

## Management Response: Implementation Plan for Evaluation Recommendations

### General Information

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Evaluation Manager	Michael Spilsbury
Project Evaluation Title	Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP/GEF project “Support to Eligible Parties to Produce the Sixth National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity, CBD” Covering: (i) Pacific (GEF Id 9823; (ii) Africa-1 (GEF Id 9817); (iii) Africa-2 (GEF Id 9824); (iv) Europe, CIS and Mongolia (GEF Id 9822); and (v) Global (GEF Id 9832)
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UNEP Sub-programme	SP3 – Healthy and Productive Ecosystems
GEF Focal Area	Biodiversity
Project Manager/ Task Manager	Julian Blanc
Office/Division	Ecosystems Division
Branch & Unit	Ecosystems - Biodiversity and Land Branch
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Implementation Plan Sent to PM/TM (Date)	12-04-22
Implementation Plan Returned by PM/TM (Date)	12-05-22
Implementation Plan finalized (if different from the date above)	

### Implementation Plan

No	Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation	Recommendation	Priority level	Type of Recommendation	Responsibility	Proposed Implementation time-frame	Acceptance	Reason if not Accepted or Partially Accepted	Management Action(s) to be taken
1	This recommendation recognises the strengths of the current project design and aims for continuity in this approach in subsequent CBD national reporting cycles. Adjustments to the proposed Framework (attached here as Annex VIII) can be made, as drivers, assumptions and reporting requirements evolve post-2020 and the relevance of NR to global	UNEP (together with UNDP) to consider using a template Results Framework and TOC for the design of future CBD national reporting GEF Enabling Activity projects. (see Annex VIII)	Opportunity for improvement	Partners	UNEP (GEF Biodiversity & Land Degradation Unit) – to achieve with UNDP	January to June 2022.	Partially Accepted	The project design already includes a results framework, which was collaboratively developed between UNDP and UNEP.  The results framework can be refined to provide better indicators, but a theory of	Refine results framework in future enabling activities projects.

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	<p>outputs varies. Indicators proposed at the Outcome and Objective levels, including a variant of GEF Core Indicator 11 (sector- and sex-disaggregated data) can act as both project indicators and ones that can measure the quality of NR processes in countries (either directly or as a proxy).</p>							<p>change is not possible feasible in the context of GEF enabling activities, as the requirements are provided set by the Parties to the Convention. This means a ToC process – including problem analysis, objectives tree, causal pathways and so on – a moot exercise.</p>	
2	<p>This recommendation considers the following factors: (i) evolving GEF policies that integrate knowledge management requirements and across-the-board use of Core Indicators, even if not for GEF-6 Enabling Activities; (ii) continued involvement of both Agencies in GEF Enabling Activities for CBD and other Conventions and Protocols; (iii) efficiency gains to be had from collaboration and pooling of resources; and (iv) UN Secretary General's Data Strategy that seeks to build a data-driven organization.</p>	<p>UNEP (together with UNDP) to propose a joint knowledge management strategy and simplified Technical Review Framework to better capitalise on the cooperation between UNEP and UNDP during post-2020 national reporting interventions, and thus increase the value-for-money of these GEF Enabling Activities.</p>	<p>Opportunity for improvement</p>	<p>Partners</p>	<p>UNEP (GEF Biodiversity &amp; Land Degradation Unit + Wildlife Unit) – to achieve with UNDP</p>	<p>As part of designing the GEF Enabling Activity project for the next CBD national reporting exercise, or as early as the opportunity arises.</p>	<p>Partially Accepted</p>	<p>A joint knowledge management strategy existed in the project in terms of the NBSAP forum, which was used by both UNDP and UNEP to share knowledge and information with the Parties, as well as in a jointly developed Technical Review Framework. In the course of implementation, UNEP felt that the Technical Review Framework was overly complicated and adaptively developed a simplified framework, which it encourage</p>	<p>UNEP to continue the engagement and promotion of the use of a simplified technical review frameworks for future enabling activity projects, as piloted in previous enabling activities the 6NR project.</p> <p>UNEP to Ensure continued to use and support for the improvement of the NBSAP Forum for knowledge management and to address emerging issues.</p>

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								UNDP to adopt as well.	
3	<p>The design of future CBD national reporting interventions can be optimised by learning from prior experiences. Those lessons can point to ways to tailor the project's technical assistance for more effective and efficient uptake by countries, and integrate more elements of technology transfer. The following are considerations to this end, based on project findings:</p> <p>a. In addition to language and geographical location, technological capacity is another criterium for grouping or sub-grouping countries in capacity building activities.</p> <p>b. Global meetings at the side-lines of CBD meetings could have a longer duration, and follow-up provided after all tool-intensive encounters.</p> <p>c. Planning for in-person rather than virtual inception workshops makes the project front-heavy but responsive to demands from countries for early in-person inductions. These allow country project managers to familiarise themselves from the onset with the tools on offer, and all technical and reporting aspects of the project, including the UNEP project manager with whom they will relate.</p> <p>d. If workshops and</p>	<p>UNEP to explore efficient and effective ways to tailor the delivery of technical assistance entailed in CBD national reporting GEF Enabling Activity projects, to better match the capacities and geopolitical realities of countries.</p>	<p>Opportunity for improvement</p>	<p>Project</p>	<p>UNEP (GEF Biodiversity &amp; Land Degradation Unit + Wildlife Unit)</p>	<p>As part of designing the GEF Enabling Activity project for the next CBD national reporting exercise, or as early as the opportunity arises.</p>	<p>Partially Accepted</p>	<p>In this project, UNEP looked for every opportunity to engage in face-to-face workshops in preference to webinars, precisely to address the problem of technological challenges. However, organizing ad-hoc training events for such a large number of countries / regions is limited by the availability of PMC budgets – hence the need to seek opportunities to piggyback on existing events (e.g. CBD meetings). Adding another dimension beyond region and language (technological capacity – point a.), having more (point c.) or longer (point b.) face-to-face workshops would be even less feasible in terms of costs. A ToT approach could be implemented</p>	<p>UNEP will encourage Parties to make use of CBD rosters of experts and/or to create and build maintain their own rosters of experts to help build the expertise at country level</p>

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	<p>webinars are to function as “seed capital” for more of a trainer-of-trainers approach, then the onward-relay of information on how to use those tools will need special attention; the idea is to help those trained to better transmit their utility and relevance to NBSAPs to national teams.</p> <p>e. Promoting the use of expert rosters, with regional and thematic distinctions, can facilitate the tailoring of technical support.</p> <p>f. Consideration can be given to providing countries with the opportunity to use project budgets to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• carry out communication and outreach activities, especially if useful to build political support or national awareness of biodiversity issues.</li> <li>• mobilize regional support and services, which can be especially useful to small island developing states.</li> <li>• attend to specific information technology needs for improved data collection and management.</li> <li>• receive in-country targeted courses or trainings, drawing from UNEP partnerships or the roster of experts, on the use of open-access biodiversity data sources.</li> </ul>							<p>by inviting potential trainers to face to face events in addition to end users (point d.), but this would also (i) increase costs, particularly where travel for additional participants is involved; and ii) would necessarily leave it to the Parties to ensure the knowledge is spread by organizing their own subsequent training events; uptake would vary widely in this respect.</p> <p>Regarding expert rosters (points e.), the CBD Secretariat maintains a roster of experts, and future projects could sensitize Parties about this service, as well as encouraging them to maintain their own rosters.</p> <p>Finally, regarding recommendations in point f.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parties have the freedom to set their own budgets according to their needs, and many did include communications and outreach</li> </ul>	

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								<p>budgets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The UNEP regional office in the Pacific was mobilized to support countries in the region (the only one to include SIDS in the project).</li> <li>• Several Parties included IT equipment in their budgets, but systemically improving general IT capacity at the country level is beyond the scope of enabling activity projects. Nevertheless, one-to-one technical support on tools such as the UN Biodiversity Lab was provided on demand, and the NBSAP Forum was used to spread knowledge and lessons learned on the tool.</li> <li>• In-country training – be it through partners or through rostered experts, requires resources and this is not scalable given limitations in the amount of PMC and technical support funding</li> </ul>	

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								available in typical enabling activity projects.	
4	<p>a) early engagement with national executing partners /CBD Focal Points in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- agree on an appropriate execution arrangement, considering direct (with a designated NEA) and indirect options (through a UNEP Regional Office, UNOPS, or a UNDP Country Office - at costs to be negotiated early).</li> <li>- obtain the necessary institutional and financial information from the designated NEA, as per UNEP policies.</li> </ul> <p>b) the use of a specific internal agreement template for GEF Enabling Activities that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- simplifies internal reporting requirements to align them with GEF requirements and the information obtainable from UNEP's financial management system</li> <li>- places more emphasis on national execution oversight responsibilities.</li> <li>- introduces M&amp;E elements, such as GEF Core indicator 11 and the revision of Internal Agreement annexes to include country reporting templates for use in sub-agreements, that facilitate monitoring for knowledge management (e.g., obtaining sex- and sector-disaggregated data from participatory</li> </ul>	<p>UNEP to consider project management and oversight improvements for the global execution of GEF Enabling Activities that entail:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) early engagement with national executing partners /CBD Focal Points;</li> <li>b) the use of a specific internal agreement template for GEF Enabling Activities</li> </ul>	Important	Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) UNEP (Wildlife Unit – or the Unit that will execute future CBD national reporting interventions)</li> <li>b) UNEP (GEF Biodiversity &amp; Land Degradation Unit).</li> </ul>	January to October 2022.	Partially Accepted	<p>a) Early engagement is always aimed for. In this particular case, lack of human resources – and the lengthy timelines in UN recruitment processes – made this early engagement difficult. Once contacted, Parties had the option to select their preferred implementation arrangements – most went for direct funding through UNEP's mechanisms, while others selected the relevant UNEP regional office and others received their funds through a Fax Authorization to UNDP. Note, however that, particularly in the light of UNEP's emerging Delivery Model, UNEP Regional Offices are increasingly reluctant to be conduits for enabling activity funds, particularly without cost</p>	<p>UNEP will develop template for collection of gender disaggregated data and promote its use at country level and for use in its own activities.</p>

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	<p>activities; including a rapid-response questionnaire in countries' Final Report template).</p> <p>- includes under the "Terms and Responsibilities of the Implementing Party" (clause 7) the provision of the above reporting templates, to facilitate global monitoring.</p>							<p>recovery (which is not sufficient in terms of available PMC funds) and.</p> <p>b) standard approved legal instrument templates and reporting annexes were used for both internal and external agreements. Note also that enabling activity funds are not subject to the same rules as other GEF projects. In particular, only annual statements of expenditures are required by GEF-funded enabling activity projects, and these are obtained from Umoja. GEF core indicator 11 is also not applicable to enabling activities, but UNEP can encourage Parties to collect and report on gender-disaggregated data on their activities; UNEP can also collect such data for its own activities such as workshops.</p> <p>A rapid response</p>	

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								questionnaire was developed and administered to the countries at the end of the project.	