystems services. The program was implemented by UNEP in collaboration with GEF, IUCN, WRI, the World Bank, UNDP and environmental research institutions from different countries. Evaluation activities included review of documentation and consultation of program staff in Nairobi, Kenya, field missions to Chile and Brazil, interviewing of national delegates at the Conference on Biodiversity COP-8 meeting in Curitiba, and the drafting of the final evaluation report in collaboration with Team Leader.

8-9/2005 Poverty Reduction Advisor UNDP – Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. Technical support to the Urban Poverty Pilot Project, an initiative which promotes community mobilization, capacity development and civic engagement in the municipal planning and budgeting process. Evaluation and technical advisory support to NGOs and community-based organizations in the design of training materials on participatory planning, participatory budgeting and citizen report cards. Design of a main-phase project proposal in partnership with UN-Habitat, the World Bank and other donors.

Annex 9: UNEP Evaluation Quality Assessment

Evaluation Title:

Terminal Evaluation of the Project Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework in Costa Rica

All UNEP evaluations are subject to a quality assessment by the Evaluation Office. The quality assessment is used as a tool for providing structured feedback to the evaluation consultants.

The quality of both the draft and final evaluation report is assessed and rated against the following criteria:

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Draft Report Rating	Final Report Rating
Substantive report quality criteria			
A. **Quality of the Executive Summary**: Does the executive summary present the main findings of the report for each evaluation criterion and a good summary of recommendations and lessons learned? (Executive Summary not required for zero draft)	Draft report: Final report: Good summary presenting key points		6
B. **Project context and project description**: Does the report present an up-to-date description of the socio-economic, political, institutional and environmental context of the project, including the issues that the project is trying to address, their root causes and consequences on the environment and human well-being? Are any changes since the time of project design highlighted? Is all essential information about the project clearly presented in the report (objectives, target groups, institutional arrangements, budget, changes in design since approval etc.)?	Draft report: Good overview of context, changes adequately discussed (mainly delays) Final report: Overview of context used to anchor conclusions and recommendations	5	5
C. **Strategic relevance**: Does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of strategic relevance of the intervention in terms of relevance of the project to global, regional and national environmental issues and needs, and UNEP strategies and programmes?	Draft report: Draft report only presented relevance to the country and GEF Final report: final report includes analysis of relevance to UNEP MTS/PoW	4	5
D. **Achievement of outputs**: Does the	Draft report:	5	5

	report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of outputs delivered by the intervention (including their quality)?	Yes well-reasoned analysis presented Final report: Same as above		
E.	**Presentation of Theory of Change**: Is the Theory of Change of the intervention clearly presented? Are causal pathways logical and complete (including drivers, assumptions and key actors)?	Draft report: ToC reconstruction developed with EOU support Final report: Same as above	4	5
F.	**Effectiveness - Attainment of project objectives and results**: Does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of the achievement of the relevant outcomes and project objectives?	Draft report: Yes, complete presentation Final report: Final report includes links and recommendation for the next project	5	6
G.	**Sustainability and replication**: Does the report present a well-reasoned and evidence-based assessment of sustainability of outcomes and replication / catalytic effects?	Draft report: Analysis is well reasoned and based on evidence Final report: Same as above	5	5
H.	**Efficiency**: Does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of efficiency? Does the report present any comparison with similar interventions?	Draft report: Good analysis, no comparisons are attempted Final report: Some suggestions have been included to increase efficiency	5	5
I.	**Factors affecting project performance**: Does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of all factors affecting project performance? In particular, does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used; and an assessment of the quality of the project M&E system and its use for project management?	Draft report: Full analysis, financial data presented as available from anubis Final report: Same as above	5	5
J.	**Quality of the conclusions:** Do the conclusions highlight the main strengths and weaknesses of the project, and connect those in a compelling story line?	Draft report: Conclusions capture the key points and are linked to report solidly Final report: Same as above	5	5
K.	**Quality and utility of the recommendations**: Are recommendations based on explicit evaluation findings? Do	Draft report: Recommendations needed refinement, some may become lessons Final report: Recommendations are actionable and target	5	6

recommendations specify the actions necessary to correct existing conditions or improve operations ('who?' 'what?' 'where?' 'when?)'. Can they be implemented?	key specific issues, most of which can be addressed in the follow up project being planned		
L. **Quality and utility of the lessons**: Are lessons based on explicit evaluation findings? Do they suggest prescriptive action? Do they specify in which contexts they are applicable?	Draft report: Lessons are relevant and specific Final report: Same as above, some R have been re-phrased as lessons	5	6
Report structure quality criteria			
M. **Structure and clarity of the report**: Does the report structure follow EO guidelines? Are all requested Annexes included?	Draft report: Annexes not included, structure has been followed Final report: All required annexes have been included	4	6
N. **Evaluation methods and information sources**: Are evaluation methods and information sources clearly described? Are data collection methods, the triangulation / verification approach, details of stakeholder consultations provided? Are the limitations of evaluation methods and information sources described?	Draft report: Yes good description of methods and limitations Final report: Same as above	5	5
O. **Quality of writing**: Was the report well written? (clear English language and grammar)	Draft report: Required some editing in some sections Final report: Well written report	4	6
P. **Report formatting**: Does the report follow EO guidelines using headings, numbered paragraphs etc.	Draft report: Mostly Final report: Some formatting required	5	5
	OVERALL REPORT QUALITY RATING	4.9	5.3

The quality of the evaluation process is assessed at the end of the evaluation and rated against the following criteria:

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments		Rating
Evaluation process quality criteria			
Q. **Preparation:** Was the evaluation budget agreed and approved by the EO? Was inception report delivered and approved prior to commencing any travel?	Inception report finalised, ToC revised by EOU and finalised with evaluator the beginning of the mission		5

R.	**Timeliness:** Was a TE initiated within the period of six months before or after project completion? Was an MTE initiated within a six month period prior to the project's mid-point? Were all deadlines set in the ToR respected?	TE started just before the project ended. Some delays led to longer than planned implementation time frame		5
S.	**Project's support:** Did the project make available all required documents? Was adequate support provided to the evaluator(s) in planning and conducting evaluation missions?	Yes, all documents were made available and most stakeholders contributed to the process openly and supportively		6
T.	**Recommendations:** Was an implementation plan for the evaluation recommendations prepared? Was the implementation plan adequately communicated to the project?	Yes		6
U.	**Quality assurance:** Was the evaluation peer-reviewed? Was the quality of the draft report checked by the evaluation manager and peer reviewer prior to dissemination to stakeholders for comments? Did EO complete an assessment of the quality of the final report?	Yes, report was peer reviewed and assessment done		6
V.	**Transparency:** Were the draft ToR and evaluation report circulated to all key stakeholders for comments? Was the draft evaluation report sent directly to EO? Were all comments to the draft evaluation report sent directly to the EO and did EO share all comments with the commentators? Did the evaluator(s) prepare a response to all comments?	Yes, ToR shared with TM and and stakeholders for comment. Comments compiled by EOU with comments from EOU and evaluator for circulation		6
W.	**Participatory approach:** Was close communication to the EO and project maintained throughout the evaluation? Were evaluation findings, lessons and recommendations adequately communicated?	Yes		6
X.	**Independence:** Was the final selection of the evaluator(s) made by EO? Were possible conflicts of interest of the selected evaluator(s) appraised?	Yes, independent and no conflict of interest		6

OVERALL PROCESS RATING		5.75

Rating system for quality of evaluation reports

A number rating 1-6 is used for each criterion: Highly Satisfactory = 6, Satisfactory = 5, Moderately Satisfactory = 4, Moderately Unsatisfactory = 3, Unsatisfactory = 2, Highly Unsatisfactory = 1

The overall quality of the evaluation report is calculated by taking the mean score of all rated quality criteria.