



Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP-GEF Project “Generating
Enhanced Political Will for Natural Resource Management
and Conservation” - GEF ID 9678
(2017 – 2021)





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Generating Enhanced Political Will for Natural Resource Management and Conservation
GEF ID 9365
February 2025

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Acknowledgements

The insight and facilitation provided by the International Conservation Caucus Foundation (ICCF) Group was fundamental to assess project performance and the sustainability of legislative Caucuses. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the support given by Ms. Katherine Brantley (International Grants Director), Ms. Clare Falcone (Chief of Staff), Mr. Jaime Cavalier (Vice-President Strategic Alliances), Ms. Ana Cubillos (ICCF-Colombia), Ms. Eleonora Arandia (ICCF-Mexico) and Ms. Fiorella Suárez (ICCF-Peru).

The input of Congress members who responded to the evaluation questions was fundamental to understand the present status of the legislative Caucuses in Mexico, Colombia and Peru; and to assess post-project sustainability.

Ms. Gloritzel Frangakis, Senior Programme Assistant with UNEP's Ecosystems Division at ROLAC, provided background on the project and UNEP's involvement, in addition to sharing the project's documentation.

Ms. Susan Wangui Mugwe, Evaluation Officer with UNEP's Evaluation Office, served as Evaluation Manager for the Terminal Evaluation, providing guidance, supervision and support to the consultant so as to ensure compliance with the Terms of Reference and UNEP evaluation guidelines.

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About the Evaluation

This report is a terminal evaluation of a UNEP-GEF project implemented between January 2017 and March 2021. The terminal evaluation was conducted between June and November 2024 by an external evaluation consultant, in accordance with UNEP evaluation guidelines.

The goal of the project was to create and strengthen conservation caucuses in national congresses of Colombia, Mexico, and Peru, to build political will for enhanced management of natural resources for development and conservation.

The evaluation 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 evaluation has two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned in UNEP, GEF, ICCF, CCN and the Conservation Caucuses in Mexico, Colombia and Peru. Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention, and the participating countries.

Key words

Political will, Caucus, International Conservation Caucus Foundation, Conservation Council of Nations, United Nations Environment Programme, Global Environment Facility, ICCF, CCN, UNEP, GEF

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AICS	Agencia Italiana per la Cooperazione Allo Sviluppo
CCN	Conservation Council of Nations
CONABIO	National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity
CONAF	National Forestry Council
CONANP	Comisión Nacional de Áreas Naturales Protegidas
COSUDE	Swiss Development Cooperation Agency
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DEPI	Division of Environmental Policy Implementation
EO	Evaluation Office
EU	European Union
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
FITI	Fisheries Transparency Initiative
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GGGI	Global Green Growth Institute
ICCF	International Conservation Caucus Foundation
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
MTS	Medium Term Strategy
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PARLAMAZ	Parlamento Amazónico
PIR	Project Implementation Review
PNN	Parques Nacionales Naturales
POLEA	Política y Legislación Ambiental
PPG	Project Preparation Grant
PROFANANPE	Fondo de Promoción de las Áreas Naturales Protegidas del Perú
PSMA	Port State Measures Agreement
ROLAC	Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean
SINA	Sistema Nacional Ambiental
SEMARNAT	Secretariat for Environment and Natural Resources
SERNANP	Servicio Nacional de Areas Protegidas
SINANPE	Sistema Nacional de Areas Protegidas Naturales
TE	Terminal Evaluation
TOC	Theory of Change
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Table 1: Project Identification Table

GEF Project ID:	9678	Umoja no.: GFL-11207-14AC0003-SB-007067	
Implementing Agency:	Division of Environmental Policy Implementation (DEPI)	Executing Agency:	Conservation Council of Nations (CCN)
Relevant SDG(s) and indicator(s):	SDG5: Promoting Gender Equality: Target 5.5, Indicator 5.5.1 SDG12 Responsible Production and Consumption: Target 12.4; Indicator 12.4.1 & Target 12.5, Indicator 12.5.1 SDG14 Life Under Water: Target 14.1, Indicator 14.1.1 & Target 14.4, Indicator 14.4.1 SDG15 Life on Land: Target 15.1, Indicator 15.1.2 & Target 15.2, Indicator 15.2.1 and Target 15.5, Indicator 15.5.1		
GEF Core Indicator Targets	N/A		
Sub-programme (2020- 2021)	a) Subprogramme 3: Healthy and productive ecosystems b) Subprogramme 4: Environmental governance c) Subprogramme 6: Resource Efficiency	Expected Accomplishments	Subprogramme 3: (a) The health and productivity of marine, freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems are institutionalized in education, monitoring and cross-sectoral and transboundary collaboration frameworks at the national and international level. Subprogramme 4: (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 SDGs. Subprogramme 6: (b) Public, private and financial sectors increasingly adopt and implement sustainable management frameworks and practices
UNEP approval date:	22nd October 2016	Programme of Work Output(s):	2. Technical support provided to countries to implement ecosystem-based adaptation and integrate it into national plans 3. Support provided to countries to access adaptation finance and strengthen readiness for deploying adaptation finance
GEF approval date:	5th December 2016	Project type:	Medium Size Project
GEF Operational Programme #:	GEF 6	Focal Area(s):	Biodiversity
		GEF Strategic Priority:	BD4-Program 9: Managing the human-biodiversity interface BD4- Program 10: Integration of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services into Development and Finance Planning
Expected start date:	January 2017	Actual start date:	24 January 2017

Planned operational completion date:	January 2019	Actual operational completion date:	March 2021
Planned project budget at approval:	USD 4,195,000	Actual total expenditures reported as of 30th June 2021:	2,009,718.23
GEF grant allocation:	USD 1,995,000	GEF grant expenditures reported as of 30th June 2021	USD 2,009,718
Project Preparation Grant - GEF financing:	USD 50,000	Project Preparation Grant - co-financing:	0
Expected MSP co-financing:	USD 2,200,000	Secured MSP co-financing:	USD 2,974,700
Date of first disbursement:	22 February 2017	Planned date of financial closure:	30th September 2021
No. of formal project revisions:	2	Date of last approved project revision:	21st May 2020
No. of Steering Committee meetings:	2	Date of last Steering Committee meeting:	December 2019
Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (planned date):	Not Planned ¹	Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (actual date):	Not done
Terminal Evaluation (planned date)	3rd quarter 2021	Terminal Evaluation (actual date):	June 2024
Coverage - Country(ies):	Colombia, Mexico and Peru	Coverage - Region(s):	Latin America
Status of previous project phases:	None	Status of future project phases:	None

¹ MTR for MSP is at the discretion of the Task Manager

Executive Summary

1. This section summarizes the main findings of the Terminal Evaluation of UNEP-GEF project “Generating Enhanced Political Will for Natural Resource Management and Conservation (GEF ID 4668). The project was implemented in Mexico, Colombia and Peru between January 2017 and September 2021. Its objective was to create and strengthen Conservation Caucuses in the national congresses of Colombia, Mexico, and Peru, in order to build political will for enhanced natural resource management and conservation. This GEF medium-size project was approved with a budget of USD 4.195 million that included a USD 1.995 million GEF grant and USD 2.2 million in co-financing from ICCF. Additional co-financing of USD 774.700 was raised from the International Conservation Caucus Foundation (ICCF) and country partners² during the project’s implementation.
2. This Terminal Evaluation has two purposes (i) documenting evidence-based results that meet accountability requirements, and (ii) promoting operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing between UNEP and ICCF/CCN. It is also expected to identify lessons of operational relevance for the broader UNEP and ICCF/CCN portfolios. This evaluation follows up on a previous Terminal Evaluation exercise that was conducted in 2021 yet was cancelled by UNEP for technical reasons unbeknownst to CCN. While the initial evaluation included project site visits and in-country stakeholder interviews, this evaluation was home-based and relied principally on the desk review of project documents and other available information. As a result, there was minimal input from country stakeholders during the second evaluation. The scheduling of this evaluation, three years after the project’s finish, brought mixed blessings: Insight was gained on post-project sustainability and the likelihood of impact, yet the scope
3. The goal of the project was to create and strengthen conservation caucuses in national congresses of Colombia, Mexico, and Peru, to build political will for enhanced management of natural resources for development and conservation. The project aimed to create self-sustaining legislative caucuses with the capacity to support conservation legislation on topics self-initiated by legislators themselves. Anticipated outcomes included broader knowledge of the importance of good conservation management; enhanced support for adequate domestic funding of priority conservation tasks; increased adoption of innovative conservation tactics including public-private partnerships and payment for ecological services; and proposal/adoption of model conservation legislation by various legislatures.
4. Project performance was assessed according to the following criteria: Strategic relevance, quality of project design, effectiveness (output and outcome achievement, likelihood of impact), efficiency, monitoring and reporting, and sustainability. Contributing factors to project performance were also considered. These included project management, country ownership, stakeholder participation and communications and public awareness. Performance was rated for the various criteria and assigned weighted scores based on UNEP EO evaluation guidelines (Figure 10). The combined ratings and scores indicate overall **Moderately Satisfactory** performance.

² European Union, FAO, COSUDE, POLEA, USAID

The main findings are summarized below:

5. *Strategic Relevance (Performance rating: Highly Satisfactory)*: The project was relevant to several Sub-programmes of UNEP's 2014- 2017 Mid-Term Strategy and 2020-2021 Programme of Work. The project objective and planned deliverables showed consistency with Sub-programmes 3: Healthy and productive ecosystems, 4: Environmental governance, and 6: Resource efficiency. The project was particularly relevant to Sub-programme 4 through the creation and strengthening of legislative Caucuses in all countries, and to Sub-programme 3 with the adoption of legislation for the conservation and sustainable management of forest and Andean highland ecosystems in Mexico and Colombia. An important post-project contribution to Sub-programmes 3 and 6 are the likely impacts of legislation and policies adopted through Caucus initiatives. While the project showed relevance to Aichi Target 2 in its design, limited progress was achieved towards the integration of biodiversity values in national planning or accounting systems.

6. The project was supportive of various 2030 Sustainable Development Goals in its design. These included SDG 5 "Gender Equality" (*Target 5.5.*), SDG 12 "Responsible Consumption and Production" (*Target 12.4 and 12.5*), SDG 14 "Life under Water" (*Target 14.1*) and SDG 15 "Life on Land" (*Targets 15.1, 15.2*). Donor relevance was reflected in the project's alignment to GEF 7's Biodiversity Focal Objective BD4, Programme 9 "Managing the human-biodiversity interface", and Programme 10 "Integration of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services into Development and Finance Planning".

7. Relevance to national conservation challenges and priorities was very high. The project encouraged high levels of country ownership and played a facilitative role in support of conservation and legislative agendas that were determined by the Caucuses of each country. This has contributed directly to the formulation and adoption of legislation addressing sustainable forest management in Mexico, land and ocean ecosystems management in Colombia, and the banning of single-use plastics in Colombia and Peru.

8. *Nature of External Context (Performance rating: Moderately Unfavorable)*: The achievement of project results was highly dependent on external factors that included the turnover of legislators (re-elections were not permitted in Colombia and Mexico, two of three countries, influencing the continuity of policy agendas), evolving policy contexts and political unrest. As the implementing agency, UNEP had limited experience in working within congressional and legislative environments. The designation of ICCF/CCN as project executing agency was important in managing risks and applying adaptive management.

9. *Quality of Project Design (Performance rating: Moderately Satisfactory)*: There is a logical relationship between the results framework and causal pathways linking outputs to outcomes. The project's main design strength was its focus towards systemic levels – political, legislative – that condition and influence change processes. This is reflected in a logical progression of outputs on causal pathways that lead to intended outcomes, as seen in the Theory of Change Analysis. The results framework contained provisions for gender inclusiveness within the Caucuses and Councils and foresaw the engagement of marginalized groups in the planning of national park and protected area management plans. Benchmark outputs that provided enabling conditions for other outputs – for example, the establishment of

country Caucuses and Councils as the project's main target groups - were programmed at an early stage. Once established, the Caucuses and Councils were supported by project outreach initiatives that expanded legislator interaction with government and non-governmental actors and provided field exposure to issues on the ground. The knowledge and insight that are gained by the Caucuses and their partners, contributed to the formulation of legislation and policy proposals that are better informed and in several cases were approved. These include national forest legislation in Mexico, ecosystems and natural resource conservation legislation in Colombia, and laws banning single-use plastics in Colombia and Peru.

10. The immediate project objective centered on establishing the legislative Conservation Caucus model in the three countries. By establishing the Caucuses and Councils at an early stage, the project was able to generate a mechanism that was – and remains – strategically positioned to influence legislation and budgets for environmental conservation, protected area and forest management, sustainable tourism, and fiscal reform measures to encourage sustainable resource use. The Caucuses and Councils benefited from a robust outreach component that broadened legislator interactions with Executive Branch agencies, technical experts and other external actors, while offering exposure to issues on the ground. The knowledge and insight gained have been critical to the design of legislation that was approved in the three countries.

11. A major design flaw was the approved two-year project duration, which did not consider the project's vulnerability to external variables that were outside of its control, i.e. changing political and policy junctures, political and social unrest. The assumption of a linear and consistent implementation process did not take into account variances in the legislative cycles, electoral calendars and socio-political contexts of the three countries. The project's approved implementation period was unrealistically short, and an 18-month extension was required to deliver the planned outputs.

12. *Effectiveness (Performance rating: Moderately Satisfactory):* This assessment reflects the project's moderately satisfactory performance in the delivery of outputs and achievement of outcomes, and the high likelihood of impact from the approval and budgeted implementation of conservation legislation. Caucus membership targets were reached in all countries and have shown resilience through elections and turnover of its members. Political unrest in Peru (followed by COVID-19) led to the closure of Congress and suspension of the Caucus, which was eventually reactivated and continues to promote conservation legislation, almost three years after the project's termination.

13. Output achievement was moderately satisfactory. The project was most effective in delivering outputs that supported the creation of legislative Conservation Caucuses (outcome 1), followed by expanded legislator outreach, interaction with Executive Branch agencies and external actors, and exposure to conservation issues on the ground (outcomes 1.3 and 2.1), which improved the design of Caucus agendas and legislative initiatives.

14. There was also moderately satisfactory progress towards the intended outcomes. The outcome of self-sustained Caucuses with expanded membership (outcome 1.1) was fully reached. The project facilitated broader communication and cooperation with departments of the executive branch of government (outcome 1.2), bringing improvements in legislator

knowledge and capacities for promoting conservation legislation (outcome 1.3). However, the outcome target indicator - measures linking biodiversity valuation to fiscal reform - was partially achieved. Conservation linkages between national parks and sustainable tourism (outcome 2.2) were not strengthened as planned. There was progress towards GEF-7 Core Indicator Targets for area of land restored, terrestrial protected areas under improved management for conservation and sustainable use, areas of landscape and marine habitat under improved practices, and gender-responsive measures. Project management was consistent with the GEF Safeguards Plan that was submitted at CEO approval.

15. The likelihood of impact is high. Caucuses initiatives in Mexico, Colombia and Peru - often led by "champion" Congress members - have led to the approval of national legislation for forestry management, conservation of land-based and ocean ecosystems, and banning of single-use plastics. To the extent that they are adequately budgeted and implemented, the new/amended laws and related policies may reach the impact statement of sustainable natural resource management and mitigated environmental degradation in the three countries.

16. *Financial management (Performance rating: Satisfactory):* Funds were satisfactorily managed from ICCF/CCN Headquarters. Significant delays or other issues involving cash advances or disbursements for project activities were not experienced. Reporting was done at ICCF/CCN Headquarters and signed by the project coordinator. Reporting was considered difficult and time-consuming yet PIRs, progress reports and financial statements were submitted on a timely basis. The final project audit report indicated that finances had been managed in accordance with GEF-UNEP guidelines.

17. *Efficiency (Performance rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory):* The assessment of project efficiency was based on the timeliness of project implementation and its cost effectiveness. Project timeliness was moderately unsatisfactory. The project was severely constrained by its own timeline: The two years approved for its implementation were insufficient to deliver the planned outputs on schedule, against the different country contexts, implementation issues, and periods of political unrest in particular. As a result, two no-cost extensions were required over a 24-month period to complete implementation. Conversely, the project was cost-effective in its use of project resources and pro-rated staff remuneration arrangements. Project implementation was prolonged over an extended period without additional funds. This was assisted by ICCF/CCN co-financing and increased through in-country partner contributions to Caucuses.

18. *Monitoring and Reporting (Performance rating: Moderately Satisfactory):* The project document included a budgeted monitoring plan with SMART indicators and measurable performance targets. A Mid-Term Evaluation/Review was not foreseen given the project's short duration and status as a mid-size GEF project. Although little information was available, monitoring visits by the UNEP Task Manager were infrequent – at least one mission took place at the project inception stage – and there is no reference to further monitoring activity by UNEP. Implementation monitoring and adaptive management were conducted internally by ICCF/CCN. UNEP's monitoring performance may have been influenced by the discontinuity and subsequent cancellation of the Project Steering Committee, scheduled to meet bi-annually. Project reports – PIRs, Mid-Year Progress Reports, Financial Statements - were submitted on a timely basis and issues of content or compliance were not raised. However, some of these – the Final Project

Report in particular – were largely output and activity-focused, provided limited insight on the achievement of outcomes, lessons learned, or implementation process in general.

19. *Sustainability (Performance rating: Likely)* The continued activity of Caucuses in all countries is an important achievement and addresses the main strategic evaluation question in the Terms of Reference. The *ex-post* perspective that came with the evaluation's late scheduling - almost three years after project termination - gave insight into different manifestations of sustainability. *Socio-political sustainability* is highly likely and one of the project's strongest aspects. The continuity of Conservation Caucuses with environmental agendas and collaborative initiatives - despite changing legislative cycles, periodic turnover of legislators or political unrest - underscore the resilience of the Caucus model as applied through this project. Legislative Caucuses remain active in the three countries and continue to promote environmental agendas and legislation. *Financial sustainability* is moderately likely to highly likely: Caucuses membership is driven by environmental priorities and political commitment and does not rely on external funding for its continuity. Caucuses receive financial and technical assistance from ICCF/CCN, the ICCF Secretariat and international development agencies at country level that support Caucus communications and outreach. The resources that are available were considered to be generally adequate for most Caucus activities according to respondents. *Institutional sustainability* is highly likely both in terms of the resilience and continuity of the Caucus model within national legislatures, and the continued country presence and support of ICCF/CCN.

20. *Factors affecting Performance (Performance rating: Satisfactory):* The evaluation highlighted several contributing factors that have influenced project performance. The quality of project management and supervision by ICCF/CNN as the executing agency, both from its Headquarters and at country level, was decisive to ensure high levels of country ownership, and to adjust to changing country contexts, for example during periods of unrest in Peru and Colombia. Stakeholder participation was reflected in the interaction and consultation between Caucus members and Executive Branch agencies, technical experts, and national park managers and diverse external actors. However, the participation of vulnerable groups that were affected by environmental issues on the ground or by conservation legislation seemed below expectations. There were consultations with representatives of such groups in all countries. However, the documentation gives the impression that their participation was passive and oriented to inform legislators. Direct engagement in the formulation of legislation or national park/protected area management plans (both foreseen as outputs) was not documented. Communications and public awareness were supported in all countries through field missions, round table discussions, consultations with Executive Branch agencies and external actors. This was critically important to inform legislators and provide direct access to conservation issues "on the ground". The knowledge and insight that was gained from these activities have enhanced Caucus conservation agendas and proposed legislation.

21. The following conclusions, lessons and recommendations are drawn from the analysis of the evaluation criteria:

Conclusions

- The project achieved the objective of creating and strengthening sustainable conservation caucuses within the national congresses of Colombia, Mexico and Peru, to build political will for enhanced natural resource management and conservation.
- Project impacts on biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource management are likely.
- The project's main contribution was in expanding legislator interaction and cooperation with external actors and providing legislators and partners with greater exposure to conservation issues on the ground. The knowledge and capacity gained have been applied to the development of legislative agendas and proposed conservation legislation (or amendments) that are better-informed and formulated.
- Project progress and performance were consistent with GEF-6 and GEF-7 effectiveness targets, safeguards and gender inclusion guidelines.
- The project contributed substantively to legislator consultations with a broad range of stakeholders in the three countries. However, the expected participation of civil society actors – communities, forest users, indigenous groups - in the production of outputs regarding needs assessments, design of National Park management plans, sustainable tourism initiatives - is not documented. While CCN considers that civil society participation did indeed meet project expectations, this was not reflected in the documentation made available for the evaluation.
- Progress towards the adoption of fiscal reform based on biodiversity accounting, and the development of sustainable tourism initiatives was limited.
- The comparatively lower progress that was achieved in engaging local stakeholders around specific conservation initiatives affecting them (including sustainable tourism) highlights the difficulties of articulating very different project environments.
- The project timeframe was unrealistic.

22. The evaluation Terms of Reference raises the following strategic question: To what extent are the caucuses operating now following the project closure? ^[1]_[SEP] There have been positive tendencies since the project's completion more than three years ago. Caucuses continue to function in the three countries, with documented examples of legislation proposed and approved, and continued consultations with other branches of government and external stakeholders. Peru's Caucus was re-activated after more than a year's inactivity due to the closure of Congress. Sustainability is one of the project's most outstanding features.

Lessons Learned

- The implementation experience offers insight on project-based approaches that can affect the systemic dimensions of change. For example, how to influence policy change through the congressional and legislative spheres of government. This arrangement departed from ministry-based counterpart frameworks. By working through an experienced partner (ICCF) with knowledge of the internal dynamics,

UNEP was able to effectively support change processes and improve its knowledge of working at these levels.

- Interventions that work at legislative levels and promote improved legal frameworks for conservation and natural resource management have over-arching relevance for a wide range of national and internationally supported initiatives. The approval of enabling legislation for forest protection, ecosystem conservation or the banning of plastics, supports the mandates and objectives of other sectors, institutions and projects.
- The re-scheduling of an *ex-post* evaluation after the project's completion provided insight into the situation after the project's termination. This enabled the evaluator to capture key developments such as the re-activation of Peru's Caucus and the continued Caucus activity in the three countries. On the downside, the time that had lapsed since the project's termination severely reduced the evaluation's access to in-country stakeholders that had participated during its implementation.

Recommendations

- ICCF/CCN should promote the Caucus model to a wider regional audience – both at congressional level and among international development agencies – to replicate the project experience on a broader scale and give greater momentum to the approval of environmental legislation.
- UNEP should further develop its association with ICCF/CNN, mobilizing institutional commitments and resources to support parallel processes on a broader scale within the LAC region.
- Ex-post evaluations need to be programmed within a year or 18 months after project completion to ensure access to an adequate sample of stakeholders and focus groups and enhance insight into project sustainability and likelihood of impact. This recommendation applies to both UNEP and ICCF/CCN.

1 INTRODUCTION

23. “Generating Enhanced Political Will for Natural Resource Management and Conservation” project was implemented in Mexico, Colombia and Peru between January 2017 and September 2021. The project was approved with a USD 4.195 million budget, consisting of a USD 1.995 million grant from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and USD 2.2 million in co-financing. The project aimed to establish Conservation Caucuses of legislators, supported by Councils of partners, to enhance country legal frameworks for sustainable natural resource management and biodiversity conservation. The project additionally sought to improve enabling conditions for the development of sustainable tourism in national parks and protected areas, to generate alternative sources of income for biodiversity conservation.

24. UNEP was the designated implementing agency for the project through its Division of Environmental Policy Implementation (DEPI), which is now the Ecosystems Division. DEPI was responsible for project oversight, liaising between the project and GEF Secretariat, approving budget revisions and financial transactions, and ensuring timely reporting and disbursements. ^[SEP] The Conservation Council of Nations (CCN), which is part of the International Conservation Caucus Foundation (ICCF), served as the project’s executing agency. CCN was responsible for overall project implementation, programmatic and financial management, and oversight to ensure the timely delivery of planned outputs and outcomes.

25. The present Terminal Evaluation (TE) was conducted in September 2022, in accordance with UNEP evaluation guidelines.³ The TE’s main purposes were to (i) document evidence-based results that meet accountability requirements, and (ii) promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing between UNEP and ICCF-CCN. For this, the evaluation has sought to identify lessons of operational relevance for future projects, and recommendations that are relevant to the broader UNEP and ICCF/CCN portfolios. The evaluation assessed project performance applying the criteria of quality of design, effectiveness (achievement of outputs and outcomes, likelihood of impact), efficiency, sustainability, and contributing factors that have influenced performance. The TE was guided by a set of strategic questions that are included in the Terms of Reference and annexed to this report. The evaluation analysis additionally considered questions that are required by the GEF Portal in relevant sections of the report.

Relevance to UNEP Strategic Priorities

26. As noted in the project document, the project was supportive of UNEP’s Ecosystem Management Sub-programme of Work under the 2014-2017 Medium-Term Strategy (MTS). It addressed the Expected Accomplishments of “use of the ecosystem approach in countries to maintain ecosystem services and sustainable productivity of terrestrial and aquatic systems is increased” and “services and benefits derived from ecosystems are integrated with development planning and accounting and the implementation of biodiversity and ecosystem

³ An earlier TE was undertaken in 2021, yet the report was not considered to meet UNEP Evaluation Office standards and was discontinued.

related multilateral agreements." Subsequent reports⁴ highlighted the project's relevance to UNEP's Programme of Work for the Biennium 2020-2021, and in particular Sub-programmes supporting Healthy and Productive Ecosystems (SP3), Environmental Governance (SP4) and Resource Efficiency (SP6).⁵

Target Audiences

27. The intended audiences of the evaluation are UNEP's Ecosystems Division, GEF, ICCF/CCN and the main country partners – Conservation Caucuses and Councils - that drove the project's implementation. The dissemination of evaluation findings to project stakeholders in the three countries is severely constrained by the three years that have passed since the project's termination, and by the turnover or departure of legislators and other partners in the three countries.

⁴Project Implementation Review (PIR) reports.

⁵ The project's correspondence to UNEP strategic priorities is assessed with more depth in Section 2. "Relevance".

2 EVALUATION METHODS

28. The evaluation looked at project performance in Mexico, Colombia and Peru, and at overarching management, coordination and monitoring. The evaluation analysis and findings were organized around the criteria of relevance, quality of design, effectiveness, efficiency, financial management, monitoring and reporting, and sustainability, in addition to contributing factors and cross-cutting issues that influenced performance, and in accordance with UNEP Evaluation Policy and UNEP's programme manual, and the GEF guidelines for conducting terminal evaluations.

29. Project performance for the various criteria was rated and assigned weighted scores that are based on UNEP EO evaluation guidelines (Figure 10). Performance was rated according to the following scale:

- Highly Satisfactory/Highly Likely (6)
- Satisfactory/Likely (5)
- Moderately Satisfactory/Likely (4)
- Moderately Unsatisfactory/Unlikely (3)
- Unsatisfactory/Unlikely (2)
- Highly Unsatisfactory/Unlikely (1)

The combined ratings and resulting scores indicate overall Satisfactory project performance.

30. The evaluation was limited in scope and depth by the non-availability of country stakeholders and resulting lack of input by key focus groups. Throughout this evaluation process and in the compilation of the Final Evaluation Report efforts have been made to represent the views of both mainstream and more marginalized groups. Data were collected with respect for ethics and human rights issues. All pictures were taken, and other information gathered after prior informed consent from people, all discussions remained anonymous, and all information was collected according to the UN Standards of Conduct.

31. The project did not have a mid-term evaluation due to its short duration. As noted earlier, a previous TE was conducted in 2021 with country visits and face-to-face meetings. However the evaluation report did not meet technical standards and the exercise was discontinued.

The stages of the evaluation are described below:

32. *Inception Phase (first – third weeks of April)*: The evaluator designed an evaluation approach and methodology, drawing on the Terms of Reference and consulting with ICCF/CNN, UNEP ROLAC and UNEP EO. ICCF/CNN was responsible for contacting members of the a representative sample of Caucuses and the main stakeholders – from other government

branches, at community level, within protected areas⁶ - in the three countries for interviews. , However there was very little progress in this respect and an agenda was not developed. A draft Inception Report (the first evaluation deliverable) was submitted to the EO Evaluation Manager for review and editing. This Inception Report guided the following phases of the evaluation:

33. *Data Collection: Desk Review (April – second week of June)*⁷: Field visits were not foreseen and there were difficulties in reaching project participants outside of ICCF/CCN. Data collection therefore relied on the review of the project documentation. This covered the project document, half-yearly progress reports and annual PIR reports, the final project report, financial reports, website data and summarized responses of ICCF/CCN country focal points to an earlier evaluation questionnaire in 2021, and the project database which described a number of project activities and events that took place in the three countries.

34. *Data Collection: Online Interviews and recorded responses to evaluation questions (third week of June – fourth week of July)*: The desk review was to be followed by online interviews with a very compact sample of legislators and project partners from the three countries. However, ICCF country representatives were unable to secure these interviews: This was because there were Congressional recesses in Peru and Colombia, and Mexico was about to commence a new term with newly elected members. There were few serving Caucus members from the project period – most had completed their terms - and those remaining were reluctant to repeat interviews that were conducted for the 2021 evaluation.

35. Alternative ways of reaching project stakeholders were sought. A Whatsapp chat group was created to encourage responsiveness. Four legislators from three countries provided recorded responses to key evaluation questions via Whatsapp. However, the sample size was insufficient to draw meaningful findings. Most of the feedback that was received focused on the present situation. This offered insight into the sustainability of Caucuses and current initiatives, almost three years after the project's closure. However, the recorded responses do not capture the scope or depth of information that would have been obtained through interactive, online interviews. Requests for interviews or written feedback from the UNEP Task Managers (there were two) and FMO were not answered. As a result, UNEP's input to the evaluation was essentially limited to online interviews held with UNEP-ROLAC's Senior Programme Assistant who was present throughout the project. The very slow progress in receiving stakeholder feedback extended this stage of the TE considerably, overlapping with the analysis of data and drafting of this report.

36. *Data analysis, systematization of findings and formulation of the draft evaluation report (first-fourth weeks of July)*. The inputs obtained from the desk review, interviews and recorded responses were triangulated,⁸ and emergent trends systematized into preliminary findings

⁶ The initial selection of stakeholder groups was drawn from the institutional framework and stakeholders outlined in the project document and PIR Reports, in addition to their mapping during the evaluation's inception phase.

⁷ The extended time allocated to desk review was due to the slow process of organizing meetings to discuss the availability of country respondents and approaches for reaching reach them.

⁸ Triangulation was done by documenting and systematizing the perceptions of interviewed target Caucus representatives, ICCF and UNEP respondents; and the performance assessments contained in the PIR and progress

according to the evaluation criteria. These findings provided the foundations of the TE report. Most of the analysis is qualitative, with gaps in some areas given the lack of input received. There were quantitative assessments of output and outcome achievement based on their performance targets, when applicable.

2.1 Evaluation Criteria and Guiding Questions

37. The Terminal Evaluation was based on criteria set by the ToRs and guided by sets of questions that are annexed to this report.⁹ Among these, the main strategic question posed by the evaluation was the extent to which the legislative caucuses have continued to operate since the project's closure. In addition, the evaluation considered questions that are required for the GEF portal (annexed):

38. The extent and depth to which the various evaluation questions were addressed was undermined by the absence of stakeholder interviews (outside of ICCF/CCN) and limited recorded responses received. As mentioned, memory of the project had naturally diminished over the years as legislators finished their terms, and ICCF or UNEP focal points moved on to new projects (or left the organization). In addition, project stakeholders had already given interviews for the previous evaluation attempt, and it was not possible to repeat the interviews. As a result, the Evaluator was unable to cover the full range of questions and focused on the following over-arching aspects:

- What were the project's main strengths and contributions? What were the main weaknesses? Please provide concrete examples.
- Describe Caucus trends over the past three years in terms of membership, agendas and collaboration with external partner (i.e. Conservation Councils, Executive Branch, environmental organizations, national park/protected area managers, local government and civil society representatives)? Please provide concrete examples.
- What are the main challenges faced by Caucuses to improve their effectiveness?

2.2 Methodological Limitations

39. There were various methodological limitations, several of which are described above. The three years that passed since the project's termination – with elections and turnovers of legislators in all countries - significantly reduced access to legislators and other participants with memory of the project. Moreover, the evaluation coincided with congressional recesses and/or commencing legislative cycles with newly-elected members. Legislators that had participated in the project were reluctant to be interviewed again.¹⁰

reports. The data from the different sources were compared, and the emergent trends, consistencies and variances contributed to the formulation of initial findings.

⁹ Annex 1: "Evaluation Framework"

¹⁰ These limitations were anticipated by IFFC/CCN at the evaluation's inception stage.

40. Given the limitations, online interviews were requested with a minimum of two Caucus members and/or Council partners in each country. A Whatsapp group chat was also created to receive recorded responses to key questions. However, the Evaluator was only able to interview the IIFC/CCN country representatives. Only five Caucus members gave recorded responses to a Whatsapp group chat. This sample is too small to draw substantive findings. Contacts with project partners - government agencies, farmer organizations, indigenous communities, national parks, ecotourism enterprises or international cooperation agencies - were not made because ICCF/CCN does not maintain contact with them.

41. A broad range of partners had supported the project and it was hoped that some would be available for interview. At the time of the final PIR in 2021 the project engaged 139 partners in the three countries, with government and international cooperation agencies, environmental organizations, private sector enterprises and others (Annex 6). However, this evaluation had very little contact with project partners outside of CCN, despite requests. As mentioned, there has been considerable legislator turnover (with lower project memory) over the past years. Country stakeholders had already given interviews for the previous evaluation attempt, and it was not possible to repeat the interviews

42. Inputs from UNEP were also limited. The evaluator was unable to interview either of the project Task Managers or Financial Management Officer (FMO) despite written requests. This was influenced by the loss of project memory, the re-assignment or departure of staff, and the evaluation's scheduling at a time when staff take annual leave. The feedback provided by the Senior Programme Assistant at UNEP-ROLAC, who participated throughout the project, helped to fill some of the information gaps.

3 THE PROJECT

3.1 Context

43. “Generating Enhanced Political Will for Natural Resource Management and Conservation” project was implemented in Colombia, Mexico, and Peru between January 2017 and September 2021. All the three countries are considered “megadiverse” and host different ecosystems that possess a high percentage of global biodiversity: It is estimated that 12% of all species on earth live in *Mexico*, including 8% of the world’s diversity in amphibians. Conservation policies in Mexico are shaped by the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT) in close coordination with the National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity (CONABIO) and the National Commission of Natural Protected Areas (CONANP). *Colombia* hosts close to 10% of global biodiversity, ranking first in bird and orchard species and second in plants, butterflies, freshwater fish and amphibians. The National Environmental System (SINA) sets guidelines, resources and programs for implementing environmental provisions contained in Colombia’s 1991 Constitution and Law 99 of Environment. Key conservation actors include the Ministry of Environment, the National Environment Council that advises government and promotes inter-sector coordination, and the National National Parks (PNN) authority. *Peru* is known as one of the world’s 10 megadiverse countries and hosts approximately 25,000 plant species (10% of the global total) with 30% endemism. In terms of fauna, Peru ranks first in number of fish species (close to 2,000 species, 10% of the world total); second in bird fauna (1,736 species); third in amphibians (332 species); third in mammals (460 species); and fifth in reptiles (365 species). Key institutional actors include the National Service for Natural Protected Areas (SERNANP) as the designated government authority, the national fund for protected areas (PROFANANPE), and the National System of Natural Protected Areas (SINANPE) that sets guidelines for conservation, management and financing.

44. In addition to having global biodiversity importance, the three countries also share common barriers and challenges in sustaining the conservation of national parks and protected areas. The main challenges that the project sought to address were:

45. *Declining Finance for Conservation:* The three countries have faced declining levels of international financial assistance for biodiversity conservation and protected area management over the past years. As Colombia, Mexico and Peru are designated middle-income countries, foreign assistance has declined accordingly. This trend is reinforced by the limited domestic investment in biodiversity and natural resource conservation, contributing to widening funding deficits. There is a recognized need to develop domestic revenue sources for conservation through sustainable tourism and fiscal reform based on biodiversity accounting.

46. *Undeveloped Potential for Sustainable Tourism:* Tourism is a major source of revenue in the three countries yet carries environmental impacts that are detrimental to biodiversity. Sustainable tourism in national parks and protected areas is considered a strategic option to generate income for funding conservation. It is one of the main themes of the project document.

47. *Competing Needs at Legislative Level.* There are inevitable tensions between biodiversity conservation measures that offer long-term economic benefit, and immediate needs for investment, production and employment generation. At country level, the dynamics of competing legislative priorities and sector interests has often postponed the consideration of environmental agendas, leading to low budget allocations and inconsistent legal frameworks.

48. At country level, the project was highly vulnerable to externalities such as political unrest, shifting political junctures, competing interests and turnovers of Congress members (re-election was not allowed in Peru or Mexico during the project period). The Caucuses determined their agendas independent of the project. While indicating high levels of national ownership, this led to variations in the extent and manner by which outputs were delivered. The latter stage of the project's extension coincided with the onset of COVID-19; however, significant disruptions to implementation were not reported. As a result, adaptive management was required on the part of CCN throughout the implementation period.

3.2 Project Results Framework

49. The project results framework is well structured and aligned to the causal pathways that are identified under the ToC analysis. The project interventions are focused at systemic levels – congressional and legislative processes, policy formulation - that influence the enabling conditions for transformational change. This is reflected in the logical progression of outputs that lead to the intended outcomes: Key outputs that enabled the delivery of other outputs – for example, establishing congressional Caucuses and Councils as the main target groups - were programmed at an early stage. The Caucuses and Councils were critical in driving the implementation process and were the conduit for project outreach initiatives that enabled legislators to visit protected areas, consult with diverse stakeholders and technical experts, and engage with Executive Branch agencies in the formulation of new laws or amendments to existing laws. The knowledge and insight gained by Caucus members led to the formulation of legislation and policy proposals that, in several cases were approved. Examples at country level include Mexico's General Law of Sustainable Forests, Peru's ban on single-use plastics, and legislation to protect highland ecosystems and promote sustainable resource management in Colombia's San Andres archipelago. The momentum and results that were achieved in the three countries have encouraged the continuity of congressional Caucuses beyond the project term.

Table 2. Project Results Framework

Project objective and Outcomes	Performance Indicator	End-of project target
Objective: Create and strengthen Conservation Caucuses of Members in national congresses of Colombia, Mexico, and Peru to build political will for enhanced management of natural resources for development and conservation.		
Outcome 1.1: Self-sustaining legislative		- Caucuses established and growing in

Project objective and Outcomes	Performance Indicator	End-of project target
Caucuses with the capacity to support conservation legislation	Establishment and membership lists of national Caucuses	Peru and Mexico. - Increased membership in the Colombian Caucus by 10% to 44. - Increased membership in the Peru and Mexico caucuses by 10% and 20% respectively.
	Women representation in the leadership of the Caucuses	At least one woman as a co-chair of the caucus in each country
	Conservation Council membership numbers increase in each country	Recruit 4 additional Conservation Council Members in Colombia, Create Conservation Councils in Mexico and Peru
Outcome 1.2: Enhanced cooperation between the legislative members and the Executive Branch agencies of their respective countries is promoted.	National level interventions that link biodiversity valuation to policy and fiscal reform	1 national level intervention, which links biodiversity valuation to policy and fiscal reform per country.
Outcome 1.3: Broader knowledge of the importance of good conservation management is increased through adoption of conservation best practices (i.e. proposal/adoption of model conservation legislation by the legislatures in the target countries)	Legislative or policy action taken by caucus members in support of conservation	Caucus leadership put forward new national level interventions to stem biodiversity loss in each country
Outcome 2.1: Links between best conservation practices in national parks and sustainable tourism are improved.	Caucuses incorporate parks, protected areas, and tourism in their agendas through briefings, workshops and other activities.	4 activities on parks, protected areas, and tourism in each of the target countries.
Project Outputs		
<p>1.1.1 Increased Caucus membership at start of grant by 10% in Colombia, 20% in Mexico, 10% in Peru.</p> <p>1.1.2: Outreach to and recruitment of conservation opinion leaders in the target countries</p> <p>1.1.3: Established sustainable conservation councils in each target country</p> <p>1.2.1: Widespread and detailed consultations among stakeholders to better define conservation needs as perceived in the countries themselves.</p> <p>1.2.2: Encourage Members to take stock of opportunities and needs in their countries' conservation systems and policies, by means of workshops, dialogues, briefings, and field visits.</p> <p>1.3.1: Study of regional and global models of conservation legislation and fiscal reform measures</p> <p>1.3.2: Adoption of appropriate resolutions and declarations during the policymaker Summit, and their wide publicity</p> <p>1.3.3: Preparation and introduction of new legislation, as necessary and appropriate, in the view of the Members</p>		

Project objective and Outcomes	Performance Indicator	End-of project target
themselves 2.1.1: Legislative Members are engaged on issues of best practices to prepare for and implement sustainable tourism in Parks and Protected Areas 2.1.2: Wide variety of stakeholders, including indigenous peoples, women, local people and landowners are engaged in preparation of park management plans 2.1.3: Conservation Council in each country addresses interactions among parks, biodiversity and tourism. 2.1.4: Members of the Caucuses encourage actions regarding the implementation of these best practices.		

3.3 Stakeholders

50. The project interacted for the most part within the national Congresses of Colombia, Mexico and Peru, and in particular with the legislative Caucuses and (to a lesser extent) external partners that supported the Caucuses through Conservation Councils or other arrangements. The Caucuses were the main project stakeholders, both as legislators committed to conservation and as beneficiaries that received the largest share of project support. Another important stakeholder group were civil society organizations, communities and vulnerable groups within and around ecosystems or protected areas addressed through the project. Their involvement in "widespread and detailed consultations" was planned to better define conservation needs, as was the development of park management plans with the participation of "indigenous peoples, women, local people and landowners" (Outputs 1.2.1 and 2.1.1). Consultations were held with representatives of these groups in all countries. However, their input to the formulation of conservation legislation, policies or national park management plans is not evident from the project documentation with exception of Mexico' An exception was Mexico, where sustained consultations with indigenous communities and local forest organizations were channelled into the General Law of Sustainable Forestry.

Table 3. Analysis of Stakeholder Hierarchies

Stakeholders	Power over project results/implementation and the level of interest	Participation in project design	Potential roles and responsibilities in project implementation	Changes in their behaviour expected the project
<i>Type A: High power / high interest = Key player</i>				
<p>International Conservation Caucus Foundation (ICCF), through the Conservation Council of Nations (CCN)</p> <p>Conservation Caucuses of Legislators</p> <p>Conservation Councils (Category 1 partners)</p>	<p>CCN was the international executing agency of the project and had main responsibility for project implementation and oversight.</p> <p>The legislative conservation caucuses were the main country target groups and channels for introducing conservation legislation and enabling sustainable tourism at national level.</p> <p>Category 1 partners provided financial support to the national conservation caucuses and formed conservation councils in the three countries.</p>	<p>CCN contributed to project design, which builds on its support to existing legislative caucus initiatives</p> <p>Caucus participation in project design was not reported. However, there were consultations, and the project directly supported caucus objectives and activities.</p> <p>Council members and partners were approached after the project's design.</p>	<p>As an international executing agency, CCN was responsible for project management, coordination and implementation of activities, in coordination with legislative caucuses and environmental councils.</p> <p>The legislator members of the Caucuses were responsible for promoting, drafting and lobbying the approval of improved conservation legislation, and for improving enabling conditions for sustainable tourism in national parks and protected areas.</p> <p>As financial donors, the partners had input into the conservation caucus agendas and priorities.</p>	<p>Through the project, CCN was expected to strengthen its linkages with environmental caucuses and legislators in the three countries and advance towards its strategic objectives.</p> <p>The caucuses were expected to assume a more decisive and proactive role in supporting environmental conservation, through increased membership, awareness and operational capacity.</p> <p>Council members representing different stakeholder groups would be have a platform on which to promote conservation agendas and sustainable tourism, influencing legislation and policy in coordination with the caucuses.</p>
<i>Type B: High power/ low interest over the project =Meet their needs</i>				
Project Steering Committee	A tri-country Project Steering Committee was responsible for providing guidance and oversight to CCN and the project's	The PSC did not participate in project design.	The Project Steering Committee was responsible for providing guidance, institutional coordination and oversight to CCN and overall project	None were expected or reported.

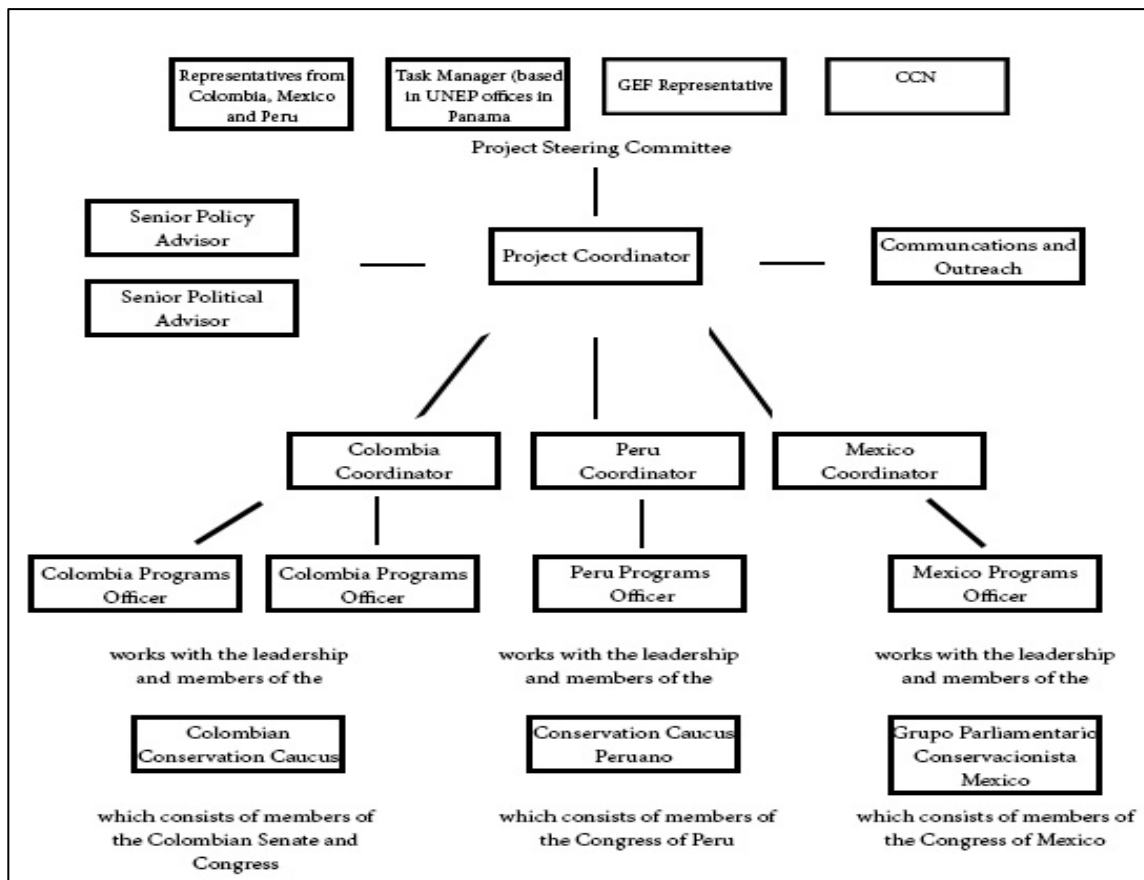
Stakeholders	Power over project results/implementation and the level of interest	Participation in project design	Potential roles and responsibilities in project implementation	Changes in their behaviour expected the project
Type D: <i>Low power /low interest over the project= Least important</i>				
(Not identified)				

51. The Project Steering Committee held two meetings and was subsequently discontinued in 2019 given to the difficulties of bringing country participants together. Power hierarchies and relations between the different stakeholder groups played an important role in influencing project decisions, adaptive management and general implementation. These are described in the table below.

3.4 Project Implementation Structure and Partners

52. Project implementation was led by the Conservation Caucus of Nations (CCN), an extension of the International Conservation Caucus Foundation (ICCF) in its role as international executing agency. ICCF/CCN was responsible for overall project management, coordination and implementation of activities, in coordination with legislative Caucuses and Environmental Councils. As noted above, a tri-country Project Steering Committee was created with UNEP, GEF, ICCF/CCN and Caucus representation yet was discontinued by common agreement; as a result, it's role and contributions were limited.

Figure 1. Project Governance Structure



Source: Project Document

53. The Caucuses were supported by partner networks. Project partners were categorized by three groups according to their level of involvement: Category 1 referred to financially contributing partners, whereas Category 2 consisted of partners that worked with the Caucuses. Category 3 grouped partners that participated in specific project activities. Category 1 partners were included in the project governance structure as Conservation Councils. The scale of partnership appears to have been broad if uneven between countries. A total of 139 national and international partners – public sector, environmental organizations, donors, NGOs, private enterprises – were listed for the three countries in the final 2021 PIR report. Unfortunately, only a handful of participants were available for interview despite requests.¹¹

3.5 Changes in Design during Implementation

54. There were no changes made to the project design during the implementation process. However, budget lines were adjusted and unspent funds re-programmed, as needed, through annual budget revisions. Workshops and round-table events were conducted online following the onset of COVID-19 towards the end of the project’s extension, without changes to project design.

3.6 Project Financing

55. The project was approved for a budget of USD 4.195 million that included a GEF grant of USD 1.995 million.¹² The remaining budget of USD 2.2 million was raised through co-financing-sharing from ICCF. This commitment was fully met: A total of USD 900,000 in cash and USD 1.3 million in-kind were contributed by ICCF and the ICCF Conservation Council.

56. Budget allocations among the project components were balanced as shown below.

Table 4. Distribution of Project Budget by Component (USD)

Component	GEF Grant	Co-financing
1. Build and enhance political will in support of decisions informed by biodiversity valuation	900,000	890,000
2. Policy reforms: Integrate best practices for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.	913,636	1,146,364
Project Management Cost	181,364	163,636
TOTAL:	1,995,000	2,200,000

Source: Project document

Project Budget and Expenditure

¹¹ They are listed in Annex 6.

¹² This was preceded by a GEF Project Preparation Grant (PPG) of USD 50,000.

57. Over 91% of the project budget had been expended by the end of the approved two-year project period, yet the slow progress achieved at country level led to two consecutive no-cost project extensions. This was influenced by the political unrest that affected Congressional activities in Colombia and Peru between 2018-2020, and by Congressional dynamics that were influenced by changing political junctures and competing legislative/policy priorities. At the end of the second project extension in September 2021, 98.3% of the project budget had been spent.

58. Likewise, project co-financing commitments were received and expended in full. During the project's implementation, additional co-financing contributions to those initially committed were received from the following partners:

- European Union - \$20,116.00 (cash)
- FAO - \$2,500.00 (cash) for Training workshop for officials who handle politics of environment (2020)
- COSUDE - \$3,400.00 (cash) for series of briefings on freshwater conservation and ecosystem services in Colombia (2019)
- POLEA - \$117,472.00 (cash) cooperated as Secretariat of the Mexican Conservation Caucus in planning and holding briefing events and field missions, as well as co-financed a portion of Mexico Program Officer's salary and office premises/supplies.
- USAID - \$631,264.00 (cash/in-kind) through American Conservation Experts Project that provides in-kind consulting at the request of national governments to support capacity for sustainable management of protected areas (2017-2021)

59. ICCF- (cash and in-kind) supported international engagements through a global network of conservation caucuses, and provided co-financing by staff time and administrative support

Figure 2. Project Expenditures

Object of expenditure by UNEP/budget Code	National Project Budget (US\$)	Expenditures					Total Project Expenditures	Unspent Balance of budget
		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021		
1101 National Project Coordinator	140,000.00	64,273.00	64,080.00	11,147.00	0.00	0.00	140,000.00	0.00
1102 Project Staff	1,016,328.02	473,445.41	373,369.63	146,114.83	23,398.15	0.18	1,016,328.20	-0.18
1120 Administrative Staff	181,364.00	90,682.00	90,682.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	181,364.00	0.00
1201 International Consultants	76,558.67	30,000.00	30,000.00	10,000.00	4,000.00	2,558.67	76,558.67	0.00
1202 National Consultants	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1601 Staff Travel & Transport	135,197.11	52,513.52	52,212.60	15,470.99	0.00	14,672.41	134,869.52	327.59
2201 Sub Contract to governmental agencies	50,000.00	50,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	50,000.00	0.00
2301 Sub Contract to private firms	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3201 Training	99,654.95	23,239.67	17,290.70	14,158.61	5,005.97	20.16	99,675.11	-20.16
3301 Meetings	257,802.33	56,899.53	128,924.63	19,449.23	35,927.53	16,647.23	257,848.15	-45.82
4101 Office supplies and consumables	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4102 Laboratory supplies and consumables	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4201 Non Laboratory Purchase	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4202 Laboratory Equipment	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4301 Office Premises	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4302 Research Facilities	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
5101 Equipment maintenance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
5201 Publication, Translation, Dissemination and reporting costs	53,094.92	12,840.62	15,067.11	17,922.61	3,202.21	3,562.76	53,095.31	-0.39
5202 Audit Reports	40,000.00	0.00	0.00	15,000.00	5,380.00	19,620.00	40,000.00	0.00
5301 Communications (tel, fax, e-mail, etc.)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
5302 Others	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
5303 Technical Support	35,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	35,000.00
5375 UNDP charges	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
9999 GRAND TOTAL	2,045,000.00	854,393.75	771,586.67	249,263.27	77,413.86	57,081.41	2,009,738.96	35,261.04

Source: CCN LAC/MSP Final Financial Statement (2022)

Figure 3. Co-financing Expenditures

REPORT OF PLANNED AND ACTUAL CO-FINANCE BY BUDGET LINE								
(Please prepare one)								
Project title: International Conservation Caucus Foundation // ICCF								
Project number: Generating enhanced political will for natural resource management and conservation								
Project executing partner: GFL-11207-14AC0003-SB-007067								
Project reporting period: CCN								
From:	US\$	US\$	US\$	US\$	US\$	US\$	US\$	US\$
To:	Prior Year	Cash Co-finance	Actual	In-kind Co-finance	Actual	Total for year	Actual	Cummulative
	Actual Total	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Actual Total
UNEP BUDGET LINE*	A	B	C	D	E	F=B+D	G=C+E	H=A+G
1100 Project person	-	50,000	915,264	-	78,100	50,000	993,364	993,364
1200 Consultants	-	-	53,028	-	-	-	53,028	53,028
1300 Administrative	-	-	45,341	-	-	-	45,341	45,341
1600 Travel on office	-	-	197,806	-	-	-	197,806	197,806
2100 Sub-contracts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2200 Sub-contracts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2300 Sub-contracts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3200 training (study	-	-	250	-	311,025	-	311,275	311,275
3300 Meetings/conf	-	700,000	292,768	1,300,000	159,287	2,000,000	452,055	452,055
4100 Expendable ec	-	-	7,216	-	-	-	7,216	7,216
4200 Non-expendab	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4300 Premises (offic	-	80,000	115,099	-	-	80,000	115,099	115,099
5100 Operation and	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5200 Reporting cost	-	70,000	60,178	-	-	70,000	60,178	60,178
5300 Sundry(comm	-	-	21,913	-	-	-	21,913	21,913
5400 Hospitality and	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5500 Evaluation (co	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL COSTS	-	900,000	1,708,864	1,300,000	548,412	2,200,000	2,257,276	2,257,276

* The actual expenditures should be reported in accordance with the specific budget lines of the approved budget (Appendix 2) of the pro

Name: Clare Falcone Title: CCN Secretary Name of Project Manager: Olivia Blanchette
 Duly authorize: Signature: [Signature] Date: 1/14/2022
 Signature: [Signature] Date: 1/14/2022

4 THEORY OF CHANGE AT EVALUATION

60. A Theory of Change (ToC) diagram was not developed for the project at design stage and has been formulated for this evaluation to analyze the project's structure and causal logic. The ToC builds on the project's Results Framework with the inclusion of a reconstructed project objective, intermediate states and long-term impact statement.

61. The project addresses systemic levels of change by influencing political will at congressional levels and promoting new legislation, while raising public awareness and organizing civil society stakeholders around conservation issues, with emphasis on sustainable tourism and participatory management planning in national parks and protected areas. The vehicles for achieving these are the creation (or strengthening) of Environmental Caucuses and formation of multi-stakeholder Environmental Councils in the three countries. Knowledge management and exposure to best practices are transversal drivers that feed into these processes.

Table 5. Proposed Reconstructed Results Framework

Formulation in original project document	Formulation for Reconstructed ToC at Evaluation Inception (RTOC)	Comments and Justification for Reformulation
LONG TERM IMPACT		
Long-term impacts are not identified in the project document.	Sustainable health and resilience of the biodiversity ecosystems are restored in protected areas of Mexico, Peru and Colombia.	The project document does not specifically refer to long-term impacts.
PROJECT OBJECTIVE		
Create and strengthen conservation caucuses of Members in national congresses of Colombia, Mexico, and Peru to build political will for enhanced management of natural resources for development and conservation.	To build political will and develop capacities to enhance and enforce legal frameworks for the management and conservation of natural resources, through the creation and strengthening of Congressional Conservation Caucuses and sustainable Conservation Councils in Mexico, Peru and Colombia.	The project addresses a broader range of issues and expectations than the Caucuses: Adoption of policy resolutions, preparation and introduction of legislation, broad stakeholder consultations for protected area management plans, and application of best practices (Outcomes 1.2-3). In this context, the strengthened national congressional caucuses are an outcome (as stated for Outcome 1.1) and key driver, rather than the project's objective.
INTERMEDIATE STATES		
The identification of Intermediate States was not required at the time of the project's design.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Environmental legislation and policies proposed by legislative caucuses have been approved. 2. Best practices are adopted and applied to country priorities (<i>Colombia:</i> 	The project document does not refer to Intermediate States.

Formulation in original project document	Formulation for Reconstructed ToC at Evaluation Inception (RTOC)	Comments and Justification for Reformulation
	<p>Support adoption of a sustainable development plan for the Orinoco region, <i>Mexico</i>: Develop of a Plan of Action for Protected Areas, <i>Peru</i>: integrate valuation of BD and ecosystem services stressing outreach to the existing Commission for Andean-Amazonian-Afro Peruvian People, Environment and Ecology).</p> <p>3. Sustainable tourism and participatory management plans are implemented in targeted National Parks and Protected Areas.</p>	
OUTCOMES		
1.1 Self-sustaining legislative caucuses with the capacity to support conservation legislation.	Conservation legislation is approved at country level with the support of self-sustaining legislative caucuses.	There is considerable overlap between the project objective, Outcome 1.1 and Outputs 1.1.1 and 1.1.3 as initially formulated.
1.2 Enhanced cooperation between the legislative members and the Executive Branch agencies of their respective countries is promoted.		As stated, this could be considered an output.
1.3 Broader knowledge of the importance of good conservation management is increased through adoption of conservation best practices (i.e. proposal/adoption of model conservation legislation by the legislatures in the target countries)		Broader knowledge can be considered an output, which UNEP defines as the availability of new products, services or gains in knowledge, abilities, and awareness of intended beneficiaries/users.
2.1 Links between best conservation practices in national parks and sustainable tourism are improved.		This can be considered an output, unless the benefits or changes resulting from the improved links are stated.
OUTPUTS		

Formulation in original project document	Formulation for Reconstructed ToC at Evaluation Inception (RTOC)	Comments and Justification for Reformulation
1.1.1 Increased caucus membership at start of grant by 10% in Colombia, 20% in Mexico, 10% in Peru.		There seem to be overlaps with Output 1.1.3, which also uses caucus membership as a target indicator. If there is an overlap this output could be reformulated as an indicator for 1.1.3.
1.1.2: Outreach to and recruitment of conservation opinion leaders in the target countries		
1.1.3: Established sustainable conservation councils in each target country		The target for this output refers to caucus membership, which may overlap with Output 1.1.1. If so, this would constitute the output.
1.2.1: Widespread and detailed consultations among stakeholders to better define conservation needs as perceived in the countries themselves.	Priority needs and actions required to protect, manage and sustainably use natural resources and ecosystems are identified through widespread and detailed consultations with stakeholders.	
1.2.2: Encourage Members to take stock of opportunities and needs in their countries' conservation systems and policies, by means of workshops, dialogues, briefings, and field visits.	Caucus members achieve a better understanding of opportunities and needs in their countries' conservation systems and policies, by means of workshops, dialogues, briefings, and field visits.	As formulated, Output 1.2.2 describes an activity. The reconstructed Output focuses on the knowledge and understanding gained.
1.3.1: Study of regional and global models of conservation legislation and fiscal reform measures		
1.3.2: Adoption of appropriate resolutions and declarations during the policymaker Summit, and their wide publicity		This is a higher-level output on the results chain that feeds into an intermediate state.
1.3.3: Preparation and introduction of new legislation, as necessary and appropriate, in the view of the Members themselves		This is a higher-level output on the results chain that feeds into an Intermediate State.

62. The Results Framework suggests a logical sequence of causal pathways that are described below. The project's activities in the three countries at central government level, which focus on establishing environmental Caucuses within national congress, are complemented by the support to multi-stakeholder councils that promote inclusive management plans and sustainable tourism within national parks and protected areas. The progress achieved towards improved conservation legislation, fiscal policies, and sustainable

tourism that are based on best practice, are key to generating new income sources for financing conservation and encouraging inclusive national park/protected area management planning with a broader spectrum of stakeholders.

63. The review of the Results Framework (Section 2) led to the reconstruction of the project objective. The objective at design was to "...*Create and strengthen Conservation Caucuses of Members in national congresses of Colombia, Mexico, and Peru to build political will for enhanced management of natural resources for development and conservation.*" This did not reflect the broader range of initiatives and deliverables – conservation councils, study of best practices, drafting and adoption of legislation and resolutions, protected area management plans with stakeholder involvement, sustainable tourism - for which the Caucuses (and environmental councils) were drivers, or at best an outcome as stated in Outcome 1.1.

64. The reconstructed project impact statement looks at a broader strategic scenario: Sustainable health and resilience of the biodiversity ecosystems are restored in protected areas of Mexico, Peru and Colombia. This builds on the reconstructed objective of building political will and developing capacities to enhance and enforce legal frameworks to manage and conserve natural resources, through the creation and congressional Conservation Caucuses and parallel Conservation Councils.

65. The Reconstructed Results Framework includes three Intermediate States that are generated from the achieved outcomes and establish enabling conditions for achieving the project objective:

- Best practices are adopted and applied to country priorities (identified in the project document).
- Environmental legislation and policies proposed by legislative Caucuses have been approved.
- Sustainable tourism and participatory management plans are implemented in targeted National Parks and Protected Areas.

66. 65. The analysis of the Results Framework (Figure 5) suggests two pathways or results chains that are causally linked and connect with the expected outcomes: The *first pathway* leads to the adoption of environmental legislation and policies proposed by legislative Caucuses, integrating Outcomes 1.1-2. This pathway has the following sequence of outputs, which are causally linked and mutually supportive.

67. *Creating the institutional framework* (Outputs 1.1.1-1.1.2) provides the vehicle for delivering many of outputs across the pathway. The legislative Caucuses are the primary target group and recipient of project support and are expected to drive the project's momentum along this pathway.

68. *Raising awareness of best practices and capacities to apply improved models* (Outputs 1.2.2. and 1.3.1, feeding into 2.1.4.). The knowledge generated from the study of conservation models and fiscal reform measures (Output 1.3.1), combined with stocktaking exercises, workshops and field trips (Output 1.2.2) is fundamental to guide Caucus initiatives at higher stages of this pathway.

69. *Applying knowledge and capacities gained* to improve the legal and policy frameworks for conservation. The knowledge gained and exposure to model approaches are applied by the Caucuses to promote conservation legislation, sustainable tourism, and apply best practices (Outputs 2.1.4, 1.3.2, 1.3.3). The frequency of Output 1.3.3 linkages, both with other outputs and with project outcomes, underscores the importance of this deliverable.

70. The *second pathway* is conducive to participatory management plans and sustainable tourism in national parks and protected areas. To a large extent, this is driven by the establishment of Environmental Councils with multi-stakeholder representation that provide the vehicle for delivering many of the outputs on the pathway. The second pathway follows a sequence of actions that are connected to and implemented parallel to those of the first pathway:

71. This begins with the *establishment of environmental councils* (Outputs 1.1.2, 1.1.3) that represent the main institutional actors for many of the outputs on the pathway. As noted, the councils are the primary target group and recipients of project support and are expected to drive many of the activities and outputs that are articulated along the pathway.

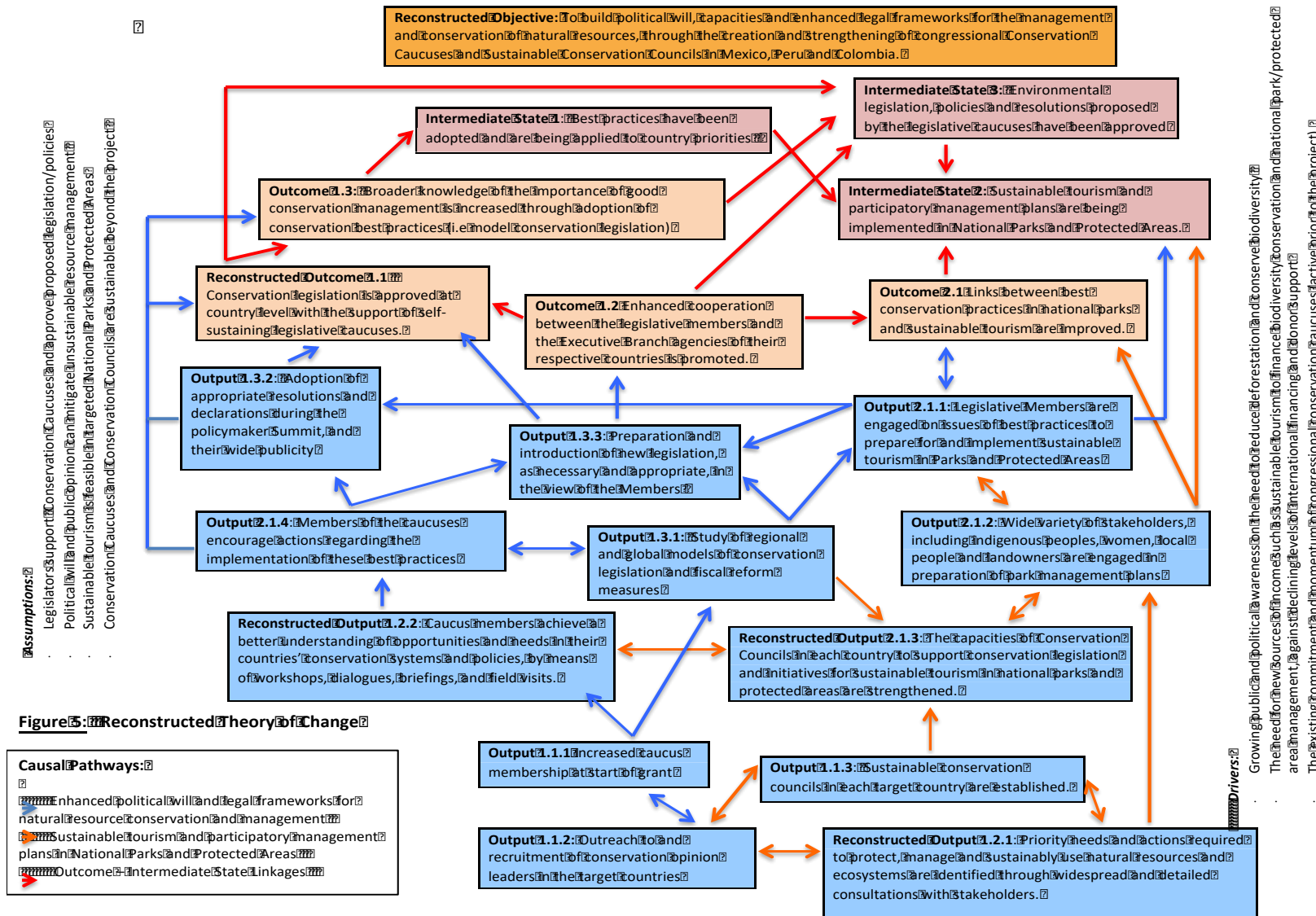
72. *Awareness raising and strengthened council capacities*, through exposure to conservation models and broad stakeholder consultations (Outputs 1.2.1, 1.3.1). The knowledge and capacities that are generated enable the councils to better understand the interactions between parks, biodiversity and tourism, identify country priorities, and implement a programme of work (Output 2.1.3), and encourage broader stakeholder participation in national park/protected area management planning (Output 2.1.2), while supporting – and benefiting from – the efforts of legislative members to promote best practices for sustainable tourism (Output 2.1.1).

73. The *knowledge and capacities gained are applied to council-driven initiatives* that include the drafting of participatory management plans for national parks and protected areas (Output 2.1.2), which are linked to legislation on best practices and sustainable tourism (Output 2.1.1). Both stand out as key deliverables that directly precede Outcomes 2.1 and 1.3 and connect to several outputs on both pathways.

74. The analysis indicates that the Results Framework is consistent with the results chains that connect outputs to outcomes, with a high incidence of causal linkages among outputs from different project components. This raises the potential for synergies between deliverables and outcomes that are mutually supportive.

75. The pathways are both vertical and transversal. In addition to leading to the outcomes of each component, they intersect at different stages. Outputs that strengthen institutionality - for example, establishing Caucuses and Councils), raising awareness and capacities to implement good practices - cut across project components and support several outcomes. This suggests that there were opportunities for joint implementation and feedback between project components at key stages of implementation, to maximize the project's cumulative effect.

Figure 4. Reconstructed Theory of Change



76. The ToC analysis includes the consideration of the drivers that move implementation forward and can be influenced by the project, and by assumptions that are outside the project's control:

Drivers:

- Growing public and political awareness on the need to reduce deforestation and conserve biodiversity. Increased environmental degradation from unregulated land use and resource extraction, as reflected in rising deforestation and loss of biodiversity.
- The need to develop new sources of income such as sustainable tourism to finance biodiversity conservation and national park/protected area management, against declining levels of international financing and donor support. Sustainable tourism is highlighted for its income generating potential by policymakers.
- The existing commitment and momentum of conservation Caucuses (active prior to the project).
- The project's design was responsive to gender inclusiveness and foresaw the incorporation of women legislators to Caucus leadership positions.

Assumptions:

- Legislators and decision-makers will support the work of the Conservation Caucuses and approve proposed legislation and policies (against competing interests).
- National Parks and Protected Areas engage the participation of vulnerable stakeholder groups in their management plans.
- Financing is available to support the functioning of Caucuses and Councils during and after the project.
- An overriding assumption is that the approved 24-month implementation period was adequate to deliver results in three countries with different legislative and electoral calendars.

5 EVALUATION FINDINGS

5.1 Strategic Relevance

(Performance rating: Highly Satisfactory)

5.1.1 Alignment to UNEP Strategic Priorities

77. The project was relevant to several Sub-programmes of UNEP's 2014- 2017 Medium-Term Strategy and 2020-2021 Programme of Work. The project objective and planned deliverables showed consistency with Sub-programmes 3: Healthy and productive ecosystems, 4: Environmental governance, and 6: Resource efficiency (Figure 4).

78. Project implementation supported these Sub-programmes and their indicators to varying extents. The most tangible contributions were to Sub-programme 4 through the creation and strengthening of the legislative Caucuses, and to Sub-programme 6 with the adoption of sustainable resource management frameworks (Colombia and Mexico) and approval of legislation (in the three countries).

Table 6. Project relevance to UNEP Sub-programmes and Expected Accomplishments

Expected Accomplishment	Indicator
Sub-programme 3: (a) The health and productivity of marine, freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems are institutionalized in education, monitoring and cross-sector and transboundary collaboration frameworks at the national and international levels	ii) The number of countries and groups of countries that improve their cross-sectoral and transboundary collaboration frameworks for marine and terrestrial ecosystem management with the assistance of UNEP
Sub-programme 4: (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 SDGs	(i) The number of countries that have enhanced institutional capacity and legal frameworks to fully implement the multilateral environmental agreements and to achieve internationally agreed environmental goals, including the SDGs as a result of UNEP support
Sub-programme 6: (b) Public, private and financial sectors increasingly adopt and implement sustainable management frameworks and practices	(i) Increase in the number of public and private stakeholders that base their decision-making on life cycle approaches

Sources: Project document, Final Report

79. In all countries, project implementation was consistent with strategic areas of the UNSDCF and UNDAF Cooperation Frameworks. There were tangible contributions to Colombia's UNSDCF through the strengthening of Caucus and Council membership and outreach, and to Mexico's through the approval of the General Law on Sustainable Forestry.

Table 7. Project relevance to Country UN Cooperation Frameworks

Cooperation Framework Strategic Area	Expected Result
<i>Colombia UNSDCF 2020-2023</i> Strategic Area 3: Technical assistance to accelerate catalytic SDGs	3.3: Government institutions with created and strengthened capacity to implement strategies that promote sustainable consumption and production patterns and the preservation and sustainable use of natural resources, with the support of the UN Country Team to the efforts of the State
<i>Mexico UNSDCF 2020-2025</i> Work Area 3 – Green economy and Climate Change	Direct Effect 6: Conservation of natural resources, ecosystems and biodiversity considerations under Direct Effect 6
<i>Peru UNDAF 2017-2021</i>	1.1: By 2021, people in situations of vulnerability, poverty and discrimination, improve their access to livelihoods and productive employment and decent work, through sustainable development pathways that strengthen social and natural capital, integrating adequate risk management.

Source: Project Final Report

5.1.2 Alignment to GEF/donor/partner strategic priorities

80. The project was relevant in its design and objective to GEF 7’s Biodiversity Focal Objective BD4, under Programme 9: “Managing the human-biodiversity interface”, and Programme 10: “Integration of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services into Development and Finance Planning”. ^[13] Project contributions were mixed: The project succeeded in creating or strengthening legislative constituencies in the three countries. There was less correspondence with Programme 10 in light of the limited progress that was made towards incorporating biodiversity valuation within policy instruments and fiscal reforms (a central aspect of the project).

81. The Caucuses were supported by a broad range of partners, some of who contributed financially to their operation. These included multi-bilateral cooperation agencies and embassies, government agencies, national and international NGOs, and research institutions that viewed Caucus initiatives as supportive of their own programme and policy priorities. In Mexico, Caucus efforts to formulate and ultimately approve national legislation for sustainable forestry were assisted by Mexico’s National Forestry Council (CONAF), representing a wide range of public, private and communal (*ejido*) forest stakeholders, and by POLEA, a civil society organization that promotes environmental legislation and policy. ¹³

¹³ Project partners by country are listed in Annex

5.1.3 Relevance to global regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities

82. Project support was centered on legislative Caucuses with the aim of enhancing the national legal/policy frameworks for environmental conservation and sustainable resource management, and of promoting sustainable tourism within national parks and protected areas as a domestic source of income. Different agenda priorities were pursued in each country – sustainable forest governance in Mexico; land and ocean ecosystems management in Colombia; bans on single-use plastics in Colombia and Peru – that were determined by the Caucuses. In all cases, Caucus agendas have shown high relevance to the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (Figure 6).

Table 8. Relevance to 2030 Sustainable Development Goals

Sustainable Development Goal	Project design and implementation
SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. Indicator 5.5.1 Proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments and (b) local governments	At least one woman co-chair of each country Caucus
SDG 12: Responsible Production and Consumption Indicator 12.4.1 Number of parties to international multilateral environmental agreements on hazardous waste, and other chemicals that meet their commitments and obligations in transmitting information as required by each relevant agreement. Target 12.5 "By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse."	Approved legislation on plastics prohibition in Colombia and Peru
SDG 14: Life Under Water Target 14.1 By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution Indicator 14.1.1 Index of coastal eutrophication and floating plastic debris density	Approved legislation banning plastics in Colombia and Peru and Colombia. Sustainable resource management plan for San Andres archipelago in Colombia Creation of Oceans Conservation Caucus in Colombia
SDG 15: Life on Land Target 15.1 By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements Indicator	Approval of General Law on Sustainable Forestry in Mexico Sustainable resource management plan for San Andres archipelago in Colombia

Sustainable Development Goal	Project design and implementation
<p>Indicator 15.1.2 Proportion of important sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity that are covered by protected areas, by ecosystem type</p> <p>Target 15.2 By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally</p> <p>Indicator 15.2.1 Progress towards sustainable forest management.</p>	<p>Sustainable resource management plan for San Andres archipelago in Colombia</p> <p>Approval of General Law on Sustainable Forestry in Mexico</p>

83. Project design was relevant to Aichi Target 2, which stated that biodiversity values would be incorporated into national accounting and reporting systems by 2020. However, little progress was achieved towards this result with the (post-project) exception of approved fiscal amendments for the management of community forests in Mexico, based on their environmental and social value. The project also sought to promote sustainable tourism as a positive incentive for conservation, in line with Aichi Target 3, although limited progress was achieved.

84. The project was highly relevant to conservation issues affecting the three countries. All contain high percentages of global biodiversity yet faced shortcomings in mobilizing investment for biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource management. This deficit was reinforced by the decline of international conservation funding for middle-income countries. The project was conceived with the aim of enhancing legal and policy frameworks for conservation and creating sources of domestic financing through sustainable tourism - balancing the drive for tourism revenues with biodiversity conservation to avoid exceeding environmental thresholds. This was pursued at congressional and policy levels, by strengthening the capacity of Conservation Caucuses to implement their own legislative agendas based on best practice. Project activities were country-driven and supportive of Caucus priorities, i.e. sustainable forestry in Mexico, ecosystems management in Colombia, protected area management and banning of single-use plastics in Colombia and Peru.


5.1.4 Complementarity with relevant existing interventions/coherence

85. The project was aligned with ICCF's core mandates and built on its ongoing work in the region. ICCF and CCN had reached out to legislators in several countries who indicated interest in conservation and were positioned in their national congress to take pro-conservation actions. At the time of the project's approval the Caucus model had already been introduced in several countries. An active Caucus had been formed in Colombia with a professional secretariat and a calendar of activities. Preliminary exploratory assistance was underway in Mexico, Peru and Paraguay

86. The project benefitted from high levels of country ownership. The Caucuses set legislative agenda priorities in each country. The project played a supporting role that facilitated the development and implementation of Caucus agendas, as was the case with sustainable forest management in Mexico. One of the project's strengths was its ability to align with Caucus priorities and strengthen their ability to move forward.

87. By focusing on improving the legal and policy frameworks for biodiversity conservation, the project contributed to various GEF initiatives whose implementation and potential impact were conditioned by existing legislation. These included¹⁴:

- IADB: Consolidation of the National System of Protected Areas (SINAP) at National and Regional Levels (Mexico)
- GEF-FAO: Implementing the Socio-Ecosystem Connectivity Approach to Conserve and Sustainable Use Biodiversity in the Caribbean Region of Colombia
- GEF-UNDP: Strengthening Management of the Protected Area System to Better Conserve Endangered Species and their Habitats (Mexico)
- GEF-UNDP: Transforming Management of Protected Area/Landscape Complexes to Strengthen Ecosystem (Peru)
- GEF-UNDP: Designing and Implementing a National Sub-System of Marine Protected Areas (Colombia)
- GEF-IFAD: Conservation and Sustainable Use of High-Andean Ecosystems through Compensation of Environmental Services for Rural Poverty Alleviation and Social Inclusion
- GEF-World Bank: Strengthening Sustainable Management of the Guano Islands, Isles and Capes National Reserve System (Peru)
- GEF-World Bank: Strengthening Biodiversity Conservation through the National Protected Areas Program (Peru)
- GEF-World Bank: Forest Conservation and Sustainability in the Heart of the Colombian Amazon

88. There were also complementarities with the country programme priorities of international cooperation agencies such as COSUDE (Switzerland), the EU and  AICS (Italy) that supported the Caucuses both technically and financially. The assistance that was given to the development and adoption of Caucus agendas was indirectly supportive of their own mandates and country initiatives.

¹⁴ As listed in the project document.

5.2 Quality of Project Design

(Performance rating: Moderately Satisfactory)

89. The project's main design strength was to focus interventions at systemic levels – political, legislative – that condition and influence change processes. The immediate project objective centered on establishing the legislative Conservation Caucus model in the three countries. By doing this, the project was able to generate a mechanism that was – and remains – strategically positioned to influence legislation and budgets for environmental conservation, protected area and forest management, sustainable tourism, and fiscal reform measures to encourage sustainable resource use. This is reflected in the approval of new and amended conservation legislation, driven by Caucuses in the three countries.

90. The project included a robust outreach component that enabled Congressional members to visit protected areas, consult with diverse stakeholders and technical experts, and engage with Executive Branch agencies in the formulation of new laws or amendments to existing laws. The support for consultations and technical assistance that were provided by the project were critical to the design and approval of Mexico's General Law of Sustainable Forests. Project facilitation of Caucus consultations with the government executive branch, other stakeholders and specialized knowledge contributed towards Peru's ban on single-use plastics and sustainable resource management legislation for Colombia's San Andres archipelago.

91. The project's ability to adjust to changing political contexts, legislative priorities and Caucus agendas reflects both on CCN's management capabilities and implementation approach. The Caucuses determined their own legislative and policy priorities, which evolved over time yet received consistent support. In several cases planned outputs were partially delivered or adjusted to Caucus priorities - i.e. the creation of Conservation Councils in Peru and Mexico, the study of global best practices and model legislation, transferring best practices to pre-identified country initiatives. However, these variations were more the result of Caucus autonomy and evolving contexts and priorities, rather than poor performance.

92. The implementation framework was well suited to the issues and target groups addressed by the project. The designation of ICCF/CCN as executing agency enabled the project to build on its ongoing initiatives with national Congresses, providing direct access to the main target groups in each country. This also permitted the project to leverage support from the ICCF-affiliated International Conservation Corps as happened in Peru. Likewise, the presence of core ICCF/CCN personnel in each country allowed the project to reimburse staff time on a pro-rated basis. This arrangement lowered the project's overhead costs and was cost-effective against inconsistent implementation, Congressional recesses, political unrest and COVID-19 that affected project delivery. Ultimately the project was able to sustain two no-cost extensions over an 18-month period.

93. Project implementation was consistent with the management measures included in the GEF Safeguards Plan that was submitted at CEO Approval. The project did not have negative

environmental impacts, and has supported biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource management initiatives that are likely to have positive effects. Consultations were held with different stakeholder groups, including forest and indigenous communities in and around protected areas. The legislative Caucuses have raised the level of collaboration between Congress members of different political parties, and with agencies of the Executive Branch.

94. There were also design weaknesses: Several elements of the project Results Framework were reconstructed under the Theory of Change analysis. There were overlaps between the project objective, first outcome and related outputs; the project objective of creating sustained Conservation Caucuses was duplicated under Outcome 1.1. The approval of new legislation, policy and fiscal reform, participatory protected area management plans, and transfers of best practices - all of which carried longer-term and potentially transformative impacts - were designated as outputs.

95. A critical design flaw was the project's two-year duration. Project implementation and delivery were highly vulnerable to external variables that were outside the project's control: There were turnovers of Congress, changing political junctures and agenda priorities, and periods of political unrest that undermined activities in Colombia and Peru in particular. Project timelines were not in sync with the dynamics of the environment it sought to influence. The project's slow implementation - at times interrupted - led to the project's extension from January 2019 to March 2021. The low likelihood of delivering expected results over a two-year period was overlooked by project's pre-approval appraisal. Interviewed ICCF/CCN staff could not explain why the project had been designed and approved for such a short period.

Rating of Project Design Quality

96. Project design was reviewed and rated with weighted criteria used by UNEP EO. The design ratings are shown below.

Table 9. Rating of Project Design Quality

SECTION	RATING (1-6)	WEIGHTING	TOTAL (Rating x Weighting/10)
Operating Context	3	.04	0.12
Project Preparation	4	1.2	0.48
Strategic Relevance	6	0.8	0.48
Intended Results and Casualty	4	1.6	0.64
Logical Framework and Monitoring	5	0.8	0.4
Governance and Supervision Arrangements	5	0.4	0.2
Partnerships	5	0.8	0.4
Learning, Communications and Outreach	5	0.4	0.2

SECTION	RATING (1-6)	WEIGHTING	TOTAL (Rating x Weighting/10)
Financial Planning/Budgeting	5	0.4	0.2
Efficiency	3	0.8	0.24
Risk Identification and Social Safeguards	4	0.8	0.32
Sustainability/Replication and Catalytic Effects	5	1.2	0.6
Identified Project Design Weaknesses/Gaps	0 (n/a)	0.4	0
Performance rating of Project Design Quality	Total Score:	4.2 - Moderately Satisfactory	

5.3 Nature of the External Context

(Performance rating: Moderately Unfavorable)

97. The project focused most of its activities on legislative Caucuses that were composed by members of Congress in the three countries. As such, the project was very much affected by the Congressional dynamics, political junctures, and competing legislative/policy agendas of each country. Challenges were faced in creating Conservation Caucuses and building common agendas across party divides; the level of political polarization was particularly pronounced in Peru. The project also faced challenges in sustaining momentum against the periodic turnover of legislators, who were not eligible for re-election in Mexico and Peru.

98. As noted by the Final Project Report, working with legislatures always presents the risk of political upheaval or instability, and individual contexts need to be adequately analyzed to determine their feasibility.¹⁵ The project was not an exception, and faced periods of political unrest in Colombia in 2019 and Peru between 2018 and 2020, leading to the closure of Peru's Congress and legislative Caucus until 2021.

99. The final year of the project coincided with the onset of COVID-19. Travel was discontinued and meetings were held online. This was not considered to have had significant negative effect on project implementation.

¹⁵ Final Project Report (2021), p. 27

5.4 Effectiveness

(Performance rating: Moderately Satisfactory)

100. The project played a facilitative role in support of the Caucuses and their environmental agendas in each country. This was done by providing organizational support, technical assistance and facilitating legislator interactions with executive government branches, technical agencies and specialists, in addition to field exposure to local communities, national parks and issues on the ground. Through these actions, the project has contributed to the approval of new legislation. These include national forest legislation in Mexico, laws for ecosystems conservation and sustainable resource management in Colombia, and national bans on single-use plastics in Peru and Colombia. It is likely that many Caucus-driven legislation initiatives would have developed without the project's intervention, although at a slower pace with less support for consultations and consensus-building across political lines.

101. The Terms of Reference raise the following strategic question: To what extent are the caucuses operating now following the project closure? More than three years after the project's completion, findings are positive. Caucuses continue to function in the three countries, with documented examples of legislation proposed and approved, and continued consultations with other branches of government and external stakeholders. Peru's Caucus was re-activated after more than a year's inactivity due to the closure of Congress. Sustainability is one of the project's most outstanding features.

5.4.1 Availability of Outputs

(Performance rating: Moderately Satisfactory)

102. Evaluation findings on project effectiveness are evidence-based and consider the adoption of new or amended legislation and policies, the continuity of Conservation Caucuses and Councils, and the support given to conservation initiatives at country level. Other indicators of effectiveness that appear in the results framework include the transfer and adoption of best practices, development of sustainable tourism initiatives in national parks and protected areas, and approved national park/protected area management plans that were formulated with the participation of forest and indigenous communities, in addition to other affected groups.

103. Seven of twelve planned outputs (58%) were fully completed by the end of the project's extension in 2021, according to the Final Project Report. The evaluation's assessment generally coincides with this estimation. Figure 8 provides a summary analysis of output delivery¹⁶ that considers reported achievement levels, performance targets and stakeholder perceptions. The Performance rating suggests that overall output delivery was moderately satisfactory.

¹⁶ Based on UNEP EO's rating score criteria

104. The project's most effective performance was in the delivery of outputs related to the creation and strengthening of Conservation Caucuses – in essence, the project's institutional-operational framework – under the first outcome.¹⁷ Caucus membership targets were reached in the three countries, although political unrest in Peru led to its discontinuity between 2020-2021.

105. *Colombia's* Conservation Caucus raised its membership numbers (from 40 to 72) and level of interaction with the Executive Branch, private sector, NGO and cooperation agencies through roundtable discussions and training events. In addition, an Oceans Caucus was created to expand the legal discussion on marine issues. During the project period, Colombia's Conservation Caucus was the main driver behind the approval of the following legislation:

- The *Ley de Páramos* (Andean highlands) for the restoration and sustainable use of these ecosystems (2018). The law includes provisions for funding from the electricity sector to the National Parks of Colombia (PNN).
- Colombia's accession of the Minamata Convention on Mercury (2018)
- Law P / L 110 2017 that prohibits the use bags and other plastic materials in the Archipelago Department of San Andrés, Providencia and Santa Catalina y Islas (2019)

106. The project supported the creation of *Mexico's* Conservation Caucus, which focused efforts on revising existing forest legislation. This ultimately led to the approval of the *Ley General de Desarrollo Forestal Sustentable* (General Law of Sustainable Forestry) in 2018, in collaboration with the Executive Branch and supported by field consultations in Campeche and Oaxaca states. The law includes dispositions to preserve forest ecosystems and biodiversity, address climate change, and support sustainable development in rural and indigenous communities. The Mexican Congress also reviewed the tax legislation for Mexican forest communities (outcome 2.1) considering environmental and socio-economic aspects, leading to proposed fiscal amendments.

107. Peru's Conservation Caucus was created with multi-party membership. The project's ability to catalyze cooperation within a highly polarized political environment is considered the project's greatest contribution.¹⁸ Within the Caucus, a Commission on Andean, Amazonian and Afro-Peruvian Peoples, Environment and Ecology was founded. The work of the Peruvian Caucus was interrupted by the closure of Congress due to political unrest, undermining the delivery of related outputs, yet was re-established after the project's termination. Despite these obstacles, the Caucus was able to draft legislation for the elimination of single-use plastics, plastic straws and technopar that was approved as national law.

¹⁷ These include Outputs 1.1.1-1.1.3, 1.2.2, 1.3.2-3., 2.1.1., 2.1.3-4

¹⁸ This view was expressed by Congress member Jeny López.

108. At regional level, the project supported Caucus participation in the adoption of the Mount Vernon Declaration for promoting regional cooperation and best practices for sustainable natural resource management. In 2019, the Caucuses issued a Manifesto to promote the conservation of the Amazon region and Colombia's Protected Areas, in conjunction with the Leticia Pact and Amazon Parliamentary League (PARLAMAZ).

109. Partial progress was achieved towards outputs for the creation of Conservation Councils, stakeholder participation in protected area management plans, and the development of sustainable tourism initiatives. Colombia's Conservation Council developed the largest membership among the three countries, with over 80 partners.¹⁹ Although Councils were not formally established in Mexico and Peru, the Caucuses of both countries engaged with external partners on a smaller scale.

110. In all countries there were outreach and consultations with other stakeholders.²⁰ The available data suggests that much of this centered on field visits to national parks and protected areas, and on round table discussions with government agencies, environmental specialists and national park/protected area authorities. Representative examples include the Round Table Dialogue on Challenges and Opportunities for the Conservation of Natural Areas in Mexico, supported by the Conservation Caucus and Climate Change Commission of the Chamber of Deputies. Mexico's *Política y Legislación Ambiental* (POLEA), a civil society organization, supported field trips and discussions on the effects of climate change on forests. Peru's Caucus organized a field visit to the Amazon region with multi-party representation to consult local communities and national park managers on park conservation and buffer zone management. Peru also implemented a course for legislators to strengthen their understanding of environmental and natural resource management issues. Colombia's Congressional Staff Training Series focused on biodiversity conservation with speakers from various sectors, raising the awareness of legislators. There were field visits by Colombian legislators to ocean national parks to better understand the issues affecting ocean and coastal conservation. Outreach and consultation with Mexico's National Forestry Corporation (CONAF) and affected community organizations were instrumental in formulating the General Law on Sustainable Forestry. Likewise, collaboration between the Peru's Caucus and Executive Branch were key to the approval of national legislation banning plastics. The Conservation Caucus Roundtable with SERNAP in Peru led to the approval of a MoU with the ICCF Group to support the management of four protected areas.

111. Roundtable meetings and field visits to national parks and protected areas involved consultations with forest and indigenous communities, civil society representatives and NGOs. However, their influence on park management plans—foreseen under output 2.1.2 - conservation legislation or policy reforms was not evident. A clear documented exception was the contribution of on-the-ground field consultations to the formulation and approval of Mexico's

¹⁹ 2021 Project Implementation Review (PIR)

²⁰ Outputs 1.2.1 and 2.1.2.

General Law on Sustainable Forestry. In Peru, a commission for indigenous and afro-Peruvian peoples was created within the Caucus, yet its projection – and that of the Caucus – were undermined by the closure of Congress and suspension of legislative sessions. There seems to have been less progress in the study of fiscal reform measures under output 1.3.1. Amendments to community forest tax legislation were recently proposed by Mexico’s Congress, reflecting continued Caucus initiatives beyond the project. The 2019 PIR noted that further legislative engagement on biodiversity valuation in the context of fiscal reform would have been desirable.

Table 10. Reported Achievement of Outputs with Target Indicators with Evaluation Comments

Outputs	Target Indicators ²¹	Reported Level of Completion ²²	Evaluation Comments
<p>1.1.1: Increased caucus membership at start of grant by 10% in Colombia, 20% in Mexico, 10% in Peru</p>	<p>Caucuses established and growing in Peru and Mexico.</p> <p>Increased membership in the Colombian Caucus by 10% to 44</p> <p>Increased membership in the Peru and Mexico caucuses by 10% and 20%</p> <p>4 additional Conservation Council Members in Colombia, Create Conservation Council in Mexico and Peru</p> <p>Caucus leadership put forward a new national level interventions to</p>	<p>Completed in Colombia and Mexico.</p> <p>Ongoing in Peru.</p>	<p>The output was delivered. Caucus membership targets for the start of the project were reached or exceeded. The Caucuses continue to be active in all countries, three years after the project’s termination.</p> <p>Membership of the Mexican Caucus stood at 39 members, surpassing the 20% goal through two election cycles.</p> <p>Colombian Caucus membership increased to 72, far members, surpassing the goal of 10% across an election cycle.</p> <p>Peru’s Conservation Caucus was created and reached 23 members, yet was discontinued in 2018 when Congress was closed due to political unrest. The Caucus was reactivated in 2021 and is active.</p> <p>The Colombian Oceans Caucus was created and had 50 members by the end of the project.</p> <p>Conservation Councils are no longer in operation although Caucuses collaborate with different partners in all countries.</p> <p>Amazonian Sub-commissions linked to the Caucuses were established in Colombia and Peru, as part of the larger PARLAMAZ initiative for countries of the Amazon basin.</p> <p>Female co-chairs were appointed to the Conservation Caucuses in the</p>

²¹ The same indicators are applied to both outcomes and outputs in the project results framework.

²² Based on the 2021 Project Implementation Review (PIR) and Final Project Report, 2021

Outputs	Target Indicators ²¹	Reported Level of Completion ²²	Evaluation Comments
	stem biodiversity loss in each country. At least one woman as a co-chair of the caucus in each country		three countries <i>Performance rating: Satisfactory (5)</i>
1.1.2: Outreach to and recruitment of conservation opinion leaders in the target countries		Completed	The output was delivered. It was enabled by a robust set of activities, even where Councils were not formed: There were in-country roundtable dialogues with governmental and non-governmental actors, field visits to national parks and recruitment of partners that supported Caucus activities. <i>Evaluation: Satisfactory (5)</i>
1.1.3: Established sustainable conservation councils in each target country		Ongoing	This output was partially delivered. A Conservation Council was established in Colombia only. Councils were not formed in Peru or Mexico, although in practice all Caucuses received technical support and guidance from external partners. Colombia's Council included financially contributing members ²³ within a network of 70+ partners. Other partners that contributed financially to the Caucus activities included FAO in Peru and POLEA (a CSO supporting environmental legislation) in Mexico. This output was linked to Output 1.2.1. <i>Performance rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory (4)</i>
Output 1.2.1: Widespread and detailed consultations among stakeholders to better define conservation needs as perceived in the countries themselves.	1 national level intervention, which links biodiversity valuation to policy and fiscal reform per country. Caucus leadership put forward new national level interventions to stem biodiversity loss in each country	Completed	This output was fully delivered and is causally linked to 1.1.2. The Caucuses held consultations and roundtable discussions with relevant government agencies and technical institutions, conservation specialists and park managers, in addition to (less frequent) consultations with civil society stakeholders, local community organizations, indigenous groups and NGOs. The project reports that 139 stakeholders engaged with Congress members and project staff. These consultations have had influence on the formulation of legislation, i.e. Mexico's General Law on Sustainable Forestry, the banning of single-use plastics in Colombia and Peru. <i>Performance rating: Highly Satisfactory (6)</i>

²³ Swiss Embassy to Colombia through COSUDE, Audubon Society, FAO Colombia, European Union and *Agencia Italiana de Cooperación*

Outputs	Target Indicators ²¹	Reported Level of Completion ²²	Evaluation Comments
<p>Output 1.2.2: Encourage Members to take stock of opportunities and needs in their countries' conservation systems and policies, by means of workshops, dialogues, briefings, and field visits.</p>		Completed	<p>The output was delivered and complemented output 1.2.1. Legislators were briefed on conservation issues that reflected agenda priorities. The topics discussed included oceans governance and terrestrial solutions to climate change (Colombia), potable water and sustainable forestry (Mexico), and protected area management (Peru) among others. In Colombia, a training series for legislators on environmental legislation was introduced. There were field visits, briefings and dialogues that at times included community organizations, indigenous representatives and NGOs. As mentioned above, these activities contributed to the formulation of new legislation and amendments to existing laws.</p> <p><i>Performance rating: Highly Satisfactory (6)</i></p>
<p>1.3.1: Study of regional and global models of conservation legislation and fiscal reform measures.</p>	<p>Caucus leadership put forward new national level interventions to stem biodiversity loss in each country</p>	Ongoing	<p>The output appeared to be partially delivered, although no targets were set. Two knowledge products were produced: Strengthening the National System of Natural Protected Areas from the Legislative Field (2020) was published for the three Caucuses and disseminated. The Policy Recommendations from the Congressional Training Series in Colombia (hosted by ICCF) was published in 2021 and shared with members of the national Caucus and council members. More emphasis was given to national issues and case studies over regional or global models; studies of regional and global best practices were re-focused at country level in Mexico and Colombia.</p> <p>The 2021 PIR noted that the project terminated without directly addressing biodiversity valuation or fiscal reform in legislation. However, there has been some progress since the project's termination: Workshop discussions on the fiscal aspects of sustainable forestry in Mexico led to proposed tax reform measures in 2023 (approval pending).</p> <p><i>Performance rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory (3)</i></p>
<p>1.3.2: Adoption of appropriate resolutions and declarations during the policymaker Summit, and their wide publicity</p>		Completed	<p>The output was delivered according to target. Legislators of each national Caucus signed the Mount Vernon Declaration, reaffirming their commitment to promote regional cooperation and best practices for sustainable management of natural resources in their countries. The Declaration was made public online and widely reported on in ICCF Publications. The Declaration 's impact or follow-up have not been documented.</p> <p><i>Performance rating: Satisfactory (5)</i></p>
<p>1.3.3: Preparation and introduction of new legislation, as necessary and appropriate, in the view of the Members themselves</p>		Completed	<p>This was a key output that supported the achievement of project outcomes. and targets. Output delivery varied considerably between countries in relation to the target (at least three positive changes in laws, policies or practices per country). The output was achieved and surpassed in Colombia, while delivered on a smaller scale in Mexico. There was comparatively less progress in Peru due to the dissolution of Congress and cessation of Caucus activity. As a result, outputs targets were not met in all countries and the output was partially delivered.</p> <p>Legislative advances during project included:</p>

Outputs	Target Indicators ²¹	Reported Level of Completion ²²	Evaluation Comments
			<p>Colombia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Manifesto to promote the conservation of the Amazon and Colombia's Protected, 2019 ● Passage of the San Andres Single Use Plastics Law banning single use plastics on the island of San Andres, 2019 ● Ratification in 2019 of the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol, protecting the ozone layer. ● Law P / L 110 to prohibit the use of plastic bags and other plastic materials in the Archipelago Department of San Andrés, Providencia, and Santa Catalina y Islas. ● Law for the <i>Páramos</i> (Andean highlands) for the restoration and sustainable use of <i>páramo</i> ecosystems. The law includes provisions for funds to be transferred from the electricity sector to the national parks authority (PNN). ● Ratification of the Minamata Convention to restrict the use of Mercury. <p>Mexico:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The new General Law of Sustainable Forestry Development, 2018 ● Amendments to the General Law of Sustainable Forestry that expands definitions of forested land for consistency with international standards, 2020 <p>Peru:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Peru passed the "Law of Plastics" which regulates the manufacture, import, distribution and consumption of single-use plastics, such as bags, cigarettes and others in order to protect the environment and health from the pollution generated by the waste left by these products. This effort was presented and led by Caucus leadership (2019). <p>Regional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Leticia Pact was signed in 2019. This contributed to passage of the San Andres Single Use Plastics Law banning single use plastics in the San Andres archipelago, which was subsequently expanded to national law. <p><i>Performance rating: Moderately Satisfactory (4)</i></p>

Outputs	Target Indicators ²¹	Reported Level of Completion ²²	Evaluation Comments
<p>2.1.1: Legislative Members are engaged on issues of best practices to prepare for and implement sustainable tourism in Parks and Protected Areas</p>	<p>4 activities on parks, protected areas, and tourism in each of the target countries</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>The output was not achieved. The project supported legislator in-country field trips to national parks and protected areas. These activities focused more on offering legislators exposure and providing briefings rather than direct engagement. The preparation or implementation of tangible sustainable tourism initiatives within national parks and protected areas was not documented. Technical assistance was provided through ICCF to four protected areas in Peru on ecotourism through SERNAP (Output 2.1.2), yet legislators do not appear to have been involved.</p> <p><i>Performance rating: Unsatisfactory (2)</i></p>
<p>2.1.2: Wide variety of stakeholders, including indigenous peoples, women, local people and landowners are engaged in preparation of park plans</p>		<p>Completed</p>	<p>The output was not delivered. Caucus members held meetings with stakeholders within and around parks and protected areas. In Mexico, sustained consultations were held in relation to sustainable forestry legislation. An agreement was reached by CCN in Peru with SERNAP, the national protected area authority, to assist four protected areas in training tour guides, and designing of visitor centers and interpretative material. Documentation was not seen suggesting that indigenous groups, local communities, women or landowners participated in preparing national park or protected area management plans.</p> <p><i>Performance rating: Unsatisfactory (2)</i></p>
<p>2.1.3: Conservation Council in each country addresses interactions among parks, biodiversity and tourism.</p>		<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The output was partially delivered. An active Conservation Council was created in Colombia that provided technical guidance and in some cases financial support, whereas Mexico's Caucus did not create a Council yet established close cooperation with the National Forest Corporation (CONAF) <i>Reforestar Mexico</i> and POLEA. A Council was not formed in Peru. As a result, Council interactions with park, conservation or eco-tourism actors varied across countries. There were Council missions to national parks in the three countries for briefing purposes. In Mexico, a seminar on Risks and Opportunities in National Parks was held. In comparison, the conservation Caucuses seemed more active in this regard.</p> <p><i>Performance rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory (3)</i></p>
<p>2.1.4: Members of the Caucuses encourage actions regarding the implementation of these best practices (Col: Support adoption of a sustainable development plan for the Orinoco region, Mex: Develop of a Plan of Action for Protected Areas, Peru: integrate valuation of BD and ecosystem services</p>		<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The project Final Report noted that this output was not achieved in any of three countries. None of the identified country initiatives were addressed during the project. In the case of Colombia and Peru, targeted initiatives were not prioritized by the Caucuses, which set other priorities. Nor is it clear if or how best practices were applied, more so given the limited attention given to the study of global/regional best practices or model legislation.</p> <p>Mexico's Caucus discussed the incorporation of protected area management within national development plans through briefings, field missions and a publication that was shared with legislators. However, the national development plan was stalled in Congress and was not enacted during the project period. ICCF-supported missions visited four national parks in Peru to discuss proposed management plans and valuation of ecosystem services; technical assistance was given for national park trail guides, design of visitor centers, and interpretative material.</p>

Outputs	Target Indicators ²¹	Reported Level of Completion ²²	Evaluation Comments
stressing outreach to the existing Commission for Andean-Amazonian-Afro Peruvian People, Environment and Ecology)			. <i>Performance rating: Unsatisfactory (2)</i>

112. Output delivery was influenced by the causal linkages and results chains. The pathways towards enhanced political articulated different outputs, yet some had lower delivery during the project term. Contributing factors included the closing of Peru's Caucus in December 2018 due to social unrest, the uneven development of Conservation Councils and partnership networks, and working with competing legislative agendas, changing priorities and electoral turnover. The Colombian Caucus experienced the most significant growth during the project, increasing from 40 to 72 members. Likewise, the uneven development of national Conservation Councils (again, strongest in Colombia) may have lowered the project's capacity to engage affected stakeholders in conservation, sustainable tourism and protected area management (foreseen under outputs 1.2.1 and 2.1.1-2).

5.4.2 Achievement of Outcomes

(Performance rating: Moderately Satisfactory)

113. The final status of outcomes is considered in the 2021 final PIR report. Two out of four outcomes were reported as fully completed and given satisfactory ratings: Greater knowledge of good conservation management through the application of best practices (1.3), and improved links between best conservation practices and sustainable tourism in national parks and protected areas (2.1). This was considered as moderately satisfactory performance. The views given by ICCF-CCN staff to a 2021 questionnaire suggested overall satisfaction with the levels of outcome achievement.²⁴

114. Outcome achievement is assessed in Figure 9. The evaluation's assessment considers the extent to which outcome targets and contributing outputs were met in the three countries. As a result, some of the reported ratings were adjusted. The establishment of sustainable Caucuses and Councils (outcome 1.1) was attained in Colombia and Mexico yet had received a moderately satisfactory rating given the discontinuity of this process in Peru. However, ex-post findings indicate that the Peruvian Caucus was reactivated in 2021, and all Caucuses are active at present (with continuing support from ICCF/CCN). Likewise, all Caucuses have expanded their engagement with the Executive Branch and external partners, including cases where Councils were not formally constituted (Mexico, Peru). Given the evidence of continuity in the three countries, the Performance rating for this outcome was raised to satisfactory. Conversely, outcome 1.2 was not reached and tangible initiatives for fiscal reform were not generated during the project.²⁵

²⁴ Question 10, *Terminal Evaluation Inception Questionnaire (2021)*

²⁵ Fiscal amendments to forest tax legislation were subsequently proposed in Mexico, two years after the project had concluded.

115. Broader knowledge of the importance of good conservation management through adoption of conservation best practices (outcome 1.3) was also rated as moderately satisfactory in terms of attainment. Legislator outreach in the three countries included visits to national parks and protected areas, and meetings with government agencies, park managers and local stakeholders. Two knowledge products were published and shared among Caucus and Council members. Legislator knowledge of these issues was clearly broadened by these interactions. However, these interactions were often informative and served briefing purposes.

Table 11. Achievement of Outcomes

Outcome	Outcome Targets	Reported Achievement	Evaluation Assessment and Rating
<p>1.1 Self-sustaining legislative Caucuses with the capacity to support conservation legislation.</p>	<p>Caucuses established and growing in Peru and Mexico.</p> <p>Increased membership in Colombian Caucus by 10% to 44.</p> <p>Increased membership in the Peru and Mexico caucuses by 10% and 20%</p> <p>At least one woman co-chair in each Caucus.</p> <p>4 additional Conservation Council members in Colombia. Create Councils in Mexico and Peru</p>	<p>Moderately Satisfactory</p>	<p>The outcome was achieved for the most part. Legislative Caucuses were created in Mexico and Peru. The Peruvian Caucus was discontinued in late 2018 due to political unrest, yet was reconstituted in 2021. In Colombia and Mexico, Caucuses received financial contributions from project partners (mainly international agencies). All Caucuses are active at present and have demonstrated their capacity to support conservation legislation.</p> <p>Targets regarding the Conservation Councils were partially met. However, all Caucuses have engaged with external partners in some manner according to their approach. Colombia's Caucus was strengthened and supported by a Conservation Council and broad network of partners. Mexico's Caucus worked closely with the National Forest Corporation (CONAF) and POLEA, although a multi-partner Council was not pursued. Nor was a Council created in Peru.</p> <p>Performance rating: Satisfactory (5)</p>

Outcome	Outcome Targets	Reported Achievement	Evaluation Assessment and Rating
<p>1.2 Enhanced cooperation between the legislative members and the Executive Branch agencies of their respective countries is promoted</p>	<p>One national level intervention per country that links biodiversity valuation to policy and fiscal reform</p>	<p>Moderately Unsatisfactory</p>	<p>Cooperation was promoted through interaction with government agencies, yet performance targets were not met.</p> <p>Promoting cooperation was more of an activity (or output if rephrased) than outcome. In all countries there were varying levels of cooperation between legislators and Executive Branch agencies. In some cases this cooperation was decisive to approve new legislation i.e. Mexico's General Law on Sustainable Forestry, Peru's Law on Plastics. However, the project failed to generate legislation linking biodiversity valuation to fiscal reform. This is recognized as a limitation by project reports. The closure of Peru's Congress in December 2018 led to the discontinuity of the Caucus, undermining opportunities for further cooperation and outreach.</p> <p>Performance rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory (3)</p>
<p>1.3 Broader knowledge of the importance of good conservation management is increased through adoption of conservation best practices (i.e proposal/adoption of model conservation legislation by legislatures in the target countries)</p>	<p>Caucus leadership put forward new national level interventions to stem biodiversity loss in each country</p>	<p>Satisfactory</p>	<p>Broader knowledge was achieved in all countries through field visits, workshop events and roundtable dialogues. This contributed to new/revised legislation addressing biodiversity loss, i.e. Mexico's General Law on Sustainable Forestry. However, country targets for changes to laws and policies (under Outcome 2.1) were not met in all cases. Country initiatives that were identified for the application of best practices (in the project document) were not addressed; this was attributed to changing legislative priorities.</p> <p>Performance rating: Moderately Satisfactory (4)</p>

Outcome	Outcome Targets	Reported Achievement	Evaluation Assessment and Rating
2.1 Links between best conservation practices in national parks and sustainable tourism are improved.	<p>4 activities on parks, protected areas, and tourism in each of the target countries</p> <p>At least 3 positive changes in policies, laws or practices on issues of parks, protected areas and sustainable tourism.</p>	Satisfactory	<p>The outcome targets were achieved to a large extent. There were field visits and meetings with protected area and national park authorities. A MoU was approved between ICCF and Peru's SERNAP to support four national parks in ecotourism aspects. In Colombia, Congress members, partners and stakeholders developed a framework for the sustainable development of the San Andres archipelago. This was considered an example of cross-sector collaboration on protected area tourism. A joint mission of Mexican-Colombian legislators to the Yucatan peninsula led to the "Legislative Declaration of the Yucatan Peninsula" on the relevance of protected areas and biodiversity conservation for green recovery. A virtual forum in Mexico focused on fiscal policy for biodiversity conservation. A knowledge product - "Strengthening the National System of Natural Protected Areas from the Legislative Field" (2020) - was shared with Caucus and Council members. There were positive changes in legislation addressing forest conservation (Mexico) and ecosystems management (Colombia). However, there was comparatively less progress towards legislation and policies addressing sustainable tourism. Likewise, performance targets were not fully met in all countries; political instability being a contributing factor in Peru.</p> <p>Performance rating: Moderately Satisfactory (4)</p>

TOTAL SCORE: 16 PERFORMANCE RATING: 4.0 Moderately Satisfactory

116. The inclusion of Reconstructed Outcome 1.1 also indicates satisfactory performance.

Outcome	Outcome Indicator	Evaluation Assessment and Rating
Reconstructed Outcome 1.1. Conservation legislation is approved at country level with the support of self-sustaining legislative caucuses.	<i>Indicator:</i> New legislation and amendments to existing legislation that are promoted by the Caucuses are approved in the three countries.	<i>Level of Achievement:</i> New legislation and amendments to existing laws were approved with Caucus support the three countries. These address forest protection, ecosystems conservation and bans of single use plastics, among others. <i>(Performance rating: Satisfactory)</i>

117. The extent to which the knowledge gained was fed into the application of best practices or model legislation varied considerably between countries. Positive examples include the formulation of Mexico's Law on Sustainable Forestry and the natural resource management framework that was developed for the San Andres. A joint mission of Mexican-Colombian legislators to Mexico's Yucatan peninsula led to the "Legislative Declaration of the Yucatan Peninsula" highlighting the importance of protected areas for ecosystems conservation.

118. The Core Indicator Targets of area of land restored and terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use were supported by the approval of national legislation for sustainable forestry (Mexico) and the protection of páramo ecosystems (Colombia); as well as by the technical support given selected national parks and protected areas (Peru, Colombia, Mexico). Core Indicators for the landscapes under improved practices and areas of marine habitat under improved practices were supported by national bans on single-use plastics in Colombia and Peru, and the approval of Colombia's Congress to the Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA) against illegal fishing.

5.4.3 Likelihood of Impact

(Performance rating: Likely)

119. The likelihood of impact is tied to the implementation of laws, policies and initiatives that were promoted by the Caucuses and approved during the project period. All countries reported achievement in the approval of new or amended laws and resolutions that, if adequately budgeted and implemented, are likely to have impact on biodiversity conservation:

Colombia:

120. Legislation was approved in 2018 for the restoration and sustainable use of Andean highland ecosystems (Ley 1930 de Páramos). This is likely to have an impact on the conservation of biodiversity within páramo ecosystems. The law includes provisions for the transfer of funds from the national electricity sector to Colombia's national parks authority (PNN) to enhance financial sustainability.

121. The approval of Law P / L 110 of 2017 prohibits the entry, use and circulation of single-use plastics in the Archipelago of San Andrés, Providencia and Santa Catalina y Islas. Following the project, the law was elevated to national legislation in 2022. Both legislations are expected to have impact on land and ocean-based contamination by plastics, as well as facilitate waste management.

122. Congress approved Colombia's formal accession of the Minamata Convention in 2018, which is expected to reduce the availability and use of mercury for separating gold from sediment in illegal mining operations. This may have a positive impact on biodiversity conservation – and water quality - in Colombia's mining areas and the Chocó region in particular.

Mexico:

123. The General Law for Sustainable Forest Development (Ley General de Desarrollo Forestal Sustentable) was approved in 2018. The law amends prior forest legislation and incorporates dispositions to preserve forest ecosystems and achieve 2030 climate change and deforestation goals. It recognizes the role of local communities in the conservation of forests and promotes their sustainable development. Following the project, further amendments have been proposed to provide fiscal incentives for community forestry. The law is presently under implementation and is likely to reduce deforestation rates to the extent that sustainable forest management is consolidated. Mexico's Caucus has also proposed legislation to conserve ocean and coastal ecosystems under the Blue Carbon Initiative, and played a lead role in the adoption of the international Agreement on Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA) to combat illegal fishing.

Peru:

124. Law 30884 for the Regulated Use of Plastics was approved in 2018, banning single use plastics, technopor and plastic straws on a national scale. The law is likely to have impact land and ocean-based plastics contamination, as well as facilitate waste management.

125. Peru's Caucus is also leading efforts to approve proposed Law 1477/2021 CR on Transparency in Fishing (Ley de Transparencia Pesquera), which aims to reduce illegal fishing by requiring the publication of data on volumes of catch, the granting of fishing rights and related payments. The Law, once approved, would improve government monitoring of the fishing sector, regulate the exploitation of different fish species in Peruvian waters, generate a comprehensive base, and assist in evaluating the impact of sector policies.

5.5 Financial Management

(Performance rating: Satisfactory)

126. The limited feedback received on this aspect²⁶ indicates that the project finances were well managed. The project budget and country disbursements were managed from ICCF/CCN headquarters in Washington DC, which received five cash advances from UNEP and disbursed funds to its country offices in Mexico, Colombia and Peru. The interviewed country based ICCF-CCN representatives concurred in their view that funds were disbursed and received without notable delay throughout the project. Likewise, the prior CCN project coordinator has noted that cash advances were received on schedule.

²⁶ The evaluator was unable to interview the FMO or Task Managers.

127. An external financial audit²⁷ of the project was conducted for the January 2020 – March 2021 period. The audit confirmed that project finances had been managed by CCN in accordance with correct accounting procedures.

128. The evaluation was not able to interview the project FMO, who was no longer in that office, or suggested finance staff with indirect knowledge of the project's financial management. This was not surprising considering the more than three years that have passed since the project's finalization. The feedback that was received from ICCF-CCN and UNEP indicate that the project budget and finances were well managed. This is supported by an external final audit that was conducted in 2021 and found that finances were managed in accordance with recognized guidelines.

5.6 Efficiency

(Performance rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory)

129. Project efficiency was assessed on the basis of the cost-effectiveness and timeliness of implementation. The timeliness of project implementation according to the planned schedule was highly unsatisfactory. The project was approved for a two-year period and required two no-cost extensions for 26 months to deliver the planned outputs. The initial termination date of January 2019 was subsequently rescheduled to March 2021. The combined extensions exceeded the project's approved two-year duration.

130. This was more a consequence of the unrealistically ambitious timelines, than of project performance. The approved 24 months did not consider the influence of elections, political instability or other external factors. Consistent implementation and output delivery were sought among the three countries, without factoring variances in the legislative cycles, electoral calendars and policy landscapes of each country. As was noted by one respondent, "...legislation and politics are influenced by external circumstances that often lead to changes in the forecasted time frames. This becomes even more complex when several countries with different political circumstances are involved. The foregoing explains why an extension was requested during the time of the project."²⁸ These realities were overlooked during the pre-approval appraisal (by UNEP's Project Review Committee), leading to a structural limitation that undermined the project's chances to succeed. Indeed, ICCF/CCN staff interviewed for this evaluation could not explain how the project had been approved for a period that was evidently inadequate to achieve the expected results and outcomes.

131. Conversely, the project was implemented and managed in a cost-effective manner. The presence of country-based ICCF/CNN offices allowed the project to reimburse staff time on a pro-rated basis. This arrangement lowered project's overhead costs and was cost-effective against the various challenges (Congressional recesses and elections, political unrest, COVID-19) that affected project delivery. Ultimately the project was able to sustain no-cost extensions

²⁷ *Statement of Programme Expenditures with Independent Auditor's Report*, Deleon & Stang, 2021

²⁸ *Notes of Inception Phase Meeting with Field Officers (2021)*

over a 18-month period within the approved budget; this was also enabled by the availability of co-financing by ICCF/CNN and project partners at country level. At the end of the extension period, over 98% of the approved implementation budget was spent with a USD 35,000 balance that was earmarked for the project's terminal evaluation (Figure 3).

132. The partnerships and collaborations made with other organizations also contributed to efficiency. These includes support from EU FAO for training, COSUDE for freshwater conservation and ecosystem services, extended support from POLEA for Mexico's Caucus operations, and from USAID for technical assistance on protected area management. Caucuses in all countries have received and continue to receive advisory support from national organizations and institutions, an example being POLEAs support to the formulation of national sustainable forestry legislation.

5.7 Monitoring and Reporting

(Performance rating: Moderately Satisfactory)

5.7.1 Monitoring Design and Budgeting

133. A budgeted monitoring and evaluation plan was included in the project document. The M&E plan was consistent with GEF's Monitoring and Evaluation Policy, as well as UNEP guidelines. SMART indicators were assigned to project outcomes and outputs that included baselines and end-of-project targets. The M&E Plan did not foresee a Mid-Term Evaluation given the project's short duration and status as a mid-size GEF project.

134. Indicators and their targets were both quantitative and qualitative and were measurable within the project period for the most part. A potential exception would have been the transfer/application of best practices within priority country initiatives (Output 2.1.4), which was never realized. Some outcome indicators and targets were output or even activity-based (i.e. outcomes 1.3 and 2.1) and did not reflect the strategic results that were expected. Likewise, outcome 1.2 ("enhanced cooperation between legislative members and Executive Branch agencies of their respective countries *is promoted*") was formulated more as an activity than result. The outcome's target indicator refers specifically to biodiversity valuation and fiscal reform and not the broader range of cooperation that was sought and achieved in practice.

5.7.2 Monitoring of Project Implementation

135. Monitoring was conducted on a regular basis by ICCF/CCN headquarters and country-based staff, as part of their oversight role. This appears to have been effective as reflected in the project's capacity to adjust to changing country contexts and apply adaptive management measures. However, there appeared to be inconsistent monitoring on the part of UNEP-DEPI due to staff changes. The PIRs and Half-yearly Progress Reports contain little mention of monitoring activities conducted during the project's implementation: The 2017 PIR made reference to an initial project workshop (March 2017) involving the project Steering Committee, as a monitoring activity that was attended by the UNEP Task Manager. The 2020 PIR mentions a virtual informative meeting (December 2019) on the project's status that was directed at caucus members and GEF OFP offices; this was an ICCF/CCN initiative and does not appear to have involved UNEP.

136. Partners and representatives of project stakeholders – including vulnerable groups within targeted national parks and protected areas – were consulted for monitoring purposes, yet their contribution to project M&E was not documented.²⁹ This may be attributed to the marginal role of the project Steering Committee, which only met twice (at the initial project stage) and was subsequently discontinued due to the difficulty of bringing Caucus members and other participants from the three countries together. As a result, the project lacked a fundamental monitoring and oversight instrument that in turn curtailed stakeholder involvement.

²⁹ Based on feedback received from CCN.

5.7.3 Quality of Reporting

137. The quality and depth of project reporting varied. Half-yearly Progress Reports and PIRs were issued on schedule and adequately described the project's status during the reporting period yet lacked depth in the analysis of contributing factors affecting performance, or of lessons emerging from the implementation process. The Final Project Report does not analyse the achievement of expected outcomes or contributing factors in any depth and focuses more on reporting against the results framework (although some lessons are reported).

5.8 Sustainability

(Performance rating: Likely)

138. The *ex-post* scheduling of the evaluation offers insight into the sustainability of Conservation Caucuses, Councils and related initiatives that were supported by the project. The feedback that was received from Caucus members indicate a moderately high to high likelihood of post-project sustainability.

5.8.1 Socio-political Sustainability

(Performance rating: Highly Likely)

139. Socio-political sustainability has been one of the project's strongest aspects, based on the feedback received. In particular, the continuity of Conservation Caucuses, environmental agendas and partner relations across electoral cycles underscores the resilience of the Caucus model.³⁰ Membership has grown. Membership of the Mexican Caucus stood at 39 members, surpassing the 20% goal through two election cycles. Colombia's Caucus membership increased to 72, surpassing the goal of 10% across an election cycle. A Colombian Oceans Caucus was created and had 50 members by the end of the project. Peru's Conservation Caucus was created and reached 23 members yet was discontinued in 2018 when Congress was closed due to political unrest. The Caucus was reactivated in 2021 and is functional.

140. The Caucuses continue to contribute to the formulation and approval of environmental legislation – as described in the report - that are likely to have impact on the ground.

141. Mexico's Caucus has continued to develop new legislation around the General Law of Sustainable Forestry and recently proposed fiscal reform amendments aimed at encouraging investment in forest conservation. Under the last legislature, congressional commissions on Climate Change and Sustainability were created with Caucus support. Mexico's Caucus has also introduced legislation to conserve ocean and coastal ecosystems under the Blue Carbon Initiative and is formulating proposals for sustainable use of water resources and the promotion of circular economies. The Caucus led the approval of the Agreement on Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA) to combat illegal fishing. These are positive developments that

³⁰ A Conservation Caucus was recently launched in Ecuador's Congress with support from ICCF.

demonstrate Caucus continuity in spite of legislator turnover (re-election was not permitted until the present year). Mexico's Congress is presently in recess, and it is expected that the Caucus will be re-established with new members

142. Colombia's Caucus presently has 60 members and has remained active through two congressional terms. Recent developments include the approval of Law 2218 (2022) that formalizes cooperation between the Government of Colombia and Green Growth Institute on deforestation control policies and the reduction of GHG emissions. The Caucus has successfully lobbied to increase public spending for protected areas and forest conservation. There are on-going partnerships and consultations with international cooperation agencies, CSOs and technical experts on biodiversity conservation and carbon credits.

143. Peru's Caucus has shown resilience and is a case study of multi-party collaboration towards a common agenda, against a context of political instability and polarization. The Caucus was discontinued in 2019 when Peru's Congress was closed; this was followed by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the Caucus was re-established in 2021 after the project's closure and remains active at present. During the last legislative sessions, Peru's Caucus had 25 members (out of a total of 130 legislators) and was focused on sustainable fishing, *Impuesto Sano* (taxes on unhealthy foods and products), and forest conservation in collaboration with the Amazonian Sub-commission of PARLAMAZ.³¹ The continued resilience of Peru's Caucus, in spite of the obstacles faced, is considered to be an important achievement by its members.³²

5.8.2 Financial Sustainability

(Performance rating: Moderately Likely)

144. The continuity of the Conservation Caucuses ought to be driven by environmental priorities and political commitment rather than external funding. However, Caucus Secretariats continue to be financed through ICCF. External funding is needed to enable Caucus outreach, field visits and consultations that were supported by the project and are essential to their mandate. Financing is provided by ICCF and international cooperation agencies, a trend that is likely to be sustained in the medium term. The Colombian Caucus has financially contributing partners within the Conservation Council, whereas Peru and Mexico do not. The Caucus members that gave feedback to the evaluation considered that available funds were adequate to cover most activities (although more is always welcome). Colombia's Law 1930 for the conservation of Andean highlands (*Ley de Páramos*) contains provisions for the transfer of funds from the national electricity sector to the national parks authority (PNN) in order to strengthen its financial sustainability.

145. An important development is the 2023 approval of a new GEF project – "Enhancing Political Will for Sustainable Financing of Protected Areas" - that aims to develop financial sustainability mechanisms for protected areas. This initiative is being implemented in Colombia

³¹ The Amazonian Parliament, representing countries that share the Amazon Basin.

³² As stated by Jeny López, Congresswoman and Caucus member

and Mexico by UNEP with CCN as executing agency and aims to build on the (limited) progress that was achieved under the project.

5.8.3 Institutional Sustainability

(Performance rating: Highly Likely)

146. The rating is based on the continued resilience of the Caucuses in all countries, overcoming electoral cycles, turnovers of members and changing political junctures. The re-launching of the Peruvian Caucus, after the closure of Congress in 20-19, is particularly representative of the model's sustainability. All Caucuses continue to work with the Executive Branch and external partners, including within countries where Conservation Councils were not formally established (Mexico, Peru).

147. A key sustainability factor is ICCF/CCN's continued presence and support at country level. ICCF has on-going cooperation agreements with Caucuses in the three countries that support capacity building, outreach and external consultations. This has been critical in sustaining momentum beyond the project cycle and consolidating the Caucus model at country level. CCN has additionally mobilized parallel support from its network; the Conservation Corps of retired professionals continues to provide technical assistance to selected protected areas in Peru.

5.9 Factors affecting Performance

148. The following factors stood out as contributors to project performance and merit recognition:

5.9.1 Preparation and Readiness

(Performance rating: Highly Satisfactory)

149. The project benefited from ICCF/CCN's experience and credibility in conservation legislation advocacy, and from its familiarity with the congressional/legislative environments of each country. ICCF/CCN's presence at country level and prior cooperation activities with members of Congress enabled the project to build on the existing momentum and contacts that were already in place. This facilitated levels of access that might have been more difficult to achieve through UNEP or development agencies less familiar with the dynamics of legislative processes or political lobbying.

5.9.2 Project Management and Supervision

(Performance rating: Satisfactory)

150. The performance rating is based on ICCF/CCN's performance as the executing agency. Project management was cost-effective: There were ICCF/CCN staff assigned in each country, which enabled the project to reimburse staff time on a pro-rated basis according to the actual time that was devoted. This arrangement lowered overhead costs and gave flexibility against electoral cycles, legislative recesses or periods of political strife that affected implementation at

country level. The continued presence of ICCF/CCN has been fundamental for the continued development of the Caucus model beyond the project.

5.9.3 Country Ownership and Driven-ness

(Project Rating: Highly Satisfactory)

151. High levels of ownership were encouraged by the project and reflected in the legislative agendas and priorities that were set by the Caucuses in each country. Caucus membership targets were met and surpassed at country level. Peru's Caucus was discontinued with the closure of Congress yet was re-constituted in 2021 after the project had finished. Almost three years later, Caucuses remain active in the three countries and continue to promote legislative agendas within Congress. Country ownership is also reflected in the autonomy of Caucuses, which set their conservation priorities and legislative agendas internally. There were departures from planned output deliverables that responded to evolving Caucus priorities: Conservation Councils weren't created as planned in two countries, yet alternative partnership arrangements were developed. The study of regional and global best practices on conservation legislation and fiscal reform (output 1.3.1) was re-focused towards in-country experiences. National initiatives that had been earmarked for applying best practices in the project Results Framework (output 2.1.4) were substituted by other priorities such as sustainable forestry in Mexico. The adjustment of planned deliverables underlined a strong sense of ownership on the part of Caucuses, as well as ICCF/CCNs capacity to facilitate that ownership through adaptive management.

5.9.4 Stakeholder Participation

(Performance Rating: Moderately Satisfactory)

152. There were high levels of Caucus participation in the setting of agenda priorities. The project enabled consultations and interaction with Executive Branch agencies and national park/protected area authorities. The project was able to complete gender-responsive measures that were included in the project document that was submitted for GEF CEO approval; women were nominated as Caucus co-chairs in all countries. However, the participation of vulnerable groups most likely to be affected by conservation legislation – indigenous and rural communities, women, landowners and small-scale farmers – fell below expectations. Although there were consultations with such groups in all countries, their participation seemed to be passive and oriented to inform legislators. Their engagement in the formulation of national park and protected area management plans (Output 2.1.2) does not appear to have taken place. An exception to this trend were the sustained consultations that were held with diverse forest stakeholders at provincial level during the formulation of Mexico's General Law on Sustainable Forestry.

5.9.5 Communications and Public Awareness

(Performance Rating: Satisfactory)

153. The project was supported by a Communications & Outreach Officer. Its workplan included a robust communications and outreach component that supported round table discussions, consultations with Executive Branch agencies and various environmental actors, field missions and visits to local communities (Outputs 1.2.1-1.2.2.). These activities have informed legislators and provided direct exposure to conservation issues "on the ground", broadening their knowledge and awareness. They have also helped to build internal consensus within Congress on environmental priorities, and enhanced the formulation of conservation legislation. Examples included Mexico's sustainable forestry legislation, and laws banning single-use plastics in Colombia and Peru. The expanded radius of interaction, communication and partnership that was generated through the project was considered its most important contribution by evaluation respondents. Communications, public awareness and outreach activities were consistent with the knowledge management and learning approach outlined in the project document that was submitted for GEF-CEO approval. One aspect that was not adequately addressed was the study of regional and global models of conservation legislation and fiscal reform, due to time constraints on the part of legislators and their preference towards in-country case studies and best practices.³³

5.9.6 Environmental and Social Safeguards

(Performance Rating: Satisfactory)

154. The project's main aim was to assist national Congress members in formulating conservation legislation for approval. The laws and measures that were approved for sustainable forest management, ecosystems conservation, pollution and waste management (banning of single-use plastics), and sustainable natural resource management are likely to help in the mitigation of conservation threats. Direct field interventions were not programmed aside from study tours or field visits, and the project's overall carbon footprint was minimal. Social safeguards perhaps involved targeting marginalized stakeholder participation in national park management plans and sustainable tourism initiatives, but progress in these areas was limited.

5.9.7 Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equity

(Performance Rating: Satisfactory)

155. The project was oriented towards support environmental conservation and its implementation did not include environmentally-degrading activities; its carbon footprint has been minimal. Gender inclusion was included in the results framework and the targets for Caucus leadership were met. Affected and/or interested stakeholder were visited on several occasions in all countries by Caucuses and consulted on their views. Social impacts from the design and approval of National Park management plans did not happen.

³³ There were exchanges between Caucus members of the three countries, i.e. the Yucatan Declaration by Mexico and Colombia.

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Conclusions

156. The conclusions, lessons and recommendations should be taken in the evaluation context. The evaluation relied on the review of project documentation and interviews with the executing agency, yet the quality and depth of findings were limited by the lack input from Caucus members, project partners or affected stakeholders. Country visits and face-to-face meetings were not foreseen, nor was the evaluator able to obtain remote interviews with project participants in Mexico, Colombia or Peru. The limited response from country stakeholders consisted of recorded responses by five Caucus members to evaluation questions, through a WhatsApp group chat created for that purpose. Conclusions, lessons and recommendations are drawn from the memory of a project that was operationally completed almost three years ago; for this reason, their present relevance or applicability may be open to question.

157. The Terms of Reference raised the following strategic question: To what extent are the caucuses operating now following the project closure? ^{LE}_{SEP} The findings to this question were positive. Sustainability is one of the project's outstanding features. The Caucuses continue to function in the three countries, with documented examples of proposed and approved legislation, with continuing consultation with other branches of government and external stakeholders. Peru's Caucus was re-activated after more than a year's inactivity due to the closure of Congress.

158. Conclusion 1. The project achieved its objective of creating and strengthening sustainable conservation caucuses within the national congresses of Colombia, Mexico and Peru, to build political will for enhanced natural resource management and conservation. The project was able to successfully demonstrate and validate the Caucus model in the three countries. Conservation Caucuses have driven multi-partisan agendas that have led to the approval of new laws and amendments to existing legislation. Caucus membership targets were achieved and in several cases surpassed, as mentioned earlier. Three years after the project's termination the legislative Caucuses remain active and continue to promote environmental legislation that addresses current challenges. The resilience of the model was demonstrated by Peru's Caucus, discontinued after political unrest led to the closure of Congress in 2019 yet re-established in 2021 with a growing multi-partisan membership base (within a highly polarized political ambience). In all countries there were "champion" legislators who have driven Caucuses agendas. There is potential for replication elsewhere in the region. A Conservation Caucus was recently created in Ecuador that builds on the project's experience.

159. **Conclusion 2. Impacts on biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource management are likely.** This would support the achievement of the project impact statement and reconstructed objective that are based on the Theory of Change. The probability of impact is tied to the implementation of laws, policies and initiatives that have been introduced by Caucuses and approved (both during and since the project). All countries have reported achievements in the approval of new or amended laws and resolutions that, if budgeted and applied, are likely to have impact on biodiversity conservation and natural resource management. These include the *Ley de Páramos* (Andean highlands) and national bans of single-use plastics in Colombia and Peru, Mexico's General Law on Sustainable Forestry and

proposed fiscal incentives for sustainable community forestry, and proposed legislation for the transparent reporting of fishing data in Peru. These developments suggest that the reconstructed objective of building political will, capacities and legal frameworks for enhanced management and conservation of natural resources (through the Conservation Caucuses) has been reached or is in process of being reached. These intermediate states are the enabling conditions for reaching the long-term impact statement of sustainable natural resource management and mitigated environmental degradation in the three countries.

160. Conclusion 3. The project's main contribution was in expanding the range and depth of legislator interaction (and collaboration) with diverse actors, and in enabling greater direct exposure to conservation issues on the ground. A key component of the project was the consistent support that was given for legislator roundtable discussions with Executive Branch agencies, technical experts, conservation institutions and field visits that enabled contact with local stakeholders. This has had a strong catalytic effect and is considered the most valued project contribution by evaluation respondents. Activities were organized around Caucus priorities and have helped to building congressional consensus across political divides. The knowledge and insight that was gained has benefited the formulation of legislation that in several cases was approved.

161. Conclusion 4. Project progress and performance were consistent with GEF-7 effectiveness targets, safeguards and gender inclusion guidelines. The project indirectly supported GEF-7's Core Indicator Targets with the approval of conservation legislation in the three countries. There was progress towards the indicators of "area of land restored" and "terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use" through the approval of national legislation for sustainable forestry (Mexico) and protection of *páramo* highland ecosystems (Colombia); and on a smaller scale with the technical support given to selected national parks and protected areas.

162. GEF-7 indicators for the areas of landscape and marine habitat under improved practice were supported by national bans on single-use plastics in Colombia and Peru; and by Colombia's adoption of the Minamata Convention and Agreement on Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA). The project was able to complete gender-responsive measures as foreseen in the project document submitted for GEF CEO approval; women were nominated as Caucus co-chairs in all countries. Communications, awareness and outreach activities were elevated to outcome level and implemented in a manner consistent with the knowledge management and learning approach described in the project document submitted for GEF-CEO approval. One aspect not fully addressed was the study of regional and global models of conservation legislation and fiscal reform measures, due to availability constraints of legislators and their interest on in-country conservation issues and practices

163. Conclusion 5: The project enabled a broad range of stakeholder consultations and interaction, yet the participation of civil society and affected groups in the production of specific outputs is not documented. The Results Framework foresaw the broad participation of stakeholders in or near protected areas affected by proposed legislation under Outputs 1.2.1 and 2.1.2. Forest and indigenous communities, farmers, landowners and women were to engage in the design of national park management plans. This was achieved to an extent as reflected in legislator visits and consultations with forest stakeholders during the formulation of

Mexico's General Law on Sustainable Forestry. Legislators have visited and held meetings with community representatives and other local stakeholders during field visits in all countries. Overall civil society participation was considered adequate by CCN. However, the engagement of targeted stakeholders in the production of the relevant Outputs does not appear to have been documented. The evaluation did not find documented evidence of the engagement of community or indigenous organizations in developing national park or protected area management plans, or local sustainable tourism initiatives.

164. Conclusion 6. Progress towards the adoption of fiscal reform measures based on biodiversity accounting or the development of enabling frameworks for sustainable tourism was limited. Conservation agendas were set by the Caucuses independent of the project Results Framework and evolved in response to domestic priorities and contexts of each country. There were advances in the introduction of proposed tax amendments for sustainable community forest management in Mexico. However, overall progress fell below the deliverables foreseen in the project document. Likewise, sustainable tourism legislation, policies or related initiatives did not show much advance, aside from the international technical assistance given by the International Conservation Corps to selected parks in Peru.

165. Conclusion 7. The comparatively lower progress that was achieved in engaging local stakeholders in conservation initiatives affecting them (including sustainable tourism) highlighted the challenges of articulating different project environments. Rather than suggesting weakness of performance, it underscored the dynamic tension of working at different levels and with different partners simultaneously without connecting links or feedback mechanisms. The project was focused on congressional, legislative environments that have very different dynamics from the rural settings where conservation and tourism activities were contemplated. Connecting both spheres of intervention would have required a parallel implementation approach that was outside the project's institutional or budget capabilities.

166. Conclusion 8. The project timeframe was unrealistic. The project's implementation was severely constrained by its own timeline and required prolonged extension. This was a flaw of project design and appraisal: The approved two-year duration was unrealistic in light of the project's high vulnerability to external factors. The assumption of a linear and consistent implementation process failed to consider the variances of legislative cycles, electoral calendars or socio-political junctures of each country.

167. The combined Performance ratings of project performance are presented below (Figure 10) based on weighted scores for the different criteria:

Table 12. Performance ratings of Project Performance

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Rating
A. Strategic Relevance	The project demonstrated highly satisfactory levels of strategic relevance both in design and performance.	HS
<i>1. Alignment to MTS and POW</i>	The project was relevant to several Sub-programmes of UNEP’s 2014- 2017 Mid-Term Strategy and 2020-2021 Programme of Work. The project objective and planned deliverables showed consistency with Sub-programmes 3: Healthy and productive ecosystems, 4: Environmental governance, and 6: Resource efficiency. The project was particularly relevant to Sub-programme 4 through the creation and strengthening of legislative Caucuses in all countries, and to Sub-programme 3 with the adoption of legislation for the conservation and sustainable management of forest and Andean highland ecosystems.	HS
<i>2. Alignment to UN Environment /Donor/GEF strategic priorities</i>	The project was supportive of various 2030 Sustainable Development Goals in its design. These included SDG 5 “Gender Equality” (<i>Target 5.5.</i>), SDG 12 “Responsible Consumption and Production” (Target 12.4 and 12.5), SDG 14 “Life under Water” (<i>Target 14.1</i>) and SDG 15 “Life on Land” (<i>Targets 15.1, 15.2</i>). Donor relevance was reflected in the project’s alignment to GEF 7’s Biodiversity Focal Objective BD4, Programme 9 “Managing the human-biodiversity interface”, and Programme 10 “Integration of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services into Development and Finance Planning”.	S
<i>3. Relevance to regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities</i>	Relevance to national conservation challenges and priorities was very high. The project encouraged high levels of country ownership and played a facilitative role in support of conservation and legislative agendas that were determined by the Caucuses of each country. This has been critical towards the formulation and adoption of legislation for sustainable forest management in Mexico, land and ocean ecosystems management in Colombia, and the banning of single-use plastics in Colombia and Peru.	HS
<i>4. Complementarity with existing interventions</i>	The project was supportive of the GEF BD project portfolios in Mexico, Colombia and Peru. More importantly, the project had crosscutting relevance to a range of project initiatives, many funded by international agencies, that are constrained by gaps and inconsistencies in legislation for conservation and sustainable resource management. .	HS
B. Quality of Project Design	The project’s main design strength was its focus towards systemic levels – political, legislative – that condition and influence change processes. The immediate project objective was centered on establishing the legislative Conservation Caucus model in the three countries. By doing this, the project was able to generate a mechanism that was – and remains – strategically positioned to influence legislation and budgets. A fundamental design flaw was the approved project timeline, which was unrealistic in relation to expected deliverables. The two-year duration did not consider project vulnerability to external factors that included changing political and policy junctures, legislator turnover, and political or social unrest. The assumption of a linear and consistent implementation process was at odds with the variances encountered between countries.	MS
C. Nature of External Context	The achievement of project results was partly dependent on external factors that included turnover of legislators (re-election was not permitted in two of three countries), changing policy contexts and political junctures, and social unrest. The role of ICCF/CCN as project executing agency was important in managing risks and applying adaptive	MU

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Rating
	management.	
D. Effectiveness	Project outputs were not delivered to the extent that had been planned. Outcomes were largely achieved for the second and third project components. Impacts are likely from the implementation of approved legislation.	MS
<i>1. Delivery of outputs</i>	The project was most effective in delivering outputs that supported the creation of legislative Conservation Caucuses, followed by outputs supporting legislator consultation and collaboration with Executive Branch agencies and external actors, with exposure to conservation issues on the ground. There was little progress towards fiscal reform measures that applied biodiversity accounting, development of sustainable tourism initiatives, or the engagement of local stakeholders and vulnerable in the design of national park management plans. Limited attention was given to the study of regional/global model legislation, and priority country initiatives that had been earmarked for support (in the Results Framework) were not addressed. Conservation Councils were not formally established in two countries. It is important to point out that divergences from outputs contained in the Results Framework were often the result of changing Caucus priorities and not unsatisfactory performance.	MU
<i>2. Achievement of direct outcomes</i>	The project achieved the outcome of sustained legislative Conservation Caucuses (outcome 1). There were also significant advances towards outcomes supporting legislator knowledge and capacities through consultation and collaboration with Executive Branch agencies and external actors, and through exposure to conservation issues on the ground (outcomes 1.3 and 2.1). The knowledge that was gained has enhanced the design of conservation agendas and legislation.	MS
<i>3. Likelihood of impact</i>	Impacts are expected from the implementation of legislation for sustainable forest management (Mexico), the conservation and sustainable use of high-biodiversity ecosystems (Mexico and Colombia), and bans on single-use plastics (Colombia and Peru).	L
E. Financial Management	Financial management appears to have been satisfactory and no critical issues were raised.	S
<i>1. Completeness of project financial information</i>	Financial statements were complete and reporting issues were not raised. An independent audit confirmed that project finances had been managed in accordance with GEF-UNEP financial management and accounting guidelines.	S
<i>2. Communication between finance and project management</i>	Project finances were managed by ICCF-CCN Headquarters and disbursed to their country offices for project implementation. Disbursement delays or other problems were not reported. Five cash advances were processed by UNEP during the project period in a timely manner.	S
F. Efficiency	Efficiency was assessed on the basis of timeliness and cost-effectiveness. Project timeliness was highly unsatisfactory: Implementation was slow during the approved project period and affected by political unrest in two countries. An 18-month extension was needed to deliver planned outputs. The project was managed in a cost-effective manner and was able to sustain the project extensions without incurring additional cost.	MU
G. Monitoring and Reporting	The project document included a budgeted monitoring plan with SMART indicators and measurable performance	MS

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Rating
	targets. Monitoring was largely internal and UNEP 's did not appear to play a strong role. This may have been influenced by the discontinuity of the Project Steering Committee. Project reporting met GEF and UNEP requirements and were submitted on schedule; however, their narratives tend to focus on output and activity delivery with less analysis of outcomes, issues influencing implementation or emergent lessons.	
<i>1. Monitoring design & budgeting</i>	A budgeted monitoring plan with SMART indicators and end-of-project targets was included in the project document.	S
<i>2. Monitoring of project implementation</i>	A Mid-Term Evaluation was not foreseen due to the project's short duration and status as a mid-size GEF project. Although little information was available, it appears that monitoring visits by the UNEP Task Manager were infrequent: At least one mission took place during project inception yet there is no reference to further monitoring activities by UNEP. Implementation monitoring was conducted internally from ICCF/CCN Headquarters and country offices. UNEP's monitoring performance may have been influenced by the discontinuity of the Project Steering Committee.	MU
<i>3. Project reporting</i>	Project reporting was timely and met reporting requirements. However, some report narratives were output and activity-centered, with limited analysis of outcome achievement, lessons learned, or the implementation process in general.	MS
H. Sustainability ³⁴	There is encouraging evidence of post-project sustainability in all countries.	ML
<i>1. Socio-political sustainability</i>	Socio-political sustainability is highly satisfactory with continued Caucuses initiatives to introduce legislation for conservation and natural resource management, and their on-going collaboration with Executive Branch agencies and other actors.	HL
<i>2. Financial sustainability</i>	There is moderate financial sustainability. The Caucuses do not rely on external funding to function or exercise their mandate, yet receive financial support from ICCF/CCN and other sources for consultations, field visits, capacity building and knowledge management. The Caucus Secretariat continues to be funded by ICCF. Available resources are considered as generally adequate, and support from ICCF/CCN and other partners are likely to continue.	ML
<i>3. Institutional sustainability</i>	The continued activity and relevance of Caucuses in the three countries, combined with the in-country presence and on going technical assistance of ICCF/CCN, indicate high levels of institutional sustainability.	HL
I. Factors Affecting Performance		

³⁴ The overall rating for Sustainability is the lowest rating among the three sub-categories.

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Rating
<i>Preparation and Readiness</i>	The project benefited from ICCF/CCN's experience and credibility in conservation legislation advocacy, and from its familiarity with the congressional/legislative environments of each country.	HS
<i>Project Management & Supervision</i>	Project management was cost-effective: There were ICCF/CCN staff assigned in each country, which enabled the project to reimburse staff time on a pro-rated basis according to the actual time that was devoted. This arrangement lowered overhead costs and gave flexibility against electoral cycles, legislative recesses or periods of political strife that affected implementation at country level.	HS
<i>Stakeholder participation and cooperation</i>	Caucus consultations and cooperation with Executive Branch agencies and external actors were expanded under the project. There were legislator consultations with civil society stakeholders including representatives of forest and indigenous communities, landowners and others affected by local environmental issues or proposed conservation legislation. However, their participation appeared to be passive and geared to inform legislators, rather than assuming a more active role as was foreseen for the design of national park management plans and sustainable tourism initiatives. There were sustained consultations with forest stakeholders associated with CONAF during the formulation of Mexico's General Law on Sustainable Forestry.	S
<i>Country ownership and driven-ness</i>	The progress that was achieved reflected country ownership and commitment on the part of legislative caucuses in the three countries.	S
<i>Communications and Public Awareness</i>	The project gave consistent support to Caucus outreach, communication and knowledge development through round table dialogues, consultations with Executive Branch agencies, conservation specialists and national park authorities, and through field missions that gave legislators exposure to conservation issues on the ground and enabled communications with local residents. There was less advance in raising public awareness and project efforts were focused on supporting the Caucuses and their legislative agendas.	S
<i>Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equity,</i>	Gender-responsive measures were included in the project results framework. The target of Caucus leadership positions held by women were met with the designation of three female co-chairs. There was participation by women both within the Caucus and in the various training and outreach activities.	S
<i>Environmental and Social Safeguards</i>	The project supported environmental conservation and its implementation did not include environmentally degrading activities; the carbon footprint has been minimal.	S
PROJECT PERFORMANCE RATING: WEIGHTED SCORE: 4.47 (MODERATELY SATISFACTORY)		

6.2 Lessons Learned

Lesson Learned #1:	The implementation experience offered insight into project-based approaches that affect systemic change.
Context/comment:	Systemic levels are difficult to influence through the standard project modalities. International development agencies have long-standing counterpart relations with government line ministries, yet these are generally removed from the political and legislative dimensions that enable (or disable) environmental conservation. Supporting lobbying efforts and influencing legislative outcomes may be sensitive issues for inter-governmental agencies. The project's execution arrangements and implementation strategy were built on an existing cooperation framework that linked ICCF/CCN with legislators in the three countries. Project effectiveness and continuity were assisted by the in-country presence of ICCF/CCN staff. The designation of an international foundation with the mandate to promote conservation legislation, provided UNEP with entry points and access to an otherwise unfamiliar environment.
Lesson Learned #2:	Interventions that promote improved legal frameworks for conservation and natural resource management have over-arching relevance for a broad range of environmental initiatives.
Context/comment:	Gaps, overlaps and inconsistencies in country legislation – combined with the lack of legal incentives - are often limiting factors to the success of environmental programmes and projects. Initiatives that support Caucus models (or other consensus-building processes) at congressional level, promote legislative agendas and inform legislators are likely to benefit a broader range of initiatives. This was reflected in the inclusion of international development agencies among the Caucus partners.
Lesson Learned #3:	The arrangement of outcomes and outputs within the project Results Framework has bearing on the assessment of effectiveness.
Context/comment:	A curious aspect of the evaluation assessment was the higher performance rating assigned to the achievement of outcomes, over the rating given for output delivery. This assessment departed from the causal logic that assumes that outcomes are reached to the extent that the corresponding outputs and deliverables are generated along the causal pathways that connect them. The assessment of project design indicated that several outputs contained in the project Results Framework were in fact outcomes as presented. Conversely, one of the project outcomes was duplicative of lower-level outputs. As a result, achieving project outputs was more challenging to the project than reaching their related outcomes as reflected in the evaluation performance ratings. This underscores the importance of Theory of Change analysis at the design and appraisal stages

Lesson Learned #4:	Programming <i>ex-post</i> evaluations after project completion offers advantages and limitations that need to be balanced in order to maximize their utility.
Context/comment:	This evaluation was re-scheduled almost three years after project termination. This provided a post-project perspective significantly improved the assessment of sustainability and likelihood of impact, by providing insight on processes that have reached levels of consolidation. These manifestations of sustainability and probable impact would likely have been overlooked, had the evaluation been scheduled at the final stages of implementation (as is usually the case). Conversely, the time elapsed since the project closure had the effect of severely undermining access to project participants at country level in particular. The pronounced absence of feedback from Caucus members, Council partners and other project stakeholders was the evaluation's main limitation and raises questions on the validity of its findings.

6.3 Recommendations

Recommendation #1:	ICCF-CCN should promote the Caucus model to a wider regional audience – both at congressional levels and to international development agencies – to replicate the project experience on a broader scale and give greater momentum to the approval of environmental legislation.
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	The project experience validates the Caucus model as a project-based approach that can influence systemic change through enhanced political will and enabling legal frameworks for conservation and sustainable natural resource management. This has crosscutting relevance for diverse environmental initiatives that are affected by legal gaps, inconsistencies or disincentives for conservation. The Caucus model and implementation approach that was applied have evident potential for replication and co-financing on a broader scale and should be marketed accordingly. By expanding its cooperation network to include international agencies with conservation field experience, ICCF/CCN can be better placed to give support to congress and expose them to a wider range of stakeholders and experiences.
Priority Level:	High
Type of Recommendation	Partners
Responsibility:	ICCF and CCN
Proposed implementation time-frame:	Medium-term

Cross-reference(s): Section D. Effectiveness, Section I. Contributing Factors

Recommendation #2:	UNEP should build its association with ICCF/CCN by mobilizing institutional commitment and resources for parallel initiatives within the
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	LAC region.
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	The success achieved at building consensus in Congresses around conservation agendas contributed directly to drafting and proposing environmental legislation that were approved in the three countries. The successful demonstration (and continuity) of the Caucus model generates opportunities for future programme development, partnerships and resource mobilization. The project approach was validated and has the potential to generate over-arching benefits for a broad range of environmental initiatives that are supported by national institutions, international development agencies and donors. The dissemination and replication of the Caucus model as a knowledge product should be pursued in partnership with ICCF.
Priority Level:	High
Type of Recommendation³⁵	UNEP and Partners
Responsibility:	UNEP and ICCF/CCN
Proposed implementation time-frame:	Medium-term

Cross-reference(s): Section D. Effectiveness, Section I. Contributing Factors

Recommendation #3:	Ex-post evaluations should be programmed within a year to 18 months after project completion to, gain better insight on sustainability and the likelihood of impact, with access to an adequate sample of stakeholders and focus groups.
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	This recommendation applies to both UNEP and ICCF/CCN. Project evaluations that are scheduled after termination need to be scheduled at a point in time that enables a reliable assessment of sustainability and likelihood of impact, while avoiding excessive decline in project memory or availability of participants. Thematic evaluations that address broader themes – for example, the impact or sustainability of UNEP’s contribution to legal conservation frameworks, based on an inter-regional project sample - are likely to be better suited for <i>ex-post</i> assessments beyond a certain point in time.
Priority Level:	High
Type of Recommendation	UNEP and Partners
Responsibility:	UNEP, ICCF, CCN
Proposed implementation time-frame:	<i>Short-term</i>

Cross-reference(s): Section G. Monitoring and Evaluation, Section H. Sustainability

³⁵ Project Level, UNEP-Wide or Partners recommendation.

ANNEXES

1. Response to Stakeholder Comments
2. Evaluation Framework/Matrix
3. People Consulted during the Evaluation
4. Key Documents Consulted
5. Evaluation Itinerary
6. Project Budget and Expenditures
7. Financial Management
8. Communication and Outreach TOC
9. Brief CV of Evaluator
10. Evaluation ToRs
11. GEF Portal Inputs
12. Quality Assessment of the Evaluation

ANNEX 1. RESPONSE TO STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS

Comments, format corrections and editing suggestions to the draft TE report were received from UNEP EO. All of these were accepted and incorporated into the revised draft.

ANNEX 2. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK/MATRIX

Evaluation Criteria and Questions	Data Source
A. STRATEGIC RELEVANCE:	
<i>i. To what extent is the objective and implementation of the project consistent with UNEP's Medium Term Strategy (MTS), Programme of Work (POW) and Strategic Priorities (i.e. Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building and South-South Cooperation)?</i>	Project document UNEP Task Managers
<i>ii. How relevant are the objective and implementation of the project to GEF/donor/partner strategic priorities?</i>	Project document Project partners
<i>iii. How relevant are the objective and implementation of the project to global (SDGs, MEAs), regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities?</i>	Project document Caucus and Council Members
<i>iv. Does the project have complementarity with relevant ongoing initiatives^{SEP}? To what extent does the implementation of the project support synergies and linkages with other projects</i>	CCN Project Team Caucus and Council members
B. QUALITY OF PROJECT DESIGN:	
<i>i. Were changes made to the project Results Framework, expected deliverables or budget?</i>	CCN Project Team
<i>ii. In hindsight, were there aspects of the project's design that were (or should have been) adjusted or approached differently?</i>	CCN Project Team UNEP Task Managers Caucus and Council Members
C NATURE OF EXTERNAL CONTEXT:	
Was the project's implementation affected by conflict, natural disasters or political instability, and if so how?	CCN Project Team
D. EFFECTIVENESS:	
Availability of Project Outputs:	
<i>i. To what extent were project outputs delivered? How did this affect the project's ability to reach the expected outcomes?</i>	PIRs and Progress Reports Final Project Report CCN Project Team
<i>ii. What factors influenced the levels of output achievement?</i>	Final Project Report CCN Project Team
Achievement of Project Outcomes:	
<i>i. To what extent were the project outcomes reached or likely to be reached? How has this affected the project's ability to achieve the reconstructed project objective?</i>	Final Project Report CCN Project Team Caucus and Council Members
<i>ii. What factors influenced the levels of outcome achievement?</i>	Final Project Report CCN Project Team Caucus and Council Members
Likelihood of Impact:	

Evaluation Criteria and Questions	Data Source
i. <i>What is the likelihood that the reconstructed project objective, intermediate states and long-term impact statement will be reached?</i>	Final Project Report CCN Project Team Caucus and Council Members
ii. <i>What additional actions, if any, are needed to achieve the project's outcomes, objective and intermediate states, and have long-term impact?</i> iii. <i>Are unintended impacts likely, positive or negative?</i>	Final Project Report CCN Project Team Caucus and Council Members
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT:	
i. <i>Were financial reports submitted in a satisfactory and timely manner? What factors influenced financial reporting?</i>	UNEP FMO CCN Project Team Audit Reports
ii. <i>Were project disbursements processed and made in a satisfactory and timely manner? What factors factors influenced disbursements if any?</i>	UNEP FMO CCN Project Team Audit Reports
iii. <i>Were budget revisions made to re-programme unspent funds or adjust allocations between budget lines?</i>	UNEP FMO CCN Project Team
iv. <i>To what extent were actual project expenditures consistent with allocated budgets?</i>	Annual Financial Reports
EFFICIENCY:	
i. <i>To what extent were project outputs delivered on schedule? What factors influenced output delivery?</i>	CCN Project Team Caucus and Council members PIRs
ii. <i>Were outputs delivered and extensions approved within their approved budgets?</i>	CCN Project Team
iii. <i>What was the project's financial delivery rate (relation of expended to programmed budgets) and what factors influenced expenditure levels?</i>	CCN Project Team Annual Financial Reports
iii. <i>To what extent have the project extensions contributed to output delivery and the achievement of expected results?</i>	CCN Project Team
MONITORING AND REPORTING:	
i. <i>Did the project include a budgeted Monitoring with description of activities, frequency and responsibilities? To what extent was the Monitoring Plan implemented?</i>	Project Document, CCN Project Team UNEP Task Managers
ii. <i>Were output and outcome performance targets/indicators realistic and measurable?</i>	Project Document CCN Project Team
iii. <i>Were monitoring reports (PIRs, half-yearly progress reports, Final Project Report) submitted in a timely and satisfactory manner?</i>	UNEP Task Managers
iv. <i>To what extent did monitoring findings influence project work plans and adaptive mgmnt</i>	CCN Project Team, PIRs .Progress Reports
v. <i>Have project results and lessons been disseminated to target audiences?</i>	CCN Project Team and Country Staff

Evaluation Criteria and Questions	Data Source
SUSTAINABILITY	
Socio-political:	
<i>i. To what extent have social and political factors (i.e. legislation, policies, management plans) supported the continuity and further development of benefits derived from project outcomes?</i>	Caucus and Council members CCN Country Staff
<i>ii. What are the levels of interest and commitment among government and other stakeholders to build on project achievements and take them forward?</i>	Caucus and Council members CCN Country Staff
<i>iii. Have individual capacity development efforts been sustained since the project's termination?</i>	
Financial:	
<i>i. Are project results and outcomes financially sustainable?</i>	Caucus and Council members CCN Country Staff
<i>ii. To what extent do project outcomes depend on continued funding to sustain benefits?</i>	Caucus and Council members CCN Country Staff
<i>iii. Has a follow-up initiative to the project been funded?</i>	Caucus and Council members CCN Country Staff
Institutional:	
<i>i. To what extent is the sustainability of project outcomes (especially those relating to policies and laws) dependent on institutional factors?</i>	Caucus and Council members CCN Country Staff
<i>ii. Have institutional capacity development efforts been sustained since the project's termination?</i>	Caucus and Council members CCN Country Staff
FACTORS AFFECTING PROJECT PERFORMANCE AND CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES:	
Preparation and Readiness:	
<i>i. Were measures taken to address design weaknesses or respond to changes between project approval and commencement?</i>	CCN Project Team UNEP Task Manager
<i>ii. Was the project adequately staffed and budgeted, and if not, what aspects could have been strengthened?</i>	CCN Project Team
<i>iii. How effectively did the project team engage with different stakeholder groups?</i>	CCN Project Team Caucus and Council members
<i>iv. Were partnership agreements made with other stakeholder groups, organizations or institutions? Did partners have adequate capacities to support project implementation?</i>	CCN Project Team Caucus and Council members PIRs and Progress Reports
Quality of Project Management and Supervision:	
<i>i. To what extent did the UNEP Task and Finance Managers provide effective supervision, oversight and guidance to CCN and the project team?</i>	CCN Project Team UNEP Task Manager and FMO
<i>ii. Have the executing agency and project team effectively guided and managed the project's implementation?</i>	CCN Project Team Caucus and Council Members Partner Organizations & Institutions Final Project Report
<i>ii. Have the executing agency and project team effectively guided and managed the project's implementation?</i>	CCN Project Team

Evaluation Criteria and Questions	Data Source
	Caucus and Council Members Partner Organizations & Institutions Final Project Report
<i>iii. To what extent have the project Steering Committee and country/international partners provided guidance, oversight and facilitated the project's implementation?</i>	CCN Project Team SC Meeting Reports SC Members
<i>iv. How was adaptive management applied to challenges encountered during implementation?</i>	CCN Project Team
<i>v. Were there effective communications and collaboration between the project team, executing agency and UNEP Task Managers effective?</i>	CCN Project Team UNEP Task Manager
Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation:	
<i>i. Did the project have a Stakeholder Engagement Plan or equivalent?</i>	Project Document CCN Project Team
<i>ii. Were the Steering Committee and relevant partners consulted during the project's implementation? To what have partners and the main stakeholder groups played a role in the formulation of work plans, the implementation of activities or monitoring/coordination?</i>	CCN Project Team Steering Committee Meeting Reports Partner Organizations & Institutions
<i>iii. Were vulnerable groups, i.e. gender, indigenous communities, smallholders who were affected by the project represented among project partners or in the Steering Committee?</i>	SC Meeting Reports SC Members
Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality:	
<i>i. Was the project consistent with the UN Common Understanding on the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA), UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People and UNEP's Policy and Strategy for Gender Equality and the Environment?</i>	Project Document
<i>ii. To what extent did project implementation and monitoring take into consideration: (i) possible inequalities (for example of gender) in access and control over natural resources; (ii) vulnerabilities of disadvantaged groups (women, youth, children, the disabled) to environmental degradation or disasters; and (iii) the role of disadvantaged groups (especially gender) in mitigating /adapting to environmental changes and engaging in environmental conservation.</i>	CCN Project Team UNEP Task Manager
Environmental and Social Safeguards:	
<i>i. Did project design include environmental and social screening, risk assessment and management of potential environmental and social risks and impacts associated with project activities?</i> <i>ii. Did the project review risk ratings on a regular basis; monitor implementation for possible safeguard issues; respond (where relevant) to safeguard issues and report on the implementation of safeguard management measures taken?</i>	Project Document
Communications and Public Awareness:	
<i>i. Did the project support knowledge platforms, learning and experience sharing between project partners and interested groups during its implementation? How effective were they?</i>	CCN Project Team PIRs and Progress Reports Final Project Report
<i>ii. How effective were public awareness activities implemented to influence attitudes or shape behavior among wider communities or civil society?</i>	CCN Project Team PIRs and Progress Reports

Evaluation Criteria and Questions	Data Source
	Final Project Report
Country Ownership and Driven-ness:	
<i>i. What was the degree and quality of government/public sector engagement in the project, particularly in moving the project towards its intended results and outcomes?</i>	CCN Project Team Caucus and Council Members
<i>ii. To what extent have government and national partners contributed to the continued operation of environmental caucuses and councils?</i>	CCN Project Team Caucus and Council Members
<i>iii. Were the country cost-sharing contributions (financial and in-kind) that were committed to the project met?</i>	Annual/Final Financial Reports Audit Reports

ANNEX 3. PEOPLE CONSULTED DURING THE EVALUATION

UNEP:

Susan Mugwe, Evaluation Manager, UNEP IEO

Gloritzel Frangakis-Cano, Senior Programme Assistant UNEP-ROLAC

ICCF/CCN

Katherine Brantley, International Grants Director

Clare Falcone, Chief of Staff

Jaime Cavalier, VP Strategic Alliances

Bill Millan, Former Project Coordinator

Fiorella Suarez, ICCF/CCN Peru

Ana Cubillos, ICCF/CCN Colombia

Eleonora Arandia, ICCF/CCN Mexico

Legislators and Caucus Members ³⁶

Colombia:

Carlos Ardila

Peru:

Jenny Lopez

Mexico:

Edna Diaz

Other Stakeholders

Mauricio Lopez, Director of Red Pacto Global Colombia and Vice President of ANDESCO

³⁶ Legislators provided brief recorded responses to evaluation questions

ANNEX 4. KEY DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

- Project Document and Annexes: Generating Enhanced Political Will for Natural Resource Management and Conservation (2016)
- Final Audit Report, 2021
- Final Budget Revision, 2021
- Final Project Report, 2021
- Final Financial Statement, 2021
- Project Implementation Review (PIR) Reports: 2017-2021
- Half Yearly Progress Reports: 2017-2021
- Responses of ICCF Country Managers to Evaluation Questionnaire (2021)
- Terminal Evaluation Terms of Reference: Generating Enhanced Political Will for Natural Resource Management and Conservation (2024)
- Partnering with the Global Environment Facility for Improved Conservation Governance: The ICCF Group (no date)
- Compilation of Project Activities 2017-2021:
 - Attachment #1a - Climate Change Bill - Peru.pdf
 - Attachment #1b - Green Growth Mission - March 15-17, 2018.pdf
 - Attachment #1c - Legislative Pronouncement.pdf
 - Attachment #2 - April Event Summary.pdf
 - Attachment #3 - Forestry Workshop Summary.pdf
 - Attachment #4- Declaration of Bogota.pdf
 - Attachment #5a - Durango Field Mission Summary.pdf
 - Attachment #5b - Agenda March 21, 2018 Briefing.pdf
 - Attachment #5c - March 21 Briefing Summary.pdf
 - Attachment #6a - Mexico Forestry Law Summary.pdf
 - Attachment #6b - June 19, 2018 Event Summary.pdf
 - Attachment #7 - Summary April 2018 Mission.pdf
 - Attachment #8a - Summary May 17, 2018 Event.pdf
 - Attachment #8b - Agenda May 17, 2018 Event.pdf
 - Attachment #9a - Event Summary May 31 event.pdf
 - Attachment #9b - Meetings Agenda June 2018.pdf
 - Attachment #10a - June 7, 2018 Event Summary.pdf
 - Attachment #10b - June 2018 Field Mission Summary.pdf
 - Attachment #10c - June 26, 2018 Event Summary.pdf
 - Attachment #11 - Peru Conservation Caucus Member List.pdf
 - Attachment #12 - Mexico Conservation Caucus Member list.pdf
 - Attachment #13 - Colombian Conservation Caucus Member List - 2018.pdf
 - Attachment #14 - COLOMBIA Oceans Caucus Member List.pdf
 - Attachment #16 Declaration of Mount Vernon.pdf
 - Attachment #28 - MINAMATA Passage summary.pdf
 - Attachment #29 - Law of the Paramos.pdf
 - Attachment #30 - Proyecto de ley 073 de 2017 Senado y 235 de 2018 Camara.pdf
 - Attachment #31 - Letter from Director of Parque Nacionales Naturales de Colombia.pdf
 - Attachment #32 - Ley N 30754.pdf
 - Attachment #33 - Event on July 23, 2018 Report.pdf

Attachment #34 - Event Report July 18, 2018.pdf

Attachment #35 - Event Report - October 17, 2018.pdf

Attachment #36 - Presentations from November 22, 2018 Event.zip

ANNEX 5. EVALUATION ITINERARY

The evaluation was home-based and did not include travel.

ANNEX 6. PROJECT BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE

Approved Project Budget (Source: Project Document)

				Year 1	Year 2	Total
UNEP BUDGET LINE/OBJECT OF EXPENDITURE				US\$	US\$	US\$
STAFF						
PROJECT PERSONNEL COMPONENT						
	1100	Project Personnel				
	1101	Project Coordinator		\$ 64,080.00	\$ 64,080.00	\$ 128,160.00
	1102	Senior Political Adviser		\$ 110,304.00	\$ 110,304.00	\$ 220,608.00
	1103	Project Officers (2-Colombia , 1-Mexico, 1-Peru) (*)		\$ 108,000.00	\$ 108,000.00	\$ 216,000.00
	1104	Senior Policy Advisor (*)		\$ 60,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 120,000.00
	1105	Country Coordinators (Colombia, Mexico, Peru)		\$ 150,000.00	\$ 150,000.00	\$ 300,000.00
	1106	Communications and Outreach		\$ 70,000.00	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 140,000.00
	1199	Sub-Total		\$ 562,384.00	\$ 562,384.00	\$ 1,124,768.00
CONSULTANTS						
	1200	Consultants				
	1201	Technical writer		\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 60,000.00
	1299	Sub-Total		\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 60,000.00
STAFF TRAVEL						
	1600	Travel on Official Business				
	1601	Technical Staff Travel		\$ 52,500.00	\$ 52,500.00	\$ 105,000.00
	1699	Sub-Total		\$ 52,500.00	\$ 52,500.00	\$ 105,000.00
TRAINING COMPONENT						
	3201	Priority thematic meetings		\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 20,000.00
	3202	Introductory meetings		\$ 15,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 35,000.00
	3299	Sub-Total		\$ 25,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 55,000.00
EVENTS						
		Meetings/conferences				
	3301	Conservation Caucus Activities and Meetings		\$ 43,467.00	\$ 43,467.00	\$ 86,934.00
	3302	Policy Agenda Roundtable / Exchanges on Parks, Sustainable Tourism (12 Total)		\$ 63,467.00	\$ 63,467.00	\$ 126,934.00
	3303	Policymaker Summit in Washington DC		\$ -	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 70,000.00
	3304	Conservation Mentorship/Exchange Programs (*)		\$ 35,000.00	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 70,000.00
		Component Total		\$ 141,934.00	\$ 211,934.00	\$ 353,868.00
MISCELLANEOUS COMPONENT						
	5200	Reporting Costs				
	5201	Invitations, event/briefing materials/correspondence + technical materials		\$ 25,000.00	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 50,000.00
	5204	Audits		\$ -	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
	5500	Evaluation (consultants fees/travel/DSA/admin support, etc)				
	5581	Final evaluation		0	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 35,000.00
		Component Total		\$ 25,000.00	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 95,000.00
PROJECT OVERHEAD						
		PMC				\$ 181,364.00
		TOTAL COSTS		Year 1	Year 2	
				\$ 836,818.00	\$ 956,818.00	\$ 1,975,000.00

Approved Co-financing Budget (Project Document)

PROJECT PERSONNEL COMPONENT										
1100	Project Personnel	1,124,768								
1199	Sub-total	1,124,768	0	0	0	0	0	\$ 1,124,768.00	\$ -	\$ -
1200	Consultants	60,000								
1299	Sub-total	60,000	0	0	0	0	0	\$ 60,000.00	\$ -	\$ -
1300	Administrative support	0								
1399	Sub-total	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
1999	Component Total	1,184,768	0	0	0	0	0	\$ 1,184,768.00	\$ -	\$ -
STAFF TRAVEL COMPONENT										
1600	Travel on Official Business	105,000				50,000				
1699	Component Total	105,000	0	0	50,000	0	0	\$ 105,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 50,000.00
TRAINING COMPONENT										
3200	Group Training	55,000	50,000	350,000			50,000	50,000		
3299	Sub-total	55,000	50,000	350,000	0		50,000	50,000	\$ 155,000.00	\$ 400,000.00
3300	Meetings/Conferences	353,868	150,000	500,000	50,000		150,000	650,000		
3399	Sub-total	353,868	150,000	500,000	50,000		150,000	650,000	\$ 1,153,868.00	\$ 700,000.00
3999	Component Total	408,868	200,000	850,000	50,000		200,000	700,000	\$ 1,308,868.00	\$ 1,100,000.00
EQUIPMENT & PREMISES COMPONENT										
4100	Expendable equipment									
4199	Sub-total	0	0	0	0		0	0	\$ -	\$ -
4300	Premises (office rent, maintenance of premises)			80,000						
4399	Sub-total	0	0	80,000	0		0	0	\$ -	\$ 80,000.00
4999	Component Total	0	0	80,000	0		0	0	\$ -	\$ 80,000.00
MISCELLANEOUS COMPONENT										
5200	Reporting Costs									
5201	Events & technical materials	50,000	0	70,000	0				0	0
5202	Audit	10,000	0	0	0				0	0
5299	Sub-total	60,000	0	70,000	0		0	0	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 70,000.00
5300	Sundry (communications, postage, freight, clearance charges, DSA, etc)									0
5399	Sub-Total	0	0	0	0		0	0	\$ -	\$ -
5500	Final Report and Evaluation	35,000								0
5599	Sub-total	35,000	0	0	0		0	0	\$ 35,000.00	\$ -
5999	Component Total	95,000	0	70,000	0		0	0	\$ 95,000.00	\$ 70,000.00
99	TOTALS	1,975,000	200,000	1,000,000	100,000	200,000	700,000	700,000	\$ 2,875,000.00	\$ 1,300,000.00
									\$ 2,200,000.00	



Final Project Expenditure (CCN LAC/MSP Final Financial Statement)

Object of expenditure by UNEP budget Code	National Project Budget (US\$)	Expenditures					Total Project Expenditures	Unspent Balance of budget
		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021		
1101 National Project Coordinator	140,000.00	64,273.00	64,080.00	11,147.00	0.00	0.00	140,000.00	0.00
1102 Project Staff	1,016,328.02	473,445.41	373,369.63	146,114.83	23,398.15	0.18	1,016,328.20	-0.18
1120 Administrative Staff	181,364.00	90,682.00	90,682.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	181,364.00	0.00
1201 International Consultants	76,558.67	30,000.00	30,000.00	10,000.00	4,000.00	2,558.67	76,558.67	0.00
1202 National Consultants	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1601 Staff Travel & Transport	135,197.11	52,513.52	52,212.60	15,470.99	0.00	14,672.41	134,869.52	327.59
2201 Sub Contract to governmental agencies	50,000.00	50,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	50,000.00	0.00
2301 Sub Contract to private firms	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3201 Training	59,654.95	23,239.67	17,250.70	14,158.61	5,005.97	20.16	59,675.11	-20.16
3301 Meetings	257,802.33	56,899.53	128,924.63	19,449.23	35,927.53	16,647.23	257,848.15	-45.82
4101 Office supplies and consumables	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4102 Laboratory supplies and consumables	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4201 Non Laboratory Purchase	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4202 Laboratory Equipment	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4301 Office Premises	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4302 Research Facilities	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
5101 Equipment maintenance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
5201 Publication, Translation, Dissemination and reporting costs	53,094.92	12,840.62	15,067.11	17,922.61	3,702.21	3,562.76	53,095.31	-0.39
5202 Audit Reports	40,000.00	0.00	0.00	15,000.00	5,380.00	19,620.00	40,000.00	0.00
5301 Communications (tel, fax, e-mail, etc...)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
5302 Others	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
5303 Technical Support	35,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	35,000.00
5375 UNDP charges	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
9999 GRAND TOTAL	2,045,000.00	854,393.75	771,586.67	249,263.27	77,413.86	57,081.41	2,009,738.96	35,261.04

Final Co-financing Expenditure (CCN LAC/MSP Final Financial Statement)

REPORT OF PLANNED AND ACTUAL CO-FINANCE BY BUDGET LINE									
(Please prepare one		International Conservation Caucus Foundation // ICCF							
Project title:		Generating enhanced political will for natural resource management and conservation							
Project number:		GFL-11207-14AC0003-SB-007067							
Project executing partner:		CCN							
Project reporting period:		US\$	US\$	US\$	US\$	US\$	US\$	US\$	
From:		Prior Year	Cash Co-finance	In-kind Co-finance	Total for year		Cummulative		
To:		Actual Total	Planned	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Actual Total	
UNEP BUDGET LINE*		A	B	C	D	E	F=B+D	G=C+E	
		H=A+G							
1100	Project person	-	50,000	915,264	-	78,100	50,000	993,364	993,364
1200	Consultants	-	-	53,028	-	-	-	53,028	53,028
1300	Administrative	-	-	45,341	-	-	-	45,341	45,341
1600	Travel on office	-	-	197,806	-	-	-	197,806	197,806
2100	Sub-contracts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2200	Sub-contracts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2300	Sub-contracts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3200	training (study	-	-	250	-	311,025	-	311,275	311,275
3300	Meetings/conf	-	700,000	292,768	1,300,000	159,287	2,000,000	452,055	452,055
4100	Expendable ec	-	-	7,216	-	-	-	7,216	7,216
4200	Non-expendab	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4300	Premises (offic	-	80,000	115,099	-	-	80,000	115,099	115,099
5100	Operation and	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5200	Reporting cost	-	70,000	60,178	-	-	70,000	60,178	60,178
5300	Sundry (comm	-	-	21,913	-	-	-	21,913	21,913
5400	Hospitality and	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5500	Evaluation (co	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL COSTS		-	900,000	1,708,864	1,300,000	548,412	2,200,000	2,257,276	2,257,276

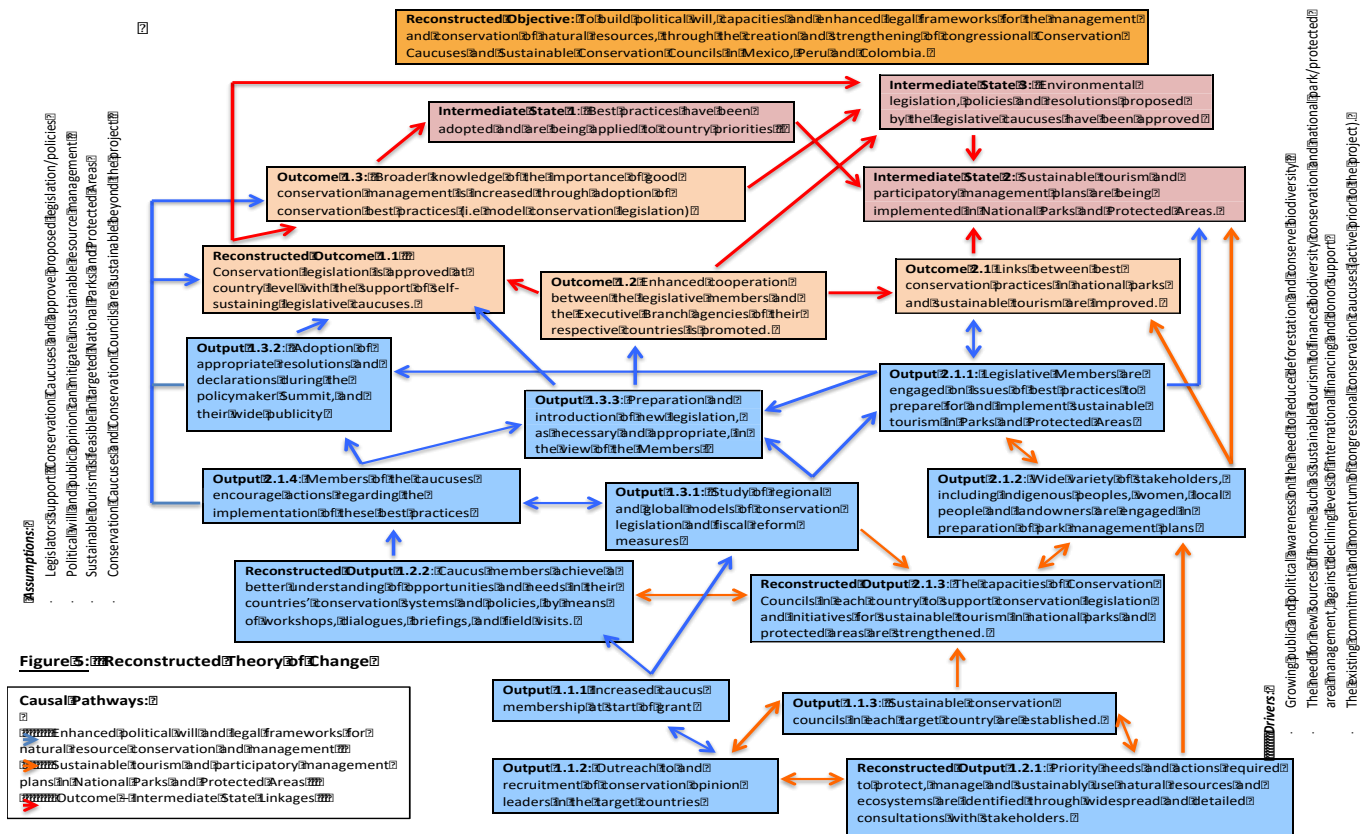
* The actual expenditures should be reported in accordance with the specific budget lines of the approved budget (Appendix 2) of the project.

Name: <u>Clare Falcone</u>	Title: <u>CCN Secretary</u>	Name of Project Manager: <u>Olivia Blanchette</u>
Duly authorize:	Date: <u>1/14/2022</u>	Signature: 
Signature: 		Date: <u>1/14/2022</u>

ANNEX 7. COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH

The project was supported by a Communications & Outreach Officer. In all countries consistent support was given communications and outreach by Caucus members and other legislators. This included building Caucus work relations with executive government branches, facilitating access technical assistance and relevant stakeholders through roundtable discussions and seminars, and organizing brief study tours and field visits that raised exposure to issues on the ground. As shown in the Reconstructed Theory of Change diagram (copied below), outreach and communications – through broader interactions and dialogue - have played a strategic role in building awareness and knowledge within Caucuses. This contributed to the development of conservation legislation agendas. In the diagram, outputs supporting outreach, communications and knowledge – 12.2, 1.3.1 and 2.13 – are connected at an intermediate level on the project’s causal pathways. They articulate the higher and lower pathways - building on the Caucus and Council framework that was previously established to reach target stakeholder groups of legislators and council participants. The interaction, exposure and knowledge gained from outreach activities improved the capacity of Caucuses to propose environmental legislation that was more informed and better formulated.

Reconstructed Theory of Change



ANNEX 8. BRIEF CV OF THE EVALUATOR

Hugo Navajas has more than 25 years' experience as an evaluator of environmental management, biodiversity conservation, climate resilience and sustainable development initiatives. He has conducted evaluation assignments in over 40 countries for UN agencies (UNEP, UNDP, FAO, UN Habitat), the Global Environment Facility (GEF), World Bank, Conservation International (CI), and the Gordon & Betty Moore Foundation among others. He is based in Bolivia and serves on the Board of Directors of PROMETA, a Bolivian NGO supporting biodiversity conservation, protected area management and sustainable rural development.

ANNEX 9. EVALUATION TOR

Section 1: PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

A. Project General Information

Table 1: Project summary

GEF Project ID:	9678	Umoja no.: GFL-11207-14AC0003-SB-007067	
Implementing Agency:	UNEP	Executing Agency:	Conservation Council of Nations (CCN)
Relevant SDG(s) and indicator(s):	<p>SDG5: Promoting Gender Equality: Target 5.5, Indicator 5.5.1 ^[SEP]</p> <p>SDG12 Responsible Production and Consumption: Target 12.4; Indicator ^[SEP]12.4.1 & Target 12.5, Indicator 12.5.1 ^[SEP]</p> <p>SDG14 Life Under Water: Target 14.1, Indicator 14.1.1 & Target 14.4, Indicator 14.4.1 ^[SEP]</p> <p>SDG15 Life on Land: Target 15.1, Indicator 15.1.2 & Target 15.2, Indicator ^[SEP]15.2.1 and Target 15.5, Indicator 15.5.1 ^[SEP]</p>		
GEF Core Indicator Targets (identify these for projects approved prior to GEF-	N/A		

Sub-programme (2020-2021)	<p>Subprogramme 3: Healthy and ^[SEP]productive ^[SEP]ecosystems ^[SEP]</p> <p>Subprogramme ^[SEP]4: Environmental governance ^[SEP]</p> <p>Subprogramme 6: Resource ^[SEP]Efficiency ^[SEP]</p>	Expected Accomplishments	<p>Subprogramme 3: (a) The health and productivity of marine, freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems are institutionalized in education, monitoring and cross-sectoral and transboundary collaboration frameworks at the national and international level.</p> <p>Subprogramme 4: (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 SDGs.</p> <p>Subprogramme 6: (b) Public, private and financial sectors increasingly adopt and implement sustainable management frameworks and practices</p>
UNEP approval date:	22 nd October 2016	Programme of Work Output(s):	TBA
GEF approval date:	5th December 2016		Medium Size Project

		Project type:	
GEF Operational Programme #:	GEF 6	Focal Area(s):	Biodiversity
		GEF Strategic Priority:	BD4-Program 9: Managing the human-biodiversity interface BD4-Program 10: Integration of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services into Development and Finance Planning
Expected start date:	January 2017	Actual start date:	24 January 2017
Planned operational completion date:	January 2020	Actual operational completion date:	30 th September 2021

B. Project Rationale

1. "Generating Enhanced Political Will for Natural Resource Management and Conservation" was a five-year project implemented with GEF funding in Colombia, Mexico and Peru from Dec. 2016 till Sept. 2021. At the design of project, conservation and indigenous areas had been legally classified and demarcated in all target countries but lacked adequate long-term management capacity and funding to ensure that biodiversity was supported, and deforestation was controlled. This project sought to "consolidate political conservation leadership in national legislatures and to encourage the newly emergent conservation leaders to cooperate across parties by starting with political leaders already interested in conservation and attracting others by association with issues that they found important such as sustainable economic development, clean air, and clean water" (Source. MSP Approval Doc. 2016).

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Planned project budget at approval:	USD 4,195,000	Actual total expenditures reported as of [30th June 2021]:	2,009,718.23
GEF grant allocation:	USD 1,995,000	GEF grant expenditures reported as of [date]: 30th June 2021	USD 2,009,718
Project Preparation Grant - GEF financing:	USD 50,000	Project Preparation Grant - co-financing:	0
Expected Medium-Size Project co-financing:	USD 2,200,000	Secured Medium-Size Project/Full-Size Project co-financing:	USD 4,195,000
Date of first disbursement:	22 February 2017	Planned date of financial closure:	30th September 2021
No. of formal project revisions:	2	Date of last approved project revision:	21st May 2020
No. of Steering Committee meetings:	None	Date of last/next Steering Committee meeting:	Last: Next: N/A

			N/A
Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (planned date):	Not Planned	Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (actual date):	Not done
Terminal Evaluation (planned date)	3rd quarter 2021	Terminal Evaluation (actual date):	September 2022
Coverage - Country(ies):	Colombia, Mexico and Peru	Coverage - Region(s):	Latin America
Status of previous project phases:	None	Status of future project phases:	None

2. In particular, the project sought to address:

- a. **Domestic Finance:** Mexico, Colombia and Peru possess a high percentage of global ^[1]_{SEP} biodiversity. At the design of the project, the three countries had limited domestic investment in conservation of biodiversity and natural resources. The urgency of other immediate priority human needs (especially education, health, transport, and infrastructure) meant that the three countries, even when well-intentioned, consistently under-invested in conservation. Although international assistance partially met this shortfall, lack of secure domestic support left conservation subject to the whims of international development finance. Over years, as Colombia, Mexico and Peru progress economically to become middle-income countries, foreign assistance has declined. This project therefore aimed at mobilizing political support in the three target countries to secure domestic financing for parks and other protected areas. ^[1]_{SEP}
- b. **Parks, Protected Areas and Tourism:** In the three targeted countries, tourism is an opportunity and a major source of revenue yet a threat to biodiversity. This project aimed at advancing political dialogue to strike a balance between sustainable management tourism and protection of biodiversity by strengthening the conservation caucuses of Members of national congresses of Colombia, Mexico, and Peru. ^[1]_{SEP}
- c. **Competing Needs:** In all three target countries, there exists an inevitable tension between biodiversity conservation for long-term economic benefit and need for jobs and livelihoods. Conserving a protected area is most often compounded by illegal access for farming, logging, and other economic activities. This project thus aimed at fostering enhanced political will in the three target countries for conservation among persons and institutions that have power to affect outcomes. ^[1]_{SEP}

C. Project Results Framework

3. The project's high-level objective was 'to create and strengthen conservation caucuses of members in the national congresses of Colombia, Mexico, and Peru to build political will for enhanced management of natural resources for development and conservation' (PIR, 2021). This was supported by two components described below:

- a. **Component: 1. Build and enhance political will in support of decisions informed by biodiversity valuation:** This component focused on working through the legislative conservation caucus model to promote policy action that advances conservation of biodiversity. The component

aimed at strengthening the self-sustainability of the legislative conservation caucuses in each of the targeted countries - including ensuring adequate female representation in the caucuses, engagement with the executive branch, and strong stakeholder support - and convening these entities to enhance policymaker awareness of critical biodiversity issues and policy and budget options to advance biodiversity conservation. [1] [SEP]

b. Component: 2. Policy reforms integrate best practices for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use: This component aimed at leveraging on the legislative conservation caucuses to understand and advance legislative action to incorporate sustainable [1] [SEP] tourism and protected areas management into national policies, budgets, and legislation for the protection of biodiversity.

4. The project outcomes and outputs are illustrated in the table below:

Table 2: Results Framework, PIR June 2021

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<p>Outcome 1.1: Self-sustaining legislative caucuses with the capacity to support conservation legislation. <i>Output 1.1.1:</i> Increased caucus membership at start of grant by 10% in Colombia, 20% in Mexico, 10% in Peru. [1] [SEP] <i>Output 1.1.2:</i> Outreach to and recruitment of conservation opinion leaders in the target countries. <i>Output 1.1.3:</i> Established sustainable conservation councils in each target country</p>
<p>Outcome 1.2: Enhanced cooperation between the legislative members and the Executive Branch agencies of their respective countries is promoted. <i>Output 1.2.1:</i> Widespread and detailed consultations among stakeholders to better define conservation needs as perceived in the countries themselves. <i>Output 1.2.2:</i> Encourage Members to take stock of opportunities and needs in their countries' conservation systems and policies, by means of workshops, dialogues, briefings, and field visits.</p>
<p>Outcome 1.3: Broader knowledge of the importance of good conservation management is increased through adoption of conservation best practices (i.e proposal/adoption of model conservation legislation by the legislatures in the target countries) <i>Output 1.3.1:</i> Study of regional and global models of conservation legislation and fiscal reform measures. <i>Output 1.3.2:</i> Adoption of appropriate resolutions and declarations during the policymaker Summit, and their wide publicity <i>Output 1.3.3:</i> Preparation and introduction of new legislation, as necessary and appropriate, in the view of the Members themselves</p>
<p>Outcome 2.1: Links between best conservation practices in national parks and sustainable tourism are improved. <i>Output 2.1.1:</i> Legislative Members are engaged on issues of best practices to prepare for and implement sustainable tourism in Parks and Protected Areas. <i>Output 2.1.2:</i> Wide variety of stakeholders, including indigenous peoples, women, local people and landowners are engaged in preparation of park management plans.</p>

D. Executing Arrangements

5. UNEP served as the Implementing Agency for the project while The Conservation Council of Nations (CCN) served as the Executing Agency. CCN provided overall management and oversight of the Project from its headquarters in Washington, DC. CCN's management entailed administration and implementation of all project activities including financial management and ensuring the project was delivered on time and on budget. Figure 1 below illustrates the envisaged project implementation structure at the design stage.

Figure 1: Project Governance Structure (Source, CEO Approval, Annex E)

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Output 2.1.3: Conservation Council in each country addresses interactions among parks, biodiversity, and tourism.

Output 2.1.4: Members of the caucuses encourage actions regarding the implementation of these best practices (Col: Support adoption of a sustainable development plan for the Orinoco region, Mex: Develop of a Plan of Action for Protected Areas, Peru: integrate valuation of BD and ecosystem services stressing outreach to the existing Commission for Andean-Amazonian-Afro Peruvian People, Environment and Ecology).

E. Project Cost and Financing

Colombia Programs Officer

6. The total project budget at design stage was USD 4,095,000 with GEF contributing USD 1,995,000 of this while the rest was covered through co-finance amounting to USD 2,200,000 as shown in the table below.

Table 3: Total Project Cost -GEF & Co-finance (Source Annex D-2)

Evaluation Office of UNEP

Source/Type of Funding	Value (USD)
GEF	\$ 1,995,000.00
Co-Financing – Monetary	
ICCF Conservation Council	\$ 200,000.00
ICCF Advisory Council	\$ 200,000.00
ICCF	\$ 700,000.00
Co-Financing – In Kind	
ICCF	\$ 1,000,000.00
Conservation Council	\$ 100,000.00
Total	\$ 4,195,000.00

Table 4: GEF Costs in Components (Source CEO Approval, GEF Website)

Components	GEF	Co-finance
Component 1: Build and enhance political will in support of decisions informed by biodiversity valuation	\$900,000	\$ 890,000
Component 2: Policy reforms: Integrate best practices for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.	\$913,639	\$1,146,364
Project Management Cost	\$181,364	\$163,686
Total Costs	\$ 1,995,000	\$ 2,200,000

F. Implementation Issues

7. The project did not carry out a Mid-Term Review. The project was delayed with about 18 months because of regional unrest in Colombia and Peru in 2019 and COVID 19 in 2020.

Section 2. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION G. Objective of the Evaluation

8. In line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy² and the UNEP Programme Manual³, the Terminal Evaluation 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.

² <https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment/evaluation-office/policies-and-strategies>

³ <https://wecollaborate.unep.org>

9. 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 Conservation Council of Nations. Therefore, the Evaluation will identify lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation and implementation, especially where a second phase of the project is being considered. Recommendations relevant to the whole house may also be identified during the evaluation process.

H. Key Evaluation Principles

10. Evaluation findings and judgements will be based on **sound evidence and analysis**, clearly documented in the Evaluation 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.

11. **The "Why?" Question.** As this is a Terminal Evaluation and a follow-up project is likely [or similar interventions are envisaged for the future], particular attention will be given to learning from the experience. Therefore, the "why?" question should be at the front of the consultants' minds all through the evaluation exercise and is supported using a theory of change approach. This means that the consultant(s) needs to go beyond the assessment of "what" the project performance was and make a serious effort to provide a deeper understanding of "why" the performance was as it was (i.e., 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.

12. **Attribution, Contribution and Credible Association:** 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 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 evaluations. 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.

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

I. Key Strategic Questions

14. In addition to the evaluation criteria outlined in Section 10 below, the Evaluation will address the **strategic questions** listed below. These are questions of interest to UNEP and to which the project is believed to be able to make a substantive contribution. ^[L]_[SEP]**Q1:** To what extent are the caucuses operating now following the project closure? ^[L]_[SEP]
15. Also included below are five questions that are required when reporting in the GEF Portal and these must be addressed in the TE. 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:** ^[L]_[SEP]

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 provided⁴).

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

⁴ This is not applicable for Enabling Activities

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

J. Evaluation Criteria

16. All evaluation criteria will be rated on a six-point scale. Sections A-I below, outlines the scope of the criteria. A weightings table in excel format will be provided by the Evaluation Manager to support the determination of an overall project rating. The set of evaluation 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. The Evaluation Consultant(s) can propose other evaluation criteria as deemed appropriate. **a. Strategic Relevance**
17. The Evaluation 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 Evaluation 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 Medium Term Strategy (MTS), Programme of Work (POW) and Strategic Priorities**
18. The Evaluation 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 Building (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
19. Donor, including GEF, strategic priorities will vary across interventions. GEF priorities are specified in published programming priorities and focal area strategies. The Evaluation 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**
20. The Evaluation 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 be considered. Examples may include UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF), 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/Coherence**

21. An assessment will be made of how well the project, either at design stage or during the project inception or mobilization⁸, took account of ongoing and planned initiatives (under the same sub-programme, other UNEP 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 Evaluation 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 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 equality, Country ownership and driven-ness

⁷ This sub-category is consistent with the new criterion of 'Coherence' introduced by the OECD-DAC in 2019. ⁸ 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.

b. Quality of Project Design

22. The quality of project design is assessed using an agreed template during the evaluation 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 Evaluation Inception Report. Later, the overall Project Design Quality rating⁹ should be entered in the final evaluation ratings table (as item B) in the Main Evaluation Report and a summary of the project's strengths and weaknesses at design stage should be included within the body of the report. *Factors affecting this criterion may include (at the design stage):* Stakeholders participation and cooperation, Responsiveness to human rights and gender equality.
23. At evaluation inception stage a rating is established for the project's external operating context (considering the prevalence of conflict, natural disasters and political upheaval¹⁰). This rating is entered in the final evaluation ratings table as item C. Where a project has been rated as facing either an Unfavorable or Highly Unfavorable 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 Evaluation Consultant and Evaluation Manager together. A justification for such an increase must be given.

i. Availability of Outputs¹¹

24. The Evaluation 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

⁹ In some instances, based on data collected during the evaluation process, the assessment of the project's design quality may change from Inception Report to Main Evaluation Report.¹⁰ 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 by the project team. From March 2020 this should include the effects of COVID-19.

¹¹ 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) 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 Evaluation will briefly explain the reasons behind the success or shortcomings of the project in delivering its programmed outputs and meeting expected quality standards.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Preparation and readiness¹² • Quality of project management and supervision¹²

ii. Achievement of Project Outcomes¹³

25. The achievement of project outcomes is assessed as performance against the project outcomes as defined in the reconstructed¹⁴ 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 where substantive amendments to the formulation of project outcomes is necessary to allow for an assessment of performance. The Evaluation 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 realized.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Quality of project management and supervision¹² • Stakeholders' participation and cooperation¹⁴ • Responsiveness to human rights and gender equality • Communication and public awareness

¹² ¹² 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.

¹³ ¹³ 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)¹⁴ ¹⁴ All submitted UNEP project documents are required to present a Theory of Change with all submitted project designs. The level of 'reconstruction' needed during an evaluation 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 formal changes made to the project design.

iii. Likelihood of Impact

26. Based on the articulation of long-lasting effects in the reconstructed TOC (i.e. from project

outcomes, via intermediate states, to impact), the Evaluation 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 evaluations is outlined in a guidance note available 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. ^[1]_[SEP]

27. The Evaluation 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. ^[1]_[SEP]
28. The Evaluation will consider the extent to which the project has played a catalytic role¹⁵ 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. ^[1]_[SEP]
29. 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 Evaluation will assess the likelihood of the project to make a substantive contribution to the long-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). ^[1]_[SEP]

¹⁵ *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. Factors affecting this criterion may include:*

- Quality of Project Management and Supervision (including adaptive management) • Stakeholders participation and cooperation^[1]_[SEP] • Responsiveness to human rights and gender equality^[1]_[SEP] • Country ownership and driven-ness
- Communication and public awareness

e. Financial Management

30. 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 Evaluation 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 Evaluation 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 Evaluation will record where standard financial documentation is missing, inaccurate, incomplete or unavailable in a timely manner. The Evaluation will assess the level of communication between the Project/Task 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. ^{[[SEP]]}*Factors affecting this criterion may include:*^{[[SEP]]} Preparation and readiness^{[[SEP]]} Quality of project management and supervision^{[[SEP]]}

31. **f. Efficiency**^{[[SEP]]}

32. Under the efficiency criterion the Evaluation 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. ^{[[SEP]]}

33. 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 Evaluation 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 Evaluation will ^{[[SEP]]}describe any cost or time-saving measures put in place to maximize 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.

33. The Evaluation 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 complementarities¹⁶ with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. to increase project efficiency. ^{[[SEP]]}

34. The factors underpinning the need for any project extensions will also be explored and discussed. As management or project support costs cannot be increased in cases of 'no cost extensions', such extensions represent an increase in unstated costs to implementing parties. ^{[[SEP]]}*Factors affecting this criterion may include:*^{[[SEP]]} Preparation and readiness (e.g. timeliness)^{[[SEP]]} Quality of project management and supervision • Stakeholders participation and cooperation ^{[[SEP]]}**g. Monitoring and Reporting**^{[[SEP]]}

35. The Evaluation will assess monitoring and reporting across three sub-categories: monitoring design and budgeting, monitoring implementation and project reporting. ^{[[SEP]]}*i. Monitoring Design and Budgeting*^{[[SEP]]}

36. Each project should be supported by a sound monitoring plan that is designed to track progress against SMART¹⁷ results towards the provision of the project's outputs and achievement of project outcomes, including at a level disaggregated by gender, marginalization or vulnerability, including those living with disabilities. In particular, the Evaluation 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 Evaluation 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 Evaluation/Review should be discussed if applicable. ^[1]_[SEP] **ii. Monitoring of Project Implementation** ^[1]_[SEP]

37. The Evaluation will assess whether the monitoring system was operational and facilitated the timely tracking of results and progress towards projects objectives throughout the project ^[1]_[SEP]

¹⁶ *Complementarity with other interventions during project design, inception or mobilization is considered under Strategic Relevance above.* ^[1]_[SEP] ¹⁷ SMART refers to results that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-oriented. Indicators help to make results measurable.

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, marginalized 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 Evaluation should confirm that funds allocated for monitoring were used to support this activity.

38. 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. ^[1]_[SEP] **iii. Project Reporting** ^[1]_[SEP]

39. UNEP has a centralized project information management system (Anubis) in which project managers upload six-monthly progress reports against agreed project milestones. This information will be provided to the Evaluation Consultant(s) by the Evaluation Manager. Some projects have additional requirements to report regularly to funding partners, which will be supplied by the project team (e.g. the Project Implementation Reviews and Tracking Tool for GEF-funded projects). The Evaluation will assess the extent to which both UNEP and donor 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. ^[1]_[SEP] *Factors affecting this criterion may include:* ^[1]_[SEP] • Quality of project management and supervision ^[1]_[SEP] • Responsiveness to human rights and gender equality (e.g disaggregated indicators and data) ^[1]_[SEP] **h. Sustainability** ^[1]_[SEP]

40. Sustainability ¹⁸ 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 Evaluation 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 project outcomes may also be included. ^[1]_[SEP]

¹⁸ *As used here, 'sustainability' means the long-lasting 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)*

i. Socio-political Sustainability

41. The Evaluation 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 and commitment among government and other stakeholders to take the project achievements forwards. In particular the Evaluation will consider whether individual capacity development efforts are likely to be sustained. ^[SEP]^[SEP] **ii. Financial Sustainability** ^[SEP]^[SEP]
42. 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 Evaluation 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 a project's 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. ^[SEP]^[SEP] **iii. Institutional Sustainability** ^[SEP]^[SEP]
43. The Evaluation 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 Evaluation will consider whether institutional capacity development efforts are likely to be sustained. ^[SEP]^[SEP] *Factors affecting this criterion may include:* ^[SEP]^[SEP] Stakeholders participation and cooperation ^[SEP]^[SEP] Responsiveness to human rights and gender equality (e.g. where interventions are not inclusive, their sustainability may be undermined) ^[SEP]^[SEP] Communication and public awareness • Country ownership and driven-ness ^[SEP]^[SEP] **i. Factors Affecting Project Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues** ^[SEP]^[SEP]
44. These factors are rated in the ratings table but are discussed within the Main Evaluation Report as cross-cutting themes as appropriate under the other evaluation criteria, above. If these issues have not been addressed under the evaluation criteria above, then independent summaries of their status within the evaluated project should be given.) ^[SEP]^[SEP]

i. Preparation and Readiness

45. This criterion focuses on the inception or mobilization stage of the project (i.e. the time between project approval and first disbursement). The Evaluation 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 Evaluation 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). ^[SEP]^[SEP] **ii. Quality of Project Management and Supervision** ^[SEP]^[SEP]
46. In some cases 'project management and supervision' may refer to the supervision and guidance provided by UNEP to implementing partners and national governments while in others, specifically for GEF funded projects¹⁹, it may refer to the project management performance of the executing agency and the technical backstopping and supervision provided by UNEP. The performance of parties playing different roles should be discussed and a rating provided for both types of supervision (UNEP/Partner/Executing Agency) and the overall rating for this sub-

category established as a simple average of the two. [SEP]

47. The Evaluation 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. [SEP] **iii. Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation** [SEP]
48. Here the term 'stakeholder' should be considered in a broad sense, encompassing all project partners, duty bearers with a role in delivering project outputs and target users of project outputs and any other collaborating agents external to UNEP and the Executing Agency. 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 maximize 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). [SEP]

¹⁹ For GEF funded projects, a rating will be provided for the Project Management and Supervision of each of the Implementing and Executing Agencies. The two ratings will be aggregated to provided an overall rating for Quality of Project Management and Supervision

iv. Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality

49. The Evaluation 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 Evaluation will assess to what extent the intervention adheres to UNEP's Policy and Strategy for Gender Equality and the Environment²⁰. [SEP]
50. In particular the Evaluation 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 those related to gender) in mitigating or adapting to environmental changes and engaging in environmental protection and rehabilitation. [SEP]
51. Note that the project's effect on equality (i.e. promoting human rights, gender equality and inclusion of those living with disabilities and/or belonging to marginalized/vulnerable groups) should be included within the TOC as a general driver or assumption where there is no dedicated result within the results framework. If an explicit commitment on this topic is made within the project document then the driver/assumption should also be specific to the described intentions. 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). [SEP] **v. Environmental and Social Safeguards** [SEP]

52. 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 Evaluation will confirm whether UNEP requirements²¹ 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 [SEP]

²⁰ *The 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_strategy2015Gender_equality_and_the_environment_policy_and_strategy.pdf.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y*

²¹ *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.*

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 evaluated above under Quality of Project Design).

53. The Evaluation will also consider the extent to which the management of the project minimized 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. [SEP] **vi. Country Ownership and Driven-ness** [SEP]
54. The Evaluation 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 Evaluation will consider the engagement 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-lasting impact to be realized. Ownership should extend to all gendered and marginalized groups. [SEP] **vii. Communication and Public Awareness** [SEP]
55. The Evaluation 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 Evaluation should consider whether existing communication channels and networks were used

effectively, including meeting the differentiated needs of gendered or marginalized groups, and whether any feedback channels were established. Where knowledge sharing platforms have been established under a project the Evaluation will comment on the sustainability of the communication channel under either socio-political, institutional, or financial sustainability, as appropriate. [SEP]

56. 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. [SEP]

Section 3. EVALUATION APPROACH, METHODS AND DELIVERABLES

57. The Terminal Evaluation will be an in-depth evaluation using a participatory approach whereby key stakeholders are kept informed and consulted throughout the evaluation process. Both quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods will be used 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 Evaluation implementation phase in order to increase their (and other stakeholder) ownership of the evaluation findings. Where applicable, the consultant(s) will 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.) [SEP]
58. The findings of the Evaluation will be based on the following: [SEP].i. **A desk review of:** [SEP] Relevant background documentation – Project Cooperation Agreement, CEO Endorsement. • Project design documents at approval - Annual Work Plans and Budgets, revisions to the project (Project Document Supplement), the logical framework and its budget. [SEP] Project reports such as six-monthly progress and financial reports, progress reports from collaborating partners, meeting minutes, relevant correspondence and including the Project Implementation Reviews and Tracking Tool etc. [SEP] Project deliverables: [i.e. New legislations that have been adopted in the three target countries]. [SEP].ii. **Interviews (individual or in group) with:** [SEP] UNEP Task Manager (TM); [SEP] Project management team, including the Project Manager within the Executing Agency, where appropriate. [SEP] UNEP Fund Management Officer (FMO); [SEP] Portfolio Manager and Sub-Programme Coordinator, where appropriate. [SEP] Project partners; [SEP] Relevant resource persons; [SEP] Representatives from civil society and specialist groups (such as women's, farmers and trade associations etc). [SEP].iii. **Surveys: to be determined** [SEP].iv. **Field visits: to be determined in the evaluation inception stage.** v. **Other data collection tools: to be determined** [SEP]

Section 3. EVALUATION APPROACH, METHODS, AND DELIVERABLES

59. The Evaluation Consultant will review the existing **Inception Report that was developed previously to make any adjustments as necessary.** (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, evaluation framework and a tentative evaluation schedule.
60. The Evaluation Consultant will develop:
- a. **A Preliminary Findings Note:** typically, in the form of a PowerPoint presentation, the [SEP] 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. In the case of highly strategic project/portfolio evaluations or evaluations with an

Evaluation Reference Group, the preliminary findings may be presented as a word document for review and comment. [1] [SEP]

- b. **A Draft and Final Evaluation Report:** containing an executive summary that can act as a stand-alone document; detailed analysis of the evaluation findings organized by evaluation criteria and supported with evidence; lessons learned and recommendations and an annotated ratings table.
- c. **An Evaluation Brief**, (a 2-page overview of the evaluand and key evaluation findings) for wider dissemination through the UNEP website may be required. This will be discussed with the Evaluation Manager no later than during the finalization of the Inception Report. [1] [SEP]

61. **Review of the Draft Evaluation Report.** The Evaluation Consultant(s) will submit a draft report to the Evaluation Manager and revise the draft in response to their comments and suggestions. Once a draft of adequate quality has been peer-reviewed and accepted, the Evaluation Manager will share the cleared draft report with the Task Manager and Project Manager, who will alert the Evaluation Manager in case the report contains any blatant factual errors. The Evaluation Manager will then forward the revised draft report (corrected by the Evaluation Consultant(s) where necessary) 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 Evaluation Manager for consolidation. The Evaluation Manager will provide all comments to the Evaluation Consultant(s) for consideration in preparing the final report, along with guidance on areas of contradiction or issues requiring an institutional response.

62. Based on a careful review of the evidence collated by the Evaluation Consultants and the internal consistency of the report, the Evaluation Manager will provide an assessment of the ratings in the final evaluation report. Where there are differences of opinion between the evaluator and the Evaluation Manager on project ratings, both viewpoints will be clearly presented in the final report. The Evaluation Office ratings will be considered the final ratings for the project.

- 63. The Evaluation Manager will prepare a **quality assessment** of the first draft of the Main Evaluation Report, which acts as a tool for providing structured feedback to the Evaluation Consultant(s). The quality of the final report will be assessed and rated against the criteria specified in template listed in Annex 1 and this assessment will be appended to the Final Evaluation Report. [1] [SEP]
- 64. At the end of the evaluation process, the Evaluation Office will prepare a **Recommendations Implementation Plan** in the format of a table, to be completed and updated at regular intervals by the Task Manager. The Evaluation Office will track compliance against this plan on a six monthly basis for a maximum of 12 months. [1] [SEP]

K. The Evaluation Consultant

- 65. For this Evaluation, the Evaluation Team will consist of one Evaluation Consultant who will work under the overall responsibility of the Evaluation Office represented by an Evaluation Manager (Susan Mugwe) in consultation with the UNEP Task Manager (Thais Narciso/Robert Erath), Fund Management Officer (Michael Atogoh) and the Sub-programme Coordinators of the Subprogramme 3: Healthy and Productive Ecosystems (Marieta Sakalian), Subprogramme 4: Environmental Governance (Yassin Ahmed), and Subprogramme 6: Resource Efficiency (Djaheezah Subratty). [1] [SEP]
- 66. The consultants will liaise with the Evaluation Manager on any procedural and methodological matters related to the Evaluation, including travel. It is, however, each 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 project team will, where possible, provide logistical support (introductions, meetings etc.) allowing the consultants to conduct the Evaluation as efficiently and independently as possible. [SEP]

67. The Evaluation Consultant will be hired over a period of 6 months [1st February to 31st July 2024] 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. [SEP]

A minimum of 5 years of technical / evaluation experience is required, preferably including evaluating large, regional, or global programmes and using a Theory of Change approach. [SEP]

A good/broad understanding of environmental governance in Latin America is desired. [SEP]

English 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. [SEP]

Working knowledge of the UN system and specifically the work of UNEP is an added advantage.

68. The work will be home-based with possible field visits. The Evaluation Consultant will be responsible, in close consultation with the Evaluation Office of UNEP for overall management of the Evaluation and timely provision of its outputs, described above in Section 11 Evaluation Deliverables, above. The consultant will ensure together that all evaluation criteria and questions are adequately covered. [SEP]

69. In close consultation with the Evaluation Manager, the Evaluation Consultant will be responsible for the overall management of the Evaluation and timely provision of its outputs, data collection and analysis and report-writing. More specifically: [SEP]

Inception phase of the Evaluation, including:

- preliminary desk review and introductory interviews with project staff; • draft the reconstructed Theory of Change of the project; [SEP] • prepare the evaluation framework; [SEP] • develop the desk review and interview protocols;
- draft the survey protocols (if relevant); [SEP] • develop and present criteria for country and/or site selection for the evaluation mission; • plan the evaluation schedule; [SEP] • prepare the Inception Report, incorporating comments until approved by the Evaluation Manager

Data collection and analysis phase of the Evaluation, including:

- conduct further desk review and in-depth interviews with project implementing and executing agencies, project partners and project stakeholders; [SEP] • (where appropriate and agreed) conduct an evaluation mission(s) to selected countries, visit the project locations, interview project partners and stakeholders, including a good representation of local communities. Ensure independence of the Evaluation and confidentiality of evaluation interviews.
- regularly report back to the Evaluation Manager on progress and inform of any possible problems or issues encountered and; [SEP] • keep the Project/Task Manager informed of the evaluation progress.

Reporting phase, including:

- draft the Main Evaluation Report, ensuring that the evaluation report is complete, coherent and consistent with the Evaluation Manager guidelines both in substance and style; [SEP] • liaise with the

Evaluation Manager on comments received and finalize the Main Evaluation Report, ensuring that comments are taken into account until approved by the Evaluation Manager

- prepare a Response to Comments annex for the main report, listing those comments not accepted by the Evaluation Consultant and indicating the reason for the rejection; and
- (where agreed with the Evaluation Manager) prepare an Evaluation Brief (2-page summary of the evaluand and the key evaluation findings and lessons)

Managing relations, including:

- maintain a positive relationship with evaluation stakeholders, ensuring that the evaluation process is as participatory as possible but at the same time maintains its independence; ^[11] communicate in a timely manner with the Evaluation Manager on any issues requiring its attention and intervention.

L. Schedule of the Evaluation

70. The table below presents the tentative schedule for the Evaluation.

Table 3. Tentative schedule for the Evaluation

Evaluation Office of UNEP

Milestone	Tentative Dates
Evaluation Initiation Meeting	1 st February 2024
Inception Report	22 nd February 2024
Evaluation Mission	7 th to 26 th March 2024
E-based interviews, surveys etc.	7 th to 26 th March 2024
PowerPoint/presentation on preliminary findings and recommendations	9th April 2024
Draft report to Evaluation Manager (and Peer Reviewer)	23 rd April 2024
Draft Report shared with UNEP Project Manager and team	7 th May 2024
Draft Report shared with wider group of stakeholders	21 st May 2024
Final Report	20 th June 2024
Final Report shared with all respondents	15th July 2024

M. Contractual Arrangements

Evaluation Consultants will be selected and recruited by the Evaluation Office of UNEP under an individual Special Service Agreement (SSA) on a "fees only" basis (see below). By signing the service contract with UNEP /UNON, the consultant(s) certify that they have not been associated with the design and

implementation of the project in any way which may jeopardize their independence and impartiality towards project achievements and project partner performance. In addition, they will not have any future interests (within six months after completion of the contract) with the project's executing or implementing units. All consultants are required to sign the Code of Conduct Agreement Form.

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

Schedule of Payment for the Evaluation Consultant:

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 Evaluation Manager and on the production of acceptable receipts. Terminal expenses and residual DSA entitlements (25%) will be paid after mission completion.

The consultants 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 evaluation report.

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

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

ANNEX 10. GEF PORTAL INPUTS

Responses to the following questions were required for the GEF Portal.

<p>What was the performance at the project's completion against GEG 6 Core Indicator Targets?</p>	<p>The project provided tangible contributions to the following core indicator targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -9.1. Increased area of production landscapes and seascapes that integrate conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity into management. -9.2. The degree to which sector policies and regulatory frameworks incorporate biodiversity considerations and implement the regulations. -10. 1. The degree to which biodiversity values and ecosystem service values are internalized in development, finance policy and land-use planning and decision making
<p>What were the progress, challenges, and outcomes regarding engagement of stakeholders in the project/program as evolved from the time of the MTR?</p>	<p>Since the MTR the project faced delays and disruption due to social unrest in Colombia and especially Peru. Adaptation was needed to turnovers of legislators following elections. The challenges and setbacks were surmounted during and after the project.</p>
<p>What were the completed gender-responsive measures and, if applicable, actual gender result areas?</p>	<p>Women were nominated as Caucus co-chairpersons in the three Countries. There was satisfactory gender participation in the project's implementation, i.e. Caucus composition, training.</p>
<p>What was the progress made in the implementation of the management measures against the Safeguards Plan submitted at CEO Approval?</p>	<p>Risks were identified at design stage and avoided or mitigated for the most part. Social and political instability were outside the project's control, yet implementation was resumed in all cases when feasible.</p>
<p>What were the challenges and outcomes regarding the project's completed Knowledge Management Approach?</p>	<p>Caucus knowledge was raised significantly through the project's substantial study tours, field visits and roundtable events. Public awareness campaigns were foreseen but not carried out.</p>

ANNEX 11. REVIEW OF EVALUATION QUALITY

Evaluand Title:

Terminal Evaluation: "Generating Enhanced Political Will for Natural Resource Management and Conservation" GEF ID 9678

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

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final Report Rating
Report Quality Criteria		
<p>Quality of the Executive Summary</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> acts as a stand alone and accurate <u>summary</u> of the main evaluation product, especially for senior management.</p> <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • concise overview of the evaluation object • clear summary of the evaluation objectives and scope • overall evaluation rating of the project and key features of performance (strengths and weaknesses) against exceptional criteria • reference to where the evaluation ratings table can be found within the report • summary response to key strategic evaluation questions • summary of the main findings of the exercise/synthesis of main conclusions • summary of lessons learned and recommendations. 	<p>Final report :</p> <p>The Executive Summary provides a detailed summary of the main findings of the evaluation, including a short response to the evaluation's strategic question. The summary of performance ratings in is narrative form and there is no reference to the ratings table that is in the Conclusions section.</p>	5
<p>Quality of the 'Introduction' Section</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> introduces/<u>situates</u> the evaluand in its institutional context, establishes its main parameters (time, value, results, geography) and the purpose of the evaluation itself.</p> <p>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) • coverage of the evaluation (regions/countries where implemented) • implementing and funding partners • total secured budget • whether the project has been evaluated in the past (e.g. mid-term, external agency etc.) • concise statement of the purpose of the evaluation and the key intended audience for the findings. 	<p>Final report :</p> <p>The introduction is brief and covers the essential elements.</p>	5

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<p>Quality of the 'Evaluation Methods' Section</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> provides reader with clear and comprehensive description of evaluation 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 evaluation 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) • evaluation 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 evaluation process and in the compilation of the Final Evaluation 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 :</p> <p>This section covers the required elements. It also sets out the challenges faced by the evaluator in taking up this work after the initial evaluation attempt had to be curtailed.</p>	<p>5</p>
<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> <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 	<p>Final report:</p> <p>The section is detailed, covers all elements and is well presented.</p>	<p>5</p>

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<p>affected the project's scope or parameters should be described in brief in chronological order</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <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>Quality of the Theory of Change</p> <p><u>Purpose</u>: to set out the TOC at Evaluation 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 Evaluation</i>³⁷ 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 in the Inception Report and should appear somewhere in the Main Evaluation report. 	<p>Final report:</p> <p>A reconstructed TOC is presented as a narrative and a diagram. The causal pathways are discussion and Drivers and Assumptions identified. The process by which the TOC was reconstructed in terms of who was involved apart from the evaluation consultant, is not discussed.</p>	5
<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 evaluation criterion or a strategic question from the TOR. A finding should go beyond description and uses analysis to provide insights that aid learning specific to the evaluand. In some cases a findings statement may articulate a key</p>	<p>Final report:</p> <p>The report is clear in terms of the evidence it provides and also its limitations. 'Findings statements' appear as 'Conclusions' in the conclusions section. The use of tables to set out the performance at output and outcome level provides clarity about how the performance has been assessed under Effectiveness.</p>	5

³⁷ During the Inception Phase of the evaluation process a *TOC at Evaluation Inception* is created based on the information contained in the approved project documents (these may include either logical framework or a TOC or narrative descriptions), formal revisions and annual reports etc. During the evaluation process this TOC is revised based on changes made during project intervention and becomes the *TOC at Evaluation*.

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<p>element that has determined the performance rating of a criterion. Findings will frequently provide insight into 'how' and/or 'why' questions.</p>		
<p>Quality of 'Strategic Relevance' Section</p> <p><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.</p> <p>To include:</p> <p>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/mobilisation³⁸), with other interventions addressing the needs of the same target groups. 	<p>Final report:</p> <p>All elements are covered.</p>	5
<p>Quality of the 'Quality of Project Design' Section</p> <p><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:</p> <p>The discussion of project design extends to some discussion of how the design features influenced implementation, which is not specifically required under UNEP Evaluation Office guidance.</p>	5
<p>Quality of the 'Nature of the External Context' Section</p> <p><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 upheaval³⁹), and how they affected performance.</p> <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:</p> <p>The Evaluation Office of UNEP intends this section to discuss any unexpected and unfavourable events that took place during project implementation and that might have destroyed or distorted evidence of the project's achievements. The regular political processes and dynamics mentioned, including legislator</p>	3

³⁸ 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.

³⁹ 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.

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	turnover, would not be considered unexpected. This rating does not affect the overall rating of the project as it is only applied if extenuating circumstances that undermine performance have been established.	
<p>Quality of 'Effectiveness' Section</p> <p>(i) Availability of Outputs:</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of the outputs made available to the intended beneficiaries.</p> <p>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:</p> <p>This section presents a clear and readable assessment of the availability of outputs. It is supported by Table 10.</p>	5.5
<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:</p> <p>This section presents a clear and readable assessment of the achievement of outputs. It is supported by Tables 11 and 12.</p>	5.5

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<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:</p> <p>The assessment of the likelihood of impact was supported by the length of time that had elapsed since the project end and shows a 'Likely' level of impact.</p> <p>The discussion would have benefited from a summary of whether the Drivers and Assumptions were seen to hold as expected.</p>	5
<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 :</p> <p>There is limited discussion on financial management although no concerns are raised. Project spending is presented on pg 26 in section 3.6 Project financing, as well as in Annex 6 on the Project budget and expenditure.</p>	3
<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:</p> <p>All elements addressed as required.</p>	5

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<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> <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 (<i>e.g. PIMS and donor reports</i>) 	<p>Final report:</p> <p>All sub categories are discussed, with some reflection on the quality of the indicators.</p>	4
<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).</p> <p>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:</p> <p>The report provides an interesting discussion of likelihood of sustainability.</p>	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.</p> <p>Consider how well the evaluation 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 supervision⁴⁰ • stakeholder participation and co-operation • responsiveness to human rights and gender equality • environmental and social safeguards • country ownership and driven-ness • communication and public awareness 	<p>Final report:</p> <p>All elements are appropriately discussed and assessed.</p>	5
<p>Quality of the Conclusions Section</p> <p>(i) Conclusions Narrative:</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to present summative statements reflecting on prominent</p>	<p>Final report:</p> <p>The conclusions section provides a readable narrative focused on the</p>	5.5

⁴⁰ 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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<p>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 evaluation 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>main achievements.</p>	
<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>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 evaluation 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:</p> <p>The evaluation report offers useful lessons.</p>	<p>4</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 Evaluation Office can monitor and assess compliance with the recommendations. <p>NOTES:</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</p>	<p>Final report</p> <p>The evaluation report offers relevant recommendations, although their feasibility may be challenges. There is no recommendation on focused on the human rights or gender dimension.</p>	<p>4</p>

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preparation with the same third party, a recommendation can be made to address the issue in the next phase.		
Quality of Report Structure and Presentation (i) Structure and completeness of the report: To what extent does the report follow the Evaluation Office structure and formatting guidelines? Are all requested Annexes included and complete?	Final report: The report is complete.	5
(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? Do visual aids, such as maps and graphs convey key information?	Final report: The report is clearly written and accessible.	5
OVERALL REPORT QUALITY RATING		5

A number rating 1-6 is used for each criterion: Highly Satisfactory = 6, Satisfactory = 5, Moderately Satisfactory = 4, Moderately Unsatisfactory = 3, Unsatisfactory = 2, Highly Unsatisfactory = 1. The overall quality of the evaluation report is calculated by taking the mean score of all rated quality criteria.