

**Validated Terminal Review of the UNEP-GEF Project
'Costa Rica's integrated reporting and transparency
system' (GEF ID 9652)**

2017 – 2023



UNEP Climate Change Division

Validation date: June 2024



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This report has been prepared by an external consultant as part of a Terminal Review, which is a management-led process to assess performance at the project's operational completion. The UNEP Evaluation Office provides templates and tools to support the review process and provides a formal assessment of the quality of the Review report, which is provided within this report's annexed material. In addition, the Evaluation Office formally validates the report by ensuring that the performance judgments made are consistent with evidence presented in the Review report and in-line with the performance standards set out for independent evaluations. As such the project performance ratings presented in the Review report may be adjusted by the Evaluation Office. The findings and conclusions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of Member States or the UNEP Senior Management.

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Costa Rica's integrated reporting and transparency system (CBIT 9652)
(UNEP/GEF 9652)
(Date 04/24)
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This Terminal Review was prepared for UNEP ROLAC by Natalia Aquilino.

The reviewer would like to express their gratitude to all persons met and who contributed to this review, as listed in Annex III.

The review team would like to thank the project team and in particular Mr Asher Lessels, Mrs Ana Celeste Schweiger; Mr Marco Heredia and Mrs Ana Lucía Moya Mora for their contribution and collaboration throughout the review process. Sincere appreciation is also expressed to Ana Celeste Schweiger who took time to provide comments to the draft report.

The review consultant hopes that the findings, conclusions and recommendations will contribute to the successful finalization of the current project, formulation of a next phase and to the continuous improvement of similar projects in other countries and regions.

BRIEF CONSULTANT BIOGRAPHY

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ABOUT THE REVIEW

Joint Review: No

Report Language(s): English

Review Type: Terminal Review

Brief Description: This report is a Terminal Review of a UNEP/GEF 9652 project implemented between 2017 and 2023. The project's overall development goal was that Costa Rica complies with the requirements of the transparency framework under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change (CBIT 9652). The review sought 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 review 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 the relevant agencies of the project participating countries.

Key words: Climate change, Transparency Framework, mitigation and adaptation, climate data, public climate, expenditures, Institutionalization, Costa Rica international reporting.

Primary data collection period: between July 2023 to December 2023, virtual.

Field mission dates: no field visit performed.

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List of acronyms and abbreviations

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| BUR | Biennial Update Report |
| CBIT | Capacity-Building Initiative for Transparency |
| CENIGA | National Centre of Geo-environmental Information (<i>Centro Nacional de Información Geoambiental</i>) |
| CGE | Consultative Group of Experts |
| CINDE | Costa Rican Investment Promotion Agency (<i>Coalición Costarricense de Iniciativas de Desarrollo</i>) |
| CO ₂ e | Carbon Dioxide Equivalent |
| COP | Conference of the Parties |
| DCC | Directorate of Climate Change |
| DSE | Sub-sectoral Secretariat for Energy Planning |
| EOU | Evaluation Office of UNEP |
| FONAFIFO | National Fund for the Financing of Forestry |
| GCP | Global Coordination Platform |
| GEB | Global Environmental Benefit |
| GEF | Global Environment Facility |
| GHG | Greenhouse Gasses |
| GIZ | German Corporation for International Cooperation GmbH (<i>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH</i>) |
| ICAT | Initiative for Climate Action Transparency |
| IMN | National Meteorological Institute |
| INDC | Intended Nationally Determined Contribution |
| INEC | National Statistics and Census Institute |
| IPCC | Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change |
| IT | Information Technology |
| LTS | Long term strategy |
| MAG | Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock |
| MINAE | Ministry of Environment and Energy |
| MOPT | Ministry of Transport and Public Works |
| MoU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| MRV | Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification |
| NAMA | Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action |
| NC | National Communication |
| NDC | Nationally Determined Contribution |
| NIR | National Inventory Report |
| NPGEE | National Policy for Gender Equality and Equity |
| PA | Paris Agreement |
| PROCOMER | Costa Rica's Foreign Trade Promotion Board (<i>Promotora del Comercio Exterior de Costa Rica</i>) |
| QA | Quality Assurance |
| QC | Quality Control |
| RN | Costa Rican National Registry |
| SBSTA | Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice |
| SCCC | Scientific Council for Climate Change |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goal |
| SINAMECC | National System for Climate Change Metrics |
| SINIA | National System for Environmental Information tCO ₂ e Tonnes of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent |
| TR | Terminal Report |
| TNA | Technology Needs Assessment |
| TTE | Team of Technical Experts |
| TTF | Transparency Task Force |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNEP | United Nations Environment Programme |
| UNFCCC | United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change |

Project Identification Table

UNEP / GEF Project Identification Table

| UNEP programme: | Sub- | Climate change | UNEP Division/Branch | |
|--|------|---|---|--|
| Expected Accomplishment(s): | | Costa Rica complies with the requirements of the transparency framework under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change | United Nations Environment Programme -Latin America and the Caribbean- Economy Division | |
| SDG(s) and indicator(s) | | 13. Climate Action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SDG 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts Target 13.2: Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning Indicator • 13.2.1: Number of countries with nationally determined contributions, long-term strategies, national adaptation plans, strategies as reported in adaptation communications and national communications • Target 13.3: Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning Indicator • 13.3.2: Number of countries that have communicated the strengthening of institutional, systemic and individual capacity building to implement adaptation, mitigation and technology transfer, and development actions | | |
| GEF Core Indicator Targets (identify these for projects approved prior to GEF-7 ¹) | | N/A | | |
| Dates of previous project phases: | N/A | Status of future project phases: | N/A | |

FROM THE PROJECT'S PIR REPORT (latest version) :

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Project Title: | Costa Rica's integrated reporting and transparency system |
| Executing Agency: | UNEP, Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean |
| Project partners: | Ministry of Environment and Energy (MINAE) |
| Geographical Scope: | National |
| Participating Countries: | Costa Rica |

¹This does not apply to Enabling Activities

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| GEF project ID: | 9652 | IMIS number* ² : | N/A |
| Focal Area(s): | Climate Change | GEF OP #: | N/A |
| GEF Strategic Priority/Objective: | Costa Rica complies with the requirements of the transparency framework under the PA on Climate Change | GEF approval date*: | 03/01/2018 |
| UNEP approval date: | 08/11/2018 | Date of first disbursement*: | 07/12/2018 |
| Actual start date ³ : | 20/11/2018 | Planned duration: | 48 months |
| Intended completion date*: | 7/12/2021 | Actual or Expected completion date: | 31/03/2022 |
| Project Type: | CBIT | GEF Allocation*: | US\$ 1,000,000 |
| PPG GEF cost*: | N/A | Co-financing*: | US\$ 2,750,000 |
| Expected MSP/FSP Co-financing*: | | Total Cost*: | UD\$ 3,750,000 |
| Mid-term Review/eval. (planned date): | N/A | Terminal Report (planned date): | July - November 2023 |
| Mid-term Review/eval. (actual date): | N/A | No. of revisions*: | 3 |
| Date of last Steering Committee meeting: | 02/02/2023 | Date of Last Revision*: | 01/07/2022 |
| Disbursement as of 30 June 2022*: | 974,998 (as of 30/06/2023) | Date of planned financial closure*: | 28/02/2024 |
| Date of planned completion ⁴ *: | 30/06/2022 | Actual expenditures reported as of ⁵ :28/02/2023 | 893,598 (as latest ERS1 2023 submitted, |

² Fields with an * sign (in yellow) should be filled by the Fund Management Officer

³ Only if different from first disbursement date, e.g., in cases where a long time elapsed between first disbursement and recruitment of project manager.

⁴ If there was a "Completion Revision" please use the date of the revision.

⁵ Information to be provided by Executing Agency/Task Manager

| | | | |
|--|------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| | | | waiting for Final ER submission) |
| Total co-financing realized (31/06/2022) | 2,750,000 (as of 08/10/2023) | Actual expenditures - IMIS 31/12/2022*: | N/A |
| Leveraged financing: ⁶ | 0 | | |

⁶ See above note on co-financing

Project timeline

Table 1. Project lifetime vis a vis context

| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |
|---|--|--------------------------|---|------------------------------|----------------|------------------|---|--------|
| International context | | | | | COVID Pandemic | | | |
| Climate change initiatives in Costa Rica funded by international actors | UNDP Capacity building for mainstreaming objectives of Multilateral Environmental Agreements in structures and inter-ministerial mechanism | | | | | | | |
| | GIZ Accounting Rules for the achievement of the mitigation goals of non-Annex 1 countries | | | | | | | |
| | GIZ – Promoting Costa Rica’s GHG neutrality goal as a low emissions development strategy | | | | | | | |
| | Initiative for Climate Action Transparency | | | | | | | |
| | Climate Technology Centre & Network | | | | | | | |
| | Partnership for Market Readiness | | | | | | | |
| | Upstream Policy Analysis (UPA) 2 | | | | | | | |
| UNEP | | | Medium Term Strategy | | | | | |
| National Development Plan | Alberto Cañas Escalante | | | Bicentenario | | | Rogelio Fernández Güell | |
| Relevant laws | | | Strengthening of Public Finances Law #9635 | | | | | |
| Political party | Citizenship Action | | | | | | Democratic Progress | Social |
| Political leadership | L.G. Solís Rivera | | C. Alvarado Quesada | | | R. Chavez Robles | | |
| Project phase | Preparation - Formulation | Formulation - Submission | Implementation | | | | Evaluation | |
| Project leadership | MINAE CCD | | | | | | MINAE NMI | |
| Output 1.1. | | | QCA continuous improvement program for CR transparency instruments designed | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------|--|--|-------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Output 1.2. | | | Strategic Planning Unit development | | | |
| Output 1.3. | | | | | | Knowledge sharing platform for MRV related transparency and data |

Source: own elaboration

Executive summary

This document serves as the Terminal Report for GEF Project 9652, titled 'Costa Rica's integrated reporting and transparency system.' Funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) with a grant of USD 1,000,000, the project was implemented by United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and executed by the Ministry of Environment and Energy (MNAE). Co-financing, totaling USD 2,750,000 in cash and in-kind contributions, supported project activities.

Costa Rica actively participates in international climate agreements, including the Paris Agreement (PA). The country's commitment to global climate action is evident through its contributions to international negotiations and collaborations with other nations. Challenges persist, including securing funding for climate initiatives, addressing deforestation, and ensuring climate policies consider social and gender aspects, particularly the needs of vulnerable communities. Costa Rica continues its journey toward a sustainable and climate-resilient future.

The Capacity-Building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT) project, developed between 2017-2022, was a strategic tool providing support to enhance its national transparency system, reporting on progress in implementing its highly ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) and progressing towards a national-scale decarbonization laboratory, in line with the Paris Agreement. According to the Project Document, GEF-CBIT was designed to support Costa Rica in establishing an overarching structure across all sectors to ensure high quality in its transparency instruments and created capacities to transcend in the usage of Measurement, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) for policy design inputs.

The project objective, "Costa Rica complies with the requirements of the transparency framework under the PA on Climate Change," aimed to be addressed through one component, two outcomes (i) Costa Rica's transparency instruments are strengthened to meet the Paris Agreement's Transparency Framework requirements and (ii) National institutions use climate change analysis and monitoring data for decision-making, and three outputs: (i) Quality control, assurance, and continuous improvement program for Costa Rica's transparency instruments designed; (ii) Strategic Climate Planning Unit (SPU) developed; and (iii) Knowledge sharing platform for MRV-related transparency and data methodologies implemented under one project main objective.

The leading role was held by the MNAE - Directorate of Climate Change (DCC), the main beneficiary, holding the most prominent role, interest, and influence over the project's results. MNAE's DCC was the national focal point for climate change and the project's counterpart, the responsible institution for coordinating initiatives supporting the implementation and design of SINAMECC. Key stakeholders at international and national levels included partnerships with expert organizations (GEF, World Bank), donors as the German Corporation for International Cooperation GmbH (GIZ), partnerships schemes, and national level engagements with other public sector stakeholders, civil society organizations, and the private sector.

This terminal review (TR) report provides a comprehensive participatory assessment, covering the project's design, management, performance (relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency), outcomes, impacts, and sustainability. The evaluation, initiated during the Inception Phase from June to August 2023, set the groundwork for subsequent data collection and analysis. This phase included establishing the evaluation framework, developing data collection tools, and refining the theory of change for assessing project

accomplishments. The quality of the project design was also scrutinized at this stage. The second phase of data collection and analysis occurred between September and December 2023, involving data triangulation from various sources and methods to enhance credibility. The evaluation encompassed consultations with project and partner agencies, reviews of project documents, records, meetings' minutes, training materials, policy documents, and data from various governmental, academic, partner, and other agencies.

The overall approach of the Costa Rica CBIT 9652 project's theory of change, covering its narrative, drivers, assumptions, and causal pathways, remained logically sound throughout the entire implementation phase. The TR report argues that the project significantly enhanced Costa Rica's instruments for complying with transparency requirements under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Notable achievements include strengthening quality control, assurance, and continuous improvement of transparency instruments and enhancing the use of climate change analysis and monitoring data for decision-making at national institutions. However, challenges were encountered in obtaining approval and full implementation of the Strategic Planning Unit (SPU). Despite this, the project exhibited strong foundational knowledge-building. It effectively utilized existing efforts, delivering high-quality products and fostering partnerships with key ecosystem players in Costa Rica. The project's management was commendable, laying a robust knowledge foundation for the country.

The project was designed from a strong situation analysis and baseline, building on what was done and understanding the local context and situation very well. It built on the country's existing efforts through effective and necessary tools and instrument upgrades.

The project delivered products of excellent quality, highly useful for application, and for building the knowledge base in the long run. The project was well-managed overall, with strong facilitation particularly in forging partnerships with key ecosystem players in Costa Rica. In summary, this well-managed project laid a strong foundation of knowledge that the country can take and further build on effectively.

In summary, the project receives a rating of 'Satisfactory.' The lessons drawn highlight the importance of long-term planning, technical expertise, inclusive engagement, and collaborative structures to ensure project success and sustainability amid predictable political and institutional changes:

- i) A long-term strategy for climate change reporting leadership provides stability and continuity through political transitions;
- ii) Relying on established technical bodies, such as the National Meteorological Institute (NMI) and the CCD, strengthens the country's commitment to climate action beyond political changes assuming they have enough founding and political endorsement;
- iii) Involving key public institutions fosters collaboration and ensures a holistic approach to climate initiatives; and
- iv) Design and implement projects taking systematically the context into account can foster efficiency by managing rising risks and mitigating non expected political changes that may occur.

The project also provides a platform to suggest recommendations for future actions that includes:

- Costa Rica MINAE: i) Improve SINAMECC and integrate it with existing systems such as SIMOCUTE⁷, CONAGEBIO⁸, SINIA⁹, etc.;
- Partners: ii) Continue providing technical and financial support to existing institutions leading advancements made by the project.
- UNEP:
 - iii) Continue supporting NMI in building further legitimacy for MRV implementation through a CBIT II project, following up meetings every 6 months and including Costa Rica in the CBIT global transparency platform; and
 - iv) Plan ahead and in detail identify future change in government to sustain and accomplish project commitments using tools such as stakeholder mapping, power-interest grids, and influence diagrams to visualize the political landscape.

Validation

The report has been subject to an independent validation exercise performed by UNEP's Evaluation Office. The performance ratings for the 'Costa Rica's integrated reporting and transparency system' project (GEF ID 9652), set out in the Conclusions and Recommendations section have been adjusted as a result. The overall project performance is validated at the Satisfactory level. Moreover, the Evaluation Office has found the overall quality of the report to be Satisfactory (see Annex XIII).

⁷ National System for Monitoring the Coverage and Use of Land and Ecosystems <https://www.fao.org/costarica/noticias/detail-events/ar/c/1273209/> retrieved in January 2024.

⁸ Commission for Comprehensive Biodiversity Management <https://www.conagebio.go.cr/> retrieved in January 2024.

⁹ National Environmental Information System of Costa Rica <https://sinia.go.cr/> retrieved in January 2024.

Introduction

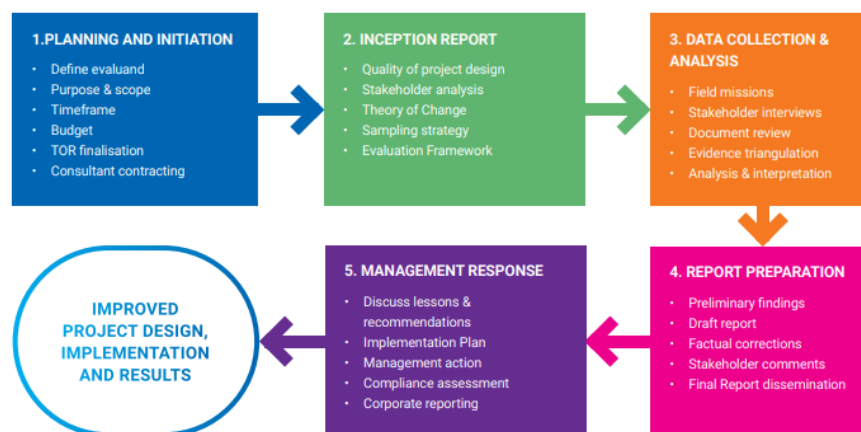
1. This document constitutes the Terminal Report (TR) for GEF Project entitled “Costa Rica’s integrated reporting and transparency system” (hereinafter referred to as the “Project”). The GEF ID of the Project is 9652. The Project was funded through the Global Environment Facility (GEF) with a grant of USD 1,000,000 implemented by UNEP and executed by the Ministry of Environment and Energy (MINA). Co-financing (cash and in-kind contributions) were secured to a value of USD 2,750,000.
2. In line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy and the UNEP Programme Manual, the TR is being undertaken after completion of the Project in March 2022 with a non cost extension until July 2023. The TR is carried out 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 operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP and country level partners. Therefore, the evaluation will identify lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation and implementation of follow on projects.
3. The TR process for the project started in June 2023 and is expected to be completed by December 2023. It has been fully funded and constitutes the last phase of the Project work plan according to the Project Document. The TR process has two different instances and deliverables: i) Inception Report (IR) (already delivered as of October 24th 2023) and ii) Final evaluation report (present document).
4. The TR is the second deliverable prepared by the Evaluation Consultant and is largely a desk-based exercise involving initial discussions with the main staff responsible for the project to form a good understanding of the evaluation and to identify the stakeholders (including their roles and responsibilities). Therefore, the TR contains i) a brief description of the evaluation approach; ii) a summary of the project background including problem statement, justification of the intervention, governance structure, stakeholders description and Project outputs and outcomes; iii) an assessment of project design quality, an analysis of the Project’s Theory of Change and stakeholders; iv) evaluation findings and v) conclusions including lessons learned and recommendations.
5. From a methodological perspective, this TR was built mainly based on i) desk review of relevant project documents; ii) semi-structured interviews with relevant stakeholders and iii) feedback from stakeholders (UNEP) to the documents produced by the review process. All information was fully available for this review. The tools employed for the IR were documentation reviews, stakeholder interviews and verification through public information (web pages mainly). Additionally, continuous interaction with the UNEP team, the project management team and other relevant stakeholders supported timely information gathering but also provided feedback to findings. The main documents considered were the GEF CEO Approval document/Project Document, Theory of Change, Project work plan, Project deliverables, financial statements and budget inputs available at [Costa Rica CBIT 9652 Folder](#).

I. Review Approach

a) Review process and criteria

6. The overall review process¹⁰, as prescribed by the UNEP Evaluation Office, is shown in Figure 1. The process initiated with a planning phase to define the scope of the TR which first delivered an Inception Report (stage 2) and was followed by a data collection phase and the drafting and completion of this Final Report (stage 4). Thereafter, the project team will be charged with preparing a management response or implementation plan to address this TE's recommendations (stage 5).

Figure 1. UNEP Evaluation process flowchart



Source: UNEP Evaluation Manual (2022)

7. Central to this TR was the analysis and reconstruction of the project's Theory of Change (TOC). Consultations during the TR inception phase helped to arrive at a nuanced understanding of how the project sought to drive change and what contributing conditions ('assumptions' and 'drivers') would need to be in place to support such change. The reconstructed TOC was shared with the project team. The final version of the TOC is presented later in this report (Section Theory of Change) and has been used throughout the review process.

8. This TR consists of an in-depth participatory assessment of the project's design, management, performance (relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), outcomes and impacts (actual and potential), and sustainability. As required in UNEP evaluations, the project is being evaluated against nine criteria: (1) Strategic Relevance, (2) Quality of Project Design, (3) Nature of External Context, (4) Effectiveness (incl. availability of outputs; achievement of outcomes and likelihood of impact), (5) Financial Management, (6) Efficiency, (7) Monitoring and Reporting, (8) Sustainability and (9) Factors Affecting Project Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues. For each criterion, the UNEP Evaluation Office has developed a ratings matrix containing detailed descriptions of the main elements required to be demonstrated at each level. This allows evaluation criteria to be rated on a six-point scale, as follows: Highly Satisfactory (HS); Satisfactory (S); Moderately Satisfactory (MS); Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU); Unsatisfactory (U); Highly

¹⁰ Available at

<https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/42025/2023%200903%20Evaluation%20Manual.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

Unsatisfactory (HU). Sustainability and Likelihood of Impact are rated from Highly Likely (HL) down to Highly Unlikely (HU) and Nature of External Context is rated from Highly Favorable (HF) to Highly Unfavourable (HU). After considering all the evidence gathered, in relation to this matrix, the ratings against each criterion are weighted in order to derive the Overall Project Performance Rating. The UNEP Evaluation Office has developed detailed descriptions of the main elements required to be demonstrated at each level (i.e. Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory) for each evaluation criterion. The evaluator has considered all the evidence gathered during the review in relation to this matrix in order to generate evaluation criteria performance ratings. The greatest weight is placed on the achievement of Outcomes, followed by dimensions of sustainability.

9. In addition to evaluation criteria, the TR Terms of Reference (TORs) in Annex IX also establish a series of Key Strategic Questions. The Key Strategic Questions are: Q1: Did the State and non-State actors participating in the project adopt the enhanced transparency framework arrangements under the Paris Agreement? Q2: Does the country Strengthen and improve transparency mechanisms of National institutions for domestic and UN conventions reporting? Q3: Did the State and non-State actors participating in the project adopt the new tools developed by the project Q4: Was the project executed efficiently? Q5: What changes were made to adapt to the effects of COVID-19 and how might any changes affect the project's performance?
10. As a GEF-funded project, specific findings from this TR report are to be uploaded on the GEF Portal. This includes findings in relation to five topics of interest to the GEF, which are summarized in chapter IV section I (as Factors affecting Performance and Crosscutting issues) and also included as an annex (Annex X). The 5 topics are: i) performance against GEF's Core Indicator Targets; ii) engagement of stakeholders; iii) gender-responsive measures and gender result areas; iv) challenges and outcomes regarding the project's completed Knowledge Management Approach; and v) implementation of management measures taken against the Safeguards Plan. For the latter, the UNEP Evaluation Office template "[Assessment of Planning and Management of Environmental and Social Safeguards](#)" was used to identify relevant environmental and social safeguard risks and determine management responsiveness to these risks (if any) during project implementation.
11. The TR consisted of several steps, including the elaboration of the review design, data collection and analysis, discussion of preliminary results with key project stakeholders, drafting the terminal review report, receiving feedback and finalizing the report.
 - b) Data collection
12. The review Inception Phase, conducted in June-August 2023, laid the foundation for the first data collection and analysis stage. It established the framework for the TR, detailed data collection tools and elaborated the theory of change against which the project accomplishments were assessed. The quality of the project design was also assessed at this stage.
13. The second data collection and analysis phase took place during September-December 2023 and involved data triangulation – the collection and analysis of data using various methods and from different sources to enhance the credibility of the review. The TR consulted with project and partner agencies' websites and social media sites; reviewed project documents and records, meetings' minutes and project-produced studies/assessments; training materials; project-elaborated policy and legislative

documents; other documents and data produced by the government, academia, partner and other agencies (see Annex IV for the list of documents consulted).

14. The sources for the TR included individual online interviews representing all types of stakeholders including project staff and consultants, national government, civil society organizations (CSOs), (see Annex III for the list of consulted stakeholders). From the list of 54 relevant stakeholders, 30 were contacted by email and 16 were interviewed or provided feedback on the project.

Table 2. Respondents' sample for the Terminal Review Costa Rica CBIT 9652

| Respondent Category | Entity | # People Involved (M/F) (A) | # People Contacted (M/F) (B) | # Respondent (M/F) (C) | % Respondent (C/B) |
|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Project team (those with management responsibilities) | Implementing agency | M = 5 F = 3 | M = 3 F = 3 | M = 2 F = 3 | M = 66% F = 100% |
| | Executing Agency | M = 6 F = 6 | M = 3 F = 6 | M = 1 F = 2 | M = 33% F = 33% |
| Project (implementing/ executing) partners (receiving funds from the project) | CBIT Team | M = 4 F = 7 | M = 2 F = 3 | M = 1 F = 2 | M = 25% F = 75% |
| Other government partners | CENIGA, MAG, MIDEPLAN, UCR, BCCR | M = 8 F = 4 | M = 4 F = 2 | M = 2 F = 2 | M = 50% F = 100% |
| Private sector partners | GIZ, PNUD CR; NDC Action, Aliarse | M = 2 F = 8 | M = 0 F = 2 | M = 0 F = 1 | M = 0% F = 50% |

15. The review did not uncover any significant limitations; however, one notable challenge was the non-participation of nearly 50% of respondents. This non-participation was either due to a lack of response or individuals being too busy to participate. In particular, access to team members that had participated during the design and formulation stages of the Project was not achieved despite many attempts. It is noteworthy that a considerable amount of time was spent rectifying incorrect email addresses from the original list to ensure accurate communication.
16. This TR was bound to the Ethical Code of Conduct as per the UNEP Evaluation policy, which includes the following key factors: (a) all interviews and information were provided in confidence and anonymously and no information can be traced back to a direct source/individual, (b) those involved in the TR have had the opportunity to review the

report findings as well as the main review report, (c) the evaluator was sure to have empathy and sensitivity to different contexts and cultures in which stakeholders work.

II. The Project

a) Context

17. Costa Rica is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. The nation experiences rising temperatures, altered precipitation patterns, and the increasing occurrence of extreme weather events. These factors have implications for agriculture, water resources, and coastal communities, putting stress on the country's ecosystems and biodiversity. Nevertheless, Costa Rica has shown leadership in climate mitigation. It generates a substantial portion of its electricity from renewable sources, such as hydropower, wind, and geothermal energy. The country has set ambitious goals for carbon neutrality by 2050, reflecting its dedication to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. In addition to mitigation, Costa Rica is actively implementing climate adaptation measures. These include investments in climate-resilient infrastructure, improved water resource management, and strengthened disaster risk reduction strategies. Such actions are crucial for safeguarding the well-being of its communities and the preservation of its unique ecosystems. Costa Rica's renowned biodiversity is under threat due to climate-induced habitat shifts and rising sea levels. Conservation efforts and protected areas play a pivotal role in safeguarding the nation's diverse flora and fauna.
18. Costa Rica is an active participant in international climate agreements, including the Paris Agreement. The country's commitment to global climate action is evident through its contributions to international negotiations and its collaborations with other nations. Challenges persist, including securing funding for climate initiatives, addressing deforestation, and ensuring climate policies consider social and gender aspects, particularly the needs of vulnerable communities. Costa Rica continues its journey toward a sustainable and climate-resilient future.
19. In this context, Costa Rica has prominently placed climate change in the [2015-2018 National Development Plan](#), making it the cornerstone of every strategic action to be performed. This ambition was reflected in the [Intended Nationally Determined Contributions \(INDC\) submitted in 2015](#)¹¹, as Costa Rica: i) reaffirmed its aspiration of becoming a carbon neutral economy by 2021; and ii) committed to reducing its GHG emissions to 9,374,000 tCO₂ in 2030. Costa Rica has started transforming key sectors like agriculture and transport for which it actively engages the private sector as a key driver of de-carbonization. Historically, the country has made an effort to share its success stories and corresponding drivers and obstacles with its peers and will extend these efforts as its de-carbonization laboratory fetches more and more promising results. In line with the Paris Agreement, Costa Rica was also required to enhance its national transparency system to report with clarity and transparency on its progress in implementing its highly ambitious NDC vis-à-vis its progress towards a national-scale de-carbonization laboratory.

¹¹ The INDC drew a path for a low-emission and climate-resilient development, including policies and measures for mitigation and adaptation, being comprehensive as it was economy-wide, including all sectors, gasses, sources and sinks. To achieve these ambitious goals, Costa Rica aimed at becoming a national-scale laboratory to promote de-carbonization at the global level, based on three key concepts: knowledge sharing; innovative capacity, and private investment.

20. The CBIT project developed between 2017-2022 was a strategic tool in providing support to achieve this objective. According to the Project Document, GEF-CBIT was designed to support Costa Rica in establishing an overarching structure across all sectors that can ensure high quality in its transparency instruments; and created the capacities to transcend in the usage of MRV for policy design inputs. CBIT's most important contribution was meant to:

"...occur through the creation of capacities at an inter-sectoral level. This cross-sectorial work was fundamental to Costa Rica due to the economy-wide nature of its' NDC target, which seeks to drive deep, transformational de-carbonization which can only be achieved incorporating multi/inter-sectoral approaches." (page 10, GEF CEO Approval document).

21. The project faced two external challenges namely (a) government changes due to national elections (Presidential, 2021) which implied a change in the ruling party from the center left Citizenship Action party to the center right Democratic Social Progress and (b) COVID-19 pandemic which took place during project implementation. These will be discussed under the Findings section.

b) Results Framework

22. The project objective "Costa Rica complies with the requirements of the transparency framework under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change" was to be addressed through one component, two outcomes and three outputs under one project main objective. It also details key indicators, baseline, target at mid-term and end of Project, sources of verification, risks and assumptions.

Table 3. Costa Rica CBIT 9652 Project objective, outcome, outputs and activities

| Project Objective | Costa Rica complies with the requirements of the transparency framework under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. | |
|---|--|---|
| Outcome | Output | Activities |
| 1.1 Costa Rica's transparency instruments are strengthened to meet the Paris Agreement's Transparency Framework requirements. | 1.1.1. Quality control, assurance and continuous improvement program for Costa Rica's transparency instruments (e.g. National Communications, Biennial Communications and National Greenhouse Gas Inventories) designed. | <p>A.1: Develop QA/QC plan for the national GHG inventory and mitigation actions, with a scheduled time frame for QA/QC activities, including a list of data quality objectives following IPCC.</p> <p>A.2: Design a costed road map to integrate the QA/QC system as a part of SINAMECC (including capacity needs assessment and training modules) leading to the application of the system in the yearly reporting to UNFCCC.</p> <p>A.3: Develop legal framework/Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) for institutionalized and consistent data management (QA/QC). Assignments for QA/QC responsibility should cover all source categories included in the inventory and include MoUs and other legal agreements to operationalize the QA/QC system.</p> <p>A.4: Conduct assessment of training and capacity building needs to equip government officials with the skills required to operationalize the improved GHG QA/QC system.</p> <p>A.5: Develop guidance material to staff in key sectors on how to apply the QA/QC procedures when developing GHG inventories.</p> <p>A.6: Develop QA/QC training modules and build capacity of key stakeholders.</p> <p>A.7: Organize a regional workshop under the Latin American Network on GHG inventories and QA/QC in San Jose.</p> |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| 1.2 National institutions use climate change analysis and monitoring data for decision making | 1.2.1 Strategic Climate Planning Unit (SPU) developed | <p>B.1: Establish the Strategic Climate Planning Unit (SPU) by defining its role and scope of its legal mandate and its administrative location, including vision and mission statement, organigram, annual work plan, identify board members and a business model.</p> <p>B.2: Establish a Green Network to host forums with the private sector, politicians and citizens to promote partnerships for climate solutions and raise awareness on climate issues.</p> <p>B.3: Conduct regional technical workshops on policy instruments for implementation of the Costa Rican long-term low greenhouse gas emission development strategy (LTS).</p> <p>B.4: Undertake annual national stock taking of Costa Rica's progress in achieving the NDC including impact analysis of existing mitigation actions and identification of opportunities for implementing additional actions.</p> <p>B.5: Develop policy impact forecasts and substantive policy options for the improvement of climate change policymaking across sectors.</p> <p>B.6: Carry out Public Relations including the establishment of a Climate Embassy for Youth and develop educational material for schools on climate change.</p> <p>B.7: Provide training to SPU staff on NDC policy impact forecasting, including a workshop on integrating gender responsiveness in the NDC.</p> |
| | 1.2.2. Knowledge sharing platform for MRV-related transparency and data methodologies implemented. | <p>C.1: Design and program Transparency Knowledge Platform website.</p> <p>C.2: Populate the platform with sectoral guidance documents and methodologies available on the website</p> <p>C.3: Maintain and update the technical content of the website.</p> <p>C.4: Design user guide with step-by-step indications and ad hoc training of sector staff as necessary.</p> <p>C.5: Support the development and digitalization of an NDC Action Registry under SINAMECC.</p> <p>C.6: Establish a Data Management System including QA/QC facilitating the provision of climate data from the Transparency Knowledge Platform to the Strategic Climate Planning Unit.</p> <p>C.7: Support the enhancement of instruments and procedures guaranteeing that the implementation of all NDC activities meets clear standards.</p> <p>C.8: Carry out a study of advances made in the region and in other developing countries in order to achieve big data processing systems and Intelligent Transport Systems, for better and more precise data management in Costa Rica in the transport sector.</p> <p>C.9: Organize a regional workshop to discuss best practices related to MRV in transport sectors in the LAC region.</p> |

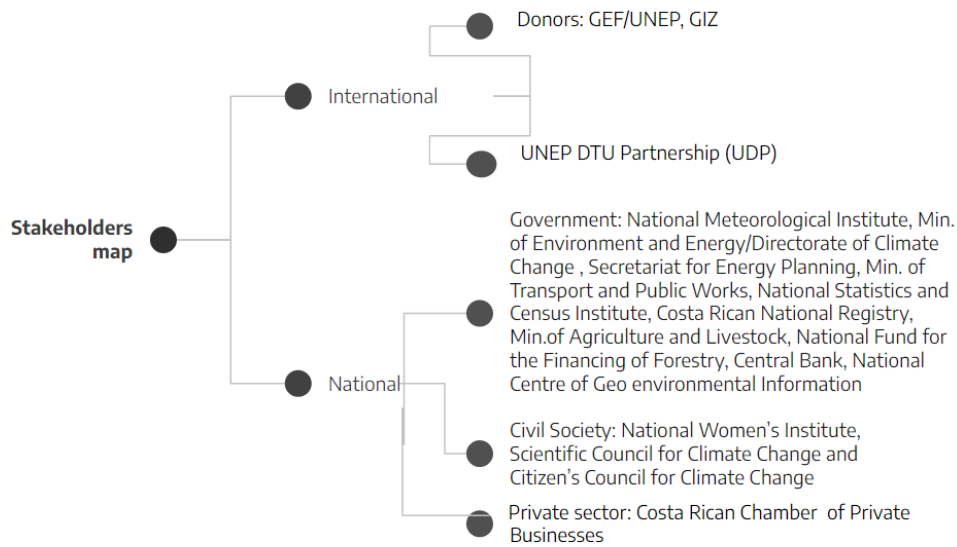
Source: own elaboration based on GEF CEO Approval document

c) Stakeholders

23. The project's key stakeholders, besides the IA and the EA, included a spectrum of collaboration and partnership that had roles to play in attaining the project results. The Project document identified key stakeholders at international and national levels. At international level it included partnerships with expert organizations (GEF, WB), donors (GIZ) and partnerships schemes (UDP). At national level the project was led by the national government and engaged with other public sector stakeholders, civil society organizations and the private sector.

24. The leading role was held by the [Ministry of Environment and Energy \(MINAE\)](#) - Directorate of Climate Change (DCC) which was the main beneficiary and held the most prominent role, interest and influence over the project's results. MINAE's DCC is the national focal point for climate change and was the project's counterpart, responsible for coordinating the initiatives that supported the implementation and design of SINAMECC.

Figure 2. Costa Rica CBIT 9652 Stakeholders map



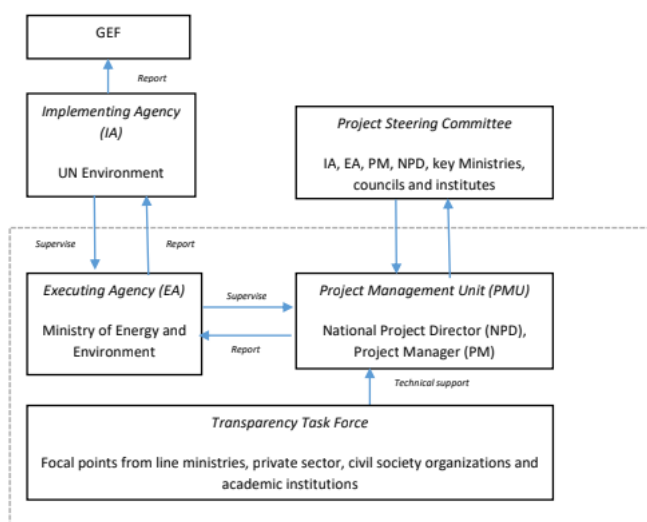
Source: GEF CEO Approval document

d) Project implementation structure and partners

25. The Implementing Agency for the Project was the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (LACO) and the Executing Agency was the Ministry of Energy and Environment (MINEA). As part of its implementing role, UNEP supervised and provided administrative support to the Executing Agency. MINEA managed the Project execution on a day-to-day basis, composed managerial and technical teams as needed and hired the required technical consultants. A Project Team within MINEA, headed by a Project Coordinator was made responsible for the day-to-day management of the Project. This team reported directly to UNEP and the Project's Steering Committee. In line with the reporting obligations of the Project, MINEA submitted administrative, progress and financial reports to UNEP.
26. A Project Steering Committee was formed by representatives of the executing and implementing agencies, key ministries, councils and institutes: National Project Director, (NPD), Project Manager (PM), UNEP, Ministry of Environment and Energy, Ministry of Public Works and Transportation, Ministry of Livestock and Agriculture, National Meteorological Institute, National Statistics and Census Institute, Scientific Council for Climate Change and Citizen's Council for Climate Change. The Committee met on a regular basis to review the Project progress and results and to guarantee the fulfillment of goals and objectives.
27. A Project Management Unit composed by the NPD and the PM was set. The PM unit reported to and was supervised by the EA and met on a regular basis.
28. A Transparency Task Force (TTF) was built on the already existing SINAMECC Committee including MINEA, CENIGA, the National Meteorological Institute and the National Statistics and Census Institute. It also included actors from the private sector, civil society organizations and academic institutions.

29. Detailed Project governance structure Project bodies names, composition, roles and frequency of meeting can be found under Annex III. A graphic view can be found under Figure 3 below.

Figure 3. Costa Rica CBIT 9652 Project governance



Source: GEF CEO Approval document

e) Changes in design during implementation

30. During project completion (July 2019 to December 2022), no substantive or significant changes were made on design apart from the ones imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic which meant re-allocation of travel budget. Operational changes included limitation of presence at project activities and Personnel and Contract Services assigned through other organizations management.

| Date | Changes | Detail | Source |
|------------|------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Pre launch | Non substantive | During the consultations process, minor changes in the wording of the logical framework were decided. | CEO Approval Document |
| 10.07.2019 | Non substantive | Workplan, budget and implementation arrangements approval. | Executive Committee meeting minutes |
| 27.08.2020 | Non substantive, operational | Work plan, schedule and budget readjusted due to delays in the start of the project and the COVID-19 pandemic. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjustments are redirected to increase local team support, reduce and merge the scope of workshops. Reduce the travel budget due to the limitation of presence and the opportunity of virtuality. | Executive Committee meeting minutes |
| 26.04.2021 | Non substantive, operational | Work plan, schedule and budget readjusted due to delays in the implementation of the project and the COVID-19 pandemic. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personnel and Contract Services are assigned to transfers and grants due to modified implementation (through other organizations). | Executive Committee meeting minutes |

| | | | |
|------------|------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| | | arrangements with other organizations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel reduction due to pandemic. | |
| 10.03.2022 | Non substantive, operational | Time extension (4 months). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project due on 31.12.2023 without additional costs. | Executive Committee meeting minutes |
| 15.07.2022 | | None. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreements to secure final implementation. | Executive Committee meeting minutes |

f) Project financing

31. The Project was funded through the Global Environment Facility (GEF) with a grant of USD 1,000,000 implemented by UNEP and executed by the Ministry of Environment and Energy (MINAE). Co-financing (cash and in-kind contributions were secured to a value of USD 2,750,000).

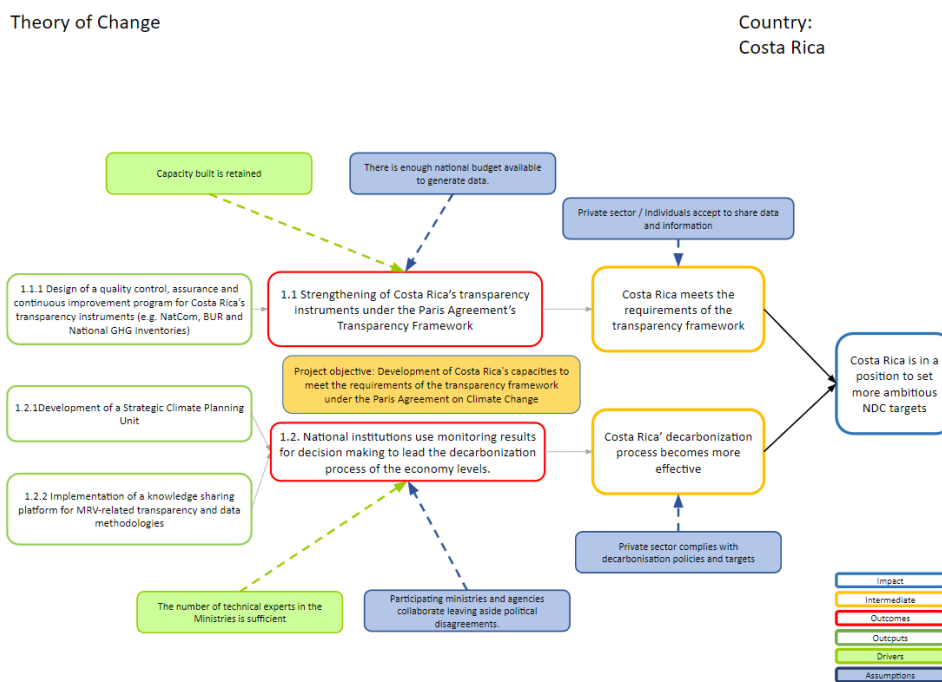
III. Theory of Change at Terminal Review

32. The Theory of Change is a particularly important framework for assessing project performance and results-achievements of the review. While it needs to maintain the elements of the original targets and intended results of the project (as the project was designed), it also needs to allow the evaluator to understand the flow from outputs through to project outcomes, intermediate states to the eventual long-lasting impact of the project, and the long-term impact to which the project aims to contribute.
33. At the time when the Project document was designed, the Theory of Change (ToC) was not yet a requirement for the development of project proposals so it was not included as a part of the CEO GEF Endorsement/Approval Document. In spite of that, and also according to UNEP policies¹², Projects are subjected to approval at the Project Review Committee instance which solicited a proper ToC apart from the Project document. Therefore, the ToC has been analyzed during this inception phase based on the defined outcomes, outputs and objectives as described in the original Project document as well as the diagram file provided by UNEP which contained i) problem tree, ii) objectives tree and iii) ToC diagram.
34. ToC reconstructed narrative can be described as "In response to the urgent need to address climate change and meet the transparency requirements of the Paris Agreement, Costa Rica has embarked on a comprehensive climate program. This program is designed to strengthen the country's capacity to report transparently on its climate actions and harness climate data for informed decision-making. In the first outcome, 'Costa Rica's transparency instruments are strengthened to meet the Paris Agreement's Transparency Framework requirements,' the program focuses on enhancing the quality and reliability of key climate data and reporting mechanisms. Through a series of carefully planned activities, including the development of a robust QA/QC system, legal frameworks for data management, and capacity building for government officials and stakeholders, Costa Rica aims to ensure that its National Communications, Biennial Communications, and National Greenhouse Gas Inventories meet international standards. The program also fosters regional collaboration through workshops to share

¹² In reference to the UNEP's Programme and Project Management Manual (PPMM). [Project Cycle Management \(PCM\)](#) chapter, page 46.

best practices. In the second outcome, 'National institutions use climate change analysis and monitoring data for decision making,' the program establishes a SPU to facilitate the integration of climate data into policy and decision-making processes. It engages various stakeholders, including the private sector and the public, to promote partnerships and raise awareness about climate issues. The SPU will conduct regular stock taking exercises, policy impact forecasting, and educational outreach, including initiatives like the Climate Embassy for Youth, to ensure that climate analysis informs strategic decisions across sectors. Additionally, the program implements a 'Knowledge sharing platform for MRV-related transparency and data methodologies.' This platform serves as a central hub for climate-related information, making sector-specific guidance, methodologies, and data readily accessible. It facilitates data management, quality control, and sharing, supporting both transparency requirements and evidence-based policymaking. Throughout the program's implementation, the effectiveness of these strategies and activities will be continuously monitored and evaluated”.

Figure 4. Costa Rica CBIT 9652 Theory of Change diagram



Source: UNEP files

35. The project was built on 12 drivers around 3 main areas: a) facilitating context which included international support, public awareness, public engagement, political commitment and private sector engagement; b) public engagement that relied on government leadership, public sectoral engagement, technical expertise, data availability and collaboration and; c) cross-cutting issues that tackled gender inclusivity and capacity building.
36. The Project assumptions can be grouped in a) facilitating context which contains stakeholders collaboration, continued international reporting, availability of stakeholders and public engagement; b) public management that assumes government commitment, availability of resources, data availability and accessibility, technical capacity and feasibility, sectoral cooperation, Transport Sector Advancements and gender integration.

37. There are two causal pathways demonstrated in the diagrammatic Theory of Change. The causal pathways all contribute to the intermediate states which flow into one pathway towards long-lasting project impact and eventually towards the long-term impact the project contributes to.
38. The first causal pathway is from Output 1.1.1. (QC&A and continuous improvement program for Costa Rica’s transparency instruments) which would lead to Outcome 1.1. (transparency instruments are strengthened to meet the PA Transparency Framework), but necessitates that the assumptions that stakeholder participation, government commitment, data and resources availability are in place.
39. The second causal pathway is from the combination of Output 1.2.1 (SPU developed) and 1.2.2. (Knowledge platform) which will lead to Outcome 1.2. (national institutions use climate change analysis and monitoring data for decision making) but necessitates that the assumptions of availability of stakeholders, public engagement, government commitment, data, technical feasibility and sectoral cooperation are in place.
40. The two intermediate states (thanks to the two causal pathways from outputs through outcomes and assumptions and drivers) would lead to a long-lasting project impact that requires that Costa Rica complies with the requirements of the transparency framework under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.
41. The overall approach of the Costa Rica CBIT 9652 project's theory of change, encompassing its narrative, drivers, assumptions, and causal pathways, remained logically sound throughout the entire implementation phase.

IV. Evaluation findings

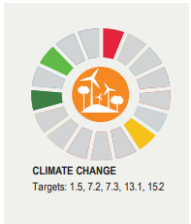
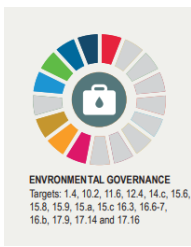

A. Strategic Relevance

Alignment to UNEP's MTS, POW and strategic priorities

42. The Project aligns with the [UN Sustainable Goals 2015 - 2030](#) through three (out of seven) of UNEP areas of focus according to the document [UNEP Medium-Term Strategy \(MTS\) 2018 to 2021](#). Specifically Costa Rica CBIT 9652 aligns with Climate Change, Countries increasingly transition to low-emission economic development and enhance their adaptation and resilience to climate change; Environmental Governance, Promoting policy coherence and strong legal and institutional frameworks to achieve environmental goals in the context of sustainable development; and “Environment under Review, Keeping the environment under review to empower stakeholders to deliver the environmental dimension of sustainable development”. There was no evidence to suggest quantitative alignment to these plans (through the indicators, for instance).

Table 4. Alignment with UNEP's MTS, POW and strategic priorities

| SDG | Area of focus | Outcomes |
|-----|---------------|----------|
|-----|---------------|----------|

| | | |
|---|--------------------------|---|
|  | Climate change | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Countries increasingly advance their national adaptation plans, which integrate ecosystem-based adaptation • Countries increasingly adopt and/or implement low greenhouse gas emission development strategies and invest in clean technologies |
|  | Environmental Governance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The international community increasingly converges on common and integrated approaches to achieve environmental objectives and implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and • Institutional capacity and policy and/or legal frameworks enhanced to achieve internationally agreed environmental goals, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals. |
|  | Environment under Review | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governments and other stakeholders use quality open environmental data, analyses and participatory processes that strengthen the science-policy interface (e.g. GEO, SDG CoPs) to generate evidence-based environmental assessments, identify emerging issues and foster policy action. |

Source: own elaboration based on CEO, UNEP's MTS, POW.

43. The Project also aligns with UNEP Programme of Work (POW) and budget for the biennium 2018-19 (POW) and with the POW 2020-2021 and contributes to three subprograms with the following objectives: 1. Climate change “Countries increasingly make the transition to low-emission economic development, and enhance their adaptation and resilience to climate change” (a. Countries increasingly advance their national adaptation plans which integrate ecosystem-based adaptation); 4. Environmental governance “Policy coherence and strong legal and institutional frameworks increasingly achieve environmental goals in the context of sustainable development” (b. Institutional capacities and policy and/or legal frameworks enhanced to achieve internationally agreed environmental goals, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals) and 7. Environment under review “Governments and other stakeholders are empowered with quality assessments and open access to data and information to deliver the environmental dimension of sustainable development”.

44. Rating for Alignment to UN SDG, UNEP’s Medium-Term Strategy, Programme of Work and strategic priorities is ‘Highly Satisfactory’.

Alignment to Donor/Partner strategic priorities

45. The Project aligns with the [Bali Strategic Plan \(BSP\)](#) through the objective “ (a) strengthen the capacity of governments of developing countries through targeted capacity building within the mandate of UNEP, using and sustaining the capacity of technology obtained through training or other capacity building efforts, and developing national research, monitoring and assessment capacity that supports national institutions in data collection, analysis and monitoring of environmental trends and in establishing infrastructure for

scientific development and environmental management (that will ensure sustainability of capacity building efforts)”¹³ (page 2, UNEP/GC.23/6/Add.1).

46. The project contributed to GEF-6 Focal Area Climate Change. According to [GEF-6 Programming Directions](#) Costa Rica CBIT 9652 is aligned specifically to Focal Area Objective CC 3. Foster Enabling Conditions to Mainstream Mitigation Concerns into Sustainable Development Strategies; to Focal Program 5: Integrate findings of Convention obligations enabling activities into national planning processes and mitigation contributions; Outcome B. Policy, planning and regulatory frameworks foster accelerated low GHG development and emissions mitigation and Indicator Indicator 7. Number of countries meeting convention reporting requirements and including mitigation contributions.
47. The Project was also aligned with GEF’s ongoing programs in Costa Rica such as the Global Support Program for National Communications and Biennial Update Report according to CEO-Approval document.
48. Rating for Alignment to Donor/Partner strategic priorities is ‘Highly Satisfactory’.

Relevance to regional, sub-regional and national issues and needs

49. The project is aligned with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) of Costa Rica for the period 2013-2017. The UNDAF strategic area 4 was “Environmental sustainability and risk management” that includes as direct effect 4.1. “The public, private and civil society sectors are able to implement the national climate change strategy to move towards a low carbon economy and reduce vulnerability to climate change”.
50. The project document clearly outlines its alignment and relevance to national environmental priorities which can be tracked in national official documents. First, Costa Rica has prominently placed climate change in the [2015-2018 National Development Plan](#), making it the cornerstone of every strategic action to be performed. Second, this ambition was reflected in the [Intended Nationally Determined Contributions \(INDC\) submitted in 2015](#)¹⁴, as Costa Rica: i) reaffirmed its aspiration of becoming a carbon neutral economy by 2021; and ii) committed to reducing its GHG emissions to 9,374,000 tCO₂ in 2030. Costa Rica has started transforming key sectors like agriculture and transport for which it actively engages the private sector as a key driver of de-carbonization. Costa Rica has in its NDC committed to an Open Government policy that is looking into strengthening accountability mechanisms, information access and availability, and citizen participation and is hoping to promote an open data policy for all relevant climate information available for any citizen. Third, the project is also aligned with the [Technology Needs Assessment](#) (TNA) (which prioritizes the transport sector), as well as its NDC.

¹³ The BSP also has other specific objectives of “promoting, facilitating and financing as appropriate, access to and support of environmentally sound technologies and corresponding know-how, especially for developing countries as well as countries with economies in transition”, and “strengthening cooperation amongst UNEP, multilateral agreement secretariats (that take into account their autonomous decision-making processes), and other bodies engaged in environmental capacity building including GEF”.

¹⁴ The INDC drew a path for a low-emission and climate-resilient development, including policies and measures for mitigation and adaptation, being comprehensive as it was economy-wide, including all sectors, gasses, sources and sinks. To achieve these ambitious goals, Costa Rica aimed at becoming a national-scale laboratory to promote de-carbonization at the global level, based on three key concepts: knowledge sharing; innovative capacity, and private investment.

51. Rating for Relevance to regional, sub-regional and national issues and needs is 'Highly Satisfactory'.

Complementarity with existing interventions

52. The project document clearly outlines the project linkages with a large number of projects that had already been implemented (page 26, 27 CEO-Approval document). The project made a large effort throughout the implementation to align and create synergies with other interventions (see also Project timeline on page 11 above for easy reference) to increase efficiency, efficacy and sustainability of results such us:

- UNDP | Capacity building for mainstreaming objectives of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) in structures and inter-ministerial mechanism
- GIZ Accounting Rules for the achievement of the mitigation goals of non-Annex 1 countries
- Initiative for Climate Action Transparency
- Climate Technology Centre & Network
- Partnership for Market Readiness
- Upstream Policy Analysis (UPA) 2 GIZ – Promoting Costa Rica's GHG neutrality goal as a low emissions development strategy.

53. Rating for complementarity with existing interventions is 'Highly Satisfactory'.

Rating for Strategic Relevance is 'Highly Satisfactory'.

B. Quality of Project Design

54. A detailed review of the project design was completed and elaborated in the Inception Report of the Terminal Review and thus only the summarized version will be presented here.

55. Project Design Assessment. The project exhibits a well-elaborated design, featuring a comprehensive and coherent results framework that aligns with the project's overarching objective. The outputs and outcomes are clearly defined and interconnected, reinforcing the project's overall purpose. Strengths of the project design include its alignment with national and international initiatives, a clear focus on transparency, and the intention to build upon previous successful efforts. Notably, the project envisions mechanisms to make its outcomes accessible to national sectoral actors, further enhancing Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) capabilities. The project prioritizes capacity building, incorporating quality control, assurance, continuous improvement, and personnel training. Moreover, the project document effectively outlines key stakeholders and their respective roles and responsibilities within the project.

56. However, some weaknesses are identified in the project design. First, the document lacks a comprehensive identification of beneficiary groups within the project document. Second, the project document lacks sufficient consideration for under-represented and marginalized groups, with only partial incorporation of gender-related aspects. Additionally, it falls short in planning activities to engage national decision-makers to advocate for the institutionalization of the Strategic Climate Planning Unit (SPU) and the development of necessary legislative agreements at national level.

57. Overall Assessment. The quality of the project's design is deemed "Satisfactory" with a score of 4.84 out of 5.16. Notable strengths are identified in strategic relevance, logical framework, monitoring, governance and supervision arrangements, partnerships, and financial planning and budgeting. The project also performs well in terms of efficiency, risk identification, and social safeguards. However, there are areas where improvements are needed, including operating context, project preparation, intended results, causality, and identified project design weaknesses/gaps. Moderately unsatisfactory performance is noted in sustainability, replication, and catalytic effects. The lowest score, "Unsatisfactory," is assigned to learning, communication, and outreach aspects.

Rating for Quality or Project Design is "Satisfactory".

C. Nature of the External Context

58. The evaluator's assessment of how the project design dealt with the nature of external context, including risk, is favorable. While the design did have some risks identified, it could have done a better job at assessing the political external context by identifying likely or at least probable issues, most notably the change in government as a result of elections during project implementation. This specific issue was not addressed at the CEO- Approval document nor mentioned in following revisions.
59. The project experienced two main events during implementation, namely in historical order: (a) government turnover in 2017 and (b) COVID-19 global pandemic.
60. Regarding (a) government turnover as an outcome of national elections in 2017 resulted in the stagnation and inactivity of the Steering Committee for most of 2017 and 2018 until the project had to request a late extension and make adaptive management arrangements around it. Nevertheless, the Project managed to overcome the situation and complete committed activities and outputs as detailed under D. Effectiveness and F. Efficiency.
61. Considering (b) the COVID-19 pandemic, which took place at the tail-end of project completion and had minor implications on project implementation, it was managed properly. In the words of the team, *"the team was able to go full virtual and complete activities by incorporating information technologies, interactive tools and online events to overcome social distancing"* (team member in a leading role, interview, 2023).
62. Neither of these two events had a significant impact on the achievement of project results. Political context will be further discussed under findings in terms of sustainability.

Rating for Nature of external Context is "Moderately Favorable".

D. Effectiveness

Availability of Outputs

63. Output 1.1.1. Quality control, assurance and continuous improvement program for Costa Rica's transparency instruments (e.g. National Communications, Biennial Communications and National Greenhouse Gas Inventories) design was fully achieved.

- The QA/QC plan for the national GHG inventory and mitigation actions, with a scheduled time frame for QA/QC activities, including a list of data quality objectives following IPCC was fully developed. The available document establishes the data and quality management framework for the operation of the SINAMECC, integrating aspects related to data management in the SINAMECC Platform, the legal aspects for their sustainability, as well as the Control and Guarantee Plan Quality for SINAMECC Operation.
- The costed road map to integrate the QA/QC system as a part of SINAMECC (including capacity needs assessment and training modules) leading to the application of the system in the yearly reporting to UNFCCC was delivered. The document “*Gestión y Calidad de Datos*” simplifies the process of implementing the designed quality management procedures in simple steps and also includes a useful cost estimate to facilitate the sustainability of the efforts.
- Legal framework/Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) for institutionalized and consistent data management (QA/QC) including assignments for QA/QC responsibility covered all source categories included in the inventory and included MoUs and other legal agreements to operationalize the QA/QC system were addressed. Between November 2020 and April 2021, the CBIT project team carried out a review of the SINAMECC standard in order to update and improve its content, technical-normative drafting and adapt its provisions to advances in transparency in accordance with the Agreement of Paris and the progress in the implementation of the MRT, as well as to facilitate the implementation of several of the data management processes. Official publication available at: http://www.pgrweb.go.cr/scij/Busqueda/Normativa/Normas/nrm_texto_completo.aspx?param1=NRTC&nValor1=1&nValor2=94315&nValor3=125528&strTipM=TC
- Assessment of training and capacity building needs to equip government officials with the skills required to operationalize the improved GHG QA/QC system was conducted. A workshop was held to map the capabilities of key personnel in terms of quality management and propose quality management training processes.
- Guidance material to staff in key sectors on how to apply the QA/QC procedures when developing GHG inventories was developed. The document “*Gestión y Calidad de Datos*” establishes a proposal for a quality management plan for the National Inventory of Greenhouse Gas Emissions, integrating different procedures and templates for its application, as well as recommendations for its implementation, based on the best practices and processes that have already been implemented. implemented by the compilation team, seeking to comply with the ETF standards and recommendations
- QA/QC training modules were deployed and capacity of key stakeholders increased. The online course: Quality management system at SINAMECC was created to facilitate capacity building in the quality management tools created within the SINAMECC framework and their application. It is openly available on the Climate Classroom platform, managed by the Climate Change Directorate of MINAE (more details below under Output 1.2.2). Documentation of capacity building strategies and actions delivered is fully available.
- Regional workshop under the Latin American Network on GHG inventories and QA/QC was delivered on line in San Jose on January 24th and 25th in 2022 with the registration of 234 participants from 21 countries and territories according to the Workshop report. This two-day workshop integrated topics related to transparency and national GHG inventories, progress in monitoring long-term low-emission development strategies, as well as aspects

of MRV in the transportation sector, contemplating both the main advances and challenges identified from the perspective of different countries in the region.



64. Output 1.2.1 Strategic Climate Planning Unit (SPU) developed was partially achieved.

→ SPU with a defined role and scope of its legal mandate and its administrative location, including vision and mission statement, organigram, annual work plan, identify board members and a business model was developed but not established as planned. According to the document “Development of Strategic Planning Unit/ SiPECC and CNA” an analysis was carried out on the institutional needs for the implementation of the SiPECC and CNA structure was designed (including training and team needs).

→ A Green Network to host forums with the private sector, politicians and citizens to promote partnerships for climate solutions and raise awareness on climate issues was designed but not implemented. There is evidence of a detailed proposed structure of the implementation of the proposed transparency training program, including sessions, speakers, dates and guests. It is important to highlight that this program proposal was not executed by decision of the project counterpart, as it was decided to change the focus and have fewer training sessions focused on a smaller group of officials.

→ As mentioned before under Output 1.1.1, the regional technical workshop on policy instruments for implementation of the Costa Rican long-term low greenhouse gas emission development strategy (LTS) planned under CEO Approval document was delivered. The report documents the regional workshop held in January 2022. This two-day workshop integrated topics related to transparency and national GHG inventories, progress in monitoring long-term low-emissions development strategies, as well as aspects of MRV in the transportation sector, contemplating both the main advances and challenges identified from the perspective of different countries in the region.

→ Annual national stocktaking of Costa Rica’s progress in achieving the NDC including impact analysis of existing mitigation actions and identification of opportunities for implementing additional actions was achieved. Available documentation includes detailed information about the construction process of the 2021 progress report of the Decarbonization Plan, including the published report and the systematization of the

information included in it. This documentation is useful as a basis for the construction of the first BTR in Costa Rica, which should include progress in the implementation of the country's NDC. Furthermore, the information can be taken as a basis to implement an NDC monitoring system.

→ Policy impact forecasts and substantive policy options for the improvement of climate change policy making across sectors were developed. The document "Analysis of data management of the modeling ecosystem focused on the energy sector to improve its transparency based on best practices at the regional level" is an assessment of the transparency of the energy sector within the framework of the decarbonization modeling tools used for the construction of the NDC 2020 of Costa Rica and an analysis of improvement options, considering good practices identified at the regional level.

→ Public Relations including the establishment of a Climate Embassy for Youth and development educational material for schools on climate change was achieved through the National Youth Forum (work of the CBIT project in relation to strengthening youth participation in climate action and project processes). Available documentation summarizes the main aspects of this event, as well as the support of the project. Besides, it is important to mention that after discussions with government authorities, it was decided to incorporate the goal of youth participation in the structure proposed as the "Climate Embassy" in the design of the National Cycle of Ambition, so that efforts would be integrated and progress would be made. a more efficient way in the design and implementation of new processes.

→ Training to SPU staff on NDC policy impact forecasting, including a workshop on integrating gender responsiveness in the NDC was designed but not delivered. Even though there is evidence of a detailed proposed structure for the implementation of the proposed training to SPU staff it is important to highlight that this program proposal was not executed by decision of the project counterpart, as it was decided to change the focus and have fewer training sessions focused on a smaller group of officials.

65. Output 1.2.2. Knowledge sharing platform for MRV-related transparency and data methodologies was implemented.

→ The Transparency Knowledge Platform website is in place, functional and can be accessed through the following link: <http://www.sinamecc.go.cr/>. The vision in terms of climate transparency that Costa Rica has in relation to the development of the SINAMECC, as well as the technical advances achieved through the development of methodologies and protocols, as well as through the implementation of the SINAMECC digital platform is well documented. Additionally, a technical report is included that details the progress and final result in the programming of the SINAMECC digital platform and its respective functionalities.

→ The SINAMECC platform was populated with data and sectoral guidance documents and methodologies available on the website and is well documented under the document "*Síntesis de la información integrada en SINAMECC*" (January, 2023).

→ The technical content of the website is maintained and updated. A detailed list of data of interest to be integrated and updated in the SINAMECC to satisfy the needs of the main actors that interact with SINAMECC for the construction of reports, as well as a prioritization carried out in conjunction with them is well documented¹⁵. This list is useful to prioritize the

¹⁵ Available at <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1dxbAy81dqrMDogcsLekFOBNUWf06YzTy/edit#gid=359933238>

sources of information and associated data to be integrated into the SINAMECC, so that the implementation of the strategy for the development of data exchange agreements with the system and related processes can be facilitated.

→ A user guide with step-by-step indications and ad hoc training of sector staff were developed. The guide is aimed at system administrators and includes part of the SINAMECC infrastructure articulated with the website, the open data platform, as well as the web application with its various modules and components, as well as the details of the technical information on the SINAMECC structure transmitted in detailed technical training to key personnel designated to monitor the system process.

→ In order to meet this target, a virtual course was created in a way that facilitates capacity building in the process of designing a mitigation action in Costa Rica and in its registration through the SINAMECC using the designed registry of mitigation actions. It is openly available on the Climate Classroom platform, managed by the Climate Change Directorate of MINAE: <https://aula.cambioclimatico.go.cr/?>. To access the course it is necessary to create a free user. The objective of the course is to obtain knowledge about the key aspects to consider for the design of a mitigation action in Costa Rica, as well as understand the requirements and the process to follow for its registration in the registry of mitigation actions of Costa Rica articulated through SINAMECC, in a way that makes your application easier for administrative users and others who interact with it. This course is also useful for the general public who is interested in understanding how SINAMECC works.

→ As part of the closing process of the CBIT project, seven training sessions were planned and executed in response to the key topics of interest transmitted by the counterparts, so as to facilitate the sustainability of the efforts. In the attached folder you will find the information that documents these sessions.

→ The NDC Action Registry under SINAMECC was developed and digitalized. The "Mitigation Actions Guide" aims to support the identification of climate actions with mitigation impacts and facilitate the registration process on the SINAMECC platform through a detailed description of each of the steps. Also a useful reference for climate actions with mitigation impacts that are in the design process, as it can help with a better approach and the design of associated monitoring systems.

→ A Data Management System including QA/QC facilitating the provision of climate data from the Transparency Knowledge Platform to the SPU is in place. The document summarizes the logic of the articulation between climate transparency tools and decarbonization modeling tools, as part of SINAMECC's vision of facilitating data-based decision making, also uniting several of the pieces supported by the CBIT project: SINAMECC, SiPECC and the CNA. It includes a process designed to take advantage of the SINAMECC functionalities to facilitate the implementation of the SiPECC and ensure consistency between the data used in the modeling tools and other transparency processes managed through the SINAMECC.

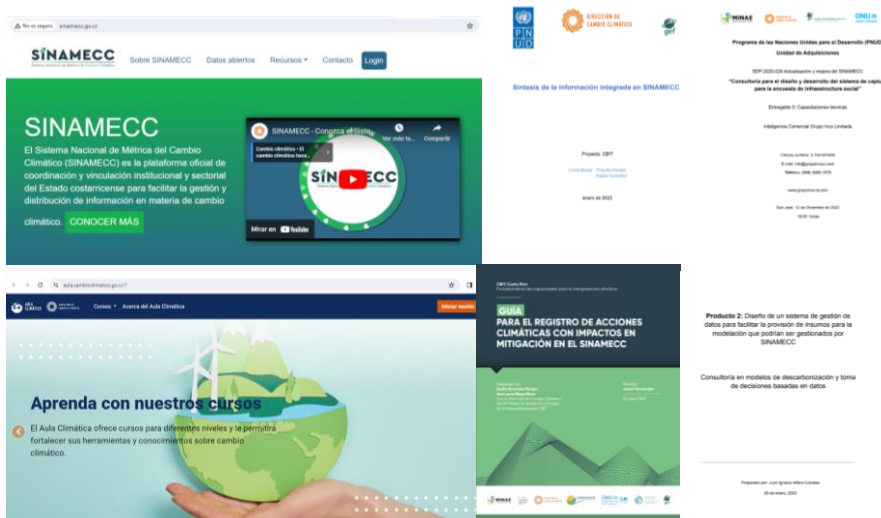
→ Instruments and procedures guaranteeing that the implementation of all NDC activities meets clear standards where enhanced. An ICTU Annex was included in Costa Rica's NDC-2020, that is, the Annex to Facilitate Clarity, Transparency and Understanding of the NDC (see page 96 of the NDC). This Annex was prepared with support from the CBIT project.

→ Recommendations for the DCC in relation to the planning and execution of the BTR, based on the Project Document (Prodoc) with UNDP that was available at the time, so that the report provides recommendations to improve this Prodoc in light of the progress and needs in the different SINAMECC modules, especially the national GHG inventory. Additionally, the recommendations of the different official UNFCCC reviews that Costa Rica has been a part of are compiled for the first time.

→ Documentation of the process design of a set of indicators to monitor its implementation, so that they can facilitate reporting under the Reinforced Transparency Framework of the Paris Agreement, as well as the approach of a participatory process to discuss the indicators among the institutions related to their measurement and the execution of the commitments and a process for the officialization of the indicators, so that a reporting periodicity aligned with the presentation of the Biennial Transparency Reports is agreed.

→ A study of advances made in the region and in other developing countries in order to achieve big data processing systems and Intelligent Transport Systems, for better and more precise data management in Costa Rica in the transport sector was developed. This document is useful because it proposes a series of recommendations on how to incorporate the use of Big Data in the modeling ecosystem for the decarbonization of Costa Rica for better and more accurate data management for the decarbonization of the transportation sector in Costa Rica.

→ A regional workshop to discuss best practices related to MRV in transport sectors in the LAC region was conducted in January 2022. This two-day workshop integrated topics related to transparency and national GHG inventories, advances in monitoring long-term low-emissions development strategies, as well as aspects of MRV in the transportation sector, contemplating both the main advances and challenges identified from the perspective of different countries in the region.





- 66. The project managed to deliver all its outputs and these were all of fair quality.
- 67. The project’s delivery of outputs is rated as ‘Highly Satisfactory’.

Achievement of Project Outcomes

- 68. The achievement of the project’s outcomes was evaluated based on the reconstructed Theory of Change’s causal pathways between outputs and outcomes, and the strategic questions provided per outcome below.
- 69. Outcome 1.1. Costa Rica’s transparency instruments were strengthened to meet the Paris Agreement’s Transparency Framework requirements.

Strategic Question 1: To what extent were Costa Rica’s transparency instruments strengthened to meet the Paris Agreement’s Transparency Framework requirements?.

- 70. Costa Rica’s transparency instruments were strengthened through the development of a quality control, assurance, and continuous improvement complete program (QA/QC program). The program impacted National Communications, Biennial Communications and National Greenhouse Gas Inventories.
- 71. The QA/QC strategy included: a) data and quality management framework for the operation of the SINAMECC; b) costed road map to integrate the QA/QC system as a part of SINAMECC leading to the application of the system in the yearly reporting to UNFCCC; c) a review of the SINAMECC standard in order to update and improve its content, technical-normative drafting and adapt its provisions to advances in transparency in accordance with the Paris Agreement and the progress in the implementation of the MRT; d) assessment of training and capacity building needs to equip government officials with the skills required to operationalize the improved GHG QA/QC system and; c) Guidance material to staff in key sectors on how to apply the QA/QC procedures when developing GHG inventories was developed.
- 72. Strengthened capacities to comply with international commitments is probably the biggest achievement and highlight from the project according to actors interviewed independently of their position within the project governance structure. As perceived by its former project manager, “The project provided and added value based on many different sources and allowed us to have a robust and clear framework for data quality management”.
- 73. The project has made an effort to align its results with other projects that were supported through multilateral agencies, already mentioned in this report, as well as other projects that are supporting Costa Rica’s efforts on climate change. Besides, there is a strong belief among consulted actors that “the project was technically and politically aligned for most of its implementation trajectory”.

74. Overall, for this outcome, the project has laid a strong foundation that seems to be used and has built towards some level of commitment on sustaining SINAMECC, but no commitment has been made by the Government to move forward on institutionalizing the designed SPU in the long run.

75. Outcome 1.2. National institutions use climate change analysis and monitoring data for decision making

Strategic Question 2: To what extent are National institutions using climate change analysis and monitoring data for decision making?. Was the SPU developed? How effective is the Knowledge sharing platform for MRV-related transparency and data methodology?.

76. National institutions are using, to some extent, climate change analysis and monitoring data for decision making mainly based on SINAMECC. Nevertheless, improved governance arrangements such as the SPU and the Green Network were designed but could not be fully implemented yet. The project, however, fell short in getting the approval and full implementation of the SPU as was planned under CEO Approval document mainly due to legal constraints regarding new public employment creation. As stated briefly by a leader team member, "...although there was an intention for it to be independent (SPU), there was much discussion about its legal form and the existing institutional restrictions such as the prohibition of creating new institutions from the law that limits the creation of new positions, Law of Strengthening Public Finances # 9635¹⁶, 2018 (leader team member, interview, 2023). The Transparency Knowledge Platform is in place and fully operational.

77. Law 9635 (December 3rd, 2018), also known as the "Strengthening of Public Finances Law" ("Ley de Fortalecimiento de las Finanzas Públicas" in Spanish), is a significant legislative initiative in Costa Rica aimed at addressing fiscal challenges and enhancing the country's financial sustainability. Key aspects of Law 9635 involves: i) Salary Caps, establishes salary caps for public sector employees, particularly targeting high salaries in certain government institutions. The law imposes limits on salaries, bonuses, and other benefits for public employees, with the aim of controlling public spending; ii) Reduction of Bonuses and Benefits, reduces or eliminates certain bonuses and benefits previously enjoyed by public sector workers. This includes reductions in vacation bonuses and limits on severance payments for government employees; iii) Limits on Hiring, imposes restrictions on the hiring of new public sector employees, particularly in non-essential areas. It aims to streamline government operations by controlling the growth of the public workforce and ensuring that new hires are justified based on operational needs; iv) Pension Reform: which impacts public sector employees' retirement benefits. It introduces changes to pension contributions and retirement age requirements to help stabilize the pension system and ensure its long-term sustainability; and v) Efficiency Measures: involves measures to streamline bureaucratic processes, reduce redundancy, and enhance productivity within government institutions. Overall, Law 9635 represents a comprehensive effort to address fiscal challenges and promote greater financial responsibility within the public sector in Costa Rica. The employment restrictions outlined in the law are designed to control public spending, enhance efficiency, and ensure the sustainability of government finances over the long term.

¹⁶ Regulation of Title III of the Law Strengthening Public Finances, Law No. 9635 regarding Public Employment available at http://www.pgrweb.go.cr/scij/Busqueda/Normativa/Normas/nrm_texto_completo.aspx?param1=NRTC&nValor1=1&nValor2=88250&nValor3=115242&strTipM=TC retrieved in January 2024.

78. The SPU design has achieved: a) defined role and scope of its legal mandate and its administrative location; b) vision and mission statement, organigram, annual work plan; c) governance arrangements (identify board members and a business model was developed) but was not officially established as a renewed governmental body as planned by the CBIT project.
79. The Transparency Knowledge Platform is in place, functional and can be accessed through the following link: <http://www.sinamecc.go.cr/>.
80. The project's achievement of outcomes is rated as 'Satisfactory'.

Likelihood of Impact

81. Impact. Costa Rica complies with the requirements of the transparency framework under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Strategic Question 3. To what extent has the project improved Costa Rica's compliance with the requirements of the transparency framework under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change?

82. The following highlights signify a foundational step toward Costa Rica's compliance with the transparency framework under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, thereby facilitating its transition to impact:
83. Strong Support for MRV Framework: Costa Rica has demonstrated steadfast commitment to transparency through active participation in international reporting mechanisms. The country routinely submits National Communications to the UNFCCC and prepares Biennial Update Reports in alignment with international standards set by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Additionally, Costa Rica engages in global climate negotiations and conferences, shaping policies, sharing experiences, and learning from other nations. The country remains open to international collaboration, sharing data, experiences, and best practices. Costa Rica's commitment to transparency is further evidenced by its incorporation of stakeholder input into climate policies and reporting processes, with climate action integrated into the National Development Plan.
84. Advancement of Project Outcomes by completion of outputs: The CBIT Project complements national efforts, enhancing the likelihood of impact by directly influencing controllable factors. The project has progressed strategic outcomes by strengthening transparency instruments, including developing national capacities for quality control, assurance, continuous improvement, staff training, and Strategic Planning Unit (SPU) development. Moreover, it facilitates the use of climate change analysis and monitoring data for decision-making through the implementation of a Transparency Knowledge Platform website.
85. Ensuring Continuity: Evidence gathered for this Terminal Report indicates that data transfer agreements ensure project continuity. Institutional agreements within MINAE and cooperation agreements with other ministries and the private sector, all led by MINAE, guarantee the sustainability of the project: "...The data transfer agreements guarantee the continuity of the project: the institutional ones, within the MINAE to make SINAMMEC active; the cooperation agreements between MINAE and other ministries and the cooperation

agreements with the private sector also led by MINAE” (leader team member, interview, 2023).

86. The approach to achieving outcomes within the Theory of Change, leading to impact, is deemed coherent. The drivers identified are considered relevant for this type of intervention, although it is noted that one related to decision enforcement should have been more prominently identified. The assumptions outlined in the Theory of Change chapter during the review were found to be accurate, notwithstanding the political commitment issue surrounding the approval of SPU, as previously mentioned. It is crucial to acknowledge that while the project cannot directly influence the political context, the decision regarding the full approval of SPU/SiPPEC implementation falls beyond the project's scope of control. However, it is worth noting that the identified shortfall in the workplan does not equate to failure, as all tools and instruments provided by CBIT are already in place.
87. The achievement of the likelihood of impact, as directly connected to the project's controllable elements and its outcomes within the Theory of Change, is rated as 'Satisfactory'.

Rating for Effectiveness is Satisfactory.

E. Financial Management

Adherence to UNEP's Policies and Procedures

88. All contracts and agreements with service providers adhered to UNEP policies and procedures, although UNDP assistance was solicited to provide certain contracts because of certain limitations in contracting. While this falls within normal operating procedure, it does create additional red tape for the project. Since UNEP LACO executed this project, they had to, by default, follow all UNEP's policies and procedures.
89. The rating given is 'Satisfactory'.

Completeness of Project Financial Information

90. Project financial information is complete, the evaluator received all the annual financial expenditure reports. The three revisions to the budgets include comprehensive financial details by budget line, on the initial budget, on the revised budget and on the difference between the two (in cash and percentages).
91. The disbursement document (Funds transfer) from GEF to UNEP exists. All the quarterly financial reports and cash requests are completed, with project expenditures sheet to date. The project is detailed by budget line for GEF funding. There is no detailed project budget by output or outcome for GEF funding.
92. Co-financing information was complete.
93. Financial completeness is rated as 'Highly Satisfactory'.

Communication Between Finance and Project Management Staff

94. Communication was good and no problems were flagged. Evidence suggests that the project managers (the different project managers as there were successively three) have strong awareness of the financial status of the project. All narrative and financial reports were confirmed as having been reviewed by both finance and project staff members prior to submission. There is evidence that good communication between financial and project staff members has positively affected project implementation. The no-cost extensions of the project didn't affect the overall project performance, as MINAE and NMI could still focus on the last outputs with sufficient funding.
95. Communication between finance and project management staff is rated as 'Highly Satisfactory'.

Rating for Financial Management is Highly Satisfactory.

F. Efficiency

96. Starting in November 2018, the project was supposed to finish in December 2021 with a planned duration of 48 months. The project activities took an additional 6 months from the originally planned period. The main initial reason for this delay was the pandemic.
97. The project underwent three project non-cost extensions. The first and second ones included variations in the amount assigned to existing budget lines as well as shifting funds from one calendar year to another. A third six-month non cost extension reflected in the work plan was requested due to administrative and pandemic related delays compounded by the common slow down around election time in the country. Costa Rica faced a change of government in May 2022, and the electoral process has had the common effect of slowing down the implementation of key activities.

| Version | Date | Main changes introduced in this revision |
|---------|------------|--|
| Rev1 | 24/07/2019 | Budget revision, budget reclassification |
| Rev2 | 22/06/2021 | Budget and work plan adjustment |
| Rev 3 | 22/07/2022 | Extension with Budget and work plan adjustment |

98. In conclusion, the project was implemented within no cost extensions. The evidence suggests that this was a cost-effective approach that strongly supported the achievement of the project. Project activities were sequenced efficiently and the project built on a partnership which strengthened each partner and created synergies between them.
99. The project was able to be quite efficient in time and cost. When looking at the amount and quality of work the project did in, admittedly, more time than it had planned, it is remarkable what it managed to achieve under a complex context that combined pandemic and change in government. It is no surprise that several interview respondents shared that more person hours went into this project than was planned and the adaptation to a virtual work environment was achieved.

100. Therefore, efficiency under above mentioned circumstances is rated as Satisfactory.

Rating for Efficiency is 'Satisfactory'.

G. Monitoring and Reporting

Monitoring Design and Budgeting

101. At design, the project covered all indicators appropriately in the logical framework, had a theoretical data collection method, and had data collection frequency appropriate for the indicator. Also, the project had a dedicated budget for monitoring activities and the person responsible for monitoring progress against each indicator was identified.

102. The monitoring design, work plan and budget were detailed in the project document. The indicators were SMART as these were geared more at output-level and focused more on participation numbers and tools rather than any demonstrated level of capacity or behavior change.

103. The budgeted monitoring plan appears realistic and well planned, with dedicated co financing per item. These include the inception, measuring of project indicators, semiannual progress and operational reports, project steering committee meetings (as well as their reports), PIRs, monitoring visits to the field sites, the MTR, the TE, an annual audit, the project final report, as well as the co-financing report. A total budget of USD 73,000 (60,000 from GEF, 13,000 co-financing) was allocated to this area of the project's work at design phase. All planned M&E activities were completed except the independent Mid-Term Review (MTR).

104. Monitoring design and budgeting is rated as 'Highly Satisfactory'.

Monitoring of Project Implementation

105. During the implementation of the project, the executing agency established a Monitoring and Evaluation function with clear structure, dedicated staff and data collection method.

106. The project demonstrated adaptability and reflexivity in its management approach, particularly during the stagnation and inactivity of the Steering Committee throughout much of 2017 and 2018. This necessitated a request for a late extension and the implementation of adaptive management arrangements. Despite these challenges, the project successfully navigated the situation, fulfilling its committed activities and outputs while remaining responsive to changing circumstances, including the turnover in government in 2017 and the global COVID-19 pandemic, as previously mentioned. The project effectively utilized its monitoring framework for detailed reporting and results-based management.

107. In particular, the project demonstrated detailed monitoring of project implementation by providing activity level monthly following up all available under PIMS folder in the shared documentation link as it was verified by the consultant.

108. Monitoring of Project Implementation is rated as 'Satisfactory'.

Project Reporting

109. All main reports are digitally available and were completed, including the cash advances, Project Implementation Review reports (PIRs), steering committee minutes, annual reports, and the PIMS, were all completed, including quarterly reporting.
110. Final project reporting through the final PIR (2022) and the Final Project Report was satisfactory but could have been more nuanced in the challenges the project faced and how it attempted to overcome these.
111. There is substantial documentation of project progress available. Project reporting is rated as 'Highly Satisfactory'.

Rating for Monitoring and Reporting is Satisfactory.

H. Sustainability

Socio-political Sustainability

112. The project made intensive capacity building efforts (QA/QC and knowledge systems improvement and deployment, regional technical training, intergovernmental institutional agreements) which are likely to be sustained for those who have stayed in their position (or moved on to similar positions) within NMI and its partners.
113. Following the national elections in 2022, there was a reshuffle that led to some changes in the project's leadership and country ownership (from MINAE's competence to NMI). The latter is limited in its mandate and personnel according to staff interviewed by the consultant. Despite these shifts, there is evidence that the country's commitment to climate change reporting leadership, driven by a well-established long-term strategy, predominantly resides within the technical expertise of national bodies such as the National Meteorological Institute (NMI) and the Climate Change Directorate (CCD). Notably, this commitment extends beyond political transitions.
114. In addition to the steadfast dedication of these technical bodies, key public institutions play a vital role in shaping the project's outcomes. The Strategic Planning Unit for Climate Change (SiPECC) designed, involving institutions like the University of Costa Rica, the Central Bank, and the Ministry of Planning, along with the National Ambition Cycle (NAC), serves as a crucial nexus. These platforms engage public universities and civil society groups, representing diverse demographics such as youth, disabled individuals, the elderly, women, trans people, indigenous communities, and Afro communities. The inclusive approach of consulting and including voices from various sectors ensures a comprehensive understanding of their needs and opportunities for future engagement. This engagement strategy not only identifies key stakeholders but also establishes a foundation for socio and political sustainability over the long term, contributing significantly to the success of the project.
115. Socio-political sustainability is rated as 'Moderately Likely'.

Financial Sustainability

116. Project outcomes have a moderate dependency on financial flows to persist. Additionally, legislative acts for ensuring SiPPEC full implementation are already prepared and waiting to be submitted and approved. The work on the enabling environment (at national and international levels) for quality reporting is in place and can provide further support to impact achievement.

117. Financial Sustainability is rated as 'Likely'.

Institutional Sustainability

118. The country has appropriate governance structures to ensure the enforcement of the newly adopted Knowledge Management Platform, the issue however could be the adequacy of staffing and integration with other existem systems that was indicated by CCD in many of the interviews conducted for the terminal review report. The project contributed to increasing the already fair capabilities of government structures in climate change planning, management and reporting.

119. Institutional sustainability will mainly be maintained through the INMI and the sustained use of SINAMMEC and the technical advancement made such as the new functionalities required to fully manage data and report on the NDC progres.

120. The project was a best practice example for how partnerships were created, a really good network and also good results sharing on various different platforms and conferences worldwide that can also be taken forward.

121. Institutional Sustainability is rated as 'Highly Likely'.

Rating for Sustainability is Likely.

I. Factors Affecting Performance and Cross-cutting Issues

Preparation and readiness

122. The project clearly outlined the baseline situation and articulated the problem statement very well. It demonstrated a good understanding of the gaps it intended to address as well as the institutional network linkages around the subject in the country. Moreover, the Project built on existing capacity strengths such as the national development planning cycle and national and international stakeholders commitments to Costa Rica climate strategy.

123. The project could have done a better job in anticipating and managing the risk of government turnover that a national election would bring, mainly by articulating a large coalition of actors that supported the SPU design, approval and further needed deployment according to the project statement.

124. Preparation and readiness is rated as 'Satisfactory'.

Quality of project management and supervision

UNEP/Implementing Agency

125. The Implementing Agency for the Project was the Industry and Economy Division (now the Climate Change Division) of UNEP. As part of its implementing role, UNEP supervised and provided administrative support to the Executing Agency. As verified through the five available Steering Committee regular meetings agenda and minutes, the IA supported the project and gave it guidance when needed, but also gave the project room to flow. The support provided by UNEP was described by interviewees as multifaceted, encompassing capacity development, network building, and policy integration initiatives: *"UNEP provides its own technical capacity (in house) to the development of the project and therefore to the development of the capacities for reporting and application of the reinforced transparency framework in Costa Rica. This allows the contribution of the implementing agency not to be exclusively operational, but rather to contribute substantially and, together with the government of the recipient country, to build and develop capabilities on a complex issue such as the reinforced transparency framework under the Agreement. Paris. UNEP implements several, possibly more than 10 CBIT projects, in the region and from this has generated a work network on transparency that is fed by the learnings and results of various governments in this matter. As a result of this networking, UNEP prepared a report on routes towards transparency that allows us to understand the problems facing the region and contributes to consolidating the challenges with the aim of being resolved through economies of scale and solidarity approaches between countries. who are politically empowered in the platform of environment ministers that UNEP hosts. UNEP itself has a mission derived from the protection and conservation of the environment, which allows transparency efforts to result not only in climate policies but also to address problems related to the loss of biodiversity and environmental pollution. This possibility of having a mandate focused on environmental integrity allows us to support governments in the development of integrated policies"* (team leader, 28/02/24).
126. Particularly, the IA supported the project in terms of adaptive management, oversight of the PIRs and project reporting. For instance, under the minutes of the 5th Steering Committee minutes it stated that *"...Furthermore, with the support of UNEP-DTU in a document that includes specific recommendations in terms of quality for the national greenhouse gas inventory. It is making progress in completing the methodological sheets of the data sets that are integrated and to be integrated into SINAMECC in order to support the beginning of the implementation of the procedures included in the Plan SINAMECC data and quality management."* (page 3, CBIT Steering Committee minute, 07/15/2022).
127. Project supervision and management by the IA is rated as 'Satisfactory'.

Partner/Executing Agency

128. The Executing Agency was the Ministry of Energy and Environment (MINAE). MINAE managed the Project execution on a day-to-day basis, composed managerial and technical teams as needed. UNEP LACO undertook all project financial management and hired all required technical consultants and staff, did all procurement. It is important to mention that the project underwent a substantial change in terms of its coordination and work with the Costa Rican government. As of October 2022, the institutional coordination of the project was transferred from the Climate Change Directorate and was assumed by the National Meteorological Institute (NMI), both at MINAE. According to a team member *"with the new government, Costa Rica pulled back on Escazu and shuffled the Project from CCD to NMI, many officers were lost and the ones remaining active have too many new functions and responsibilities; besides there was no formal communication about the changes"* (Director Committee member, virtual interview, 2023).

129. However, within the framework of the project, significant work has been done among both institutions to ensure a smooth transition that included the strengthening of the NMI's capacities to assume this new coordination.

130. As indicated before, evidence shows that project supervision and management between MINAE and UNEP LACO was systematic. People interviewed for this TR and the Steering Committee meetings (as well as their reports) indicate that "...*collaborative and sound oversight*..." (Director Committee member, virtual interview, 2023) was performed so that the project could achieve all planned outputs with little delay in a complex external context.

131. Project supervision and management by the EA is rated as 'Satisfactory'.

Stakeholder participation and cooperation

132. Although the project was developed before CEO Endorsement Documents included a Stakeholder Engagement Plan, the project comprised substantial stakeholder engagements at different levels. The engagement of civil society and academia have increased through the design of the Strategic Climate Planning Unit (SPU) and the National Ambition Cycle (NAC), in which public universities such as the Costa Rica University and civil society groups representing youth, disabled people, the elderly, women, trans people, indigenous and afro communities were included and consulted, identifying their main needs and the opportunities for increasing future engagement. Evidence shows a complete list of people that participated in project events coming from: [Centro para la Sostenibilidad Urbana](#), Foundation for Sustainability and Equity [ALIARSE](#), [Alianza Empresarial para el Desarrollo](#) (AED) and Fundecooperación.

133. Additionally, the main stakeholders, represented in the steering committee of the project (MINAE-CENIGA, INEC, MIDEPLAN, UCR, NMI, DCC) have reconfirmed their interest in continuing the work being developed with support of the CBIT project and their participation, validating the interest of the incoming government administration in the project.

134. International partners engaged included GIZ, UNDP, NDC Action and UNEP. Moreover, SIPECC was included as one of the commitments made to the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

135. The project succeeded in reaching and involving all the important stakeholders and in mobilizing support for the achievement of most outputs and outcomes. Many partnership arrangements were identified in the ProDoc under its stakeholder analysis parts, and later it was revised during the development of the communication strategy in the inception phase. As a result, the project team maximized coherence between various stakeholders by exchanging learning and expertise and pooling resources.

136. Stakeholders participation and cooperation is rated as 'Highly Satisfactory'.

Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity

137. Although the project document was prepared before CEO Endorsement Documents included gender action plans, the project contains three key gender-responsive elements related to the project's main components. First, the project includes developing gender-disaggregated data and statistics as part of the data improvement plans wherever

applicable. At the regional event on transparency and decision-making that took place in January 2022, 59% of the participants were women. Furthermore, the design of the SPU incorporated gender responsive approaches in its analysis matrix to ensure that gender is considered in all analyses developed by the Unit.

138. Besides, in the process of designing the SPU and the National Ambition Cycle (NAC), people from the seven groups identified in the 2020 NDC as the most vulnerable to the effects of climate change effects and traditionally excluded from decision-making processes in the 2020 NDC, including women and trans people, were integrated into the process. This allowed them to identify their needs in the context of the development of the SPU and the NAC.
139. Finally, the project is seeking to promote the creation of a gender dashboard as one of SINAMECC's permanent features, the main barrier to achieving this has been the lack of available data disaggregated by gender, implying that a previous awareness work has been done with the institutions that produced the data to generate the data required for designing the aforementioned dashboard.
140. Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity is rated as 'Highly Satisfactory'.

Environmental and social safeguards

141. The project had done an environmental and social safeguards screening in the project design (Annex 12 of the Project Document), although this was done somewhat superficially. The Annex M: UNEP Environmental, Social and Economic Review Note (ESERN) shows that the work on vulnerable groups and indigenous communities is categorized as Low. Besides, the pandemic also imposed limitations on the capacity to engage with vulnerable groups in a manner that can improve the project design.
142. The project primarily consists of an online system and improvements to reporting and was rated with an overall low risk at CEO endorsement. Since then, all safeguards have been effectively managed.
143. Environmental and social safeguards are rated as 'Moderately Satisfactory'.

Country ownership and drivenness

144. As already stated in previous sections of this report, there was strong government ownership through champions within MINAE, but not necessarily at the level where decisions are taken. This said, key capacities have been built, a strong Knowledge Management Platform is in place, and there have been several steps forward on Costa Rica's transparency instruments strengthening to meet the Paris Agreement's Transparency Framework requirements as a result of the project. In terms of a key team members interviewed, *"across its implementation, the Project provided the country with a robust and clear framework to quality data management adding value based on many different information sources and systems. Besides, the Project had a clear vision, its purpose was never changed"* (leader team member, virtual interview, 2023).
145. Country ownership and drivenness is rated as 'Moderately Satisfactory'.

Communication and public awareness

146. Although the PD reflected a knowledge management approach across some of the output's activities (peer-to-peer learning through a workshop under the Latin American Network on GHG inventories) and through the CBIT Global Coordination Platform there was no evidence of a systematic knowledge management approach or dissemination plans.
147. Evidence suggests the need of making climate problems and their solutions known to the wider public was implemented mainly in regional workshops to create awareness about the SPU and to obtain high-level political buy-in. The project has also engaged in an exchange of experiences with other countries and projects, such as Cuba, under the ICAT project, and Colombia. Costa Rica's CBIT project has participated in several regional platforms globally to disseminate knowledge, such the Climate Week 2022, (Partnership on Transparency in the Paris Agreement) PATPA, and COP 26. Additionally, the project executed a regional event in January 2022 to promote knowledge exchange among key stakeholders of Costa Rica and the region.
148. Besides, through the Knowledge Management Platform, the project has created a needed digital library to host methodologies that will inform national climate data generation, processing, and policy analysis. Through this, the project will ensure that the methodological work undertaken by other initiatives will be centrally hosted and made easily accessible to a wider range of stakeholders beyond those who have received training. This will help Costa Rica to transition from a static system that merely responds to the initial data demand and supply setup, to a new state in which the system can generate high-quality data in a robust and consistent manner according to the data demands of data-driven policymaking. Additionally, two virtual courses on mitigation actions and data management related to climate change have been included in the virtual climate classroom of the Climate Change Directorate.
149. Communication and public awareness is rated as 'Satisfactory'.

Rating for Factors Affecting Performance and Cross-cutting Issues is 'Highly Satisfactory'.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

A. Conclusions

150. The Project contributed greatly to improving the instruments that Costa Rica had for complying with the requirements of the transparency framework under the PA on Climate Change mainly through the strengthening of Quality control, assurance and continuous improvement transparency instruments and the enhancement of the use of climate change analysis and monitoring data for decision making at national institutions. For instance, in 2020 Costa Rica updated its NDC, including an improved net emissions target for the year 2030 and a new GHG budget target for the period 2020-2030 and 2030. The improvement in these targets was not only in ambition but in its methodology and transparency. The project, however, fell short in getting the approval and full implementation of the SPU. As stated briefly by a team member, "...although there was an intention for it to be independent (SPU), there was much discussion about its legal form and the existing institutional restrictions such as the prohibition of creating new institutions from

the law that limits the creation of new positions, Law of Strengthening Public Finances # 9635¹⁷, 2018 (leader team member, interview, 2023).

151. The project was designed from a strong situation analysis and baseline, it built on what was done and understood the local context and situation very well. It built on the country's existing efforts through some really effective and necessary tools and instrument upgrades. The project delivered products of excellent quality and which are highly useful for application and for the building of the knowledge base in the long run. The project was well managed overall, with strong facilitation particularly in forging partnerships with key ecosystem players in Costa Rica. In summary, this well-managed project laid a strong foundation of knowledge that the country can take and further build on effectively.

B. Summary of project findings

152. The table below provides a summary of the ratings and findings discussed in TR Findings (Chapter IV). Overall, the project demonstrates a rating of 'Satisfactory'.

UNEP Evaluation Office Validation of Performance Ratings:

The UNEP Evaluation Office formally quality assesses (see Annex XIII) management led Terminal Review reports and validates the performance ratings therein by ensuring that the performance judgments made are consistent with evidence presented in the Review report and in-line with the performance standards set out for independent evaluations.

The Evaluation Office assesses a Terminal Review report in the same way as it assesses the initial draft of a Terminal Evaluation report. It applies the following assumptions in its validation process:

- That what is being assessed is the contents of the report and the extent to which it makes a consistent and justifiable case for the performance ratings it records.
- That the consultant has, within the report, presented all the evidence that was made available to them.
- That the Review has been based on a robust Theory of Change, reconstructed where necessary, which reflects UNEP's definitions at all levels of results.
- That the project team and key stakeholders have already reviewed a draft version of the report and provided substantive comments and made factual corrections to the Review Consultant, who has responded to them. The Evaluation Office assumes, therefore, that it has received the Final (revised) version of the report.

In this instance the Evaluation Office validates the overall project performance rating at the '**Satisfactory**' level.

¹⁷ Regulation of Title III of the Law Strengthening Public Finances, Law No. 9635 regarding Public Employment available at http://www.pgrweb.go.cr/scij/Busqueda/Normativa/Normas/nrm_texto_completo.aspx?param1=NRTC&nValor1=1&nValor2=88250&nValor3=115242&strTipM=TC retrieved in January 2024.

Table 5: Summary of project findings and ratings

| Criterion The criterion rating and the overall project rating is based on the automatic calculations based on the Weighting of Ratings table. | Summary assessment | Rating | Justification for any ratings' changes due to validation (to be completed by the UNEP Evaluation Office – EOU) | EOU Validated Rating |
|---|---------------------------|---------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Strategic Relevance | Highly Satisfactory | 6 | Rating validated | 6 |
| 1. Alignment to UNEP MTS, POW and Strategic Priorities | Highly Satisfactory | 6 | Rating validated | 6 |
| 2. Alignment to Donor/GEF/Partner's strategic priorities | Highly Satisfactory | 6 | Rating validated | 6 |
| 3. Relevance to global, regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities | Highly Satisfactory | 6 | Rating validated | 6 |
| 4. Complementarity with relevant existing interventions/coherence | Highly Satisfactory | 6 | Rating validated | 6 |
| Quality of Project Design | Satisfactory | 5 | Rating validated | 5 |
| Nature of External Context | Moderately Favorable | | Rating validated | 4 |
| Effectiveness | Satisfactory | 5.11 | Rating aggregated based on the sub-categories below to "Moderately Satisfactory" | 4 |
| 1. Availability of outputs | Highly Satisfactory | 6 | Rating validated | 6 |

| Criterion The criterion rating and the overall project rating is based on the automatic calculations based on the Weighting of Ratings table. | Summary assessment | Rating | Justification for any ratings' changes due to validation (to be completed by the UNEP Evaluation Office – EOU) | EOU Validated Rating |
|--|---------------------------|---------------|--|-----------------------------|
| 2. Achievement of project outcomes | Satisfactory | 5 | <p>Rating adjusted to "Moderately Satisfactory".</p> <p>Outcome 1.1 refers to 'strengthening' transparency frameworks which only reaches an outcome level if project outputs are being taken up, adopted or applied. Paragraphs 74, and 76-78 indicate that the government, ministry or agency action necessary to achieve an outcome statement was not evident, which undermines the two assumptions identified at project outcome level.</p> <p>The Evaluation Office also notes that the achievement of the outcomes is not assessed against indicators and targets. The effects of the outcomes on disadvantaged groups (gender, marginalized, vulnerable) has not been analyzed or described.</p> | 4 |

| Criterion The criterion rating and the overall project rating is based on the automatic calculations based on the Weighting of Ratings table. | Summary assessment | Rating | Justification for any ratings' changes due to validation (to be completed by the UNEP Evaluation Office – EOU) | EOU Validated Rating |
|--|---------------------------|---------------|---|-----------------------------|
| 3. Likelihood of impact | Likely | 5 | <p>Rating adjusted to "Moderately Likely".</p> <p>The reference on relevance of drivers and assumptions in likelihood of impact is quite vague because it does not link the specifics to the potential impact. The assumptions indicate that a role was expected to be played by the private sector in achieving long-lasting results and the references to private sector engagement is very general. The only breakdown of private sector partners is given as: GIZ, PNUD CR; NDC Action, Aliarse</p> <p>The Evaluation Office also notes that effects on disadvantaged groups (gender, marginalized, vulnerable) has not been analyzed or described.</p> | 4 |
| Financial Management | Highly Satisfactory | 5.67 | Rating validated | 6 |
| 1. Adherence to UNEP's financial policies and procedures | Satisfactory | 5 | Rating validated | 5 |
| 2. Completeness of project financial information | Highly Satisfactory | 6 | Rating validated | 6 |
| 3. Communication between finance and project management staff | Highly Satisfactory | 6 | Rating validated | 6 |
| Efficiency | Satisfactory | 5 | <p>Rating adjusted to "Highly Satisfactory".</p> <p>Causes that affected timeliness are well articulated and their implications which resulted in cost extensions provided. The factors (pandemic and elections) that affected timeliness of the project delivery which were outside the project's control have been described.</p> | 6 |

| Criterion The criterion rating and the overall project rating is based on the automatic calculations based on the Weighting of Ratings table. | Summary assessment | Rating | Justification for any ratings' changes due to validation (to be completed by the UNEP Evaluation Office – EOU) | EOU Validated Rating |
|---|---------------------------|---------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Monitoring and Reporting | Highly Satisfactory | 5.33 | Rating validated | 5 |
| 1. Monitoring design and budgeting | Highly Satisfactory | 6 | Rating validated | 6 |
| 2. Monitoring of project implementation | Satisfactory | 5 | Rating validated | 5 |
| 3. Project reporting | Satisfactory | 5 | Rating validated | 5 |
| Sustainability | Moderately Likely | 4 | Rating aggregated based on the sub categories below to "Likely" | 5 |
| 1. Socio-political sustainability | Moderately Likely | 4 | Rating adjusted to "Likely". The report describes the ownership and institutionalization of the processes at a national mandate level which transcends various governments thus strengthening the sustainability of the project gains. | 5 |
| 2. Financial sustainability | Likely | 5 | Rating validated | 5 |
| 3. Institutional sustainability | Highly Likely | 6 | Rating validated | 6 |
| Factors Affecting Performance | Highly Satisfactory | 5.00 | Rating validated | 5 |
| 1. Preparation and readiness | Satisfactory | 5 | Rating validated | 5 |
| 2. Quality of project management and supervision | Satisfactory | 5 | Rating validated | 5 |
| 2.1 UNEP/Implementing Agency: | Satisfactory | 5 | Rating validated | 5 |
| 2.2 Partners/Executing Agency: | Satisfactory | 5 | Rating validated | 5 |
| 3. Stakeholders' participation and cooperation | Highly Satisfactory | 6 | Rating validated | 6 |

| Criterion The criterion rating and the overall project rating is based on the automatic calculations based on the Weighting of Ratings table. | Summary assessment | Rating | Justification for any ratings' changes due to validation (to be completed by the UNEP Evaluation Office – EOU) | EOU Validated Rating |
|--|---------------------------|---------------|---|-----------------------------|
| 4. Responsiveness to human rights and gender equality | Highly Satisfactory | 6 | Rating adjusted to "Satisfactory". The section was quite lean on the extent to which the project implementation recognized the differential impacts between men and women and if the various outputs availed by the project were gender responsive as a result. This is despite the fact that inclusivity is identified as the third driver in para 35. Also, the effects on disadvantaged groups (gender, marginalized, vulnerable) were not analyzed under the effectiveness criteria. | 5 |
| 5. Environmental and social safeguards | Moderately Satisfactory | 4 | Rating validated | 4 |
| 6. Country ownership and driven-ness | Moderately Satisfactory | 4 | Rating validated | 4 |
| 7. Communication and public awareness | Satisfactory | 5 | Rating validated | 5 |
| Overall Project Performance Rating | Satisfactory | 4.96 | Overall rating validated | 5 |

C. Lessons learned

153. The final report outlined a few stories to be shared; some of them are integrated into the lessons provided by the reviewer. These lessons emphasize the significance of long-term planning, technical expertise, inclusive engagement, and the establishment of collaborative structures to ensure the success and sustainability of climate-related projects in the context of predictable political and institutional changes.

Lesson 1: A long-term strategy for climate change reporting leadership provides stability and continuity, helping to sustain commitments through political transitions.

154. Long-term strategies in climate governance such as the one conducted by Costa Rica are associated with institutional resilience. Institutions that have well-established, long-term plans are better equipped to weather political changes and transitions. The country was successful in articulating two key components: policy continuity and building stakeholders commitment. On the one hand, climate policies with long-term perspectives are less susceptible to abrupt changes during electoral cycles. They provide a framework that extends beyond the short-term focus of political administrations. On the other hand, stakeholders, including the public but more importantly international partners, gain confidence in a country's climate leadership when there is evidence of a robust, long-term strategy. This confidence facilitates cooperation and support even during political transitions.

155. Moreover, the availability and enhancement of relevant policy instruments as SINAMECC and Aula Climática are strong milestones on where to keep on sustaining technical and political commitments.

Lesson 2: Relying on established technical bodies such as the National Meteorological Institute and the Climate Change Directorate strengthens the country's commitment to climate action, providing expertise beyond political changes assuming they have enough founding and political endorsement.

156. Established technical bodies and systems in Costa Rica contribute to institutional capacity by providing specialized expertise in areas crucial for effective climate action, such as meteorological data analysis, climate modeling, and impact assessment. Technical bodies ensure consistency in data collection and reporting methodologies, fostering reliability in climate information. This consistency is crucial for monitoring trends and informing evidence-based policy decisions provided enough funds and political endorsement are in place to support them.

157. Technical Bodies as pillars of international commitments often operate with a degree of professional independence, allowing them to maintain focus and continuity in their work irrespective of political transitions. In the case of the CBIT project in Costa Rica, where the institutionalization output (SPU) was not achieved, national technical officers provide a good platform to sustain project achievements in line with the PA transparency framework.

Lesson 3: Involving key public institutions like the University of Costa Rica, the Central Bank, and the Ministry of Planning fosters collaboration and ensures a holistic approach to climate initiatives

158. Engaging a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including civil society groups representing diverse demographics, ensures a more comprehensive understanding of needs and opportunities. Recognizing and consulting with key actors, such as public universities and civil society groups, ensures that the project addresses the needs and concerns of various segments of the population. The inclusive engagement strategy not only contributes to the immediate success of the project but also establishes a foundation for socio and political sustainability in the long run.

Lesson 4: Design and implement projects taking systematically the context into account can foster efficiency by managing rising risks and mitigating non expected political changes that may occur.

159. Even though rated “Satisfactory”, the Quality of Project design has room for improvement. In particular, it needs to take the political context systematically into account in project planning involving a comprehensive understanding of political dynamics (for instance, possible change in government party and scenarios derived from that), stakeholder analysis, risk assessment and strategic communication. For instance, conduct a thorough political analysis to identify key stakeholders, power dynamics, interests, and potential sources of support or opposition and utilize tools like stakeholder mapping, power-interest grids, and influence diagrams to visualize the political landscape.

D. Recommendations

160. The following recommendations are intended to enhance cooperation, sustain the project results, and support movement towards the TOC impact, i.e. Costa Rica complies with the requirements of the transparency framework under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. They are divided as per the following: (a) Project Level Recommendations – recommendations to UNEP, (b) Partner Recommendations – recommendations that pertain to partners of the project, and (c) UNEP Recommendations (for take up by UNEP for future work/learning).

161. (a) Project Level Recommendations.

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| <p><u>Recommendation 01:</u></p> | <p><u>Improve SINAMECC and integrate it with existing systems (SIMOCUTE¹⁸, CONAGEBIO¹⁹, SINIA²⁰, etc.)</u></p> |
| <p>Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation</p> | <p>SINAMECC currently has the following data sets available: i) PPCN data: compiled by the Climate Change Directorate about the companies and municipalities estimating their GHG inventories and reductions implemented (http://sinamecc.go.cr/datos-abiertos/ppcn); ii) GHG Inventory: the available data set was compiled the NMI containing detailed information of the details of the 2012 and</p> |

¹⁸ National System for Monitoring the Coverage and Use of Land and Ecosystems <https://www.fao.org/costarica/noticias/detail-events/ar/c/1273209/> retrieved in January 2024.

¹⁹ Commission for Comprehensive Biodiversity Management <https://www.conagebio.go.cr/> retrieved in January 2024.

²⁰ National Environmental Information System of Costa Rica <https://sinia.go.cr/> retrieved in January 2024.

| | |
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| | <p>2015 inventory years (http://sinamecc.go.cr/datos-abiertos/ingei) ; iii) Energy Balance: compiled by Planning Subsecretary for the Energy Sector (SEPSE by its acronym in spanish) containing the national energy data used for compiling the GHG Inventory http://sinamecc.go.cr/datos-abiertos/bne) and iv) Mitigation actions and NDC data: compiled by the Climate Change Directorate include a list of the mitigation actions and the links of the NDC to the SDGs (http://sinamecc.go.cr/datos-abiertos/acciones-mitigacion).</p> <p>Nevertheless, continuous improvement and updated data needs to be incorporated on a regular basis to build up on existing achievements. For example: integration with existing systems at MINAE.</p> |
| Priority Level | Important |
| Type of recommendation | Project |
| Responsibility | MINAE NMI |
| Proposed implementation timeframe | 2024-2025 |

162. (b) Partner Recommendations – recommendations that pertain to partners of the project.

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| <u>Recommendation 02:</u> | <u>Continue providing technical and financial support to existing institutions leading advancements made by the project</u> |
| Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation | <p>After a change in government, the NMI has been assigned the leadership role in SiNAMECC arrangements. However, NMI currently lacks the necessary resources and political influence to assume full control over the implementation of new tools such as SiNAMECC and Aula Climática. Compounding this, the CCD at MINAE has experienced a depletion of technical staff essential for conducting the tasks required for accurate reporting.</p> <p>This dual challenge underscores the importance of international support to empower the NMI in both political and technical aspects of leading the Measurement, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) processes in Costa Rica. The literature emphasizes the critical role of external support in strengthening national institutions for effective climate governance.</p> |

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| | <p>Research by Gupta et al. (2019) highlights the significance of international assistance in building the capacity of developing countries for climate-related activities. The study emphasizes the need for technical and financial support to enhance the effectiveness of institutions responsible for climate reporting.</p> <p>Furthermore, Ostrom (2010) discusses the importance of collaborative governance arrangements involving local and international actors to address complex environmental challenges. In the case of Costa Rica, collaboration with the international community becomes pivotal in mitigating the challenges faced by the NMI and the CCD as it was shown effective in the past (see Project Timeline for detailed international support given already).</p> <p>The GEF, as an international funding mechanism, has played a crucial role in supporting developing countries in their climate change efforts (GEF, 2020). Exploring avenues for increased collaboration with such entities could provide the necessary resources and expertise to bolster the NMI and CCD in fulfilling their respective roles.</p> <p>In conclusion, the current scenario underscores the need for international collaboration and support to strengthen the NMI's political and technical capacities for effective leadership in SiNAMECC. Drawing on insights from the literature, it is evident that strategic partnerships with global institutions such as UNDP, GIZ, UPA, etc can play a transformative role in overcoming the challenges posed by changing political landscapes and resource constraints.</p> |
| Priority Level | Important |
| Type of recommendation | Strategy |
| Responsibility | Partners + Donors |
| Proposed implementation timeframe | 2024-2025 |

163. (c) UNEP Recommendations (for take up by UNEP for future work/learning).

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| <u>Recommendation 03:</u> | <u>Continue supporting NMI in building further legitimacy to MRV implementation with a CBIT II project.</u> |
| Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation | While this report highlights commendable achievements, it also sheds light on persistent challenges related to institutional arrangements crucial for ensuring the continued |

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| | <p>effectiveness of the NMI leadership in the SINAMECC framework. The discontinuity of the Strategic Planning Unit (SPU), which aimed at serving as the inherent reservoir for the Measurement, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) process, poses a potential impediment to the ongoing enhancement of tools and processes in a sustained manner.</p> <p>The importance of institutional continuity in climate-related initiatives has been extensively emphasized in the literature. Scholars argue that sustained efforts in environmental governance, such as SINAMECC, require stable and well-structured institutions to navigate complex challenges effectively (Hoberg, 2016; Scott, 2014). The discontinuity of key units, like the SPU, can disrupt the seamless flow of climate data management and hinder the evolution of MRV processes.</p> <p>Therefore it is key for Costa Rica that UNEP keep supporting NMI financially and technically in enhancing its ruling MRV function through the government with, for instance, a CBIT II project, following up meetings every 6 months and including Costa Rica in the CBIT global transparency platform.</p> |
| Priority Level | Important |
| Type of recommendation | Policy |
| Responsibility | UNEP |
| Proposed implementation timeframe | 2024 |

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|---|---|
| <u>Recommendation 4:</u> | <u>Plan ahead and in detail identified future change in government to sustain and accomplish project commitments</u> |
| Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation | <p>When the project was initially conceived, it coincided with a period marked by impending national elections for the presidential replacement. In democratic contexts where institutional change is a predictable part of governance, aligning project planning with the electoral calendar becomes a manageable task. The literature underscores the importance of strategic planning in dynamic political environments, especially during election cycles.</p> <p>In their work, de Bruijn and ten Heuvelhof (2015) advocate for project planning that accounts for the political context, emphasizing that the timing of elections can significantly impact the institutional landscape. They argue that anticipating and incorporating political transitions into project</p> |

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| | <p>planning is crucial for ensuring continuity and resilience in governance structures.</p> <p>Furthermore, Cashore et al. (2003) discuss the concept of 'strategic planning for stability,' emphasizing the need to integrate foresight and scenario analysis into project planning. This approach involves considering alternative and prospective strategies, as well as developing scenarios to effectively manage challenges and commitments associated with changes in institutional dynamics.</p> <p>In the context of democratic transitions, Pachón (2019) emphasizes the need for adaptable planning that incorporates flexibility and the ability to respond to different political scenarios. This aligns with the notion of including alternative and prospective strategies in project planning to enhance resilience in the face of institutional changes.</p> <p>Additionally, Guimaraes (2018) highlights the utility of scenario analysis as a tool for anticipatory governance. By analyzing alternative scenarios, project planners can better understand potential challenges and devise strategies to navigate evolving political landscapes.</p> <p>In conclusion, the inclusion of detailed planning that accounts for national elections and incorporates alternative strategies and prospective scenarios aligns with the recommendations from the literature. It serves as a proactive approach to project management in democratic contexts where institutional change is a recurring feature.</p> <p>For instance, a Project timeline table similar to the one incorporated under this report (page 10) is a simple tool that can provide interlinkages with events and actors outside Project implementation shedding light on possible political contexts activities that can significantly affect project implementation. Even stakeholder mapping, power-interest grids, and influence diagrams to visualize the political landscape are appropriate tools as mentioned before.</p> |
| Priority Level | Important |
| Type of recommendation | Strategy |
| Responsibility | UNEP |
| Proposed implementation timeframe | For all future projects |

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ANNEX I. RESPONSE TO STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS

Table 6: Response to stakeholder comments received but not (fully) accepted by the reviewers, where appropriate

| Page Ref | Stakeholder comment | Reviewer Response |
|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

ANNEX II. REVIEW FRAMEWORK/MATRIX

| # | Evaluative questions Indicators/criteria | Evaluative questions Indicators/criteria | Data sources |
|--|--|---|---|
| Strategic relevance | | | |
| 1 | Was the project responding to UNEP and GEF strategies and priorities? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment with UNEP MTS and PoW, Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building (BSP) and South-South Cooperation (S-SC) • Alignment with GEF Climate Change Programme | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO Endorsement Request • UNEP MTS, PoW, BSP, S-SC • GEF Climate Change Programme |
| 2 | Was the project responding to the needs of the participating donor/partner strategic priorities? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment with donor/partner sector strategies and policies and priorities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIRs, HYPRs and final report • Interviews with UNEP GEF CCM Unit staff • Interviews with selected national and international stakeholders |
| 3 | Was the project relevant to regional, subregional and national issues and needs? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment with national and sector strategies and policies and priorities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO Endorsement Request • UNDAF • National Development Plan |
| 4 | Was the project and other interventions coherent and complementary? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination and cooperation with other global initiatives implemented by UNEP and other agencies • Synergy with national projects in the TNA II countries supported by UNEP and others (e.g. enabling activities) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO Endorsement Request • PIRs, HYPRs and final report • Interviews with UNEP GEF CCM Unit staff |
| Quality of project design (as per Inception Report) | | | |
| Nature of external context | | | |
| Effectiveness | | | |
| <i>Availability of outputs</i> | | | |

| # | Evaluative questions Indicators/criteria | Evaluative questions Indicators/criteria | Data sources |
|--|---|--|---|
| 5 | Were the intended project outputs delivered? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of achievement of the output and sub-outputs identified in the reconstructed ToC – incl. availability of finalized project concepts, and advocacy papers • Level of achievement of the sub-output targets available in the original ToC • Users and participants express appreciation of the outputs and activities and their usefulness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO Endorsement Request • PIRs, HYPRs and final report • MTR report • Written products • Workshop reports • Surveys conducted by project • Interviews with UNEP GEF CCM Unit staff • Interviews with Regional Centre staff |
| <i>Achievement of outcomes</i> | | | |
| 6 | Were the intended project outcomes achieved? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of achievement of the outcome identified in the reconstructed ToC – incl. stakeholder consensus and buy-in on the concrete actions (priority projects) for implementation vis-à-vis access to technology for climate action • Level of achievement of the targets for the outcome and objective indicators in the project's results framework | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO Endorsement Request • PIRs, HYPRs and final report • MTR report • Interviews with UNEP GEF CCM Unit staff |
| <i>Likelihood of impact</i> | | | |
| 7 | Was the project objective achieved? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of a contribution made towards the intermediate states and impact identified in the reconstructed ToC – incl. contributions towards: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO Endorsement Request • PIRs, HYPRs and final report • MTR report • Interviews with Regional Centre staff • Interviews with selected national stakeholders • Interviews with national Coordinators |
| Financial management | | | |
| <i>Adherence to UNEP's policies and procedures</i> | | | |
| 8 | Were financial management and decisions appropriate and conducive for project delivery? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund allocations and reallocations were clearly justified/explained | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO Endorsement Request • PIRs, HYPRs and final report • MTR report • PSC meeting minutes |

| # | Evaluative questions Indicators/criteria | Evaluative questions Indicators/criteria | Data sources |
|-------------------|--|--|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial resources were made available in a timely manner that did not cause implementation delays or implementation gaps • UNEP financial staff responsiveness to addressing and resolving financial issues • Communication between UNEP programme and financial staff • Adherence to UNEP financial procedures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial reports • Budgets • Budget amendments • Interviews with UNEP finance staff • Interviews with selected national stakeholders • Interviews with national Coordinators |
| 9 | Has co-financing materialized as expected at project approval? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of co-funding mobilized from each anticipated source • Amount of co-funding leverage from other sources (in-cash and in kind) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO Endorsement Request • Written products • Workshop reports • PSC meeting minutes • Financial reports • Co-finance confirmation statements/letters • Interviews with selected national stakeholders • Interviews with national Coordinators |
| Efficiency | | | |
| 10 | Was the project implemented in a timely manner? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeliness of activities, outputs and milestones vis-à-vis work plans • Corrective measures taken to mitigate delays • Annual spending compared to budgeted/planned spending overall and per output/sub-outputs • Justification and appropriateness of no-cost project extension • Cost implications of no-cost extension | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO Endorsement Request • PIRs, HYPRs and final report • PSC meeting minutes • Financial reports • Budgets • Budget amendments • Interviews with selected national stakeholders • Interviews with national Coordinators |
| 11 | Was the project implemented in a cost-effective manner? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actual vs. planned costs of outcomes, outputs, and sub-outputs • Number of outputs, sub-outputs and related activities delivered compared to original design • Measures taken to adjust and adapt budget and activities to actual costs • Extent to which co-financing was leveraged • Extent to which the project achieved economy of scale, cost savings and/or was able to increase the level of activity and | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO Endorsement Request • PIRs, HYPRs and final report • PSC meeting minutes • Financial reports • Budgets • Budget amendments • Interviews with selected national stakeholders • Interviews with national Coordinators |

| # | Evaluative questions Indicators/criteria | Evaluative questions Indicators/criteria | Data sources |
|---|--|--|---|
| | | output through partnerships (e.g. joint activities and division of labor) and use of existing data and processes | |
| Monitoring and reporting | | | |
| <i>Monitoring of project implementation</i> | | | |
| 1 2 | Was the monitoring system sufficiently and in a timely manner capturing implementation progress and results? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriateness of the indicators (e.g. SMART) and sufficiency of their coverage of key project deliverables • Availability of clear indicator targets and milestones • Reliability and accuracy of baseline and monitoring data • Frequency and comprehensiveness of data gathering and analysis • Utilization of pre-existing data sources • Gender-disaggregation of data (when appropriate) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO Endorsement Request • PIRs, HYPRs and final report • PSC meeting minutes • Interviews with selected national stakeholders • Interviews with national Coordinators |
| 1 3 | Were risks monitored and reported on? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risks identified in CEO Endorsement Request were regularly monitored and documented • The list of risks was regularly updated • Relevance, importance and comprehensiveness of the risks identified and accuracy of risk rating | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO Endorsement Request • PIRs, HYPRs and final report • MTR report • PSC meeting minutes • Interviews with selected national stakeholders |
| 1 4 | Was project monitoring used as a management tool? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tangible examples of monitoring data leading to changes/adjustments in project approach and implementation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIRs, HYPRs and final report • PSC meeting minutes • Interviews with PSC members |
| <i>Project reporting</i> | | | |
| 1 5 | Was project reporting timely and of adequate quality? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeliness of report submission • Realism and accuracy of information in PIRs, HYPRs, and completion report • Adherence to GEF and UNEP reporting requirements • PIR ratings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIRs, HYPR and final report • PSC meeting minutes |
| Sustainability | | | |

| # | Evaluative questions Indicators/criteria | Evaluative questions Indicators/criteria | Data sources |
|---|---|---|---|
| <i>Institutional sustainability</i> | | | |
| 1 6 | Did the project implement a clear sustainability strategy? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which the project proactively influenced and utilized the impact drivers identified in the reconstructed ToC • Extent to which the assumptions identified in the reconstructed ToC proved valid | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO Endorsement Request • PIRs, HYPRs and final report • MTR report • Interviews with selected national Coordinators • Interviews with selected national stakeholders |
| Factors and processes affecting project performance and cross-cutting issues | | | |
| <i>Quality of project management and supervision</i> | | | |
| 1 7 | Was adaptive management applied? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptive action taken to respond to opportunities and mitigate emerging risks • Measures taken to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 related constraints – and the implications for project delivery/performance • Extent of implementation of recommendations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIRs, HYPRs and final report • MTR report • PSC meeting minutes • Interviews with selected national Coordinators • Interviews with Regional Centre staff |
| <i>Stakeholder participation and cooperation</i> | | | |
| 1 8 | Did the project engage stakeholders in project implementation and management? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of consultation/involvement of key stakeholders in the project design process for both global, regional, and national level activities and deliverables • Level and nature of involvement of key stakeholders on project oversight • Level of consultation of stakeholders in the development of products • Level of cooperation and dialogue with key stakeholders • Level of private sector participation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO Endorsement Request • PIRs, HYPRs and final report • MTR report • Workshop reports • PSC meeting minutes • Interviews with selected stakeholders • Interviews with selected national Coordinators |
| 1 9 | Did the project consider the inclusion of human rights and gender? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project activities and products addressing human rights and gender considerations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO Endorsement Request • PIRs, HYPRs and final report • MTR report • Workshop reports |

| # | Evaluative questions Indicators/criteria | Evaluative questions Indicators/criteria | Data sources |
|--|---|--|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measures and approaches applied to encourage the participation of women in project management/oversight and activities Engagement of women in the delivery of project activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSC meeting minutes Interviews with selected stakeholders Interviews with selected national Coordinators |
| <i>Environmental and social safeguards</i> | | | |
| 20 | Were environmental risks mitigated? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental and social safeguarding screening at project design Activities and products addressed environmental and social considerations in the context of technology and climate action (e.g. inclusion, safeguards) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEO Endorsement Request PIRs, HYPRs and final report PSC meeting minutes Interviews with selected stakeholders Interviews with selected national Coordinators |
| <i>Country ownership and driven-ness</i> | | | |
| 21 | Did the participating key stakeholders have a degree of ownership of the project processes and outputs? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of high-level ownership and commitment to national project processes Level of interest in engaging in experience sharing with other countries | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEO Endorsement Request PIRs, HYPRs and final report PSC meeting minutes Interviews with selected stakeholders Interviews with selected national |
| <i>Communication and public awareness</i> | | | |
| 22 | Did the activities and outputs ensure that the project and its services were visible and reached the intended audience? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of hits and downloads from web platforms Number of individuals participating in global and regional workshops/events arranged by the project Communication of the project through various channels (e.g. UNFCCC COPs and intersessionals, and UNEP and UNEP-CCC websites and newsletters) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PIRs, HYPRs and final report Written products Online products Workshop reports Interviews with selected national stakeholders |

ANNEX III. PEOPLE CONSULTED DURING THE EVALUATION

| | Organization | Name | Actor | Position | Gender |
|----|---------------|-----------------------|---------------------|---|--------|
| 1 | Government | Magda Gutierrez | Executing Agency | TIC Directorate MINAE | Female |
| 2 | Government | Ana Rita Chacón | Executing Agency | Development Directorate NMI | Female |
| 3 | Government | Roberto Rodríguez | Executing Agency | Development Directorate NMI (National GEI Inventory FOLU sector leader) | Male |
| 4 | UNEP | Sebastián Carranza | Implementing Agency | Project Management Officer UNEP LACO | Male |
| 5 | Government | Olegario Saénz | Government Partner | Development Unit MINAE | Male |
| 6 | Government | Greivin Barboza | Government Partner | Development Unit MINAE | Male |
| 7 | Government | Katherine Gomez | Government Partner | Economist INEC | Male |
| 8 | Government | Mónica Rodriguez | Government Partner | Environmental Finances CBCR | Female |
| 9 | UNEP | Ana Celeste Schweiger | Implementing Agency | Programme Management Assistant UNEP, Industry and Economy Division | Female |
| 10 | UNEP | Marco Heredia | Implementing Agency | Programme Management Assistant UNEP, Industry and Economy Division | Female |
| 11 | UNEP | William Holness | Implementing Agency | CBIT Regional Portfolio Manager UNEP LACO | Male |
| 12 | UNEP | Priscila Chavarria | Implementing Agency | Finance and Budget Specialist UNEP LACO | Female |
| 13 | UNEP | Beatrice Barquero | Implementing Agency | Climate Change Consultant UNEP LACO | Female |
| 14 | Project | Laura Vargas | Executing Agency | Coordinador CBIT-CR CBIT Team | Female |
| 15 | Project | Ana Lucía Moya | Executing Agency | Coordinador CBIT-CR CBIT Team | Female |
| 16 | Civil Society | Laura Mora | Civil Society | NDC ACTION Coordinator and ex Coordinator CBIT-CR | Female |

ANNEX IV. KEY DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

| Output | Activity | Name document | Link to access |
|--------------|-------------------|---|--|
| 1.1 | A.1. | Gestión de datos y calidad en el SINAMECC | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rYdbsnt0B4Fllrutkdz_gDMekT SMAZWW/view?usp=share_link |
| 1.1 | A.1. | Aspectos clave de la gestión de datos y calidad en el SINAMECC | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LYRzKeqROqe5ligBjCMCIVJ1 0ZfESxWJ/view?usp=share_link |
| 1.1 | A.5 | Procesos de Calidad para el INGEI | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rYdbsnt0B4Fllrutkdz_gDMekT SMAZWW/view?usp=share_link |
| 1.1 | A.4, A.5, A.6 | Curso en línea: Sistema de gestión de la calidad en el SINAMECC | https://aula.cambioclimatico.go.cr/?https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1I2QgZZJqvPGZYtZ2 qWLOFR5CwmC97Ye?usp=drive_link |
| 1.1 | A.4, A.5, A.6 | Guía para aprovechar de manera más efectiva la Biblioteca QAQC Costa Rica y principales contenidos | https://drive.google.com/file/d/111QI_nBQJn3jglzDPFzqFiC9L NtOGmZ_/view?usp=share_link https://drive.google.com/file/d/1eDk7owINByxwsggayon_9x9 BhejlL6Gz/view?usp=share_link |
| 1.1 | A.2 | Hoja de ruta para integrar y dar sostenibilidad a los procesos de gestión de calidad en el SINAMECC | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IQPOgg22g5iEiQuPRQtQX- 8zlpHi1OM/view?usp=sharing |
| 1.1 | A.3 | Actualización_Decreto Ejecutivo N°42961 SINAMECC | https://drive.google.com/file/d/104xdewdqNT_AC4TzOSnAqN 0s1TJ-n_NO/view?usp=share_link https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1- 2QludEEQcPYeRQd824Ates1FIGgJ8ZA |
| 1.1 | A.3 | Estrategia para la suscripción de acuerdos de uso y transferencia de datos con las fuentes de SINAMECC | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1XaCzQaDkaL5ZvT_19nleHbH- 0LmeKGMZ/view?usp=share_link https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1-5vOcrMseD1T_99cK- 79pRPROYQxDtda?usp=share_link |
| 1.1 1.2.2 | A.3 C.3 | Lista de conjuntos de datos priorizados_SINAMECC | https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1dxbAy81dqrMDogc sLekF0BNuWf06YzTy/edit?usp=share_link&oid=1000935079027 76240980&rtpof=true&sd=true |
| 1.1 | A.4 | Análisis de prácticas de gestión de calidad en sistemas de información sobre cambio climático en países de AL | https://drive.google.com/file/d/159SJND008- STm6ZaZva3H08YxRL3FSOR/view?usp=share_link |
| 1.1 | A.4 | Resumen de hallazgos mapeo capacidades QA-QC | https://drive.google.com/file/d/17ro2P0wu2dV1KJk- bYc4jtzBdK8cddAB/view?usp=share_link |
| 1.1 | A.6 | Creación de capacidades en QA/QC | https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1aXgiMWTMyupjFDcRy eQ7xeVMUfWdo4c-?usp=drive_link |
| 1.1 | A.7 B.3 C.9 | Reporte_Evento regional_CBIT | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1894Kviw_ evsGhJBff25umQq GR94aPosQ/view?usp=share_link |
| 1.2.1 | B.1 | SIPECC_Definición administrativa, estructura legal, plan de trabajo y modelo de negocio | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1is2NWpVlyvhG- iM3VMBiYvKX14ajXsmJ/view?usp=share_link |
| 1.2.1 | B.1 | Nota técnica resumen con los elementos de la construcción del Ciclo Nacional de Ambición | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1QiZMn_0Sq2R1KGc1crgRdjz9 kqnFDvTZ/view?usp=share_link |

| | | | |
|----------------|-------------------|---|---|
| 1.2.1 | B.1 | Articulación entre el diseño del Sistema de Planificación Estratégica de Cambio Climático y el Ciclo Nacional de Ambición | https://drive.google.com/file/d/19fb9nYqcGevwkQyMmmckT_N7hUzmVNRN4/view?usp=share_link |
| 1.2.1 | B.1 | Borrador del decreto para la oficialización del Sistema de Planificación Estratégica de Cambio Climático (SiPECC) y del Ciclo Nacional de Ambición, así como del convenio interinstitucional para su articulación y expediente administrativo del proceso | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hGysMHLdzyC4z9O3jinnpSTB_XaY3lxifi/view?usp=sharing https://drive.google.com/file/d/1i47IIsFnW70bzJXy1ICXz-AphoXhc_xd/view?usp=sharing https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1LCk8isxAxIRwPt3xLJv1GWJkNYTupsrg?usp=share_link |
| 1.2.1 | B.7 | Diseño de dos cursos en línea para fortalecer las capacidades en la implementación del SiPECC: Introducción a la toma de decisiones para la acción climática en Costa Rica y Gobernanza para la acción climática transformacional | https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1o2tsiqvD9Iz9KEdX-jF7-CdFtQtIfr9m?usp=share_link |
| 1.2.1 | B.1 | Documentación talleres para la creación del CNA | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1TiG2gweftFNq4kxWPyrdwGq_JHB2RrRul/view?usp=share_link |
| 1.2.1 | B.1 | Identificación de necesidades para la implementación de SiPECC-CNA | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1j6A5tQQjzY6XZJ40Jc24IUtCiqCaO3oJ/view?usp=share_link |
| 1.2.1 | B.5 | Borrador_Decreto criterios para generar créditos de carbono_Artículo 6 | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KoxfEQwTgJU-SK6YvXhFAGug4VMKzQUd/view?usp=share_link https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Bmjsf8VE1wZ1gnxOBzBG9P70UXR9YPf3?usp=drive_link |
| 1.2.1 1.2.2 | B.5 C.5 C.7 | Análisis_Articulación plataforma SINAMECC y Mercados de Carbono | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1s6IUBAZFoUXne0rUSzzYUZ11AnC0GxP1/view?usp=share_link |
| 1.2.1 | B.7 | Analisis_Benchmark climate related think tanks climate change Recommendations for the operationalization of SiPECC | https://drive.google.com/file/d/19z68_A8VuxF1MKdhNxnW2XL127yeQF6p/view?usp=drive_link https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xpulYjaDCRmnu66zLqoQVbj3NHpk0PO/view?usp=sharing |
| 1.2.1 | B.5 | Piloto_Marco para evaluar opciones políticas que solicitan autorización para participar mercados de carbono | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vZAcddzLqStJxpaUJOBYZc78SN0Mlm_r/view?usp=share_link https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1N6mBwCBZ2jDif_XYGuX0njGcfS1SYxp/edit?usp=drive_link&ouid=100093507902776240980&rtpof=true&sd=true |
| 1.2.1 | B.1 | Insumos técnicos para el diseño del decreto que formalice el SiPECC y el CNA | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1B_m91zVVKtEEYj9dks1gBkK8jWqFlzM1/view?usp=drive_link |
| 1.2.1 | B.1 | Lecciones aprendidas y recomendaciones para la implementación de SiPECC | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1eHIW2-OVPluE4cmDdFGaQzn8FibgJOjx/view?usp=drive_link |
| 1.2 | B.6 | Nota conceptual Embajada del Clima para la Juventud | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dTjrjuKOylK4YslxKb7gG9NCrTx7_DL/view?usp=drive_link |
| 1.2 | B.6 | Reporte sobre el foro Anual de Juventudes en Acción Climática | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_yizGJG70Z83HJF4omempiEWx8hT0T9/view?usp=sharing |
| 1.2 | B.2 | Propuesta de estructura del Green Network | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mpdnSLMvdtyJa0AKTDz71K_P4HUJE4QS9/view?usp=sharing |
| 1.2 | B.2 B.7 | Programa de capacitación_Green Network | https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1JcTPZmsaGn06QqHFcYS9qVF6OHRyZ3?usp=drive_link |

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|-------|---------------|--|---|
| 1.2 | B.4 | Documentación del apoyo en el proceso de monitoreo del Plan de Descarbonización y creación de capacidades para fortalecer el monitoreo | https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1eFX-Zb7m88OyYgaMqNHKTBI86KxRtXKW?usp=sharing |
| 1.2 | B.4 | Análisis del avance en la implementación la NDC | https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1xh5240ieSj8Sbc7osxaSrrFuPM-4c8rO?usp=drive_link |
| 1.2 | B.5 | Análisis de la gestión de datos del ecosistema de modelado enfocado en el sector energético para mejorar su transparencia con base en las mejores prácticas a nivel regional | https://drive.google.com/file/d/195ZasfDRGHKTINhGDrEuFikg2EdZMyZF/view?usp=drive_link |
| 1.2 | B.7 | Viaje de estudio para crear capacidades en la implementación del SIPECC | https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1JnNtLEzllmxRjW2dyFrYOpCvmV6qsSkc?usp=drive_link https://unepccc.org/the-climatetech-podcast/ |
| 1.2.2 | C.1, C.5 | Guía para el registro de Acciones de Mitigación en el SINAMECC | https://drive.google.com/file/d/108SnLPgIU-zzcXE9i2F6Dlf55kMW-NK2/view?usp=sharing |
| 1.2.2 | C.1, C.5 | Resumen del proceso de registro de Acciones de Mitigación en el SINAMECC | https://drive.google.com/file/d/142mgr8TIGtfWP9Jkh07WuEuHefom4sqz/view?usp=drive_link |
| 1.2.2 | C.1, C.5 | Mapeo de acciones de mitigación para la articulación del Registro de Acciones de Mitigación | https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1M3o05Lv3n6G1KD_JGzSWABU7gHYnc4iAC/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=113656064874646315628&rtpof=true&sd=true |
| 1.2.2 | C.1, C.4, C.5 | Documentación del piloto del formulario de acciones de mitigación en la plataforma del SINAMECC | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1X820VWJUbtXtYkIJ43uw8x-FppJgfoVb/view?usp=drive_link https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hyxXP4_H30pL5zuJWDHS8B22hGq3tqcB/view?usp=drive_link https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1EEIzvljZiMbVJrpgDjL-LFJ9-4KVbz_Y?usp=drive_link |
| 1.2.2 | C.1, C.2, C.3 | Sistematización de los documentos actualizados incluidos en la plataforma del SINAMECC | https://drive.google.com/file/d/176L-PFKcpyP8HVIYdK5efMP-Z1wCPPeVd/view?usp=drive_link |
| 1.2.2 | C.1 | Criterio jurídico: pertinencia en la utilización de licencia de código abierto para el SINAMECC. | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FQnMp5W4zPTISx3AdYSs7E-LabE0p8iqb/view?usp=drive_link |
| 1.2.2 | C.8 | Big data processing systems and Intelligent Transport Systems | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Td6T4js-7bXYbUTmUHJm8fw5e5zvLzmo/view?usp=drive_link |
| 1.2.2 | C.1 | Visión y avances del SINAMECC y puesta en producción, implementación y estado final del SINAMECC | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IOS21Hj5pTit_tcBydXxx9YEC-exBcILB/view?usp=drive_link https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gmKWJCTWKvYk0kAWNd-2e-Wc9P8rr26D/view?usp=drive_link |
| 1.2.2 | C.1, C.4 | Identificación de las condiciones técnicas a nivel de desarrollo del SINAMECC y análisis de las necesidades para su sostenibilidad | https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Eu7SsvLcGrDCRpPRofz-MmXEcBy0jGVD2/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=109748064741669842589&rtpof=true&sd=true |
| 1.2.2 | C.4 | Guía para uso y mantenimiento del SINAMECC para las personas administradoras del sistema | https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1VITamL8Mx257y2V0dQ25F2pZf-BWK-gl?usp=drive_link |
| 1.2.2 | C.1 | Documentación del proceso de refinamiento del SINAMECC | https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1JYLZqfITyN15ooD5lv33T-oXw8WA_uAM/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=113656064874646315628&rtpof=true&sd=true |

| | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|---|--|
| 1.2.2 | C.1 | Síntesis de la estructura de la plataforma de gestión del conocimiento SINAMECC | https://drive.google.com/file/d/12o3vVpXRpITmR9VbvXwtzJnIFJzEJ14R/view?usp=drive_link |
| 1.2.2 | C.7 | Diseño de un set de indicadores para el monitoreo y reporte de la NDC-2020 de Costa Rica, así como de un proceso para su formalización | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mU3PaASHi6_Vgl-mt0RAPLWpi9Gcx9ME/view?usp=drive_link https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1A_44o7trK5l68mVoOetUHllg-twr9nXk/edit?usp=drive_link&oid=100093507902776240980&rtpof=true&sd=true |
| 1.2.2 | C.7 | NDC 2020- ICTU Annex | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1eq_a6AuXKRpTb5sJC0Rk8DhfCEBN_mr/view?usp=drive_link |
| 1.2.2 | C.7 | Recomendaciones estratégicas para la elaboración del primer BTR de Costa Rica con énfasis en el sector FOLU | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mDKF2s_aoJ1EQDWTxJfHMP9pxt0uA2e6/view?usp=sharing |
| 1.2.2 | C.6 | Bases del proceso de manejo de datos para apoyar la articulación del SiPECC a través del SINAMECC | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1U5mdIUiaX7tg1Zp5Nyx1IJDHHCi8IL6/view?usp=drive_link |
| 1.2.2 | C.6 | Diseño de un sistema de gestión de datos para articular las herramientas de modelación a través del SINAMECC y hoja de ruta para su implementación | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rOb87psqePCJ6vqb698zC8RN0HfrzJiX/view?usp=drive_link https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mcDexfG_Qhz1ImAqL_vWKdbItSadAHWH/view?usp=drive_link |
| 1.2.2 | C.4 | Curso virtual: Acciones de mitigación y su registro en Costa Rica | https://aula.cambioclimatico.go.cr/?https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1I2Qg6ZZJqvPGZYtZ2qWLOFR5CwmC97Ye?usp=drive_link |
| 1.2.2 | C.4 | Diseño del curso en línea Introducción al Sistema Nacional de Métrica de Cambio Climático | https://aula.cambioclimatico.go.cr/?https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1I2Qg6ZZJqvPGZYtZ2qWLOFR5CwmC97Ye?usp=drive_link |
| 1.1 1.2.1 1.2.2 | A.6 B.7 C.4 | Sesiones de capacitación de cierre del proyecto | https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1A65Riv73WE9xEG97736uaHEBISMVYyhv?usp=drive_link |
| 1.1 1.2.1 1.2.2 | A.6 B.7 C.4 | Resumen de resultados del proyecto CBIT | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vCb6jZik3SHImovp60v09NbrUulFzG0C/view?usp=drive_link |
| 1.2.2 | B.7 | Policy brief _Integración de las poblaciones vulnerabilizadas en los procesos de toma de decisión de cambio climático | https://drive.google.com/file/d/14FUW1fY6U8nr3NQifXi7PYcJzyc1D0D6/view?usp=drive_link |
| 1.2.1 | B.5 | Policy brief_Articulación de transparencia y mercados de carbono a través del diseño de criterios de exportación, caso práctico en Costa Rica | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1v7nY7Xn8XbFTH23UTMDO63nsGerNECxr/view?usp=drive_link |
| 1.2.1 | B.5 | Policy brief_Lecciones aprendidas sobre el proceso de implementación mejoras en la planificación y toma de decisiones basadas en datos relacionada con cambio climático en Costa Rica | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1NNKDHVIGKzRi6ZB0UXofDmXVzoJL-svr/view?usp=drive_link |
| 1.1 | A.6 | Policy Brief_Implementación de procesos de gestión de datos y calidad en sistemas de información de cambio climático | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1z8oEAe3NcHSnzXLqrS5EtaXZLUytn0_D/view?usp=drive_link |
| 1.1 | A.6 | Policy brief_Arreglos institucionales para la implementación del Marco Reforzado de Transparencia y recomendaciones para garantizar la sostenibilidad | https://drive.google.com/file/d/18ZrdQPfsmTdz-ltoeffq88Q9ZZ4qHL7/view?usp=drive_link |

| | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|--|---|
| | | desde el punto de vista legal desde una experiencia en Costa Rica | |
| 1.2.2 | C.4 | Policy brief_Proceso de implementación del registro de acciones de mitigación en Costa Rica: avances, barreras y oportunidades | https://drive.google.com/file/d/19PZAHH498PlcvDTrnajeRcjkjVgHdkhq/view?usp=drive_link |
| 1.1 1.2.1 1.2.2 | A.6 B.7 C.4 | Policy brief_Implementación del SINAMECC, considerando lecciones aprendidas y oportunidades para países latinoamericanos | https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Cw4kP8EzR3WgaAwfAur5u0nWbsQoVqsg/view?usp=drive_link |

ANNEX V. REVIEW ITINERARY

No field missions were performed.

ANNEX VI. PROJECT BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES

Table 7. Execution rate by component in USD

| Components | Outcomes | GEF Project Financing | Confirmed Co-financing | Exp | Execution rate |
|--|---|-----------------------|------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| Costa Rica complies with the requirements of the transparency framework under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. | Costa Rica's transparency instruments are strengthened to meet the Paris Agreement's Transparency Framework requirements. | US\$ 1,000,000 | US\$ 2,750,000 | US\$ 952,946 | 95% |
| | National institutions use climate change analysis and monitoring data for decision making | | | | |

ANNEX VII. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

| Financial management components: | | Rating |
|--|---|--------------|
| 1. Adherence to UNEP's policies and procedures: | | HS |
| Any evidence that indicates shortcomings in the project's adherence ²¹ to UNEP or donor policies, procedures or rules | | No |
| 2. Completeness of project financial information²²: | | |
| Provision of key documents to the reviewer (based on the responses to A-H below) | | HS:HU |
| A. | Co-financing and Project Cost's tables at design (by budget lines) | Yes |
| B. | Revisions to the budget | Yes |
| C. | All relevant project legal agreements (e.g. SSFA, PCA, ICA) | Yes |
| D. | Proof of fund transfers | Yes |
| E. | Proof of co-financing (cash and in-kind) | Yes |
| F. | A summary report on the project's expenditures during the life of the project (by budget lines, project components and/or annual level) | Yes |
| G. | Copies of any completed audits and management responses (<i>where applicable</i>) | Yes |
| H. | Any other financial information that was required for this project (list): | N/A |
| 3. Communication between finance and project management staff | | HS |
| Project Manager and/or Task Manager's level of awareness of the project's financial status. | | HS |
| Fund Management Officer's knowledge of project progress/status when disbursements are done. | | HS |
| Level of addressing and resolving financial management issues among Fund Management Officer and Project Manager/Task Manager. | | HS |
| Contact/communication between by Fund Management Officer, Project Manager/Task Manager during the preparation of financial and progress reports. | | HS |
| Project Manager, Task Manager and Fund Management Officer responsiveness to financial requests during the review process | | HS |
| Overall rating | | HS |

²¹ If the review raises concerns over adherence with policies or standard procedures, a recommendation maybe given to cover the topic in an upcoming audit, or similar financial oversight exercise.

²² See also document 'Criterion Rating Description' for reference

ANNEX VIII. COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH TOOLS

A power point presentation was developed to disseminate findings with project authorities and stakeholders. The meeting was hosted by UNEP and held on April 18th on Teams platform. Communication materials produced as well as the TR was sent by email to all project members.



The image shows the cover of a report. The top half has a dark green background with logos for UN Environment Programme, GEF, and the Government of Costa Rica. The title 'Sistema de reporte integrado y transparencia en Costa Rica CBIT 9652' is written in white. Below the title is 'Informe Final | abril 2024'. On the right, there is a photograph of hands touching a tree trunk with a glowing green globe overlaid. The bottom left features a photograph of a large tree in a park. The bottom right has a white background with the word 'Agenda' in green and a list of meeting items.

Sistema de reporte integrado y transparencia en Costa Rica CBIT 9652

Informe Final | abril 2024

Agenda

- 🎯 ¿Sobre qué vamos a conversar?
- 🗣️ ¿Cómo vamos a realizar la reunión?
- 10:00-10:10 | Bienvenida y presentaciones
- 10:10-10:20 | Marco institucional del informe final (PNUMA)
- 10:20-10:50 | Exposición del proceso, los resultados, hallazgos y recomendaciones (Consultora)
- 10:50-11:20 | Espacio de intercambio con participantes (Consultora)
- 11:20-11:30 | Cierre (PNUMA)

Informe final

01

Proceso de elaboración

02

Valoración detallada

03

Lecciones aprendidas

04

Recomendaciones

05

Intercambio

Sobre el proyecto

Objetivos

Costa Rica cumple con los requisitos del marco de transparencia bajo el Acuerdo de París sobre el Cambio Climático.

Componentes

(i) los instrumentos de transparencia de CR se fortalecen para cumplir con los requisitos del Marco de Transparencia del Acuerdo de París;

(ii) las instituciones nacionales utilizan el análisis y los datos de monitoreo del cambio climático para la toma de decisiones.

Resultados

(i) Programa de control de calidad, garantía y mejora continua diseñado para los instrumentos de transparencia de CR;

(ii) Unidad de Planificación Estratégica Climática (SPU) desarrollada; y

(iii) Plataforma de intercambio de conocimientos para metodologías de transparencia y datos relacionados con MRV implementada bajo un objetivo principal del proyecto.

Financiamiento

GEF: USD 1,000,000
CR: USD 2,750,000

| LÍNEA DE TIEMPO | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |
|---|---|------------|--|------|--|------|--|------|
| Contexto internacional | COVID | | | | | | | |
| Iniciativas de cambio climático en Costa Rica financiadas por actores internacionales | UNDP Acuerdos Ambientales Multilaterales interministeriales | | | | | | | |
| | GIZ Reglas contables para el logro de los objetivos de mitigación | | | | | | | |
| | GIZ Promoviendo la meta de neutralidad de GEI de Costa Rica | | | | | | | |
| | Transparencia de la Acción Climática | | | | | | | |
| | Centro y Red de Tecnología Climática | | | | | | | |
| | Asociación para la preparación del mercado | | | | | | | |
| PNUMA | | | Estrategia de Medio Término | | | | | |
| Plan Nacional de Desarrollo | Alberto Cañas Escalante | | Bicentenario | | | | Rogelio Fernández Güell | |
| Leyes relevantes | | | | | Strengthening of Public Finances Law #9635 | | | |
| Partido político | Acción Ciudadana | | | | Progreso Social Democrático | | | |
| Liderazgo político | L.G. Solís Rivera | | C. Alvarado Quesada | | R. Chavez Robles | | | |
| Fase del proyecto | Preparación Formulación | Aprobación | Implementación | | | | Reporte final | |
| Conducción | MINAE DCC | | | | | | MINAE IMN | |
| Productos | | | QCA y programa de mejora continua para instrumentos de transparencia en RC diseñados | | | | | |
| | | | Desarrollo de la Unidad de Planificación Estratégica | | | | Plataforma de intercambio de conocimientos para la transparencia MRV | |

Contenido del Informe

| Diseño | Dimensiones | Final | Criterios |
|---|--|--|---|
| Análisis de la calidad del diseño del proyecto. | (1) Contexto operativo | Valoración participativa en profundidad del diseño, gestión, desempeño (relevancia, eficacia y eficiencia) , resultados y impactos (reales y potenciales) y la sostenibilidad del proyecto. | (1) Relevancia estratégica |
| | (2) Preparación del proyecto | | (2) Calidad del diseño del proyecto |
| | (3) Relevancia estratégica | | (3) Naturaleza del contexto externo |
| | (4) Resultados previstos y causalidad | | (4) Eficacia (incluida la disponibilidad de productos; logro de resultados y probabilidad de impacto) |
| | (5) Marco Lógico y Monitoreo | | (5) Gestión financiera |
| | (6) Disposiciones de gobernanza y supervisión | | (6) Eficiencia |
| | (7) Asociaciones | | (7) Monitoreo e informes |
| | (8) Aprendizaje, comunicación y extensión | | (8) Sostenibilidad |
| | (9) Planificación Financiera / Presupuesto | | (9) Factores que afectan el desempeño + cuestiones transversales. |
| | (10) Eficiencia | | |
| | (11) Identificación de riesgos y Salvaguardas Sociales | | |
| | (12) Sostenibilidad | | |
| | (13) Debilidades | | |

Escala de valoración: **ALTAMENTE SATISFACTORIO (AS) | SATISFACTORIO (S) | MODERADAMENTE SATISFACTORIO (MS) | MODERADAMENTE INSATISFACTORIO (MI) | INSATISFACTORIO (I) | ALTAMENTE INSATISFACTORIO (AI)**

Metodología : enfoque cualitativo y participativo

Técnicas

- i) revisión documental de textos pertinentes del proyecto;
- ii) entrevistas semiestructuradas con partes interesadas relevantes y
- iii) retroalimentación de las partes interesadas (PNUMA, Gobierno) a los documentos producidos por el proceso de revisión.

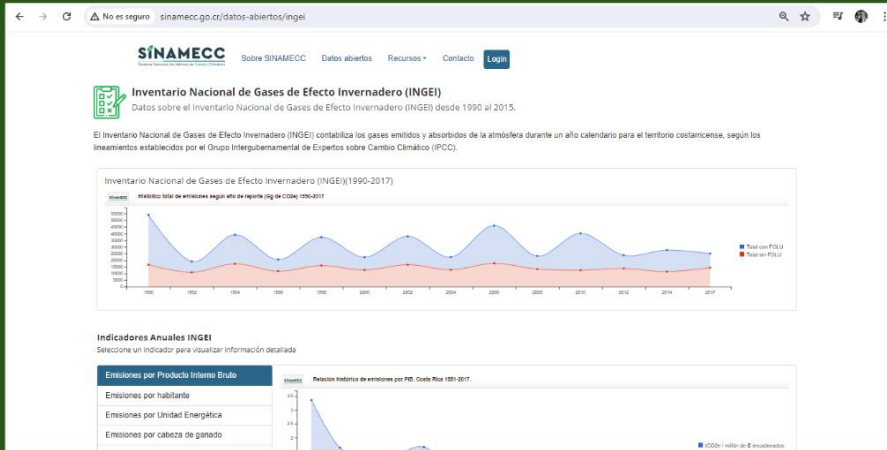
| Respondent Category | Entity | # People Involved (M/F) (A) | # People Contacted (M/F) (B) | Respondent # (M/F) (C) | % Respondent (C/B) |
|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Project team (those with management responsibilities) | Implementing agency | M = 5 F = 3 | M = 3 F = 3 | M = 2 F = 3 | M = 66% F = 100% |
| | Executing Agency | M = 6 F = 6 | M = 3 F = 6 | M = 1 F = 2 | M = 33% F = 33% |
| Project (implementing/ executing) partners (receiving funds from the project) | CBIT Team | M = 4 F = 7 | M = 2 F = 3 | M = 1 F = 2 | M = 25% F = 75% |
| Other government partners | CENIGA, MAG, MIDEPLAN, UCR, BCCR | M = 8 F = 4 | M = 4 F = 2 | M = 2 F = 2 | M = 50% F = 100% |
| Private sector partners | GIZ, PNUD CR; NDC Action, Aliaise | M = 2 F = 8 | M = 0 F = 2 | M = 0 F = 1 | M = 0% F = 50% |

Valoración detallada (I/III)

| | | |
|--|--------------------------------|-------------|
| Relevancia Estratégica | Altamente Satisfactoria | 6 |
| Alineación con los MTS, POW y Prioridades Estratégicas del PNUMA | Altamente Satisfactoria | 6 |
| Relevancia para las prioridades ambientales globales, regionales, subregionales y nacionales | Altamente Satisfactoria | 6 |
| Relevancia para las prioridades ambientales globales, regionales, subregionales y nacionales | Altamente Satisfactoria | 6 |
| Complementariedad con intervenciones existentes relevantes/coherencia | Altamente Satisfactoria | 6 |
| Calidad del diseño del proyecto | Satisfactorio | 5 |
| Naturaleza del contexto externo | Moderadamente Favorable | |
| Efectividad | Satisfactoria | 5.11 |
| Disponibilidad de productos | Altamente Satisfactoria | 6 |
| Logro de resultados del proyecto | Satisfactoria | 5 |
| Probabilidad de impacto | Probable | 5 |



“El equipo pudo realizar actividades completamente virtuales y completas incorporando tecnologías de la información, herramientas interactivas y eventos en línea para superar el distanciamiento social” (miembro del equipo en un rol protagónico, entrevista, 2023).



Hola!

Cursos disponibles

Programa País de Carbono Neutralidad
Categoría Comunidades
 Programa País de Carbono Neutralidad, Categoría Comunidades

Programa País de Carbono Neutralidad
Categoría Verificadores
 Programa País de Carbono Neutralidad, Categoría Verificadores

Programa País de Carbono Neutralidad
Categoría Productos
 Programa País de Carbono Neutralidad, Categoría Productos

https://aula.cambioclimatico.go.cr/course/view.php?id=15



Pregunta estratégica 1: ¿En qué medida se fortalecieron los instrumentos de transparencia de Costa Rica para cumplir con los requisitos del Marco de Transparencia del Acuerdo de París?

"El proyecto proporcionó y agregó valor basado en muchas fuentes diferentes y nos permitió tener un marco sólido y claro para la gestión de la calidad de los datos (miembro del equipo nacional, entrevista, 2023)"



Pregunta estratégica 2: ¿En qué medida las instituciones nacionales utilizan el análisis y los datos de seguimiento del cambio climático para la toma de decisiones? ¿Se desarrolló la SPU? ¿Qué tan efectiva es la plataforma de intercambio de conocimientos para la transparencia y la metodología de datos relacionados con MRV?

"...si bien existía la intención de que fuera independiente (SPU), hubo mucha discusión sobre su forma jurídica y las restricciones institucionales existentes como la prohibición de crear nuevas instituciones a partir de la ley que limita la creación de nuevos cargos, Ley de Fortalecimiento de las Finanzas Públicas # 9635, 2018 (miembro del equipo líder, entrevista, 2023).

Valoración detallada (II/III)

| | | |
|---|--------------------------------|-------------|
| Gestión financiera | Altamente Satisfactoria | 5.67 |
| Adhesión a las políticas y procedimientos financieros del PNUMA | Satisfactoria | 5 |
| Integridad de la información financiera del proyecto | Altamente Satisfactoria | 6 |
| Comunicación entre el personal de finanzas y gestión de proyectos | Altamente Satisfactoria | 6 |
| Eficiencia | Satisfactoria | 5 |
| Monitoreo y Reporte | Altamente Satisfactoria | 5.33 |
| Diseño y presupuesto de Monitoreo | Altamente Satisfactoria | 6 |
| Monitoreo de la implementación del proyecto | Satisfactoria | 5 |
| Reporte de proyecto | Satisfactoria | 5 |
| Sustentabilidad | Probabilidad moderada | 4 |
| Sustentabilidad socio política | Probabilidad moderada | 4 |
| Sustentabilidad financiera | Probable | 5 |
| Sustentabilidad institucional | Probabilidad alta | 6 |

Valoración detallada (III/III)

| | | |
|---|--------------------------------|-------------|
| Factores que afectan el desempeño | Altamente Satisfactoria | 5.00 |
| Preparación y alistamiento | Satisfactoria | 5 |
| Calidad de la gestión y supervisión del proyecto | Satisfactoria | 6 |
| PNUMA/Agencia de implementación | Satisfactoria | 6 |
| Socios/Agencia de ejecución | Satisfactoria | 5 |
| Cooperación y participación de las partes interesadas | Altamente Satisfactoria | 6 |
| Responsabilidad con relación a derechos humanos y equidad de género | Altamente Satisfactoria | 6 |
| Salvaguardas ambientales y sociales | Moderadamente Satisfactoria | 4 |
| Apropiación y liderazgo nacional | Moderadamente Satisfactoria | 4 |
| Comunicación pública y sensibilidad | Satisfactoria | 5 |
| Desempeño general | Satisfactorio | 4.96 |

4 lecciones aprendidas

LP le gana al CP

Una estrategia a largo plazo para el liderazgo en la presentación de informes sobre el cambio climático proporciona estabilidad y continuidad a través de las transiciones políticas

Confiar en organismos técnicos establecidos, como el Instituto Meteorológico Nacional (IMN) y el CCD, fortalece el compromiso del país con la acción climática más allá de los cambios políticos, siempre y cuando cuenten con suficiente financiación y respaldo político;

La política importa

Involucrar a instituciones públicas clave fomenta la colaboración y garantiza un enfoque holístico en las iniciativas climáticas

Diseñar e implementar proyectos teniendo en cuenta sistemáticamente el contexto puede fomentar la eficiencia al gestionar los riesgos crecientes y mitigar los cambios políticos no esperados que puedan ocurrir.

3 recomendaciones

IMN

i) Fortalecer la interoperabilidad de los sistemas.
Continuar mejorando SINAMECC e integrarlo con sistemas existentes como SIMOCUTE, CONAGEBIO, SINIA, etc.

Socios

ii) Continuar brindando el apoyo técnico y financiero a las instituciones existentes que lideran los avances realizados por el proyecto.

PNUMA

iii) Continuar apoyando al IMN en la construcción de mayor legitimidad para la implementación de MRV a través de un proyecto CBIT II, realizando seguimientos cada 6 meses e incluyendo a CR en la plataforma global de transparencia CBIT;
iv) Planificar detalladamente y anticiparse a futuros cambios de gobierno para sostener y cumplir con los compromisos del proyecto utilizando herramientas como el mapeo de partes interesadas, las matrices de poder-interés y los diagramas de influencia para visualizar el panorama político.



Síntesis

“El proyecto entregó productos de excelente calidad, altamente útiles para su aplicación y para construir la base de conocimientos a largo plazo.

En general, el proyecto fue bien gestionado, con una facilitación sólida, especialmente en la forja de alianzas con actores clave del ecosistema en Costa Rica. En resumen, este proyecto sentó una sólida base de conocimiento que el país puede aprovechar y seguir construyendo de manera efectiva.”



Gracias

Informe Final | abril 2024



Fotos:
<https://www.dw.com/es/costa-rica-laboratorio-de-conservacion-30w83n-de-la-biodiversidad/a-50817289>



© DWI/Alonso González

ANNEX IX. BRIEF CV OF THE EVALUATOR

Natalia Aquilino

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Profession | Political Scientist |
| Nationality | Argentinean |
| Country experience | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Europe: England• Africa: Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya• Americas: USA, Peru, Colombia, Belice, Mexico, El Salvador, Chile, Argentina• Asia: Pakistan, Thailand, Japan, Sri Lanka, Viet Nam, Cambodia, China, India |
| Education | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Licentiate at Political Science with a postgraduate degree on Local Development. |

Short biography

Natalia has managerial experience in the governmental (Government of Argentina) and social sectors (CIPPEC, Evaluar), in the international intergovernmental sphere (UN, UNDP, UNEP) and in the high-tech industry (Neoris, Telecom Personal). She led multidisciplinary teams in Latin America and Argentina and managed expert knowledge in social and productive development, education, security and technology. She participated in international and intercultural research teams and change management processes for most of her career.

Natalia led more than 30 impact, outcome and process evaluation, designed M&E systems and advised on evaluation policies in Latin America and Argentina. Her research agenda includes evaluability of government programs, M&E systems design, policy influence strategies and accountability and her advocacy work aims at strengthening the institutionalization of evaluation.

Currently, she is M&E National Director at the Secretary for Industrial Development of the Ministry of Economy in the Government of Argentina. Natalia also teaches planning and evaluation at postgraduate level for International and Argentinian National Universities such as ADEN School of Government (Panama), University of Bologna in Argentina (Italy), University of Saint Andrew and National Universities of Buenos Aires, Entre Ríos and Tucumán.

Previously she advised the Secretary of Strategic Affairs under the Presidency of the Nation on the design of the development assistance evaluation policy (2020-2022), performed as Policy Monitoring & Evaluation Director at CIPPEC (2012-2022), one of the leading think tanks in Latin America; and acted as United Nations Coordination Officer (2008-2012) and M&E Officer (2002-2008 at United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Argentina. In the private sector she was Customer Relationships Manager for Neoris (2000-2002) and Customer Leader for Telecom Italia Mobile (1997-2000) in Argentina.

She was founder and first chair of the Argentinean Evaluators Civil Association and is a member of the Argentinean Association of Public Administration Studies.

ANNEX X. TERMINAL REVIEW TORS (WITHOUT ANNEXES)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Terminal Review of the UNEP/GEF project 9652:
 “Costa Rica's integrated reporting and transparency system”

Section 1: PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

Project General Information

Table 1. Project summary

| UNEP Sub programme: | Climate change | UNEP Division/Branch: | Climate change |
|-----------------------------|--|---|---|
| Expected Accomplishment(s): | Climate stability: Countries increasingly transition to low emission economic development pathways and enhance their adaptation and resilience to climate change | Programme of Work Output(s): Programme of Work 2022-2023 Climate action subprogramme | Outcome 1C: State and non-State actors adopt the enhanced transparency framework arrangements under the Paris Agreement. Indicator (iii): Number of national, subnational, and private-sector actors reporting under the enhanced transparency arrangements of the Paris Agreement with UNEP support |

| | |
|--|--|
| SDG(s) and indicator(s) | <p>SDG 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts</p> <p>Target 13.2: Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning Indicator 13.2.1: Number of countries with nationally determined contributions, long-term strategies, national adaptation plans, strategies as reported in adaptation communications and national communications</p> <p>Target 13.3: Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning Indicator 13.3.2: Number of countries that have communicated the strengthening of institutional, systemic and individual capacity building to implement adaptation, mitigation and technology transfer, and development actions</p> |
| GEF Core Indicator Targets (identify these for projects approved prior to GEF-7 ¹) | N/A |

¹This does not apply to Enabling Activities

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| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|----------------------------------|-----|
| Dates of previous project phases: | N/A | Status of future project phases: | N/A |
|-----------------------------------|-----|----------------------------------|-----|

FROM THE PROJECT'S PIR REPORT:

| | | | |
|--------------------------|---|----------------|-----|
| Project Title: | Costa Rica's integrated reporting and transparency system | | |
| Executing Agency: | UNEP, Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean | | |
| Project partners: | Ministry of Environment (MMA) | | |
| Geographical Scope: | National | | |
| Participating Countries: | Costa Rica | | |
| GEF project ID: | 9652 | IMIS number*2: | N/A |

| | | | |
|---|---|--|------------------|
| Focal Area(s): | Climate Change | GEF OP #: | |
| GEF Strategic Priority/Objective: | Costa Rica complies with the requirements of the transparency framework under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change | GEF approval date*: | 03/01/18 |
| UNEP approval date: | 08/11/2018 | Date of first disbursement*: | 07/12/2018 |
| Actual start date ³ : | 20/11/2018 | Planned duration: | 48 months |
| Intended completion date*: | 31/08/22 | Actual or Expected completion date: | 28/02/23 |
| Project Type: | CBIT | GEF Allocation*: | US\$ 1.000.000,0 |
| PPG GEF cost*: | UD\$30,000 | PPG co-financing*: | 0 |
| Expected MSP/FSP Co-financing*: | UD\$2,750,000 | Total Cost*: | UD\$ 1,262,870 |
| Mid-term Review/eval. (planned date): | N/A | Terminal Evaluation (planned date): | 28-Jan-23 |
| Mid-term Review/eval. (actual date): | N/A | No. of revisions*: | 3 |
| Date of last Steering Committee meeting: | 15/02/2023 | Date of Last Revision*: | 01/07/2022 |
| Total disbursement as of 30 June 2023 | US\$ 974.998 | Date of planned financial closure*: | 28/02/24 |
| Date of planned completion ⁴ *: | 28/02/23 | Actual expenditures reported as of 30 June 2024 ⁵ : | |
| Total co-financing realized as of 31 June 2023: | US\$ 2,750,000 | Actual expenditures entered in IMIS as of 31 December 2022*: | N/A |
| Leveraged financing: ⁶ | 0 | | |

² Fields with an * sign (in yellow) should be filled by the Fund Management Officer

³ Only if different from first disbursement date, e.g., in cases were a long time elapsed between first disbursement and recruitment of project manager.

⁴ If there was a "Completion Revision" please use the date of the revision.

Project Rationale⁷

In 2015, the international community agreed on substantially extending efforts to keep global warming below 2°C with additional compromise to keep warming closer to 1.5°C as stated in the Paris Agreement. Countries, regardless of their level of development, committed to contributing to reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and adaptation as laid out in their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC).

Achieving the 2°C target requires an integral transformational process, that is informed by performance of sectoral policies, financial flows and the impact of new adopted technologies, all of which will have to be provided through, inter alia, dynamic and multidimensional models and market intelligence to support decision-making on a permanent basis. Article 13 of the Paris Agreement provides for an enhanced transparency framework aiming to build mutual trust and confidence and promote the effective implementation of the actions identified under the NDCs. Further, Article 4 determines that every country, except for least developed countries, shall report no less frequently than on a biennial basis their progress towards the implementation of their NDCs. These reports shall also include information regarding adaptation efforts and international support received. In the reports, good practice methodologies are to be used by everyone and will be internationally revised in order to ensure consistency.

The enhanced transparency framework demands substantial and immediate progress in the countries' domestic Monitoring Reporting and Verification (MRV) systems and strategic de-carbonization planning. This entails moving from often disintegrated and often different-methodological approaches in data management to an integrated and robust system. The success of the Agreement hinges on enhanced transparency of action and support, as a critical foundation to making its bottom-up, country-led approach work, as well as building mutual trust and confidence amongst Parties. The enhanced transparency framework demands substantial and immediate progress in the countries' domestic MRV systems and strategic de-carbonization planning. This requires setting up new transparency governance structures, developing and implementing measuring and reporting methodologies, and updating, implementing, and integrating new data and information flows with pre-defined periodicity. This transition towards data and information sourcing and management presents a significant barrier for many countries.

To date, Costa Rica is neither prepared to monitor, report, and verify their mitigation and adaptation actions and policies and corresponding finance in a concise and robust manner nor to generate forecasting scenarios and strategic (economic, investment, technological, among others) information for policymakers needed to support transformational change. The current processes of policy formulation, incentives, and other regulatory instruments required to achieve the de-carbonization of the economy are not defined and coordinated. This is seen as the key barrier in ensuring that Costa Rica meets its highly ambitious NDC.

GEF-CBIT will support Costa Rica in establishing an overarching structure across all sectors that will ensure high quality in its transparency instruments; and create the capacities to transcend in the usage of MRV for policy design inputs.

CBIT's most important contribution will occur through the creation of capacities at an inter-sectoral level. This cross-sectorial work is fundamental to Costa Rica due to the economy-wide nature of its' NDC target, which seeks to drive deep, transformational de-carbonization which can only be achieved incorporating multi/inter sectoral approaches.

These support objectives will strongly foster Costa Rica's capacity in complying with its obligations under the Paris Agreement. In line with the need for enhanced ambition, CBIT support will ensure

Costa Rica's long-term climate policy planning capacity needed to sustain its very ambitious target of carbon neutrality. Moreover, it will give Costa Rica the needed capacity to report with clarity and transparency on the progress towards its NDC goals in line with PA Article 13. Last but not least, the Paris Agreement encourages knowledge sharing, which Costa Rica has made one of its three pillars towards the establishment of the national de-carbonization laboratory.

The requested support further neatly aligns with the CBIT programming directions, in particular those under paragraph 18 a-c). The proposed Outcomes will strengthen Costa Rica's "national institutions for transparency-related activities in line with national priorities", as they will foster Costa Rica's capacity to "...

⁷Grey =Info to be added

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plan, coordinate, implement, monitor and evaluate policies, strategies, and programs to enhance transparency, ..."; "... integrate knowledge from transparency initiative into national policy and decision making"; and deploy and enhance "... information and knowledge management structures to meet Article 13 needs". Moreover, the proposed project reflects the capacities identified as most needed in Costa Rica's first BUR and the corresponding technical analysis, complying with the paragraph 19 of CBIT's programming directions.

Transparency Framework

The foundation for Costa Rica's enhanced national transparency system will be the National System for Climate Change Metrics (SINAMECC). It will serve as the overarching platform for transparency and accountability of the NDC, including the provision of timely information on mitigation, adaptation, climate finance and co-benefits. By design, SINAMECC will form part of a systems-in-systems approach with a multi purpose objective and a multi-directional flow of information, which will feed on all relevant data, including top-down data generated through GHG inventories as well as bottom-up sectoral MRV information. As part of Costa Rica's transparency and national de-carbonization efforts, SINAMECC will significantly contribute by providing the robust data for two key reporting areas: (I) progress reporting on all United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) obligations; and (II) a national report on the impact of public policies.

As to top-down national data, including GHG inventories, National Communications, and Biennial Update Reports (BURs), have been compiled by the National Meteorological Institute (IMN) since the 1990s. The technical team (composed of 3 permanent professionals) in charge of the compilation has not changed since reporting started. This situation has positive implications, most importantly, that it facilitates methodological consistency between reporting periods and that it has led to the development of highly-qualified experts with a wealth of knowledge and capacity. However, this arrangement has also led to a lack of formalization and institutionalization which has led to a prevalence of personalized or ad hoc data transfer procedures which do not lend themselves to the standardization required for deep analysis and long-term planning. The team can only implement limited Quality Assurance (QA) and Quality Control (QC) checks to ensure data quality.[1] Costa Rica implements periodical QA procedures only for some GHG inventory years. Current QC are implemented only for the GHG inventory of each inventory year, during documentation, data and results archiving. For activity data, QC cross checks are conducted between different national data sources. The small team is generally not able to check the quality of all information sent by other institutions and it is completely unknown whether these institutions conduct any QC procedures since it is not documented. Trend analyses have helped to identify inconsistencies in the time series. Inventory estimates are not compared to regional estimates or Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) defaults.

As to the generation of bottom-up data, SINAMECC follows a modular approach, giving the sectors

substantial leeway in their MRV design. Nonetheless, SINAMECC requires the sectoral MRV systems to align with the overarching governance structure while maintaining their flexibility. To date, the sectoral data sources that are in place have not been designed with the objective to generate climate change-relevant data and without consideration for a potential integration with the GHG inventories. Moreover, the available information flows are disintegrated and not reliable as they vary in quality and periodicity and do not meet relevant guidance under the UNFCCC and IPCC. Consequently, Costa Rica's current MRV framework is mainly composed of the processes that lead up to the compilation of national GHG inventories. To address this shortcoming, Costa Rica has developed a "SINAMECC Guide" which seeks to facilitate connecting bottom-up mitigation activity MRV schemes with the National GHG Inventory so that their impact can be properly reflected towards meeting the country's NDC commitments

Costa Rica has prominently placed climate change in its current National Development Plan, making it the cornerstone of every strategic action to be performed. This ambition is reflected in its NDC, as Costa Rica:

- reaffirms its aspiration of becoming a carbon neutral economy by 2021; and
- commits to reducing its GHG emissions to 9,374,000 tCO₂ in 2030.

The Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC), submitted in 2015, draws a path for a low-emission and climate-resilient development, includes policies and measures for mitigation and adaptation, is comprehensive as it is economy-wide, including all sectors, gases, sources and sinks. To achieve these

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ambitious goals, Costa Rica aims to become a national-scale laboratory to promote de-carbonization at the global level, based on three key concepts:

- knowledge sharing;
- innovative capacity, and
- private investment.

As a committed nation in the efforts against climate change, Costa Rica has started transforming key sectors like agriculture and transport for which it actively engages the private sector as a key driver of de-carbonization. Historically, Costa Rica has tried to share its success stories and corresponding drivers and obstacles with its peers and will extend these efforts as its de-carbonization laboratory fetches more and more promising results. In line with the Paris Agreement, Costa Rica will be required to enhance its national transparency system to report with clarity and transparency on its progress in implementing its highly ambitious NDC vis-à-vis its progress towards a national-scale de-carbonization laboratory.

Project Results Framework

The Costa Rican CBIT project: 'Costa Rica's integrated reporting and transparency system' aims to develop the country's capacities to meet the requirements of the transparency framework under the Paris Agreement, particularly by strengthening Costa Rica's transparency platform, its data and methodologies related to, for example, reporting climate action and impact, and designing an institutional framework to improve its decision making on climate change.

The project has one cross-cutting component to support the development and implementation of tools and arrangements related to the national transparency framework, with two expected outcomes: (1) Costa Rica's transparency instruments are strengthened to meet the Paris

Agreement's transparency framework requirements and (2) national institutions use climate change analysis and monitoring data for decision making.

The main partner of the project is MINAE's Climate Change Directorate, but the project also works closely with institutions part of the National Climate Change Metrics System (SINAMECC) Committee: the National Center for Geoenvironmental Information (CENIGA), the Sectoral Planning Secretariat of Environment, Energy, Seas, and Land Use (SEPLASA), the National Meteorological Institute (IMN) and the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses of Costa Rica (INEC), among other institutions that produce climate change data and use it to take decisions.

Below are briefly described the three outputs of the project:

- Quality control, assurance, and continuous improvement program for Costa Rica's transparency instruments (e.g., National Communications, Biennial Communications and National Greenhouse Gas Inventories) designed: the design QA/QC processes and a continuous improvement plan for the climate data reported to the transparency system of Costa Rica is being developed and implemented by the project, this will be enabling a systematization of the data quality used on the climate related reports and its improvement through time.
- Strategic Climate Planning Unit developed: the project is supporting Costa Rica on the creation of a unit with the capacity to do prospective analysis of the climate change policies and plans and provide recommendations on how to improve their implementation improve future planning.
- Knowledge sharing platform for Monitoring, Reporting and Verifications (MRV)-related transparency and data methodologies: CBIT is supporting Costa Rica improving its national climate change monitoring system, this improvement considers the systematization of knowledge and opening climate change data enabling more stakeholders to be involved in climate actions.

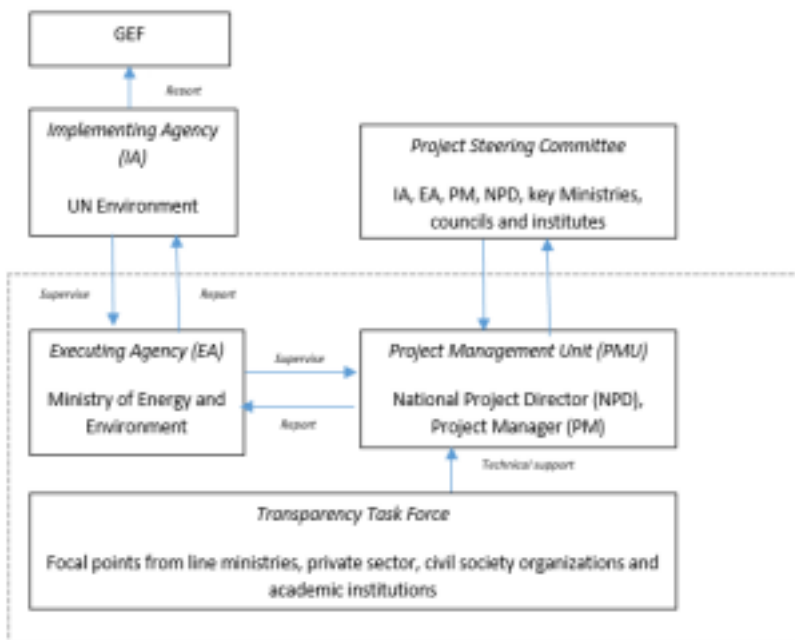
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The project is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) acting as the GEF Implementing Agency. The Ministry of Environment and Energy (MINAE) through the Directorate of Climate Change executes the project activities at the national level.

A project director in the MINAE is responsible for the execution of the project. A project steering committee (PSC) is the highest decision-making authority of this project and is comprised of high-level representatives of different ministries of the Costa Rica government. The main role of the PSC is (i) to guide and oversee the technical progress and performance of the Project, and (ii) to enhance and optimize the contributions of various partner organizations through coordination of all activities and inputs. PSC meetings are formally called by the National Project Director at least twice a year to discuss the project performance and provide future guidance.

In its role as GEF Implementing Agency, UNEP (through its Economy Division, and represented by a Task Manager) provides project oversight to ensure that GEF policies and criteria are adhered to and that the project meets its objectives and achieves expected outcomes in an efficient and effective manner. This way, different offices within UNEP perform different roles, i.e. either as Executing Agency (LACO) or as Implementing Agency (i.e. UNEP's Economy Division).



For further detailed information see the CEO:

- Annex H: Project Implementation Arrangements p. 59
- Annex K: Gef operational focal point endorsement letter and request of support p.65 Project Cost and Financing

The project's budget consists of a GEF grant and co-finance from various partners. Contributions from the GEF can be classified according to their contribution to the Fund's Focal Area objectives as depicted in the table below.

Project Objective: Costa Rica complies with the requirements of the transparency framework under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change

| Project Components/ Programs | Financing Type ¹ | Project Outcomes | Project Outputs | Trust Fund | GEF Project Financing | Confirmed and Co-financing |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|-----------------|------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Cross-cutting: National Transparency Framework | | 1.1 Costa Rica's transparency instruments are strengthened to meet the Paris Agreement's Transparency Framework requirements | 1.1.1 Quality control, assurance and continuous improvement program for Costa Rica's transparency instruments (e.g. National Communications, Biennial Communications and National Greenhouse Gas Inventories) designed | | 910,000 | 2,635,000 |
| | | 1.2 National institutions use climate change analysis and monitoring data for decision making | 1.2.1 Strategic Climate Planning Unit developed 1.2.2 Knowledge sharing platform for Monitoring, Reporting and Verifications (MRV)-related transparency and data methodologies implemented | | | |
| Subtotal | | | | | 910,000 | 2,635,000 |
| Project Management Cost (PMC) ^[1] | | | | | 90,000 | 115,000 |
| Total project costs | | | | | 1,000,000 | 2,750,000 |

[1] For GEF Project Financing up to \$2 million, PMC could be up to 10% of the subtotal; above \$2 million, PMC could be up to 5% of the subtotal. PMC should be charged proportionately to focal areas based on focal area project financing amount in Table D below.

[1] Financing type can be either investment or technical assistance.

Please see the details of the project Cost and Financing on the CEO:

- Annex C: Status of implementation of project preparation activities and the use of funds. P.35
- Annex F1: Detailed GEF budget p.51
- Annex F2: Detailed cofinance budget. p.53chi

Implementation Issues

The project encountered significant challenges throughout its implementation, causing delays in activities and deliverables. The administrative procedures of UNEP proved complex and unclear, leading to delays in initiating crucial contracts. The COVID-19 pandemic further disrupted processes, altering work modes and affecting government resources.

Decisions from COP26 on transparency had technical implications, requiring a revision of deliverables to align with the evolving context. Additionally, a change in government administration hindered articulation with key institutions and stakeholders, requiring an onboarding process for new authorities.

Limited personnel in key institutions led to reprioritization of activities, and the unexpected termination of an SSFA with UNEP-DTU necessitated a rearrangement of the procurement process. The departure of the Project Manager also posed challenges.

Despite electoral changes, the project adapted to deliver outputs, intensifying capacity building and dissemination efforts. The project's incorporation into various climate change management instruments aimed to institutionalize and ensure continuity. Challenges persisted in ensuring the sustainability of tools and deliverables, including SINAMECC, and a closing strategy faced difficulties due to internal restructuring and personnel rotation within the Ministry of Environment and Energy.

Section 2. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF THE REVIEW

Objective of the Review

In line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy⁸ and the UNEP Programme Manual⁹, the Terminal Review (TR) is undertaken at operational 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 Review has two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP and UN Environment, Regional Office for Latin America, and the Caribbean (ROLAC) in representation of the Ministry of Environment. Therefore, the Review will identify lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation and implementation, especially for future phases of the project, where applicable.

Key Review principles

Review findings and judgements will be based on sound evidence and analysis, clearly documented in the Review Report. Information will be triangulated (i.e. verified from different sources) as far as possible, and when verification is not possible, the single source will be mentioned (whilst anonymity is still protected). Analysis leading to evaluative judgements should always be clearly spelled out.

The "Why?" Question. As this is a Terminal Review and a follow-up project is possible particular attention will be given to learning from the experience. Therefore, the "why?" question should be at the front of the consultant(s)' minds all through the review exercise and is supported by the use of a theory of change approach. This means that the consultant(s) need 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. what contributed to the achievement of the project's results). This should provide the basis for the lessons that can be drawn from the project.

Attribution, Contribution and Credible Association: In order to *attribute* any outcomes and impacts to a project intervention, one needs to consider the difference between what has happened with, and what would have happened without, the project (i.e. take account of changes over time and between

contexts in order to isolate the effects of an intervention). This requires appropriate baseline data and the identification of a relevant counterfactual, both of which are frequently not available for reviews. Establishing the *contribution* made by a project in a complex change process relies heavily on prior intentionality (e.g. approved project design documentation, logical framework) and the articulation of causality (e.g. narrative and/or illustration of the Theory of Change). Robust evidence that a project was delivered as designed and that the expected causal pathways developed supports claims of contribution and this is strengthened where an alternative theory of change can be excluded. A *credible association* between the implementation of a project and observed positive effects can be made where a strong causal narrative, although not explicitly articulated, can be inferred by the chronological sequence of events, active involvement of key actors and engagement in critical processes.

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Communicating Review Results. A key aim of the Review is to encourage reflection and learning by UNEP staff and key project stakeholders. The consultant should consider how reflection and learning can be promoted, both through the review process and in the communication of review findings and key lessons. Clear and concise writing is required on all review deliverables. Draft and final versions of the main Review Report will be shared with key stakeholders by the Task Manager. There may, however, be several intended audiences, each with different interests and needs regarding the report. The consultant will plan with the Task Manager which audiences to target and the easiest and clearest way to communicate the key review findings and lessons to them. This may include some, or all, of the following; a webinar, conference calls with relevant stakeholders, the preparation of a review brief or interactive presentation.

Key Strategic Questions

In addition to the review criteria outlined in Section 10 below, the Review will address the strategic questions¹⁰ listed below (no more than 3 questions are recommended). These are questions of interest to UNEP and to which the project is believed to be able to make a substantive contribution. Also included are five questions that are required when reporting in the GEF Portal and these must be addressed in the TR:

Q1: Did the State and non-State actors participating in the project adopt the enhanced transparency framework arrangements under the Paris Agreement?

Q2: Does the country Strengthen and improve transparency mechanisms of National institutions for domestic and UN conventions reporting?

Q3: Did the State and non-State actors participating in the project adopt the new tools developed by the project Q4: Was the project executed efficiently?

Q5: What changes were made to adapt to the effects of COVID-19 and how might any changes affect the project's performance?

Address the questions required for the GEF Portal in the appropriate parts of the report and provide a summary of the findings in the Conclusions section of the report:

a) Under Monitoring and Reporting/Monitoring of Project Implementation:

What was the performance at the project's completion against Core Indicator Targets? (For projects approved prior to GEF-7, these indicators will be identified retrospectively and comments on performance provided¹¹).

b) Under Factors Affecting Performance/Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation:

What were the progress, challenges and outcomes regarding engagement of stakeholders in the project/program as evolved from the time of the MTR? (*This should be based on the description*

included in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan or equivalent documentation submitted at CEO Endorsement/Approval)

c) Under Factors Affecting Performance/Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality: What were the completed gender-responsive measures and, if applicable, actual gender result areas? (This should be based on the documentation at CEO Endorsement/Approval, including gender sensitive indicators contained in the project results framework or gender action plan or equivalent) d) Under Factors Affecting Performance/Environmental and Social Safeguards:

What was the progress made in the implementation of the management measures against the Safeguards Plan submitted at CEO Approval? The risk classifications reported in the latest PIR report should be verified and the findings of the effectiveness of any measures or lessons learned taken to address identified risks assessed. (Any supporting documents gathered by the Consultant during this Review should be shared with the Task Manager for uploading in the GEF Portal) e) Under Factors Affecting Performance/Communication and Public Awareness:

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

¹⁰ The strategic questions should not duplicate questions that will be addressed under the standard review criteria described in section 10.

¹¹ This does not apply to Enabling Activities

Practice; Adaptive Management Actions? (This should be based on the documentation approved at CEO Endorsement/Approval)

Review Criteria

All review criteria will be rated on a six-point scale. Sections A-I below, outline the scope of the review criteria. The set of review criteria are grouped in nine categories: (A) Strategic Relevance; (B) Quality of Project Design; (C) Nature of External Context; (D) Effectiveness, which comprises assessments of the availability of outputs, achievement of outcomes and likelihood of impact; (E) Financial Management; (F) Efficiency; (G) Monitoring and Reporting; (H) Sustainability; and (I) Factors Affecting Project Performance.

Annex 1 of these Terms of Reference provides a table with a list of various tools, templates and guidelines that can help Review Consultant(s) to follow a thorough review process that meets all of UNEP's needs.

A. Strategic Relevance

The Review will assess the extent to which the activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the donors, implementing regions/countries and the target beneficiaries. The Review will include an assessment of the project's relevance in relation to UNEP's mandate and its alignment with UNEP's policies and strategies at the time of project approval. Under strategic relevance an assessment of the complementarity of the project with other interventions addressing the needs of the same target groups will be made. This criterion comprises four elements:

i. Alignment to the UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy¹² (MTS), Programme of Work (POW) and Strategic Priorities

The Review should assess the project's alignment with the MTS and POW under which the project was approved and include, in its narrative, reflections on the scale and scope of any contributions made to the planned results reflected in the relevant MTS and POW. UNEP strategic priorities include

the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building¹³ (BSP) and South-South Cooperation (S-SC). The BSP relates to the capacity of governments to: comply with international agreements and obligations at the national level; promote, facilitate and finance environmentally sound technologies and to strengthen frameworks for developing coherent international environmental policies. S-SC is regarded as the exchange of resources, technology and knowledge between developing countries.

ii. Alignment to Donor/GEF/Partner Strategic Priorities

Donor strategic priorities will vary across interventions. The Review will assess the extent to which the project is suited to, or responding to, donor priorities. In some cases, alignment with donor priorities may be a fundamental part of project design and grant approval processes while in others, for example, instances of 'softly-earmarked' funding, such alignment may be more of an assumption that should be assessed.

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

The Review will assess the alignment of the project with global priorities such as the SDGs and Agenda 2030. The extent to which the intervention is suited, or responding to, the stated environmental concerns and needs of the countries, sub-regions, or regions where it is being implemented will also be considered. Examples may include UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF) or, national or sub-national development plans, poverty reduction strategies or Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action (NAMA) plans or regional agreements etc. Within this section consideration will be given to whether the needs of all beneficiary groups are being met and reflects the current policy priority to leave no-one behind.

iv. Complementarity with Relevant Existing Interventions/Coherence¹⁴

An assessment will be made of how well the project, either at design stage or during the project inception or mobilization¹⁵, took account of ongoing and planned initiatives (under the same sub-programme, other UNEP

¹² UNEP's Medium Term Strategy (MTS) is a document that guides UNEP's programme planning over a four-year period. It identifies UNEP's thematic priorities, known as Sub-programmes (SP), and sets out the desired outcomes, known as Expected Accomplishments (EAs), of the Sub-programmes. <https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment/evaluation-office/our-evaluation-approach/un-environment-documents>

¹³ <http://www.unep.fr/ozonaction/about/bsp.htm>

¹⁴ This sub-category is consistent with the new criterion of 'Coherence' introduced by the OECD-DAC in 2019. ¹⁵ A project's inception or mobilization period is understood as the time between project approval and first disbursement. Complementarity during project implementation is considered under Efficiency, see below.

sub-programmes, or being implemented by other agencies within the same country, sector or institution) that address similar needs of the same target groups. The Review will consider if the project team, in collaboration with Regional Offices and Sub-Programme Coordinators, made efforts to ensure their own intervention was complementary to other interventions, optimized any synergies and avoided duplication of effort. Examples may include work within UNDAFs or One UN programming. Linkages with other interventions should be described and instances where UNEP's comparative advantage has been particularly well applied should be highlighted.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Stakeholders' participation and cooperation
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity
- Country ownership and driven-ness

B. Quality of Project Design

The quality of project design is assessed using an agreed template during the review inception phase. Ratings are attributed to identified criteria and an overall Project Design Quality rating is established. The complete Project Design Quality template should be annexed in the Review Inception Report.

Later, the overall Project Design Quality rating¹⁶ should be entered in the final review ratings table (as item B) in the Main Review Report and a summary of the project's strengths and weaknesses at design stage should be included within the body of the Main Review Report.

Factors affecting this criterion may include (at the design stage):

- Stakeholders participation and cooperation
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity

C. Nature of External Context

At review inception stage a rating is established for the project's external operating context (considering the prevalence of conflict, natural disasters and political upheaval¹⁷). This rating is entered in the final review ratings table as item C. Where a project has been rated as facing either an *Unfavourable* or *Highly Unfavourable* external operating context, and/or a negative external event has occurred during project implementation, the ratings for Effectiveness, Efficiency and/or Sustainability may be increased at the discretion of the Review Consultant and Task Manager together. A justification for such an increase must be given.

D. Effectiveness

i. Availability of Outputs¹⁸

The Review will assess the project's success in producing the programmed outputs and making them available to the intended beneficiaries as well as its success in achieving milestones as per the project design document (ProDoc). Any formal modifications/revisions made during project implementation will be considered part of the project design. Where the project outputs are inappropriately or inaccurately stated in the ProDoc, reformulations may be necessary in the reconstruction of the Theory of Change (TOC). In such cases a table should be provided showing the original and the reformulation of the outputs for transparency. The availability of outputs will be assessed in terms of both quantity and quality, and the assessment will consider their ownership by, and usefulness to, intended beneficiaries and the timeliness of their provision. It is noted that emphasis is placed on the performance of those outputs that are most important to achieve outcomes. The Review will briefly explain the reasons behind the success or shortcomings of the project in delivering its programmed outputs available and meeting expected quality standards.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Preparation and readiness

¹⁶ In some instances, based on data collected during the review process, the assessment of the project's design quality may change from Inception Report to Main Review Report.

¹⁷ Note that 'political upheaval' does not include regular national election cycles, but unanticipated unrest or prolonged disruption. The potential delays or changes in political support that are often associated with the regular national election cycle should be part of the project's design and addressed through adaptive management of the project team. From March 2020 this should include the effects of COVID-19.

¹⁸ Outputs are the availability (for intended beneficiaries/users) of new products and services and/or gains in knowledge, abilities and awareness of individuals or within institutions (UNEP, 2019).

- Quality of project management and supervision¹⁹

ii. Achievement of Project Outcomes²⁰

The achievement of project outcomes is assessed as performance against the outcomes as defined in the reconstructed²¹ Theory of Change. These are outcomes that are intended to be achieved by the end of the project timeframe and within the project's resource envelope. Emphasis is placed on the achievement of project outcomes that are most important for attaining intermediate states. As with outputs, a table can be used to show where substantive amendments to the formulation of project outcomes is necessary to allow for an assessment of performance. The Review should report

evidence of attribution between UNEP's intervention and the project outcomes. In cases of normative work or where several actors are collaborating to achieve common outcomes, evidence of the nature and magnitude of UNEP's 'substantive contribution' should be included and/or 'credible association' established between project efforts and the project outcomes realised.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Quality of project management and supervision
- Stakeholders' participation and cooperation
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity
- Communication and public awareness

iii. Likelihood of Impact

Based on the articulation of long-lasting effects in the reconstructed TOC (*i.e. from project outcomes, via intermediate states, to impact*), the Review will assess the likelihood of the intended, positive impacts becoming a reality. Project objectives or goals should be incorporated in the TOC, possibly as intermediate states or long-lasting impacts. The Evaluation Office's approach to the use of TOC in project reviews is outlined in a guidance note and is supported by an excel-based flow chart, 'Likelihood of Impact Assessment Decision Tree'. Essentially the approach follows a 'likelihood tree' from project outcomes to impacts, taking account of whether the assumptions and drivers identified in the reconstructed TOC held. Any unintended positive effects should also be identified and their causal linkages to the intended impact described.

The Review will also consider the likelihood that the intervention may lead, or contribute to, unintended negative effects (e.g. will vulnerable groups such as those living with disabilities and/or women and children, be disproportionately affected by the project?). Some of these potential negative effects may have been identified in the project design as risks or as part of the analysis of Environmental and Social Safeguards.

The Review will consider the extent to which the project has played a catalytic role²² or has promoted scaling up and/or replication as part of its Theory of Change (either explicitly as in a project with a demonstration component or implicitly as expressed in the drivers required to move to outcome levels) and as factors that are likely to contribute to greater or long lasting impact.

Ultimately UNEP and all its partners aim to bring about benefits to the environment and human well-being. Few projects are likely to have impact statements that reflect such long-lasting or broad-based changes. However, the Review will assess the likelihood of the project to make a substantive contribution to the long

¹⁹ For GEF funded projects 'project management and supervision' will refer to the project management performance of the Executing Agency and the technical backstopping provided by UNEP, as Implementing Agency.

²⁰ Outcomes are the use (*i.e.* uptake, adoption, application) of an output by intended beneficiaries, observed as changes in institutions or behavior, attitude or condition (UNEP, 2019)

²¹ UNEP staff are currently required to submit a Theory of Change with all submitted project designs. The level of 'reconstruction' needed during a review will depend on the quality of this initial TOC, the time that has lapsed between project design and implementation (which may be related to securing and disbursing funds) and the level of any changes made to the project design. In the case of projects pre dating 2013 the intervention logic is often represented in a logical framework and a TOC will need to be constructed in the inception stage of the review.

²² The terms catalytic effect, scaling up and replication are inter-related and generally refer to extending the coverage or magnitude of the effects of a project. *Catalytic effect* is associated with triggering additional actions that are not directly funded by the project – these effects can be both concrete or less tangible, can be intentionally caused by the project or implied in the design and reflected in the TOC drivers, or can be unintentional and can rely on funding from another source or have no financial requirements. *Scaling up and Replication* require more intentionality for projects, or individual components and approaches, to be reproduced in other similar contexts. *Scaling up* suggests a substantive increase in the number of new beneficiaries reached/involved and may require adapted delivery mechanisms while *Replication* suggests the repetition of an approach or component at a similar scale but among different beneficiaries. Even with highly technical work, where scaling up or replication involves working with a new community, some consideration of the new context should take place and adjustments made as necessary.

lasting changes represented by the Sustainable Development Goals, and/or the intermediate-level results reflected in UNEP's Expected Accomplishments and the strategic priorities of funding partner(s).

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Quality of Project Management and Supervision (including adaptive management)
- Stakeholders participation and cooperation
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity
- Country ownership and driven-ness
- Communication and public awareness

E. Financial Management

Financial management will be assessed under three themes: *adherence* to UNEP's financial policies and procedures, *completeness* of financial information and *communication* between financial and project management staff. The Review will establish the actual spend across the life of the project of funds secured from all donors. This expenditure will be reported, where possible, at output/component level and will be compared with the approved budget. The Review will verify the application of proper financial management standards and adherence to UNEP's financial management policies. Any financial management issues that have affected the timely delivery of the project or the quality of its performance will be highlighted. The Review will record where standard financial documentation is missing, inaccurate, incomplete or unavailable in a timely manner. The Review will assess the level of communication between the Project Manager and the Fund Management Officer as it relates to the effective delivery of the planned project and the needs of a responsive, adaptive management approach.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Preparation and readiness
- Quality of project management and supervision

F. Efficiency

Under the efficiency criterion the Review will assess the extent to which the project delivered maximum results from the given resources. This will include an assessment of the cost-effectiveness and timeliness of project execution.

Focusing on the translation of inputs into outputs, *cost-effectiveness* is the extent to which an intervention has achieved, or is expected to achieve, its results at the lowest possible cost. *Timeliness* refers to whether planned activities were delivered according to expected timeframes as well as whether events were sequenced efficiently. The Review will also assess to what extent any project extension could have been avoided through stronger project management and identify any negative impacts caused by project delays or extensions. The Review will describe any cost or time-saving measures put in place to maximise results within the secured budget and agreed project timeframe and consider whether the project was implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternative interventions or approaches.

The Review will give special attention to efforts made by the project teams during project implementation to make use of/build upon pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies and complementarities²³ with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. to increase project efficiency.

The factors underpinning the need for any project extensions will also be explored and discussed. Consultants should note that as management or project support costs cannot be increased in cases of 'no cost extensions', such extensions represent an increase in unstated costs to UNEP and Executing Agencies.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Preparation and readiness (e.g. timeliness)
- Quality of project management and supervision

- Stakeholders participation and cooperation

G. Monitoring and Reporting

²³ Complementarity with other interventions during project design, inception or mobilization is considered under Strategic Relevance above.

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The Review will assess monitoring and reporting across three sub-categories: monitoring design and budgeting, monitoring implementation and project reporting.

i. Monitoring Design and Budgeting

Each project should be supported by a sound monitoring plan that is designed to track progress against SMART²⁴ results towards the achievement of the project's outputs and outcomes, including at a level disaggregated by gender, marginalisation or vulnerability, including those living with disabilities. In particular, the Review will assess the relevance and appropriateness of the project indicators as well as the methods used for tracking progress against them as part of conscious results-based management. The Review will assess the quality of the design of the monitoring plan as well as the funds allocated for its implementation. The adequacy of resources for Mid-Term and Terminal Review should be discussed, where applicable.

ii. Monitoring of Project Implementation

The Review will assess whether the monitoring system was operational and facilitated the timely tracking of results and progress towards project objectives throughout the project implementation period. This assessment will include consideration of whether the project gathered relevant and good quality baseline data that is accurately and appropriately documented. This should include monitoring the representation and participation of disaggregated groups, including gendered, marginalised or vulnerable groups, such as those living with disabilities, in project activities. It will also consider the quality of the information generated by the monitoring system during project implementation and how it was used to adapt and improve project execution, achievement of outcomes and ensure sustainability. The Review should confirm that funds allocated for monitoring were used to support this activity.

The performance at project completion against Core Indicator Targets should be reviewed. For projects approved prior to GEF-7, these indicators will be identified retrospectively and comments on performance provided.

iii. Project Reporting

UNEP GEF projects are required to report periodically to UNEP and the GEF through half-yearly and project implement review reports. These will be supplied by the project team (e.g. the Project Implementation Reviews and Tracking Tool for GEF-funded projects). The Review will assess the extent to which both UNEP and GEF reporting commitments have been fulfilled. Consideration will be given as to whether reporting has been carried out with respect to the effects of the initiative on disaggregated groups.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Quality of project management and supervision
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity (e.g disaggregated indicators and data)

H. Sustainability

Sustainability²⁵ is understood as the probability of the benefits derived from the achievement of project outcomes being maintained and developed after the close of the intervention. The Review will identify and assess the key conditions or factors that are likely to undermine or contribute to the

endurance of achieved project outcomes (i.e. 'assumptions' and 'drivers'). Some factors of sustainability may be embedded in the project design and implementation approaches while others may be contextual circumstances or conditions that evolve over the life of the intervention. Where applicable an assessment of bio-physical factors that may affect the sustainability of direct outcomes may also be included.

i. Socio-political Sustainability

The Review will assess the extent to which social or political factors support the continuation and further development of the benefits derived from project outcomes. It will consider the level of ownership, interest

²⁴ SMART refers to results that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-oriented. Indicators help to make results measurable.

²⁵ As used here, 'sustainability' means the long-term maintenance of outcomes and consequent impacts, whether environmental or not. This is distinct from the concept of sustainability in the terms 'environmental sustainability' or 'sustainable development', which imply 'not living beyond our means' or 'not diminishing global environmental benefits' (GEF STAP Paper, 2019, Achieving More Enduring Outcomes from GEF Investment)

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and commitment among government and other stakeholders to take the project achievements forwards. In particular the Review will consider whether individual capacity development efforts are likely to be sustained.

ii. Financial Sustainability

Some project outcomes, once achieved, do not require further financial inputs, e.g. the adoption of a revised policy. However, in order to derive a benefit from this outcome further management action may still be needed e.g. to undertake actions to enforce the policy. Other project outcomes may be dependent on a continuous flow of action that needs to be resourced for them to be maintained, e.g. continuation of a new natural resource management approach. The Review will assess the extent to which project outcomes are dependent on future funding for the benefits they bring to be sustained. Secured future funding is only relevant to financial sustainability where the project outcomes have been extended into a future project phase. Even where future funding has been secured, the question still remains as to whether the project outcomes are financially sustainable.

iii. Institutional Sustainability

The Review will assess the extent to which the sustainability of project outcomes (especially those relating to policies and laws) is dependent on issues relating to institutional frameworks and governance. It will consider whether institutional achievements such as governance structures and processes, policies, sub-regional agreements, legal and accountability frameworks etc. are robust enough to continue delivering the benefits associated with the project outcomes after project closure. In particular, the Review will consider whether institutional capacity development efforts are likely to be sustained.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Stakeholders participation and cooperation
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity (e.g. where interventions are not inclusive, their sustainability may be undermined)
- Communication and public awareness
- Country ownership and driven-ness

I. Factors Affecting Project Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues

(These factors are rated in the ratings table but are discussed within the Main Review Report as cross-cutting themes as appropriate under the other review criteria, above. If these issues have not been addressed under the Review Criteria above, then independent summaries of their status within the

reviewed project should be given in this section)

i. Preparation and Readiness

This criterion focuses on the inception or mobilisation stage of the project (i.e. the time between project approval and first disbursement). The Review will assess whether appropriate measures were taken to either address weaknesses in the project design or respond to changes that took place between project approval, the securing of funds and project mobilization. In particular, the Review will consider the nature and quality of engagement with stakeholder groups by the project team, the confirmation of partner capacity and development of partnership agreements as well as initial staffing and financing arrangements. (*Project preparation is included in the template for the assessment of Project Design Quality*).

ii. Quality of Project Management and Supervision

For GEF funded projects 'project management and supervision' may refer to the project management performance of the Executing Agency and the technical backstopping and supervision provided by UNEP as Implementing Agency. The performance of parties playing different roles should be discussed and a rating provided for both types of supervision (UNEP/Implementing Agency; Partner/Executing Agency) and the overall rating for this sub-category established as a simple average of the two.

The Review will assess the effectiveness of project management with regard to: providing leadership towards achieving the planned outcomes; managing team structures; maintaining productive partner relationships (including Steering Groups etc.); maintaining project relevance within changing external and strategic contexts; communication and collaboration with UNEP colleagues; risk management; use of problem-solving; project adaptation and overall project execution. Evidence of adaptive management should be highlighted.

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iii. Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation

Here the term 'stakeholder' should be considered in a broad sense, encompassing all project partners, duty bearers with a role in delivering project outputs, target users of project outputs and any other collaborating agents external to UNEP and the executing partner(s). The assessment will consider the quality and effectiveness of all forms of communication and consultation with stakeholders throughout the project life and the support given to maximise collaboration and coherence between various stakeholders, including sharing plans, pooling resources and exchanging learning and expertise. The inclusion and participation of all differentiated groups, including gender groups should be considered.

The progress, challenges and outcomes regarding engagement of stakeholders in the project/program occurring since the MTR should be reviewed. This should be based on the description included in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan or equivalent documentation submitted at CEO Endorsement/Approval.

iv. Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality

The Review will ascertain to what extent the project has applied the UN Common Understanding on the human rights-based approach (HRBA) and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. Within this human rights context the Review will assess to what extent the intervention adheres to UNEP's Policy and Strategy for Gender Equality and the Environment²⁶.

The report should present the extent to which the intervention, following an adequate gender analysis at design stage, has implemented the identified actions and/or applied adaptive management to ensure that Gender Equality and Human Rights are adequately taken into account. In particular the Review will consider to what extent project, implementation and monitoring have taken into consideration: (i) possible inequalities (especially those related to gender) in access to, and the control over, natural resources; (ii) specific vulnerabilities of disadvantaged groups (especially

women, youth and children and those living with disabilities) to environmental degradation or disasters; and (iii) the role of disadvantaged groups (especially women, youth and children and those living with disabilities) in mitigating or adapting to environmental changes and engaging in environmental protection and rehabilitation.

The completed gender-responsive measures and, if applicable, actual gender result areas should be reviewed. This should be based on the documentation at CEO Endorsement/Approval, including gender-sensitive indicators contained in the project results framework or gender action plan or equivalent.

v. Environmental and Social Safeguards

UNEP projects address environmental and social safeguards primarily through the process of environmental and social screening at the project approval stage, risk assessment and management (avoidance, minimization, mitigation or, in exceptional cases, offsetting) of potential environmental and social risks and impacts associated with project and programme activities. The Review will confirm whether UNEP requirements²⁷ were met to: *review* risk ratings on a regular basis; *monitor* project implementation for possible safeguard issues; *respond* (where relevant) to safeguard issues through risk avoidance, minimization, mitigation or offsetting and *report* on the implementation of safeguard management measures taken. UNEP requirements for proposed projects to be screened for any safeguarding issues; for sound environmental and social risk assessments to be conducted and initial risk ratings to be assigned are reviewed above under Quality of Project Design).

The Review will also consider the extent to which the management of the project minimised UNEP's environmental footprint.

Implementation of the management measures against the Safeguards Plan submitted at CEO Approval should be reviewed, the risk classifications verified and the findings of the effectiveness of any measures or lessons learned taken to address identified risks assessed. Any supporting documents gathered by the Consultant should be shared with the Task Manager.

²⁶The Evaluation Office notes that Gender Equality was first introduced in the UNEP Project Review Committee Checklist in 2010 and, therefore, provides a criterion rating on gender for projects approved from 2010 onwards. Equally, it is noted that policy documents, operational guidelines and other capacity building efforts have only been developed since then and have evolved over time. https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/7655/-Gender_equality_and_the_environment_Policy_and_strategy

2015Gender_equality_and_the_environment_policy_and_strategy.pdf.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y

²⁷ For the review of project concepts and proposals, the Safeguard Risk Identification Form (SRIF) was introduced in 2019 and replaced the Environmental, Social and Economic Review note (ESERN), which had been in place since 2016. In GEF projects safeguards have been considered in project designs since 2011.

vi. Country Ownership and Driven-ness

The Review will assess the quality and degree of engagement of government / public sector agencies in the project. While there is some overlap between Country Ownership and Institutional Sustainability, this criterion focuses primarily on the forward momentum of the intended projects results, i.e. either: a) moving forwards from outputs to project outcomes or b) moving forward from project outcomes towards intermediate states. The Review will consider the involvement not only of those directly involved in project execution and those participating in technical or leadership groups, but also those official representatives whose cooperation is needed for change to be embedded in their respective institutions and offices (e.g. representatives from multiple sectors or relevant ministries beyond Ministry of Environment). This factor is concerned with the level of ownership generated by the project over outputs and outcomes and that is necessary for long term impact to be realized. Ownership should extend to all gender and marginalised groups.

vii. Communication and Public Awareness

The Review will assess the effectiveness of: a) communication of learning and experience sharing

between project partners and interested groups arising from the project during its life and b) public awareness activities that were undertaken during the implementation of the project to influence attitudes or shape behavior among wider communities and civil society at large. The Review should consider whether existing communication channels and networks were used effectively, including meeting the differentiated needs of gendered or marginalised groups, and whether any feedback channels were established. Where knowledge sharing platforms have been established under a project the Review will comment on the sustainability of the communication channel under either socio-political, institutional or financial sustainability, as appropriate

The project's completed Knowledge Management Approach, including: Knowledge and Learning Deliverables (e.g. website/platform development); Knowledge Products/Events; Communication Strategy; Lessons Learned and Good Practice; Adaptive Management Actions should be reviewed. This should be based on the documentation approved at CEO Endorsement/Approval.

Section 3. REVIEW APPROACH, METHODS AND DELIVERABLES

The Terminal Review will be an in-depth review using a participatory approach whereby key stakeholders are kept informed and consulted throughout the review process. Both quantitative and qualitative review methods will be used as appropriate to determine project achievements against the expected outputs, outcomes and impacts. It is highly recommended that the consultant(s) maintains close communication with the project team and promotes information exchange throughout the review implementation phase in order to increase their (and other stakeholder) ownership of the review findings. Where applicable, the consultant(s) should provide a geo-referenced map that demarcates the area covered by the project and, where possible, provide geo-reference photographs of key intervention sites (e.g. sites of habitat rehabilitation and protection, pollution treatment infrastructure, etc.)

The findings of the Review will be based on the following:

(a) A desk review of:

- Relevant background documentation, inter alia.
- Project Document and Appendices. This includes, among others, relevant work plans, budget and supervision plans, as well as any revisions introduced after approval.
- Theory of change, problem tree, and logical framework.
- Project reports, including: half year progress reports, project implementation reports (PIRs), expenditure reports, financial statements, audits, inventory reports, progress reports from collaborating partners, meeting minutes, relevant correspondence and Tracking Tool;
- **Reviews of similar projects.**
- Project design documents (including minutes of the project design review meeting at approval); Annual Work Plans and Budgets or equivalent, revisions to the project (Project Document Supplement), the logical framework, and its budget;
- **Project reports, including half year progress reports, project implementation reports (PIRs), expenditure reports, financial statements, audits, inventory reports, progress reports from collaborating partners, meeting minutes, relevant correspondence, and the Tracking Tool**

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- Reviews of similar projects.

(b) Interviews (individual or in group) with:

- UNEP Task Manager (TM);

- Project Manager (PM)
 - Project management team;
 - UNEP Fund Management Officer (FMO);
 - Portfolio Manager and Sub-Programme Coordinator, where appropriate;
 - Project partners, including;
 - Relevant resource persons;
 - Representatives from civil society and specialist groups (such as women's, farmers and trade associations etc).
- (c) Other data collection tools: If needed, to be agreed between the Task Manager, the Project Manager and the MTR consultant at the inception phase.
- (d) Surveys
- (e) Field visits
- (f) Other data collection tools

Review Deliverables and Review Procedures

The Review Consultant will prepare:

- Inception Report: (see Annex 1 for a list of all templates, tables, and guidance notes) containing an assessment of project design quality, a draft reconstructed Theory of Change of the project, project stakeholder analysis, review framework, and a tentative review schedule.
- Preliminary Findings Note: typically in the form of a PowerPoint presentation, the sharing of preliminary findings is intended to support the participation of the project team, act as a means to ensure all information sources have been accessed, and provide an opportunity to verify emerging findings.
- Draft and Final Review Report: containing an executive summary that can act as a stand-alone document; detailed analysis of the review findings organized by review criteria and supported with evidence; lessons learned and recommendations and an annotated rating table.

A Review Brief (a 2-page overview of the evaluation and review findings) for wider dissemination through the UNEP website may be required. This will be discussed with the Task Manager no later than during the finalization of the Inception Report.

Review of the Draft Review Report. The Review Consultant will submit a draft report to the Task Manager and revise the draft in response to their comments and suggestions. The Task Manager will then forward the revised draft report to other project stakeholders, for their review and comments. Stakeholders may provide feedback on any errors of fact and may highlight the significance of such errors in any conclusions as well as providing feedback on the proposed recommendations and lessons. Any comments or responses to draft reports will be sent to the Task Manager for consolidation. The Task Manager will provide all comments to the Review Consultant for consideration in preparing the final report, along with guidance on areas of contradiction or issues requiring an institutional response.

The final version of the Terminal Review report will be assessed for its quality by the UNEP Evaluation Office using a standard template and this assessment will be annexed to the final Terminal Review report.

At the end of the review process, the Task Manager will prepare a Recommendations Implementation Plan in the format of a table, to be completed and updated at regular intervals, and circulate the Lessons Learned.

The Review Consultant

The Review Consultant will work under the overall responsibility of the Task Manager Asher Lessels, supported by project specialist Ana Celeste Schweiger, in consultation with the Fund Management Officer Fatma Twahir, the Head of Unit/Branch Mark Radka the Portfolio Managers Ruth Zugman Do Coutto and Geordie Colville and the Climate Change Coordinator of the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, Gustau Manez.

The Review Consultant will liaise with the Task Manager on any procedural and methodological matters related to the Review. It is, however, the consultant's individual responsibility (where applicable) to arrange for their visas and immunizations as well as to plan meetings with stakeholders, organize online surveys, obtain documentary evidence, and any other logistical matters related to the assignment. The UNEP Task Manager and the project team will, where possible, provide logistical support (introductions, meetings etc.) allowing the consultants to conduct the Review as efficiently and independently as possible.

The Review Consultant will be hired over a period of 9 months and should have the following: a university degree in environmental sciences, international development, or other relevant political or social sciences area is required and an advanced degree in the same areas is desirable; a minimum of 7 years of technical / evaluation experience is required, preferably including evaluating large, regional or global programmes and using a Theory of Change approach; and a good/broad understanding of Climate Changes Transparency Projects is desired. English, French and Spanish are the working languages of the United Nations Secretariat. For this consultancy, fluency in oral and written English and Spanish is a requirement. Working knowledge of the UN system and specifically the work of UNEP is an added advantage. The work will be home-based with possible field visits.

The Review Consultant will be responsible, in close consultation with the Task Manager, for overall quality of the review and timely delivery of its outputs, described above in Section 11 Review Deliverables, above. The Review Consultant will ensure that all review criteria and questions are adequately covered.

Schedule of the Review

The table below presents the tentative schedule for the Review.

Table 3. Tentative schedule for the Review

| Milestone | Tentative Dates |
|---|-----------------|
| Inception Report | 31/09/2022 |
| Review Mission | 15/10/2022 |
| E-based interviews, surveys etc. | 31/10/2022 |
| PowerPoint/presentation on preliminary findings and recommendations | 31/11/2022 |
| Draft Review Report to Task Manager (and Project Manager) | 7/12/2022 |
| Draft Review Report shared with wider group of stakeholders | 15/12/2022 |
| Final Review Report | 15/01/2023 |
| Final Review Report shared with all respondents | 15/02/2023 |

Contractual Arrangements

The Review Consultant(s) will be selected and recruited by the Task Manager under an individual Special Service Agreement (SSA) on a “fees only” basis (see below). By signing the service contract with UNEP/UNON, the consultant certifies 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. All consultants are required to sign the Code of Conduct Agreement Form.

Fees will be paid on an installment basis, paid on acceptance and approval by the Task Manager of expected key deliverables. The schedule of payment is as follows:

Schedule of Payment:

US\$ 24,000 payable for technical work in accordance with the following deliverables:

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| Deliverables | Deadline | Amount (USD) |
|--|------------|--------------|
| Approved Inception Report for project GEFID 9835 | 15/01/2023 | 4,000 |
| Final terminal review report for project GEFID 9835 | 15/03/2023 | 8,000 |
| Approved Inception Report for project GEFID 10023 | 30/04/2023 | 4,000 |
| Final terminal review report for project GEFID 10023 | 15/07/2023 | 8,000 |

Fees only contracts: Where applicable, air tickets will be purchased by UNEP and 75% of the Daily Subsistence Allowance for each authorized travel mission will be paid up front. Local in-country travel will only be reimbursed where agreed in advance with the Task Manager and on the production of acceptable receipts. Terminal expenses and residual DSA entitlements (25%) will be paid after mission completion.

The consultant may be provided with access to UNEP’s information management systems (e.g. PIMS, Anubis, SharePoint, etc.) and, if such access is granted, the consultants agree not to disclose information from that system to third parties beyond information required for, and included in, the Review Report.

In case the consultant is not able to provide the deliverables in accordance with these guidelines, and in line with the expected quality standards by UNEP, payment may be withheld at the discretion of the Head of Branch or Portfolio Manager until the consultants have improved the deliverables to meet UNEP’s quality standards.

If the consultant fails to submit a satisfactory final product to the Project Manager in a timely manner, i.e. before the end date of their contract, UNEP reserves the right to employ additional human resources to finalize the report, and to reduce the consultant’s fees by an amount equal to the additional costs borne by the project team to bring the report up to standard or completion.

ANNEX XI. GEF PORTAL INPUTS (for GEF funded projects)

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

Table 8: GEF portal inputs

| |
|--|
| <p>Question: What was the performance at the project's completion against Core Indicator Targets? (For projects approved prior to GEF-7²³, these indicators will be identified retrospectively and comments on performance provided²⁴).</p> |
| <p>Response:</p> <p>Overall, the project performed well against its core indicator targets (pages 41-42):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitoring Design and Budgeting: The project covered all indicators appropriately in the logical framework, had a dedicated budget for monitoring activities, and identified responsible personnel for monitoring progress against each indicator. The monitoring design, work plan, and budget were detailed in the project document. However, the independent Mid-Term Review (MTR) was not completed. Despite this, monitoring design and budgeting are rated as 'Highly Satisfactory.' 2. Monitoring of Project Implementation: The executing agency established a Monitoring and Evaluation function with clear structure, dedicated staff, and a data collection method. Despite challenges such as stagnation in the Steering Committee and the COVID-19 pandemic, the project demonstrated adaptability and effectively utilized its monitoring framework for detailed reporting and results-based management. Monitoring of project implementation is rated as 'Satisfactory.' 3. Project Reporting: All main reports were completed digitally, including cash advances, Project Implementation Review reports (PIRs), steering committee minutes, annual reports, and the Project Information Management System (PIMS) reports. Final project reporting through the Final PIR and the Final Project Report was satisfactory, though it could have been more nuanced in addressing project challenges and solutions. Project reporting is rated as 'Highly Satisfactory.' <p>Overall, the project's performance against core indicator targets is considered satisfactory to highly satisfactory, with effective monitoring and reporting mechanisms in place despite challenges faced during implementation.</p> |
| <p>Question: What were the progress, challenges and outcomes regarding engagement of stakeholders in the project/program as evolved from the time of the MTR? (This should be based on the description included in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan or equivalent documentation submitted at CEO Endorsement/Approval)</p> |
| <p>Response:</p> |

²³ The GEF is currently operating under the seventh replenishment period of the GEF Trust Fund covering the period July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2022. The GEF Portal Reporting Guide for FY20 Reporting Process indicates that GEF-6 projects that have yet to map existing indicators to GEF-7 Core Indicators need to do so at MTR stage or (if already there) at the time of the TE. (i.e. not GEF projects approved before GEF-6)

²⁴ This is not applicable for Enabling Activities

In summary, the project has seen significant progress, faced challenges, and achieved outcomes regarding stakeholder engagement since the Mid-Term Review (MTR) (pages 43-47):

Preparation and Readiness: The project had a strong foundation, understanding the gaps it aimed to address and building on existing capacities. However, it could have better anticipated and managed risks related to government turnover. Preparation and readiness are rated as 'Satisfactory.'

Quality of Project Management and Supervision: Both UNEP and the executing agency, MINAE, provided systematic support and oversight, contributing to the project's progress. Despite institutional changes, efforts were made to ensure a smooth transition. Project management and supervision are rated as 'Satisfactory.'

Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation: The project engaged a wide range of stakeholders, including civil society, academia, and international partners. The involvement of stakeholders was extensive and contributed to project success. Stakeholder participation and cooperation are rated as 'Highly Satisfactory.'

Country Ownership and Drivenness: Strong government ownership was evident, with key capacities built and progress made in transparency instrument strengthening. However, decision-making levels might not have fully reflected this ownership. Country ownership and drivenness are rated as 'Moderately Satisfactory.'

Overall, the project's performance regarding stakeholder engagement and cross-cutting issues is rated as 'Highly Satisfactory,' indicating significant progress and achievement in this aspect.

Question: What were the completed gender-responsive measures and, if applicable, actual gender result areas? (This should be based on the documentation at CEO Endorsement/Approval, including gender-sensitive indicators contained in the project results framework or gender action plan or equivalent)

Response:

Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equity: The project incorporated gender-responsive approaches and engaged marginalized groups in decision-making processes. Efforts were made to promote gender equity and human rights considerations. Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity is rated as 'Highly Satisfactory.'

Question: What was the progress made in the implementation of the management measures against the Safeguards Plan submitted at CEO Approval? The risk classifications reported in the latest PIR report should be verified and the findings of the effectiveness of any measures or lessons learned taken to address identified risks assessed. (Any supporting documents gathered by the Consultant during this review should be shared with the Task Manager for uploading in the GEF Portal)

Response:

Environmental and Social Safeguards: The project conducted environmental -and social safeguards screening, although somewhat superficially. Safeguards were effectively managed since the CEO endorsement, despite limitations imposed by the pandemic. Environmental and social safeguards are rated as 'Moderately Satisfactory.'

Question: What were the challenges and outcomes regarding the project's completed Knowledge Management Approach, including: Knowledge and Learning Deliverables (e.g. website/platform development); Knowledge Products/Events; Communication Strategy; Lessons Learned and Good Practice; Adaptive Management Actions? *(This should be based on the documentation approved at CEO Endorsement/Approval)*

Response:

Communication and Public Awareness: While there were efforts to disseminate knowledge and create public awareness, evidence of systematic communication plans was lacking. However, regional events and engagement with various platforms contributed to raising awareness. Communication and public awareness are rated as 'Satisfactory.'

Question: What are the main findings of the evaluation?

Response:

The overall approach of the Costa Rica CBIT 9652 project's theory of change, covering its narrative, drivers, assumptions, and causal pathways, remained logically sound throughout the entire implementation phase. The TR report argues that the project significantly enhanced Costa Rica's instruments for complying with transparency requirements under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Notable achievements include strengthening quality control, assurance, and continuous improvement of transparency instruments and enhancing the use of climate change analysis and monitoring data for decision-making at national institutions. However, challenges were encountered in obtaining approval and full implementation of the Strategic Planning Unit (SPU). Despite this, the project exhibited strong foundational knowledge-building. It effectively utilized existing efforts, delivering high-quality products and fostering partnerships with key ecosystem players in Costa Rica. The project's management was commendable, laying a robust knowledge foundation for the country.

The project was designed from a strong situation analysis and baseline, building on what was done and understanding the local context and situation very well. It built on the country's existing efforts through effective and necessary tools and instrument upgrades.

The project delivered products of excellent quality, highly useful for application, and for building the knowledge base in the long run. The project was well-managed overall, with strong facilitation particularly in forging partnerships with key ecosystem players in Costa Rica. In summary, this well-managed project laid a strong foundation of knowledge that the country can take and further build on effectively.

In summary, the project receives a rating of 'Satisfactory.' The lessons drawn highlight the importance of long-term planning, technical expertise, inclusive engagement, and collaborative structures to ensure project success and sustainability amid predictable political and institutional changes:

- i) A long-term strategy for climate change reporting leadership provides stability and continuity through political transitions;
- ii) Relying on established technical bodies, such as the National Meteorological Institute (NMI) and the CCD, strengthens the country's commitment to climate action beyond political changes assuming they have enough founding and political endorsement;
- iii) Involving key public institutions fosters collaboration and ensures a holistic approach to climate initiatives; and
- iv) Design and implement projects taking systematically the context into account can foster efficiency by managing rising risks and mitigating non expected political changes that may occur.

The project also provides a platform to suggest recommendations for future actions that includes:

- Costa Rica MINAE: i) Improve SINAMECC and integrate it with existing systems such as SIMOCUTE²⁵, CONAGEBIO²⁶, SINIA²⁷, etc.;
- Partners: ii) Continue providing technical and financial support to existing institutions leading advancements made by the project.
- UNEP:
 - iii) Continue supporting NMI in building further legitimacy for MRV implementation through a CBIT II project, following up meetings every 6 months and including Costa Rica in the CBIT global transparency platform; and
 - iv) Plan ahead and in detail identify future change in government to sustain and accomplish project commitments using tools such as stakeholder mapping, power-interest grids, and influence diagrams to visualize the political landscape.

²⁵ National System for Monitoring the Coverage and Use of Land and Ecosystems <https://www.fao.org/costarica/noticias/detail-events/ar/c/1273209/> retrieved in January 2024.

²⁶ Commission for Comprehensive Biodiversity Management <https://www.conagebio.go.cr/> retrieved in January 2024.

²⁷ National Environmental Information System of Costa Rica <https://sinia.go.cr/> retrieved in January 2024.

ANNEX XII. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Project Title and Reference No.: Costa Rica complies with the requirements of the transparency framework under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change (ID9652)

Contact Person (TM/PM): Asher Lessels- Ana Celeste Schweiger.

| | PLANS | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|---|
| RECOMMENDATIONS | ACCEPTED (YES/NO/PARTIALLY) | WHAT WILL BE DONE? | EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE | REPOSIBLE OFFICER/ UNIT/ DIVISION/ AGENCY |
| 1) Improve SINAMECC and integrate it with existing systems (SIMOCUTE18, CONAGEBIO19, SINIA20, etc.) | YES | <p>This recommendation was discussed during the Terminal Review closing workshop with the country, specifically with the National Meteorological Institute, ensuring their commitment to evaluate and explore various alternatives to integrate SINAMECC with other existing platforms while also focusing on system automation to simplify user processes to enhance SINAMECC and achieve better integration with existing systems, ultimately strengthening Costa Rica's capacity for climate change monitoring, reporting, and mitigation, the following steps have been suggested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate SINAMECC's current functionalities, strengths, and weaknesses, along with existing systems like SIMOCUTE18, CONAGEBIO19, and SINIA20. Identify areas for improvement and integration opportunities. • Develop a framework for integrating SINAMECC with existing systems to facilitate | 2024-2025 | MINAE NMI |

| | PLANS | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|
| RECOMMENDATIONS | ACCEPTED (YES/NO/PARTIALLY) | WHAT WILL BE DONE? | EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE | REPOSIBLE OFFICER/ UNIT/ DIVISION/ AGENCY |
| | | <p>seamless data exchange and compatibility. This framework should outline data-sharing protocols, standards, and synchronization mechanisms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage key stakeholders, including the Climate Change Directorate, NMI, Planning Subsecretary for the Energy Sector (SEPSE), and other relevant ministries or agencies responsible for existing systems. Foster collaboration to facilitate integration. • Continuously improve and update SINAMECC's datasets to ensure relevance and accuracy. Include new data sources, methodologies, and information on mitigation actions, GHG inventories, energy balances, and NDC commitments. • Establish mechanisms for regular data sharing and exchange between SINAMECC and existing systems. This may involve developing APIs, data interfaces, or standardized formats for data transmission. • Provide training and capacity-building programs to personnel involved in data management, analysis, and reporting within SINAMECC and other participating agencies. Ensure they have the necessary skills to utilize integrated systems effectively. • Continuously monitor the integration progress and evaluate its effectiveness in improving data management and | | |

| | PLANS | | | |
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| RECOMMENDATIONS | ACCEPTED (YES/NO/PARTIALLY) | WHAT WILL BE DONE? | EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE | REPOSIBLE OFFICER/ UNIT/ DIVISION/ AGENCY |
| | | coordination. Gather feedback from users and stakeholders for further enhancement | | |
| 2) Continue providing technical and financial support to existing institutions leading advancements made by the project | YES | <p>The UN has established the Climate Transparency Platform to facilitate information sharing among countries regarding climate efforts. This platform offers forums for countries to exchange insights and learn from each other's experiences. For example, you can explore these interactions at https://climate-transparency-platform.org/the-platform. Furthermore, it's noteworthy that the inaugural Global Transparency Forum is scheduled for May 2024 in Tokyo.</p> <p>UNEP's regional office for Latin America and the Caribbean (LACO), in collaboration with UNEP Global, is actively enhancing communication strategies across various levels. This initiative aims to foster more effective collaboration among countries in the region on climate-related issues.</p> <p>Moreover, UNEP is collaborating with Costa Rica to explore the potential development of a CBIT II. This involves assessing the feasibility of launching a second phase of the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT II). Such an endeavor would reinforce Costa Rica's commitment to climate transparency and further strengthen its capacity for effective climate governance and reporting.</p> | 2024-2025 | Partners + Donors |

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| RECOMMENDATIONS | ACCEPTED (YES/NO/PARTIALLY) | WHAT WILL BE DONE? | EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE | RESPONSIBLE OFFICER/ UNIT/ DIVISION/ AGENCY |
| 3) Continue supporting IMN in building further legitimacy to MRV implementation with a CBIT II project. | PARTIALLY | <p>UNEP has committed to collaborating with the country and relevant stakeholders to develop a Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT II) project. This project aims to tackle the institutional challenges identified and further bolster the legitimacy of MRV implementation.</p> <p>Furthermore, it's essential to include Costa Rica in the CBIT global transparency platform. This entails ensuring active participation from Costa Rica in the platform to facilitate knowledge exchange, capacity building, and collaboration with other countries encountering similar challenges in MRV implementation.</p> | 2024-2025 | UNEP |
| 4) Plan ahead and in detail identify future change in government to sustain and accomplish project commitments | PARTIALLY | <p>While UNEP considers ways to adjust the workplan for elections, it's important to note that the agreement allows for changes without compromising quality. Also, there are plans in place to ensure the project is adopted by relevant actors, lessening the impact of government changes. Learning from past projects, we'll analyze the political landscape to align with electoral processes.</p> <p>To address potential political changes, we'll integrate foresight and scenario analysis into planning, creating backup plans for continuity. We'll explore extending timelines if needed. Engagement with stakeholders, including government and civil society, will be a</p> | UNEP | Long term |

| | PLANS | | | |
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| RECOMMENDATIONS | ACCEPTED (YES/NO/PARTIALLY) | WHAT WILL BE DONE? | EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE | RESPONSIBLE OFFICER/ UNIT/ DIVISION/ AGENCY |
| | | <p>priority to maintain support and navigate transitions smoothly.</p> <p>Using tools like scenario analysis, we'll anticipate challenges and adjust strategies accordingly. Open communication channels will keep stakeholders informed about project progress and political impacts, ensuring their continued engagement and support.</p> | | |

The following is a summary of lessons learned from some of the project's experiences and based upon explicit findings of the review. They briefly describe the context from which the lessons are derived, and the potential for wider application:

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| Lesson Learned #1: | A long-term strategy for climate change reporting leadership provides stability and continuity, helping to sustain commitments through political transitions. |
| Context/comment: | Long-term strategies in climate governance, as exemplified by Costa Rica, are associated with institutional resilience. Institutions with well-established, long-term plans are better equipped to weather political changes and transitions. The country has been successful in articulating two key components: policy continuity and building stakeholder commitment. On one hand, climate policies with long-term perspectives are less susceptible to abrupt changes during electoral cycles. They provide a framework that extends beyond the short-term focus of political administrations. On the other hand, stakeholders, including the public but more importantly international partners, gain confidence in a country's climate leadership when there is evidence of a robust, long-term strategy. This confidence facilitates cooperation and support even during political transitions. Moreover, the availability and enhancement of relevant policy instruments such as SINAMECC and Aula Climática are strong milestones in sustaining both technical and political commitments. |

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| Lesson Learned #2: | Relying on established technical bodies such as the National Meteorological Institute and the Climate Change Directorate strengthens the country's commitment to climate action, providing expertise beyond political changes, assuming they have sufficient funding and political endorsement. |
| Context/comment: | <p>Established technical bodies and systems in Costa Rica contribute to institutional capacity by providing specialized expertise in areas crucial for effective climate action, such as meteorological data analysis, climate modeling, and impact assessment. These technical bodies ensure consistency in data collection and reporting methodologies, fostering reliability in climate information. This consistency is crucial for monitoring trends and informing evidence-based policy decisions, provided there is adequate funding and political endorsement to support them.</p> <p>Technical bodies serve as pillars of international commitments and often operate with a degree of professional independence, allowing them to maintain focus and continuity in their work regardless of political transitions. In the case of the CBIT project in Costa Rica, where the institutionalization output (SPU) was not achieved, national technical officers provide a good platform to sustain project achievements in line with the PA transparency framework.</p> |
| Lesson Learned #3: | Involving key public institutions like the University of Costa Rica, the Central Bank, and the Ministry of Planning fosters collaboration and ensures a holistic approach to climate initiatives. |
| Context/comment: | Engaging a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including civil society groups representing diverse demographics, ensures a more comprehensive understanding of needs and opportunities. Recognizing and consulting with key actors, such as public universities and civil society groups, ensures that the project addresses the needs and concerns of various segments of the population. The inclusive engagement strategy not only contributes to the immediate success of the project but also enhances its long-term sustainability and effectiveness. |
| Lesson Learned #4: | Designing and implementing projects while systematically considering the context can foster efficiency by managing rising risks and mitigating unexpected political changes that may occur. |
| Context/comment: | While rated "Satisfactory," the quality of project design has room for improvement. In particular, it needs to systematically consider the political context in project planning, involving a comprehensive understanding of political dynamics (such as possible changes in government parties and scenarios derived from that), stakeholder analysis, risk assessment, and strategic communication. For example, conducting a thorough political analysis to identify key stakeholders, power dynamics, interests, and potential sources of support or opposition. Utilizing tools like stakeholder mapping, power-interest grids, and influence diagrams to visualize the political landscape can enhance project design and effectiveness. |

ANNEX XIII. QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF THE REVIEW REPORT

Review Title: Terminal Review of the UNEP-GEF Project 'Costa Rica's integrated reporting and transparency system' (GEF ID 9652)

Consultant: Natalia Aquilino

All UNEP Reviews are subject to a quality assessment by the UNEP Evaluation Office. This is an assessment of the quality of the review product (i.e. Main Review Report).

| | UNEP Evaluation Office Comments | Final Review Report Rating |
|--|---|----------------------------|
| Report Quality Criteria | | |
| <p>Quality of the Executive Summary Purpose: acts as a stand alone and accurate <u>summary</u> of the main review product, especially for senior management. To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • concise overview of the review object • clear summary of the review objectives and scope • overall review rating of the project and key features of performance (strengths and weaknesses) against exceptional criteria • reference to where the review ratings table can be found within the report • summary response to key strategic review questions • summary of the main findings of the exercise/synthesis of main conclusions • summary of lessons learned and recommendations. | <p>Final report (coverage/omissions): The project's objectives and architecture have been well summarized without losing salient information</p> <p>Although the summary describes the project's overall rating, it does not explicitly reference where the review ratings table can be found within the report.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): This section does not address a summary of the responses to the strategic review questions.</p> <p>The section could also have been more elaborate on summarizing the main findings rather than merely mentioning them in passing.</p> | 4 |
| <p>Quality of the 'Introduction' Section Purpose: introduces/<u>situates</u> the evaluand in its institutional context, establishes its main parameters (time, value, results, geography) and the purpose of the review itself. To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • institutional context of the project (sub-programme, Division, Branch etc) • date of PRC approval, project duration and start/end dates • number of project phases (where appropriate) • results frameworks to which it contributes (e.g. POW Direct Outcome) | <p>Final report (coverage/omissions): The section did not describe the project's institutional context, the dates of PRC approvals, the project start date, the POW it contributes to, the key intended audiences of the findings, or whether the project was evaluated in the past.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses):</p> | 3.5 |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • coverage of the review (regions/countries where implemented) • implementing and funding partners • total secured budget • whether the project has been reviewed/evaluated in the past (e.g. mid-term, external agency etc.) • concise statement of the purpose of the review and the key intended audience for the findings. | <p>Although the section describes some of the expected parameters, such as the total secured budget, the purpose of the review, and implementing and funding partners, it falls short in describing the other relevant information and instead dwells heavily on the TR process itself rather than situating the evaluand in its institutional context.</p> | |
| <p>Quality of the 'Review Methods' Section</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> provides reader with clear and comprehensive description of review methods, demonstrates the <u>credibility</u> of the findings and performance ratings.</p> <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • description of review data collection methods and information sources • justification for methods used (e.g. qualitative/ quantitative; electronic/face-to-face) • number and type of respondents (<i>see table template</i>) • selection criteria used to identify respondents, case studies or sites/countries visited • strategies used to increase stakeholder engagement and consultation • methods to include the voices/experiences of different and potentially excluded groups (e.g. vulnerable, gender, marginalised etc) • details of how data were verified (e.g. triangulation, review by stakeholders etc.) • methods used to analyse data (scoring, coding, thematic analysis etc) • review limitations (e.g. low/ imbalanced response rates across different groups; gaps in documentation; language barriers etc) • ethics and human rights issues should be highlighted including: how anonymity and confidentiality were protected. Is there an ethics statement? E.g. <i>'Throughout the review process and in the compilation of the Final Review Report efforts have been made to represent the views of both mainstream and more marginalised groups. All efforts to provide respondents with anonymity have been made.'</i> | <p>Final report (coverage/omissions): Most of the report quality criteria elements are covered, including the limitations to the methodology and justification for methods.</p> <p>This section does not include the selection criteria used to identify respondents and methods used to analyse the data.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): A strength is the table on the Respondents' sample broken down by category and gender.</p> <p>The report demonstrates that a diverse group of stakeholders were selected as respondents to capture their different perspectives and insights, although the response rate was only 50% despite many attempts to reach them.</p> <p>On the weaknesses, this section does not include information on methods to ensure that potentially excluded groups (excluded by gender, vulnerability, or marginalisation) were considered in the stakeholder consultation.</p> | 4.5 |
| <p>Quality of the 'Project' Section</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> describes and <u>verifies</u> key dimensions of the evaluand relevant to assessing its performance.</p> <p>To include:</p> | <p>Final report (coverage/omissions): This is a well-structured section covering most of the elements of the report's quality criteria.</p> | 5.5 |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Context</i>: overview of the main issue that the project is trying to address, its root causes and consequences on the environment and human well-being (i.e. synopsis of the problem and situational analyses) • <i>Results framework</i>: summary of the project's results hierarchy as stated in the ProDoc (or as officially revised) • <i>Stakeholders</i>: description of groups of targeted stakeholders organised according to relevant common characteristics • <i>Project implementation structure and partners</i>: description of the implementation structure with diagram and a list of key project partners • <i>Changes in design during implementation</i>: any key events that affected the project's scope or parameters should be described in brief in chronological order • <i>Project financing</i>: completed tables of: (a) budget at design and expenditure by components (b) planned and actual sources of funding/co-financing | <p>It would have been appreciated if the description of groups of targeted stakeholders organized according to relevant common characteristics had been included.</p> <p>There is no reference to Annex VI, which presents the budget execution rate by component.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): The section clearly describes the division of labour of each entity involved in implementing the project, which lays the foundation for assessing the efficient coordination and collaboration of the project's execution.</p> <p>The table outlining the changes in design during implementation is informative.</p> | |
| <p>Quality of the Theory of Change</p> <p><u>Purpose</u>: to set out the TOC at Review in diagrammatic and narrative forms to support consistent project performance; to articulate the causal pathways with drivers and assumptions and justify any reconstruction necessary to assess the project's performance.</p> <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • description of how the <i>TOC at Review</i>²⁸ was designed (who was involved etc) • confirmation/reconstruction of results in accordance with UNEP definitions • articulation of causal pathways • identification of drivers and assumptions • identification of key actors in the change process • summary of the reconstruction/results re-formulation in tabular form. <i>The two results hierarchies (original/formal revision and reconstructed) should be presented as a two-column table to show clearly that, although wording and placement may have changed, the results 'goal posts' have not been 'moved'.</i> This table may have initially been presented | <p>Final report (coverage/omissions): The articulation of causal pathways is presented as per the Prodoc TOC. There is no summary of the reconstruction/results re-formulation in tabular form, and the two results hierarchies (original/formal revision and reconstructed) are not presented as a two-column table.</p> <p>The original and reconstructed TOC narrative don't incorporate human rights or gender dimensions, which would limit the assessment of performance against this criterion.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses):</p> | 3 |

²⁸ During the Inception Phase of the review process a *TOC at Review Inception* is created based on the information contained in the approved project documents (these may include either logical framework or a TOC or narrative descriptions), formal revisions and annual reports etc. During the review process this TOC is revised based on changes made during project intervention and becomes the *TOC at Review*.

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| <p>in the Inception Report and should appear somewhere in the Main Review report.</p> | <p>The report states that it relied on the TOC as described in the original project document but provides a reconstructed TOC narrative. The report would have benefited more if the reconstructed TOC narrative had been presented as a diagram with an indication of who was involved in the reconstruction.</p> <p>The TR should have reviewed the shortcomings of the TOC as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Outcome 1.1 is reconstructed as an output—it seeks to strengthen transparency instruments. This means making available a product that is an output as opposed to a change in institutional/behavioural capacities. 2. Outcome 1.2 is reconstructed as an assumption because using monitoring results for decision-making is an untested factor that is likely to affect the project's success. 3. Outputs 1.1.1 and 1.2.2 are reconstructed as activities, not as products/capital goods or services that result from an intervention. | |
| <p>Quality of Key Findings within the Report</p> <p><u>Presentation of evidence:</u> nature of evidence should be clear (interview, document, survey, observation, online resources etc) and evidence should be explicitly triangulated unless noted as having a single source.</p> <p><u>Consistency within the report:</u> all parts of the report should form consistent support for findings and performance ratings, which should be in line with UNEP's Criteria Ratings Matrix.</p> <p><u>Findings Statements (where applicable):</u> The frame of reference for a finding should be an individual review criterion or a strategic question from the TOR. A finding should go beyond description and uses analysis to provide insights</p> | <p>Final report (coverage/omissions): The findings statements were clear and provided an analysis. Most of the time, the source of the evidence was provided, and findings were triangulated.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): The report is consistent, and almost no contradictions were found between its findings and performance ratings, which are in line with UNEP's Criteria Ratings Matrix.</p> | <p>5</p> |

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| <p>that aid learning specific to the evaluand. In some cases a findings statement may articulate a key element that has determined the performance rating of a criterion. Findings will frequently provide insight into 'how' and/or 'why' questions.</p> | <p>The report could have benefitted more from both a description of the achievement of outputs and outcomes and, more importantly, an analysis that weaves the thread of evidence to show causality, especially at the outcome level.</p> | |
| <p>Quality of 'Strategic Relevance' Section <u>Purpose:</u> to present evidence and analysis of project strategic relevance with respect to UNEP, partner and geographic policies and strategies at the time of project approval. To include: Assessment of the evaluand's relevance vis-à-vis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment to the UNEP Medium Term Strategy (MTS), Programme of Work (POW) and Strategic Priorities • Alignment to Donor/GEF/Partners Strategic Priorities • Relevance to Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities • Complementarity with Existing Interventions: complementarity of the project at design (or during inception/mobilisation²⁹), with other interventions addressing the needs of the same target groups. | <p>Final report (coverage/omissions): A well-structured section covering all the elements of the report quality criteria.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): The findings support the rating (highly satisfactory), which shows how well the project was designed to contribute effectively to broader strategic frameworks, donor priorities, and synergy with existing projects.</p> | 6 |
| <p>Quality of the 'Quality of Project Design' Section <u>Purpose:</u> to present a summary of the strengths and weaknesses of the project design, on the basis that the detailed assessment was presented in the Inception Report.</p> | <p>Final report (coverage/omissions): All elements are covered.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): The section summarizes the project design well, including its strengths and weaknesses, which supports the rating. However, para #57 presents ratings on specific criteria which is not appropriate under this criterion.</p> | 5 |
| <p>Quality of the 'Nature of the External Context' Section <u>Purpose:</u> to describe and recognise, when appropriate, key <u>external</u> features of the project's implementing context that limited the project's performance (e.g. conflict, natural disaster, political upheaval³⁰), and how they affected performance.</p> | <p>Final report (coverage/omissions): This section describes well the main events during project implementation.</p> | 4 |

²⁹ A project's inception or mobilization period is understood as the time between project approval and first disbursement. Complementarity during project implementation is considered under Efficiency, see below.

³⁰ Note that 'political upheaval' does not include regular national election cycles, but unanticipated unrest or prolonged disruption. The potential delays or changes in political support that are often associated with the regular

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| <p>While additional details of the implementing context may be informative, this section should clearly record whether or not a major and unexpected disrupting event took place during the project's life in the implementing sites.</p> | <p>Final report <i>(strengths/weaknesses):</i> The finding in para #58 contradicts itself: It states that it is favourable, but the rating at the end of the section states moderately favourable. This does not affect the overall performance rating of the project.</p> | |
| <p>Quality of 'Effectiveness' Section (i) Availability of Outputs: <u>Purpose:</u> to present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of the outputs made available to the intended beneficiaries. To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a convincing, evidence-supported and clear presentation of the outputs made available by the project compared to its approved plans and budget • assessment of the nature and scale of outputs versus the project indicators and targets • assessment of the timeliness, quality and utility of outputs to intended beneficiaries • identification of positive or negative effects of the project on disadvantaged groups, including those with specific needs due to gender, vulnerability or marginalisation (e.g. through disability). | <p>Final report <i>(coverage/omissions):</i> The report presents a comprehensive, and evidence-based assessment of the availability of outputs.</p> <p>The report does not provide an assessment of the nature and scale of outputs versus the project indicators and targets.</p> <p>The effects of the outputs on disadvantaged groups (gender, marginalized, vulnerable) have not been analyzed or described.</p> <p>Final report <i>(strengths/weaknesses):</i> The findings do not go beyond description to provide insights that aid learning to the evaluand and the intended audiences.</p> <p>The evaluator indicated that the project managed to deliver ALL its outputs. However, in paragraph #64 the evaluator mentions that Output 1.2.1 Strategic Climate Planning Unit (SPU) developed was partially achieved.</p> | 4 |

national election cycle should be part of the project's design and addressed through adaptive management of the project team.

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| <p>ii) Achievement of Project Outcomes:</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of the uptake, adoption and/or implementation of outputs by the intended beneficiaries. This may include behaviour changes at an individual or collective level.</p> <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a convincing and evidence-supported analysis of the uptake of outputs by intended beneficiaries • assessment of the nature, depth and scale of outcomes versus the project indicators and targets • discussion of the contribution, credible association and/or attribution of outcome level changes to the work of the project itself • any constraints to attributing effects to the projects' work • identification of positive or negative effects of the project on disadvantaged groups, including those with specific needs due to gender, vulnerability or marginalisation (e.g. through disability). | <p>Final report (coverage/omissions): There is no description of evidence-supported analysis of the uptake of the outputs by the beneficiaries. The report does not describe the achievement of the outcomes against the indicators and targets to provide insights on the level of achievement.</p> <p>The effects of the outcomes on disadvantaged groups (gender, marginalized, vulnerable) have not been analyzed or described.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): Due to the nature of the outcomes being defined as outputs, the findings describe their availability as opposed to their uptake, adoption, or application. It is also not clear why the report describes the strategic questions under the achievement of project outcomes.</p> | 4 |
| <p>(iii) Likelihood of Impact:</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to present an integrated analysis, guided by the causal pathways represented by the TOC, of all evidence relating to likelihood of impact, including an assessment of the extent to which drivers and assumptions necessary for change to happen, were seen to be holding.</p> <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an explanation of how causal pathways emerged and change processes can be shown • an explanation of the roles played by key actors and change agents • explicit discussion of how drivers and assumptions played out • identification of any unintended negative effects of the project, especially on disadvantaged groups, including those with specific needs due to gender, vulnerability or marginalisation (e.g. through disability). | <p>Final report (coverage/omissions): This section meets most of the criteria. However, this section does not identify any unintended negative effects of the project, especially on women and vulnerable groups.</p> <p>A more comprehensive explanation of the roles played by key actors and change agents would have been appreciated.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): It is not clear why the report describes the strategic questions under likelihood of impact.</p> <p>The reference on relevance of drivers and assumptions in likelihood of impact is quite vague because it does not link</p> | 4 |

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| | <p>the specifics to the potential impact.</p> <p>The rating is given as satisfactory but for likelihood of impact it should be highly unlikely to highly likely.</p> | |
| <p>Quality of 'Financial Management' Section</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to present an integrated analysis of all dimensions evaluated under financial management and include a completed 'financial management' table (may be annexed).</p> <p>Consider how well the report addresses the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>adherence</i> to UNEP's financial policies and procedures • <i>completeness</i> of financial information, including the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used • <i>communication</i> between financial and project management staff | <p>Final report (coverage/omissions): This section covers all the criteria. However, there is no reference to Annex VI, which presents the budget execution rate by component.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): This section could have benefitted from a presentation of the financial information in a table format</p> | 5.5 |
| <p>Quality of 'Efficiency' Section</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to present an integrated analysis of all dimensions evaluated under efficiency (i.e. the primary categories of cost-effectiveness and timeliness).</p> <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • time-saving measures put in place to maximise results within the secured budget and agreed project timeframe • discussion of making use, during project implementation, of/building on pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. • implications of any delays and no cost extensions • the extent to which the management of the project minimised UNEP's environmental footprint. | <p>Final report (coverage/omissions): This section meets most of the criteria except for UNEP's environmental footprint and the discussion of using/building on pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies, and complementarities with other initiatives, programmes, and projects during project implementation.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): Causes that affected timeliness are well articulated, and their implications, which resulted in cost extensions, are provided. The factors (pandemic and elections) that affected the timeliness of the project delivery, which were outside the project's control, have been described.</p> | 5.5 |
| <p>Quality of 'Monitoring and Reporting' Section</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to present well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of the evaluand's monitoring and reporting.</p> <p>Consider how well the report addresses the following:</p> | <p>Final report (coverage/omissions): This section meets all criteria.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses):</p> | 6 |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • quality of the monitoring design and budgeting (<i>including SMART results with measurable indicators, resources for MTE/R etc.</i>) • quality of monitoring of project implementation (<i>including use of monitoring data for adaptive management</i>) • quality of project reporting (e.g. <i>PIMS and donor reports</i>) \ | | |
| <p>Quality of 'Sustainability' Section</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to present an integrated analysis of all dimensions evaluated under sustainability (i.e. the endurance of benefits achieved at outcome level). Consider how well the report addresses the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • socio-political sustainability • financial sustainability • institutional sustainability | <p>Final report (coverage/omissions): This section meets all criteria.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): The report describes the ownership and institutionalization of the processes at a national mandate level, which transcends various governments, thus strengthening the sustainability of the project gains.</p> <p>The rating for sustainability contradicts itself: It is rated as likely in the narrative section but as moderately likely in the ratings table.</p> | 5.5 |
| <p>Quality of Factors Affecting Performance Section</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> These factors are not always discussed in stand-alone sections and may be integrated in the other performance criteria as appropriate. However, if not addressed substantively in this section, a cross reference must be given to where the topic is addressed and that entry must be sufficient to justify the performance rating for these factors. Consider how well the review report, either in this section or in cross-referenced sections, covers the following cross-cutting themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preparation and readiness • quality of project management and supervision³¹ • stakeholder participation and co-operation | <p>Final report (coverage/omissions): This section omitted a description of the nature and quality of stakeholder engagement, the development of partnership agreements as well as staffing at the project inception phase.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): The section could have further developed its description of adaptive management, especially given the external factors of the pandemic and</p> | 4.5 |

³¹ In some cases 'project management and supervision' will refer to the supervision and guidance provided by UNEP to implementing partners and national governments while in others, specifically for GEF funded projects, it will refer to the project management performance of the executing agency and the technical backstopping provided by UNEP. This includes providing the answers to the questions on Core Indicator Targets, stakeholder engagement, gender responsiveness, safeguards and knowledge management, required for the GEF portal.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responsiveness to human rights and gender equality • environmental and social safeguards • country ownership and driven-ness • communication and public awareness | <p>the elections that delayed the project's close.</p> <p>This section would have been enriched by providing evidence on the extent to which the PSC provided strategic direction to the project and the extent to which these were plowed back into project implementation.</p> <p>The section was also quite lean on the extent to which the project implementation recognized the differential impacts between men and women and if the various outputs availed by the project were gender-responsive as a result.</p> <p>The rating for Factors Affecting Performance contradicts itself: It is rated as “highly satisfactory” in the narrative section but as satisfactory in the “ratings table”. Based on the ratings given for each sub-criteria in the narrative section, the overall rating is “satisfactory”.</p> | |
| <p>Quality of the Conclusions Section</p> <p>(i) Conclusions Narrative:</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to present summative statements reflecting on prominent aspects of the <u>performance of the evaluand as a whole</u>, they should be derived from the synthesized analysis of evidence gathered during the review process.</p> <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compelling narrative providing an integrated summary of the strengths and weakness in overall performance (achievements and limitations) of the project • clear and succinct response to the key strategic questions • human rights and gender dimensions of the intervention should be discussed explicitly (e.g. how these dimensions were considered, addressed or impacted on) | <p>Final report (coverage/omissions): This section meets all the criteria except for the response to the strategic questions from the TOR. UNEP evaluation guidance requires an explicit response to these questions to be included in the conclusions section.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): Human rights and gender dimensions were not discussed explicitly.</p> | 4 |
| <p>ii) Utility of the Lessons:</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to present both positive and negative lessons that have potential for wider application and use (replication and generalization)</p> | <p>Final report (coverage/omissions):This section meets the review criteria.</p> | 6 |

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| <p>Consider how well the lessons achieve the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> are rooted in real project experiences (i.e. derived from explicit review findings or from problems encountered and mistakes made that should be avoided in the future) briefly describe the context from which they are derived and those contexts in which they may be useful do not duplicate recommendations | <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): The lessons are relevant to the design and intention of the project and are clearly articulated.</p> | |
| <p>(iii) Utility and Actionability of the Recommendations:</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to present proposals for specific action to be taken by identified people/position-holders to resolve concrete problems affecting the project or the sustainability of its results.</p> <p>Consider how well the lessons achieve the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> are feasible to implement within the timeframe and resources available (including local capacities) and specific in terms of who would do what and when include at least one recommendation relating to strengthening the human rights and gender dimensions of UNEP interventions represent a measurable performance target in order that the UNEP Unit/Branch can monitor and assess compliance with the recommendations. <p><u>NOTES:</u></p> <p>(i) In cases where the recommendation is addressed to a third party, compliance can only be monitored and assessed where a contractual/legal agreement remains in place. Without such an agreement, the recommendation should be formulated to say that UNEP project staff should pass on the recommendation to the relevant third party in an effective or substantive manner. The effective transmission by UNEP of the recommendation will then be monitored for compliance.</p> <p>(ii) Where a new project phase is already under discussion or in preparation with the same third party, a recommendation can be made to address the issue in the next phase.</p> | <p>Final report (coverage/omissions): This section meets most of the criteria. However, the recommendations do not include at least one recommendation relating to strengthening the gender dimension.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): Recommendations 2 & 3 are not actionable if the financial resources will not be available.</p> | 5 |
| <p>Quality of Report Structure and Presentation</p> <p>(i) Structure and completeness of the report:</p> <p>To what extent does the report follow the UNEP Evaluation Office structure and formatting guidelines? Are all requested Annexes included and complete?</p> | <p>Final report (coverage/omissions): Most sections of the report follow the Evaluation Office structure and formatting guidelines as indicated above.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): Table 5: Summary of project findings and rating did not</p> | 4.5 |

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| | include a summary assessment justifying the ratings. | |
| <p>(ii) Writing and formatting: Consider whether the report is well written (clear English language and grammar) with language that is adequate in quality and tone for an official document?</p> <p>Do visual aids, such as maps and graphs convey key information?</p> | <p>Final report (coverage/omissions): Overall, the report is well written and in an appropriate tone for an official document.</p> <p>Final report (strengths/weaknesses): The report uses very clear and useful graphs and visuals.</p> | 5 |
| OVERALL REPORT QUALITY RATING | | 4.7 |

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 review report is calculated by taking the mean score of all rated quality criteria.