

INCEPTION REPORT

Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP/GEF project

“Integrating trade-offs between supply of ecosystem services and land use options into poverty alleviation efforts and development planning in Mixteca”

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September 2015

1. Introduction

1. This document presents the inception report for the Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the UNEP/GEF project "Integrating trade-offs between supply of ecosystem services and land use options into poverty alleviation efforts and development planning in Mixteca" (hereafter called "Mixteca project") containing a thorough review of the project context, project design quality, a draft reconstructed Theory of Change of the project, the evaluation framework and a tentative evaluation schedule.

2. In line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy¹ and the UNEP Programme Manual², the Terminal Evaluation is undertaken at completion of the project to assess project performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine outcomes and impacts (actual and potential) stemming from the project, including their sustainability. The evaluation has two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP, GEF, CONANP, CONAFOR, and WWF. Therefore, the evaluation will identify lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation and implementation [especially for the second phase of the project, if applicable].

3. The **objective** of the project is to mainstream biodiversity conservation into natural resource use and development planning in the Mixteca Region of Oaxaca integrating ecosystem services (ES) tools and sustainable livelihood options. The project objective intended to contribute to the conservation of globally important ecosystems and species within the Mixteca region of Oaxaca, including a large number of endemic and migratory species.

4. The project includes eight **outcomes**, organized in four project **components**. Component 1, Outcome 1.1: Stakeholders and decision makers at state and local level have increased access to Ecosystem Services tools applicable to biodiversity conservation and sustainable use; Outcome 1.2: Natural Resources, ecosystem services and biodiversity in the project intervention area are assessed, valued and monitored using the new ES tools and knowledge provided through the project. Component 2, outcome 2.1: Biodiversity and ES considerations are integrated into state and federal support programs and land use planning. Component 3, outcome 3.1: Local stakeholders apply the ecosystem approach for planning and implementation of productive activities and biodiversity conservation; Outcome 3.2: The supply of key Ecosystem Services is secured, improving ecosystem resilience and leading to improved livelihoods; Outcome 3.3: Improved land use planning and management practices lead to increased habitat connectivity for globally significant biodiversity within the project intervention area as assessed and monitored under outcome 1.2; Component 4, Outcome 4.1: Project findings, tools and methodologies made available to state and federal decision makers as well as the public, and relevant interest groups; Outcome 4.2: Coordination and cooperation established with UNEP Ecosystem Management Program (EMP).

5. The project intends to bring long term ecosystem integrity, stability and resilience into the food production equation by promoting science – policy integration, towards good practices in agriculture and natural resource management. It demonstrates how ecosystem management techniques could bring about improved water and soil conditions, and improved agricultural productivity in the form of higher efficiencies and yields. Productive activity will in turn be concentrated in the most suitable areas, thereby decreasing

¹ <http://www.unep.org/eou/StandardsPolicyandPractices/UNEPevaluationPolicy/tabid/3050/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

² http://www.unep.org/QAS/Documents/UNEP_Programme_Manual_May_2013.pdf

habitat disruption and encroachment on fragile and biologically significant ecosystems. In this way the project also intends to achieve global environmental benefits in the form of biodiversity conservation.

2. Project background

6. The Oaxacan Mixteca is composed of three major geographic areas: the high Mixteca, lower Mixteca and the coast, each with its physical and social characteristics that make it an important region of high biological and cultural diversity. The four zones that comprise the project's intervention area cover approximately one third of the Oaxacan Mixteca and comprise an irregular, mountainous terrain covering 567,308 hectares, 41 municipalities and 98 micro-watersheds. These areas were chosen as representative of biodiversity hotspots that interconnect with already established protected areas and thereby could provide biological corridors connecting different ecosystems

7. Mixteca ecosystems are of global importance for their unique ecosystemic richness, significant biological integrity and important degree of endemism. The Mixtecan area of Oaxaca is noted for its impressive mix of tropical and temperate montane pine-oak and cloud forests. This area of relatively low (300 - 700 mm) and seasonally concentrated rainfall is rich in biodiversity, and harbors many unique, endemic and threatened species.

8. The low, highly seasonal rainfall and soils with a lack of crucial nutrients, make agriculture in this region challenging. Moreover, in spite of its rich cultural history and diversity, the Oaxacan Mixteca traditionally suffers from many socio-economic challenges: difficult physical accessibility, low degree of technical and financial support and general marginalization of public services. Traditional agriculture, which was relatively stable, is increasingly abandoned because of lack of access to water and fertile soils, monocrops are introduced with worse environmental impact resulting in erosion and land degradation and encroachment through slash and burn into natural forest. Food security is low and overall, the Oaxacan Mixteca is now considered one of the poorest regions of the country. The high rate of poverty pushed Mixteca inhabitants, particularly men, out of the region to work in other agricultural regions, in cities or abroad, leaving the family plots to women and elders, with little capacity to apply good agricultural practice.

9. Because of the dramatic interaction of environmental (low precipitation, poor soils) and social challenges (poverty, migration), biodiversity in the region is being increasingly threatened by habitat and ecosystem destruction and land degradation by an array of low-productivity farming activities. These include deforestation through slash and burn agricultural techniques and for energy needs; cattle and goat rearing with a pasture pressure that can reach 4-5 times the sustainable rate; and an annual migration of more than 100,000 animals, largely goats. Land degradation has reached disastrous levels after years of deforestation, overgrazing and agricultural expansion which means that subsistence food production of basic staple crops generally falls far short of household food requirements.

10. National authorities are already addressing priority social issues such as poverty alleviation and food security. However, biodiversity (BD) conservation and ecosystem (ES) considerations are not yet an integral part of their programmes due to inadequate science base to support knowledge of the role it plays in maintaining and sustaining ecosystem services, including food production. This is to be achieved through rescuing traditional knowledge and bringing it together with innovative, state of the art technology in assessment, resulting in good practices in biodiversity conservation, natural resource management and agriculture. This will contribute to improving the livelihoods of local and indigenous communities, as main beneficiaries of the project.

11. **Root causes** for this are complex and relate to factors affecting decision-making on land use. According to the project document, root causes are of physical origin and socio-economic origin. The first are related to the low soil fertility and the high vulnerability of soils to disturbance. Socio-economic root causes are related to the loss of traditional lifestyles (including traditional land use practices) of the indigenous population, generalized poverty and outmigration. Loss of traditional knowledge and practice seemed to have caused more soil degradation and forest loss (because of encroaching agriculture), while poverty and migration is causing lack of labor and adequate knowledge to apply good agricultural practice.

12. **Barriers** that impede effective biodiversity conservation efforts in the region are linked to institutional deficiencies: (i) A limited level of ongoing assessments and monitoring of natural resources, (ii) A lack of technical background and specialized knowledge needed to bring long term ecosystem stability into the food production equation (iii) A lack of land use plans that take into account ecosystem services. (iv) A lack of inter-institutional coordination needed to oversee the many state and federal support programs (v) A lack of focused education and capacity building efforts among indigenous groups to create sustainable food production activities (vi) A limited capacity within CONANP to upscale pilot interventions in priority areas to harness potential investments for impact at the wider landscape level, and (vii) Poor marketability and profitability of agricultural crops produced, thanks to the paucity of farmer associations.

13. The project rationale focuses on the mentioned barriers, particularly through creating monitoring systems, creating capacity among local farmers and institutions, including BD and ES in land use plans, promoting and expanding good practice and strengthening institutional frameworks

14. The project **context has slightly changed** in a few aspects, principally related to the institutional setting. There have been governmental changes at all levels. This has resulted in the changes in policies (and sometimes even in name) of several institutes that are important project partners. It has particularly affected the participation of several agencies in the State Committee for Development Planning. It also was one of the main reasons why there has been only one meeting of the inter-institutional working group. However, according to MTR, the project has maintained its course despite the election process and the ensuing changes in institutional partners and stakeholders.

15. The migration crisis in meso america has deepened during recent years; Oaxaca and neighbouring states being the centre of the problem in Mexico. This situation, for which the relation with land use and environment has been well explained in the ProDoc, is increasingly stressing the socio-cultural conditions of the project area.

16. In Mexico as a whole, there is ongoing interest in financial incentive mechanisms for ES and BD friendly land use has increased, especially thanks to the global attention to carbon mitigation. The government supported ES mechanisms are strengthened and new initiatives provide additional opportunities.

Stakeholder analysis

The Project Document (ProDoc) of the Mixteca project includes a clear stakeholder analysis, which provides the reader with a good overview of different social groups and institutions that would have been affected by activities of the project and how these participate and/or benefit from the project.

The target area of this project, the Oaxacan Mixteca, is one of Mexico's poorest region. Of its nearly 700,000 inhabitants, 68% live in rural areas. Inhabitants are mostly indigenous peoples, principally Mixtecas. However, at least six other different ethnic groups are present. The rural population of the intervention area (approx. one third of the entire Oaxacan Mixteca) are the primary beneficiaries of the project because these are assisted in rehabilitation of traditional land and water management techniques, trained in good agricultural practice and restauration of degraded lands and alternative income sources such as tourism. They will also benefit directly from the maintained ecosystem services originating from a better overall environmental situation. Rural population from other rural areas, in similar conditions, can profit from the good examples and knowledge exchange with the project area. Finally, the wider Oaxacan population will profit from a better environmental management for good water management, maintained production and higher landscape attractiveness.

Participation of different stakeholder groups in the project execution is explained in the section on implementation arrangements of the ProDoc. The support of the project to the direct beneficiaries is provided mostly through farmers cooperatives; many of which are being stimulated with project support, although the project originally did not include a specific strategy to select communities or cooperatives to be include in project implementation.

According to the ProDoc, all identified stakeholders were involved in the project design, which was indispensable in taking into account the concerns and needs of project partners and beneficiaries. The involvement of partners and stakeholders, including local communities, indigenous peoples and women, is assured through the Project Steering Committee, its Advisory Panels and the Stakeholder Advisory Committee as part of project implementation arrangements. The Project Steering Committee will monitor and assess project implementation and, as required, will propose the necessary revisions, modifications and adjustments needed to correct any negative impacts that may emerge.

CONANP and CONAFOR as executing partners and WWF-Mexico as national executing agency have spearheaded the development of the project and, as members of the Steering Committee, will play the lead role in implementing and monitoring the project and maintaining its strategic focus.

As a region characterized by above average poverty levels, the Oaxacan Mixteca receives an array of social support programs intended to improve household income and living standards. There are more than 14 state and federal secretariats providing different types of assistance to the population, including farming subsidies, social sector programs and temporary employment schemes. This GEF project will facilitate synergy between the numerous government organizations already working in the Oaxacan Mixteca to enable them to establish agreements to avoid duplication of activities and to streamline their resource allocations towards communities, traditional collectives (*ejidos*) and small scale private land owners that have a positive attitude towards conservation and management of their natural resources, ecosystems and biodiversity. This synergy would be achieved by establishing the Inter-Institutional Working Group (IWG) to provide continuity and strengthen the government's Regional Planning Support Group in its initiatives in the Mixteca Priority Region. In addition, for the pilot demonstration projects, activities will be facilitated through Project Site Teams (PSTs) to ensure broad involvement of local communities and key stakeholders, proper planning, and broader consultations with a wide range of agencies, NGOs and key private sector groups, such as farmers, forest owners and hotel and tour operators.

Finally, the establishment of a Project Stakeholder Advisory Committee (PSAC) will provide a platform for broader on-going consultations with a wide range of local community representatives, civic groups and private sector representatives on project implementation.

While the project design identified clearly the different stakeholder groups at institutional level, including their interest in the project, the role of most partners (both governmental agencies, producer groups, civil society organizations, private sector) through the different committees (IWG, PST, PSAC) in the project is not further specified.

The present terminal evaluation recognizes the different groups of stakeholders and will place specific attention to (a) the benefits received by the main the target groups (b) the level of participation by the different agencies associated to the region's environment and development and (c) the communication between project, its stakeholders (participating in implementation) and beneficiaries.

3. Review of project design

17. The project was well designed, presents a clear logic from activities to outputs and outcomes to objectives and goals, and is accompanied by clearly stated situation analysis, stakeholder analysis, risk analysis, M&E plan and implementation arrangements (see Project Document). This provides a solid basis for project implementation and achievement of intended results. The design is realistic, efficient and provides enough opportunity for stakeholder involvement. Some information gathered during PPG stage has been well incorporated and clearly strengthened the project design.

18. The results framework is clear and detailed, includes SMART indicators, target values and means of verification. Several baseline data were not available at the start of the project, but methods to gather this information are presented. Outcomes are ambitious but realistic, and the realistic target level of the project objective creates a high feasibility for the project. Here it should be noted that the project objective is very similar to outcome 2.1 and even partly the same indicators are used.

19. The results framework includes many and diverse outputs, and their formulation is not always consistent: some are proper outputs (concrete products), others formulated as activities ("training", "rehabilitation"), while others seem outcomes ("pilot cases established"). Although there was no Theory of Change presented at the stage of project development, the evaluator could reconstruct the ToC and find most necessary elements in the project document. While reconstructing the Theory of Change, it was found that several outcomes were serial (one transitioning into another) and were (partly) reformulated as intermediate states. In spite of this challenge, the three major impact pathways (landscape connectivity, policy support and ES management and rehabilitation) could be reconstructed, in accordance to the project rationale presented in ProDoc (paragraph 81 and 82). A minor impact pathway was identified for dissemination, because of the prominent position this component has in project results framework. And although its focus is relevant, it is challenging to include it clearly in an impact pathway but rather contributes to all.

20. The evaluator made an assessment of the **Quality of Design**, including detailed responses to most of the questions in the GEF template (see Annex 1: assessment of Quality of Project Design). Overall, the quality of design was considered satisfactory, with several strengths and some minor weak points.

21. Overall **strengths** of project design are the background and situation analysis, stakeholder analysis, efficiency and overall implementation arrangements, dissemination and outreach strategies and project funding; all these were rated as highly satisfactory. The background and situation analysis, as well as the stakeholder analysis, all greatly benefiting from PPG inputs, provide a detailed description of the context, adequate partners and most likely beneficiaries of the project. It forms a good statement for the project's relevance and a clear introduction to the problem analysis. Thanks to the stakeholder analysis and participatory character of project formulation, the implementation arrangement with a core group of agencies in SC but several bodies of participation and consultation, seems an adequate way to combine efficiency with broad stakeholder participation. Nevertheless, on first sight the implementation arrangements lack concrete roles of the participating agencies and selection of beneficiary groups, especially at the level of activities.

22. The focus of the project to build upon existing structures and programmes particularly in outcome 2.1 and 3.3) creates a high (potential) efficiency. Dissemination of project results among project stakeholders and externally, inclusion of lessons learnt from within and outside de project, are strong aspects, although the relevant outcomes (4.1 and 4.2) are not straightforwardly connectable to project objectives (see below). The project-funding scheme, with enough budget, all co-funding fully secured before start and new sources identified, is also positive.

23. The project design has a few **weak aspects**, particularly gender, assumptions and risks and the definition and detail of some indicators. Gender aspects are hardly managed in the ProDoc and no specific gender approach is included in project design in spite of some clear opportunities to do so, considering the context. Aspects of migration, food security and traditional knowledge typically have strong gender aspects.

24. The risk assessment (Section 3.5, ProDoc) is short but adequate; they include environmental aspects, consistency of policies, market fluctuations, social aspects etc. However, most of these risks are not included as assumptions in the project logic. The assumptions that were included (see paragraph 115), all refer to the willingness of stakeholders; most of which participate as project executors of beneficiaries and therefore, their willingness is at least partly within control of the project. Among the risks, there is no risks included about long term financial sustainability, this is particularly relevant because the project aims at including BD and ES considerations in existing programs and plans, which will only work if these are sustained long term.

25. The indicators are generally well defined and 'SMART', but there is a lack of baseline data for some of these. Although the ProDoc states "50% of data is available", most base line information is absolute ("there is none") or subjective and most quantitative baseline data were expected to become available during yr 1 of implementation. Also, there are no livelihood indicators to measure outcome 3.2 and project objective. Indicators for project objective are more adequate for overall goal.

4. Reconstructed Theory of Change

26. Based on the project documentation, the evaluator reconstructed the Theory of Change, that implicitly underlays the project. This reconstruction was done using the GEF Evaluation Office's approach to assess the likelihood of impact that builds on the concepts of Theory of Change / causal chains / impact pathways. The method is known as **Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROtI)**. To do so, the evaluator identified the project's intended impacts (project objective, strategic objective and GEB), reviewed the project's logical framework (outputs to outcomes and objectives, including stated assumptions) and analyzed and modeled the project's outcomes-impact pathways.

27. In this reconstructed theory of change (see diagram below), effort is placed on identifying **impact pathways**, implying the transformation of the activities that generate outputs (light brown boxes), to outcomes (blue) and impacts (green). Because the project presents a long list of outputs, the consultant decided to rather present one single box of general activities for each outcome in the diagram. Project outcomes are the intended results stemming from these activities/outputs. In the strict sense, intermediate states are the transitional stages between direct project outcomes and the impact. However, in the present exercise, this had to be applied flexibly because some existing outcomes were redefined as intermediate states where these were logical result stemming from other outcomes. Also, the consultant identified other intermediate states, as transitional states between activities/outputs and outcomes.

28. To identify likelihood of desired impact, the assumptions and drivers that underpin the transformation from outputs to outcomes over intermediate states to objectives, should be analyzed. Drivers are the significant external factors that if present are expected to contribute to the realization of the intended impacts and can be influenced by the project partners; assumptions are those external factors largely beyond the control of the project. For the present exercise most assumptions and drivers were taken from the project Logical Framework (purple), complemented with some identified by the consultant (light purple). The consultant tried to differentiate between drivers (marked with D) and assumptions (A). At interception stage, it is assumed that all direct stakeholders can be influenced, so openness for receiving training or including tools and concepts into plans is considered a driver; the same holds for the quality and availability of information and monitoring systems.

29. Based on the logical framework, the ROtI exercise linked project activities and the generated outputs to the project outcomes via intermediate states to project objective. The consultant identified four impact pathways, reclassified four existing outcomes as (partial) intermediate states, and identified four other intermediate states.

30. **Final impact - GEB:** From project objective to strategic objective and GEB. This pathway is the end-portion of all following pathways and describes how the project objective (Mainstream biodiversity conservation into natural resource use and development planning in the Mixteca Region of Oaxaca integrating ecosystem services (ES) tools and sustainable livelihood options) contributes to the strategic objective (To conserve globally important ecosystems and species within the Mixteca region of Oaxaca). To attain this transformation, it is assumed that overall government support for unsustainable land use and production practices is decreasing and that the policies and plans that include BD conservation are effectively implemented, sustained over time and monitored

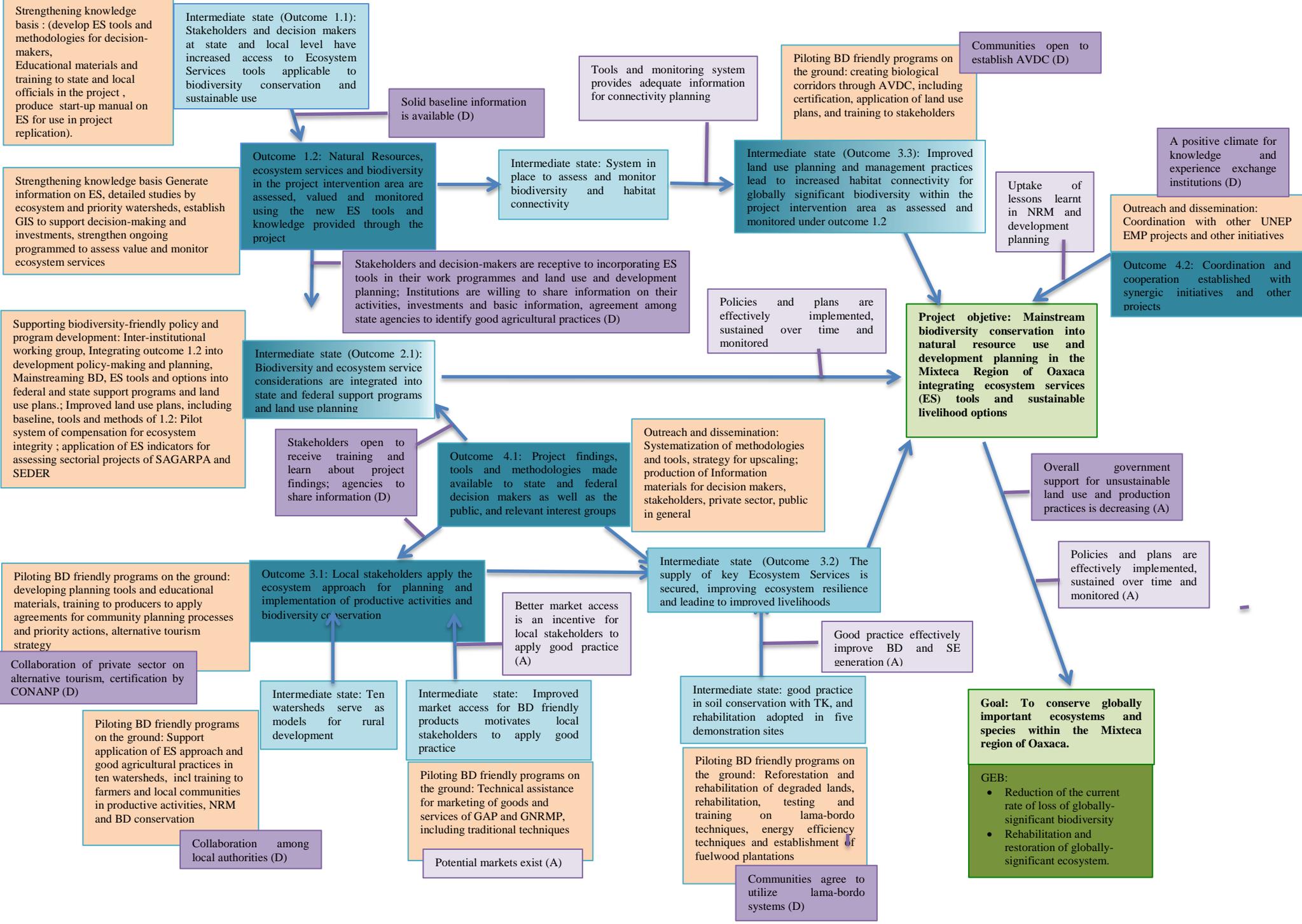
31. **Impact pathway 1 - Landscape connectivity:** from outcome 1.1 (now considered an intermediate state) to project objective via outcome 3.3 (partly considered intermediate state). The outcome on increased access to ES tools (outcome 1.2) is considered an intermediate state that transitions to project outcome 1.2 (resources, ES and BD are assessed, valued and monitored), assuming there is a solid baseline information available. To generate impact at the landscape level, this increased knowledge and monitoring should result in a functioning monitoring system at landscape level, which is assumed to identify landscape connectivity. The next state is as much an intermediate state (resulting from the generated knowledge and monitoring) as a direct outcome, resulting from activities to actively create biological corridors through the

identification, establishment and good management of Areas Voluntarily Destined for Conservation (AVDC). Here, it is assumed that the local communities are open to establish AVDC.

32. **Impact pathway 2 - Policy support:** from outcome 1.1 (now considered an intermediate state) to project objective via outcome 2.1 (partly considered intermediate status). The outcome on increased access to ES tools (outcome 1.2) is considered an intermediate state that transitions to project outcome 1.2 (resources, ES and BD are assessed, valued and monitored), assuming there is a solid baseline information available. This is a key outcome to generate that BD and ES considerations are integrated into state and federal support programs, assuming that stakeholder and decision makers are receptive to incorporation of BD and ES tools. This intermediate state is a key step to reach the program objective, assuming policies and plans are effectively implemented, sustained over time and monitored. Because there are several additional project activities and outcomes to attain the integration of BD and ES into plans and programs, Outcome 2.1 can as well be considered a direct project outcome.

33. **Impact pathway 3 - Ecosystem management and rehabilitation:** from outcome 3.1 to project objective. To attain the application of ecosystem approach for planning and implementation of productive activities by local stakeholders (outcome 3.1), the project included many different activities and outputs, some of which contribute directly to this outcome (training to producers, planning tools, alternative tourism). This includes the stated driver of certification of tourism activities by CONANP. Other groups of activities contribute more indirectly to this outcome, through intermediate states of the establishment of ten watersheds as models for rural development and improved market access for BD friendly products. These assume that potential markets exist and that better market access is an effective incentive for local stakeholders to apply good practice. Outcome 3.1 transitions to intermediate state of secured supply of key ES, improved ecosystem resilience and improved livelihoods (originally Outcome 3.2). Additional activities that lead to this intermediate state are reforestation and rehabilitation of degraded lands, rehabilitation of traditional land management techniques (*Lama Bordo*) and fuelwood efficiency and plantation, creating an intermediate state of five demonstration sites where good practice is demonstrated. When the promoted good practice in rehabilitation and land use actually improve BD and ES, the contribution to the project objective is ensured.

34. **Impact pathway 4 - Dissemination:** from outcome 4.1 to project objective via Impact Pathways 2 and 3. Outcome 4.1 generates availability of project findings, tools and methodologies to state and federal decision makers and the general public. This is a subsidiary outcome for several other outcomes and, assuming that stakeholders are open to receive training and learn about project findings, it supports other impact pathways to attain project objective. Similarly, outcome 4.2 (coordination and cooperation with synergic initiatives and other projects) supports the project objective directly.



5. Evaluation framework

36. Below, the evaluation framework is presented, in a matrix of detailed evaluation questions, indicators and sources of verification. In general, the questions are distilled from the ToR for this evaluation and arranged around the evaluation criteria. The main evaluation questions of the ToR are included under effectiveness. The evaluator included additional questions, specifically under the criteria for effectiveness (to reflect the reconstructed ToC and intermediate states) and efficiency. Several other evaluation questions from the ToR were adapted to the specific context of the project. Some questions/criteria of the ToR were not included in the evaluation matrix, because they have been responded during the current evaluation inception (e.g. M&E design, preparation & readiness; findings during inception will be verified during evaluation), imply redundancy (e.g. communication and public awareness, which is a specific project outcome and will be responded by project effectiveness; catalytic role and replication, most of which is covered by questions under sustainability and replication) or will have to be responded by the evaluator taking into consideration the evaluation process (e.g. M&E, GEF tracking tools). Where possible, indicators from the project results framework were included and where these were not available, the evaluator proposed new indicators.

37. All evaluation indicators will be analyzed using the project's own reporting mechanism, using as much as possible quantitative and qualitative data, validated through revision of documents and products and through interviews with project staff, partners, beneficiaries and key stakeholders. In several cases, the rather subjective "perception" will have to be used as an indicator, for instance for the adequacy of project management, available resources, backstopping by UNEP etc. The evaluator will use semi-structured interviews around these questions through a wide representation of project staff, partners, and stakeholders. Findings (especially on perceptions) will be cross-checked during different interviews and with available evidence.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	EVALUATION INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
Strategic relevance		
Were the objectives and implementation strategies consistent with: i) global, regional and national environmental issues and needs; ii) expectations and needs of key stakeholder groups; iii) the UNEP mandate and policies at the time of design and implementation; iv) GEF Biodiversity focal area's strategic priorities and operational programme BD-SP4-Policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of alignment with (contribution of results to) sub-regional environmental issues, UNEP mandate and policies at the time of design and implementation; and the GEF BD-PO 2 and SP4 (GEF IV) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comparison of project document and annual reports and policy and strategy papers of local-regional agencies, GEF and UNEP Interviews with UNEP staff, project staff and governmental agencies Recalling Quality of Project Design evaluation
Did the (political, environmental, social, institutional) context change during project implementation and how did the project adapt to this?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reported adaptive management measures in response to changes in context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project progress reports/PIR Interviews with project staff and key stakeholders
Achievement of outputs		
How successful was the project in producing the programmed outputs, both in quantity and quality, as well as their usefulness and timeliness?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Output level indicators of Results Framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project progress reports/PIR Tangible products (publications, studies, etc.) Interviews with program staff, partner organizations in implementation, project beneficiaries
Were key stakeholders appropriately involved in producing the programmed outputs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stated contribution of stakeholders in achievement of outputs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citation of stakeholders' roles in tangible products (publications, studies, etc.) Interviews with partners in

		implementation and project beneficiaries
Effectiveness: attainment of objectives and planned results		
To what degree have the project products (e.g. ES tool kits, studies, methodologies, etc.) been accessible to decision makers and other relevant interest groups, and what effect has this had on the appraisal of ecosystem services and biodiversity in the project intervention areas?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicators of outcome 1.1 and 1.2 (see results framework) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Means of verification outcome 1.1 and 1.2 (see results framework) Project management information system Interviews with project beneficiaries
Is the established BD and ES monitoring process functioning effectively, with key stakeholders?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of monitoring activities, diversity of issues, data management and publications Participation of key monitoring institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project progress reports/PIR Reports on monitoring Interviews with monitoring institutions
Has the project been successful in influencing government agencies to mainstream biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services into policy, regulatory frameworks, federal/state supported programs, land use plans and community based work programmes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicators of outcome 2.1 (see results framework) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Means of verification outcome 2.1 (see results framework) Annual project implementation reports Interviews with policy and regulatory agencies and organizations that manage programs for rural development in the area Interview with UNEP Mexico office Field visits to pilot implementation cases, interviews with communities/ejido members
Are policies and plans effectively implemented, sustained over time and monitored?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendations of project are actually included in policies and plans Number of new policies, plans and programs that include BD and ES considerations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation on policies and plans of governmental institutions Interviews with WSC and governmental institutions and support agencies Project implementation reports
Did the project succeed in effectively building local capacity in applying ecosystem approaches and good practice in productive activities (e.g. agriculture, tourism), and has this resulted in a marked improvement in the assessment, valuation, and monitoring of ecosystem services in the intervention areas?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicators of outcomes 3.1 and 3.2 (see results framework) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Means of verification outcomes 3.1 and 3.2 (see results framework) Interviews with regional and local representatives of governmental agencies, particularly SAGARPA, SEDER, CONANP and SECTUR Field visits to demonstration projects, interviews with local stakeholders involved with these projects and the direct beneficiaries
Through its activities related to securing key ecosystem services and improving ecosystem resilience, to what extent have the rehabilitation initiatives began to translate into improved local livelihoods in the intervention areas? Is there evidence of direct impacts arising from improved living conditions at the local level?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local beneficiaries of the outputs that contribute to outcome 3.2 (<i>lama-bordo</i> techniques, rehabilitation of degraded lands, fuelwood projects) perceive improvement of their living conditions (income, food security) and are able to provide clear examples for this 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visits to demonstration projects, interviews with local stakeholders involved with these projects and the direct beneficiaries
To what extent have improved land use planning and management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicators of outcome 3.3 (see results framework) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Means of verification outcome 3.3 (see results framework)

practices lead to increased habitat connectivity for globally significant biodiversity within the project intervention area as assessed and monitored under outcome 1.2?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field visits
To what extent have the project findings, tools and methodologies been made available to state and federal decision makers as well as the public, and relevant interest groups?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicators of outcome 4.1 (see results framework) • Quantity and quality of distribution of knowledge products (data, publications, workshops) to public in general 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Means of verification outcome 4.1 (see results framework) • Communication products • Random interviews with audience indirectly related to project • UNEP Mexico interview
To what degree of success was the project able to establish synergies with other terrestrial ecosystem management projects in the LAC region and has this resulted in opportunities for increased cooperation and coordination between similar interventions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicators of outcome 4.2 (see results framework) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Means of verification outcome 4.2. (see results framework) • Interviews with key stakeholders (partner organizations, other projects) • Project products (publications, data) that show collaboration/complementation with other initiatives
To what extent did the project contribute to the mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation into natural resource use and development planning in the Mixteca Region of Oaxaca integrating ecosystem services (ES) tools and sustainable livelihood options?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicator 4 of project outcome (see results framework); similar to indicator for outcome 2.1. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Means of verification for indicator 4 of project outcome (see results framework)
To what degree has the project contributed to the conservation globally important ecosystems and species within the Mixteca region of Oaxaca?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicators 1, 2 and 3 of Project Objective (see results framework) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Means of verification for indicators 1,2 and 3 of project outcome (see results framework)
Did the main project assumptions hold?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of compliance of assumptions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project progress reports/PIR • Interviews with project staff, key stakeholders • Analysis of ROTI vs. project results
Sustainability and replication		
Are there any social or political factors that may influence positively or negatively the sustenance of project results and progress towards impacts?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key factors positively or negatively impacted project results (in relation to stated assumptions) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with project staff, key stakeholders • Project progress reports/PIR • Revision of literature on context
Is the level of ownership by the main national and regional stakeholders sufficient to allow for the project results to be sustained?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main national and regional stakeholders participate actively in implementation and replication of project activities and results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with key stakeholders • Documentation of project activity implementation • Documentation on activities of key stakeholders
Are there sufficient government and other key stakeholder awareness, interests, commitment and incentives to integrate Biodiversity and ES considerations into national programs and land use planning?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and content of inter-institutional agreements to execute and enforce programs, plans and other project results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Execution and collaboration agreements • Interviews with key stakeholders
Did the project conduct 'succession planning' and implement this during the life of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Succession planning reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with project staff, UNEP project manager • P Project progress reports/PIR

Was sustainability improved through stakeholder strengthening? (Was capacity building conducted for key stakeholders? Did the intervention activities promoted positive sustainable changes in attitudes, behaviours and power relations between the different stakeholders? To what extent has the integration of HR and GE led to an increase in the likelihood of sustainability of project results?)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local stakeholders (local governmental agencies, rural support programs, organizations of beneficiaries, etc) perceive better capacities to sustain project results, through understanding, improved plans and strengthened power positions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder interviews
To what extent are the continuation of project results and the eventual impact of the project dependent on (continued) financial resources? What is the likelihood that adequate financial resources will be or will become available to continue implementation the programs, plans, agreements, monitoring systems etc. prepared and agreed upon under the project? Are there any financial risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project results and onward progress towards impact?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimations on financial requirements Estimations of future budget of key stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Studies on financial sustainability Documented estimations of future budget Interviews with project staff and key stakeholders
To what extent is the sustenance of the results and onward progress towards impact dependent on issues relating to institutional frameworks and governance?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key institutional frameworks that may positively or negatively influence project results (in relation to stated assumptions) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of existing institutional framework Interviews with project staff and key stakeholders
How robust are the institutional achievements such as governance structures and processes, policies, sub-regional agreements, legal and accountability frameworks etc. required to sustaining project results and to lead those to impact on human behaviour and environmental resources, goods or services?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of commitment, proved by formal agreements, included recommendations, declarations, of key stakeholders in governance structures that sustain project results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview with key stakeholders Documentation (agreements, declarations, meeting minutes) of governance systems
Are lessons and experiences coming out of the project replicated or scaled up? What are the factors that may influence replication and scaling up of project experiences and lessons?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documented examples of replication or up-scaling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with stakeholders at other levels or scales Interviews with project staff Reports and publications by other institutions
Catalytic role		
To what extent the project has created opportunities for particular individuals or institutions (“champions”) to catalyse change (without which the project would not have achieved all of its results)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of identified follow up initiatives by partner organizations or individuals to replicate lessons from project Degree of participation of new relevant institutional stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview with project staff and key stakeholders Leveraged co-financing
Efficiency		
Did the project build adequately (create complementariness) on existing institutions, lessons of other initiatives, data sources, partnerships with third parties and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of inclusion of preexisting initiatives and institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project document Interviews with key stakeholders (preexisting initiatives and institutions) Evaluation of project design

projects?		
How was the operational execution vs. original planning (time wise)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of compliance with project planning / annual plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project progress reports/PIR • Interviews with project staff
How was the operational execution vs. original planning (budget wise)? Was the project implemented cost-effective?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of compliance with project financial planning / annual plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project financial reports • Interviews with project staff
If present, what have been the main reasons for delay/changes in implementation? Have these affected project execution, costs and effectiveness?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of reasons, validated by project staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with project staff
Was adaptive management applied adequately? Were any cost- or time-saving measures put in place in attempting to bring the project as far as possible in achieving its results within its secured budget and time?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures taken to improve project implementation based on project monitoring and evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project progress and implementation reports • MTR report and management response • Interview with project staff and UNEP task manager
Factors and processes affecting project performance		
<i>Project implementation and management</i>		
To what extent have the project implementation mechanisms outlined in the project document been followed and were effective in delivering project milestones, outputs and outcomes? Were pertinent adaptations made to the approaches originally proposed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of implementation of mechanisms outlined in project document 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with project staff and partners • MTE report • Project progress reports/PIR
Was the project management (NEA, NPC) adequate, effective and efficient? (skills, leadership, coordination, adaptive capacity)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of satisfaction (among partners and project staff) of overall management by NEA and NPC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with project staff (NEA, NPC and consultants) and partner organizations
Did project management respond to direction and guidance provided by the UNEP Task Manager and the Project Steering Committee?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception of functioning of PSC • Level of participation of project partners in project design and actual inclusion in project implementation arrangements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting minutes • Interviews with PSC members • Interviews with key stakeholders
How was the performance of the different working groups established in the project? (IWG, PST, PSAC)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception of functioning of working groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting minutes • Interviews with group members
Where there any operational and political / institutional problems and constraints that influenced the effective implementation of the project, and how did the project tried to overcome these problems?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of identified problems/constraints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting minutes • Interviews with PSC and working group members
<i>Stakeholder participation, cooperation and partnerships</i>		
How was the overall collaboration between different functional units of UNEP involved in the project? What coordination mechanisms were in place? Were the incentives for internal collaboration in UNEP adequate? Was the level of involvement of the Regional, Liaison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived level of collaboration and coordination within UNEP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with UNEP Project Manager, national and regional staff • Interviews with PSC members and NPC

and Out-posted Offices in project design, planning, decision-making and implementation of activities appropriate?		
What was the achieved degree and effectiveness of collaboration and interactions between the various project partners and stakeholders during design and implementation of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of participation of project partners in project design and actual inclusion in project implementation arrangements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project progress reports/PIR • Interviews with key stakeholders
How did the relationship between the project and the collaborating partners (institutions and individual experts) develop? Which benefits stemmed from their involvement for project performance, for UNEP and for the stakeholders and partners themselves?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived satisfaction of main partners of collaboration in project, including institutional benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with key stakeholders
<i>Country ownership and driven-ness.</i>		
In how far have the national partners assumed responsibility for the project and provided adequate support to project execution, including the degree of cooperation received from the various public institutions involved in the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endorsement of project by governmental agencies • Provision of counterpart funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with national partners, UNEP and project staff • Project progress reports/PIR • Documented endorsements and co-financing
How and how well did the project stimulate country ownership of project outputs and outcomes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception of ownership by national and local agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSC meeting minutes • Interviews with PSC members and other key stakeholders at national and local government level
<i>Financial planning and management</i>		
How well are standards (clarity, transparency, audit etc.) of financial and operational (staff recruitment, evaluation, secondary conditions) planning, management and reporting applied, to ensure that sufficient and timely financial resources were available to the project and its partners?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of standards for financial and operative management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with administrative staff • Financial reports and audit reports
To what extent have other administrative processes such as recruitment of staff, procurement of goods and services (including consultants), preparation and negotiation of cooperation agreements etc. influenced project performance?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception of management efficiency by project partners and project staff/consultants • Number of cases where processes influenced project performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews of project partners and project staff/consultants • Project progress reports/PIR /financial reports/consultant contracts and report
To what extent co-financing has materialized as expected at project approval?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of co-financing, related to original planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial reports of project • Interviews with project administrative staff and UNEP task manager
What resources has the project leveraged since inception and how have these resources contributed to the project's ultimate objective?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of other leveraged resources by project partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial reports (incl co financing reports) • Reports of other organizations • Interviews with project partners

		and other institutions
Have there been any irregularities in procurement, use of financial resources and human resource management that impacted project performance? In that case, what measures have been taken by UNEP to prevent such irregularities in the future?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of cases of irregularities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with project staff and UNEP PM • Financial and audit reports
<i>Supervision, guidance and technical backstopping.</i>		
How adequate were project supervision plans, inputs and processes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree to which plans were followed up by project management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with project staff • Project progress reports/PIR
How well did the different guidance and backstopping bodies (WWF, UNEP) play their role and how well did the guidance and backstopping mechanisms work? What were the strengths in guidance and backstopping and what were the limiting factors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception of effectiveness • Documented backstopping activities by WWF/UNEP to project staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with WWF and UNEP staff and project director • Documented support (audits, communication, reports on visits, etc.) • Meeting minutes • Interviews with program staff and partners
<i>Monitoring and evaluation implementation</i>		
Was the M&E system operational and facilitated timely tracking of results and progress towards projects objectives throughout the project implementation period? Were the results used to improve project performance and to adapt to changing needs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of implementation of M&E system (execution of activities) • Changes in project implementation as result of MTE or other supervision visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with key stakeholders • Project implementation reports • Management response to MTE
Were PIR reports, half-yearly Progress & Financial Reports complete and accurate?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of completeness of reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project progress reports/PIR

	Description of the approach and methods that the consultant will use to promote reflection and learning through the evaluation process.	Review of project documents, stakeholder analysis, discussions with the Evaluation Manager, Task Manager and Project Coordinator	1
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Learning, Communication and outreach

This terminal evaluation has two goals, and part of the second is to promote learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP, GEF, CONANP, CONAFOR, and WWF. The consultant interprets this vision as an invitation for participatory evaluation process, in which these main stakeholders, but also others, will be informed and where possible involved in all stages of the evaluation process. Stakeholders (project implementers, partners and beneficiaries) will be not only considered as sources of information for this evaluation, but also as part of the target audience. Before the evaluation, the consultant will explain the details and the scope of the evaluation to an inception meeting with the project team and with the PSC. Immediately after fieldwork, a presentation will be held to main stakeholders in Oaxaca presenting initial results. During interviews, rather than a straightforward question-and-answer (structured interviews), the consultant will engage in more open semi-structured conversations, in which initial findings

can be validated and discussed with interviewed persons. This guarantees a more interactive process through which the interviewed persons have more opportunities to be informed about the evaluation. Also, the consultant hopes the revision process of the draft final report is also seen as an opportunity to share further information and clarify conclusions and recommendations where this might be needed. Whilst formal elements, to meet accountability requirements, include a full-fledged evaluation report, the consultant will ensure an accessibly written executive summary, to be used for wider public. Apart from this, the consultant is open to provide further explanations or presentations if so desired, after the final report has been approved by UNEP.

6. Evaluation schedule

38. The evaluation time frame, which was tentatively presented in the ToR for this evaluation, is now adapted to the final dates agreed for the field visit (last week of September). If comments are received in time, the final report will be ready by October 31.

Activity	Date (s)
Start of the evaluation	15 August 2015
Introduction meeting (telephone)	20 August 2015
Inception report	8 September 2015
Comments from Evaluation Office	15 September 2015
Field visits	20-28 September 2015
Zero Draft report	12 October 2015
Comments from UNEP	19 October 2015
First draft report	26 October 2015
Comments from stakeholders	9 November 2015
Final report	16 October 2015

39. The tentative program for the country visit (to be agreed upon with project staff) is as follows

Activity	Date (s)
Consultant travel to Oaxaca	20 September 2015
Inception meeting with NPC and UNEP PM	21 September 2015
PSC meeting	21 September 2015
Bilateral meeting with PSC members	21 September 2015
Field visits to project sites, interviews with beneficiaries and local stakeholders in Mixteca region	22-24 September 2015
Return to Oaxaca, additional meetings with project stakeholders, partners, staff, consultants	24/25 September
Round-up meeting and debriefing to project staff and main partners	25 September 2015
Consultant travel from Oaxaca to Mexico DF	27 September 2015
Meetings with CONANP, WWF, UNEP Mexico DF	28 September 2015
Consultant travel back to Ecuador	29 September 2015

7. Distribution of responsibilities among within the evaluation team

40. Since this is an evaluation conducted by one single person, there is no distribution of responsibilities. Tasks of the evaluator, UNEP and Project staff are adequately included in the ToR for this evaluation.

Annex A: Assessment of the Quality of Project Design

1. Project Document

	Project preparation and readiness		Addressed by PRC	Reference to ProDoc	Evaluation Comments	Rating S
1	Does the project document provide a description of stakeholder consultation during project design process?		x	Section 5	Yes, according to ProDoc a wide range of stakeholders were involved in the project design, PSC members were most active	S
2	Does the project document entail a clear stakeholder analysis? Are stakeholder needs and priorities clearly explained?		x	Section 2.5 and Appendix 16	Yes a detailed stakeholder analysis is provided, including their relevance to the project. Analysis concentrates at institutional level, less so on individual land users	S
3	Does the project document entail a clear situation analysis?			Section 2	Yes. Complete and detailed with all required elements	HS
4	Does the project document entail a clear problem analysis?			Section 2.3	Yes, Complete and detailed. Interpretation of root causes can be debated because of their complex interrelation	S
5	Does the project document entail a clear gender analysis?				No. Only marginal mention to gender issues are made; no analysis is included	U
	Relevance		Addressed by PRC	Reference to ProDoc	Evaluation Comments	Rating S
6	Is the project document clear in terms of relevance to:	i) Global, Regional, Sub-regional and National environmental issues and needs?	x	Sections 2.2, 2.4 and 3.6	Yes, global and national environmental issues are addressed (not extensively); sub-regional and regional needs (in the sense of Latin America or Mesoamerica) not specifically addressed	MS
7		ii) UNEP mandate	x	Paragraph 140-141	Yes; clear reference to UNEP mandate and core competences, as well as linkage to other UNEP programmes	HS
8		iii) the relevant GEF focal areas, strategic priorities and operational programme(s)? (if appropriate)	x	Section 3.7, Appendix 15	Yes, but scantily (1 single paragraph in ProDoc and another in CEO request), and more detail in Tracking Tool. Only refers to SP4 of BD SO2 while it also contributes to others (SP5, BD SO1, SFM)	MS
9		iv) Stakeholder priorities and needs?	x	Section 2.5, Table 3	Yes, clear reference of stakeholder interest in project and how this is included in design	HS
10	Is the project document clear in terms of relevance to cross-cutting issues	i) Gender equity	x		No	U
11		ii) South-South Cooperation		Outcome 4.2	Yes. A specific outcome and set of activities have been defined for collaboration with similar initiatives, including UNEP's global Ecosystem Management Program (EMP)	HS
12		iii) Bali Strategic Plan			No. Although apparently most strategic considerations of BSP are met, there is no specific mention	MS
	Intended Results and Causality		Addressed by PRC	Reference to ProDoc	Evaluation Comments	S

13	Are the outcomes realistic?	x		Yes, although the outcomes are ambitious (especially 3.2 and 3.3) and these seem to be a large step from output to outcome, including some strong risks and assumptions; only partially addressed in the logframe	S
14	Are the causal pathways from project outputs [goods and services] through outcomes [changes in stakeholder behaviour] towards impacts clearly and convincingly described? Is there a clearly presented Theory of Change or intervention logic for the project?	x	Section 3.1, paragraph 81 and 82	There is no TOC presented (no requirement at ProDoc presentation). The ROTI to reconstruct a ToC showed that identifying causal pathways is challenging, because of many and diverse outputs leading to the outcomes, and many outcomes are depending on others. However, before the project description as such (in LogFrame logic) the ProDoc has a consistency and clear rationale, which is practically a ToC summary	S
15	Is the timeframe realistic? What is the likelihood that the anticipated project outcomes can be achieved within the stated duration of the project?	x		yes, 5 years is well planned considering the ambitious level of the outcomes but well prepared project and good institutional agreements	S
16	Are activities appropriate to produce outputs?		Sector 3.3, appendix 5	Yes. The description of project components and results in the ProDoc offers a presentation of general activities per outcome. In appendix 5 (time frame) a more detailed list is presented. On the other hand, the outputs are described in detail, but some of these as real outputs (products) other as activities (rehabilitation, testing and training) and others almost as outcomes (Ten micro-watersheds as models for development) and it is not always clear what activities are required for which output.	MS
17	Are activities appropriate to drive change along the intended causal pathway(s)?		Sector 3.3	Yes; although not related to causal pathways (which were not defined in ProDoc)	S
18	Are impact drivers and assumptions clearly described for each key causal pathway?		Section 3.4 and Appendix 4	Partly. Assumptions are mostly related to the willingness of stakeholders. Most of these are projects partners or project beneficiaries and their willingness is, as least partly, under the projects' control. On the other hand, during ROTI exercise, several other assumptions were identified, related to project results (continuity, quality).	MS
19	Are the roles of key actors and stakeholders clearly described for each key causal pathway?	x	Section 4	In spite of good stakeholder identification and an overall description of stakeholder participation in project implementation, there is no description of stakeholders role per component, or responsibility for /output/activity	MS

20	Is the ToC-D and/or logical framework terminology (<i>result levels, drivers, assumptions etc.</i>) consistent with UNEP definitions (<i>Programme Manual</i>)		Appendix4	ToC was not defined in ProDoc.. In Logframe, Objective formulation was good, outcome as well, although there is apparent overlap between outcome 2.1 and project objective., Output formulation is variable (see question 14 above)	MS
	Efficiency	Addressed by PRC	Reference to ProDoc	Evaluation Comments	HS
21	Does the project intend to make use of / build upon pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. to increase project efficiency?	x	Section 2.7, Outcome 4.2, Outcome 2.1, paragraph 119	Yes. Apart from a detailed presentation on how the project complements and coordinates with other projects (setion 2.7), the project defined a specific outcome for collaboration with similar initiatives. In addition, one of the projects outcomes is to include BD and ES consideration into existing programmes at state level, all well described . Finally, the project builds on national initiatives, gathered in Special Concurrent Program for Rural Sustainable Development (paragraph 119)	HS
	Sustainability / Replication and Catalytic effects	Addressed by PRC	Reference to ProDoc	Evaluation Comments	S
22	Does the project design present a strategy / approach to sustaining outcomes / benefits?		Section 3.8	Yes. A specific section describes the sustainability aspects.	S
23	Does the design identify social or political factors that may influence positively or negatively the sustenance of project results and progress towards impacts?	x	Sections 3.5 an 3.11	A short but correct risk analysis and mitigation strategy is included in the project description. Social safeguards are described in section 3.11.	S
24	Does the design foresee sufficient activities to promote government and stakeholder awareness, interests, commitment and incentives to execute, enforce and pursue the programmes, plans, agreements, monitoring systems etc. prepared and agreed upon under the project?		Outcomes 1.1, 2.1, 3.1, 3.3, 4.1 and 4.2	Yes. Apart from several outcomes that are directly related to create commitments and pursue plans and programs (2.1, 3.1 and 3.3), others are related to creating awareness and knowledge (1.1, 4.1 and 4.2)	HS
25	If funding is required to sustain project outcomes and benefits, does the design propose adequate measures / mechanisms to secure this funding?			Partly. rAlthough some outcomes and benefits need funding to be sustained, this is not external funding but existing incentives or sustained market access. A weak point might be the focus of outcome 2.1, which implies supporting existing programmes but not considering the financial sustainability of these programmes.	MS
26	Are financial risks adequately identified and does the project describe a clear strategy on how to mitigate the risks (in terms of project's sustainability)	x	Section 3.8	No. The risk analysis does not include financial risks. There might be one crucial risk, which is the long term sustention of support programmes that are meant to be strengthened in outcome 2.1	MU
27	Does the project design adequately describe the institutional frameworks, governance structures and processes, policies, sub-regional agreements, legal and accountability frameworks etc. required to	x	Section 4	Yes. During project design, implementation arrangement and institutional context of outcomes adequately addresses embedding	HS

	sustain project results?			in the future	
28	Does the project design identify environmental factors, positive or negative, that can influence the future flow of project benefits? Are there any project outputs or higher level results that are likely to affect the environment, which, in turn, might affect sustainability of project benefits?	x	Section 3.8	Yes. Environmental factors are included in risk analysis and mitigation	S
29	Does the project design foresee adequate measures to promote replication and up-scaling / does the project have a clear strategy to promote replication and up-scaling?		Section 3.9, Outcome 4.2	Yes. Adequate section on replication plus a specific outcome	S
30	Are the planned activities likely to generate the level of ownership by the main national and regional stakeholders necessary to allow for the project results to be sustained?			Yes. Although project focuses at local/subnational level, the main participating governmental stakeholders are key federal agencies in the environmental sector	S
	Learning, Communication and outreach	Addressed by PRC	Reference to ProDoc	Evaluation Comments	HS
	Has the project identified appropriate methods for communication with key stakeholders during the project life?	x	Sector 3.10	Yes; section con communication describes dissemination of results to beneficiaries but also to project partners	HS
	Are plans in place for dissemination of results and lesson sharing.		Sector 3.10 and component 2	Apart from the overall strategy, a specific component focuses on dissemination and lessons sharing	HS
	Do learning, communication and outreach plans build on analysis of existing communication channels and networks used by key stakeholders ?	x	Section 2.5	Partly. With exception of UNEP program relationships. Furthermore, little presence of networks for communication in the area. Those that are, are mentioned in stakeholder analysis	S
	Risk identification and Social Safeguards	Addressed by PRC	Reference to ProDoc	Evaluation Comments	MS
31	Are all assumptions identified in the ToC and/or logical framework presented as risks in the risk management table? Are risks appropriately identified in both, ToC and the risk table?	x	Section 3.5, Appendix 4)	No. All assumptions included in logframe (Annex 4) and in assumptions section are summarized in one single risk (Varying project ownership among local stakeholder communities.) Identified risks in analysis are taken into account in project description	U
32	Is the risk management strategy appropriate?	x	Section 3.5	Yes. Several of these risks are adequate have been taken up to the reconstructed ToC.	S
33	Are potentially negative environmental, economic and social impacts of projects identified?	x	Section 3.11	Adequate presentation of social and environmental safeguards	S
34	Does the project have adequate mechanisms to reduce its negative environmental foot-print?	x	N/R	N/R	
	Have risks and assumptions been discussed with key stakeholders?			Based on the consulted information (ProDoc, PPG documents, RPC) this can not be confirmed	
	Governance and Supervision Arrangements	Addressed by PRC	Reference to ProDoc	Evaluation Comments	S

35	Is the project governance model comprehensive, clear and appropriate? <i>(Steering Committee, partner consultations etc.)</i>			Sections 4 and 5	Yes. Clear and small steering committee and in addition, several technical committees for stakeholder involvement	S
36	Are supervision / oversight arrangements clear and appropriate?			Section 4	Yes. Clearly described, short supervision lines; appropriate oversight for SC	S
	Management, Execution and Partnership Arrangements		Addressed by PRC	Reference to ProDoc	Evaluation Comments	S
37	Have the capacities of partners been adequately assessed?		x	Section 4	Yes	S
38	Are the execution arrangements clear and are roles and responsibilities within UNEP clearly defined?			Section 4	Yes	S
39	Are the roles and responsibilities of external partners properly specified?		x	Section 4, section 5	Yes, especially considering the wide group of external partners (other programs, state support agencies, etc) to be addressed	S
	Financial Planning / budgeting		Addressed by PRC	Reference to ProDoc	Evaluation Comments	S
40	Are there any obvious deficiencies in the budgets / financial planning? <i>(coherence of the budget, do figures add up etc.)</i>		x	Section 7	No	S
	Has budget been reviewed and agreed to be realistic with key project stakeholders?			Section7	Although the ProDoc does not specify this, given it is mentioned that the conceptualization is a joint effort and that all key stakeholders pledged important co-funding, it can be assumed they have been participating	S
41	Is the resource utilization cost effective?			Appendix 1	Yes	S
42	How realistic is the resource mobilization strategy?		x	Section 7.2	Highly realistic. Stated co-financing includes only fully confirmed commitments at the time of proposal submission.	HS
43	Are the financial and administrative arrangements including flows of funds clearly described?				ProDoc (incl. appendices) does not present these aspects. This detail is provided in the Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA)	MS
	Monitoring		Addressed by PRC	Reference to ProDoc	Evaluation Comments	MS
44	Does the logical framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> capture the key elements of the Theory of Change or the intervention logic for the project? 	-	Appendix 4	Yes	S
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> have 'SMART' indicators for outcomes and objectives? 	x	Appendix 4	Partly. No livelihood indicators in outcome 3.2 and project objective; indicators 1,2,3 of project objective are more appropriate for overall goal; indicator 4 doubles outcome 2.1	MS
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> have appropriate 'means of verification'? 		Appendix 4	yes	S
45	Are the milestones appropriate and sufficient to track progress and foster			Appendix 4 & 6	Yes. Milestones have not been presented, but mid-term targets for	S

	management towards outputs and outcomes?			indicators. Moreover, clear presentation of outputs/delivery date	
46	Is there baseline information in relation to key performance indicators?		Section 6, Appendix 4	No. Although the ProDoc states "50% of data is available", most base line information is absolute ("there is none") or subjective (".. not sufficiently appraised"). And where baseline data are needed, these were planned to be provided during yr 1.	MU
47	How well has the method for the baseline data collection been explained?		Paragraph 160	Short explanation, although much of these is complemented by a good context and stakeholder analysis	MS
48	Has the desired level of achievement (targets) been specified for indicators of outputs and outcomes?		Appendix 4	Yes	S
49	How well are the performance targets justified for outputs and outcomes?		Appendix 4	Reasonably. Targets are realistic considering intervention area and population, and performance targets are well costed	S
50	Has a budget been allocated for monitoring project progress in implementation against outputs and outcomes?		Appendix 7	Yes	S
51	Does the project have a clear knowledge management approach?			Partly. There is a clear focus on knowledge generation (component 1) and dissemination (comp 4) but there is no concrete knowledge management in terms of planned administration of data, publications etc	MS
	Have mechanisms for involving key project stakeholder groups in monitoring activities been clearly articulated?		Appendix 7	yes	S
	Evaluation	Addressed by PRC	Reference to ProDoc	Evaluation Comments	S
52	Is there an adequate plan for evaluation?	x	Section 6, appendix 9	yes	S
53	Has the time frame for evaluation activities been specified?	x	Section 6, Appendix 8	yes	S
54	Is there an explicit budget provision for mid-term review and terminal evaluation?		Appendix 1	yes	S
55	Is the budget sufficient?			Apparently, it is	S

2. Project alignment with the SP PoW

		Addressed by PRC	Reference to ProDoc	Evaluation Comments	Rating S
1	Does the project form a coherent part of the programme framework?	x		Yes. Fully aligned with BD SO2, SP4 but (although not mentioned in ProDoc) also contributes to SP5, BD1 and SFM	S
2	Is the relevance of the project in terms of SP higher level results clearly described?	x		YES. Although the ProDoc does not mention SP4 results, the formulation of project objective is fully in	S

				line wiht SP4 outcome	
3	How well have linkages with other projects in the same Programme Framework been described?	x	Section 2.7	Well	S
4	Where linkages with other SPs are mentioned, are they well-articulated?			N/R	
5	If the project is a pilot, is it clear why the pilot is relevant to higher level SP results?			N/R	
6	Are the designed activities relevant in terms of contributing / producing the identified PoW Output(s)? <i>(Based on project design only)</i>	x		Yes, particularly output 1,2 and 4 of AE(a) and 1,2 3 aof EA(c)	S
7	Are output indicators appropriate to measure contribution to / delivery of the PoW Output(s)?	x		ProDoc does not identify output indicators but outcome indicators. Several of these are adequate to measure contribution to PoW output	S
8	What is the likelihood that the project's contribution towards PoW output(s) will be achieved within the duration of the PoW? <i>(consider also funding, timing, staffing etc.)</i>			High because several outcomes are fully in line with PoW outputs	S
9	Are the intended results likely to contribute to the stated EA? <i>(Based on design only)</i>			Yes, Particularly EA(a) and EA(c)	S
10	Is the pathway from project outputs to EA contribution clearly described?			Project objective is written fully in line with EA(a) and (c) so project logic describes this contribution	S
11	Are the indicators appropriate to measure contribution to EA?			Yes	S
12	What is the likelihood that the project's contribution towards the EA will be achieved within the duration of the PoW? <i>(Consider also funding, timing, staffing etc.)</i>			High, particularly EA(a)	S
13	Do project milestones track progress to PoW output and all the way to the EA?			Yes	S

3. Project approval process (specific to the project under review)

		Evaluation Comments
1	What were the main issues raised by PRC that were addressed?	UNEP Comparative advantage, indicator formulation, Institutional arrangements, M&E table, social safeguards re: voluntary reserves, WWF Cofinancing
2	What were the main issues raised by PRC that were not addressed?	Gender
3	Were there any major issues not flagged by PRC?	Livelihoods indicators, specific roles of institution in implementation (responsibilities of partners for activities/outputs), Lacking inclusion of risks in logframe (assumptions only partly reflect risks)

Annex B: Documents consulted for this inception report

GEF. 2007. BIODIVERSITY FOCAL AREA STRATEGY AND STRATEGIC PROGRAMMING FOR GEF-4
Tinney Rivera. Mid term review report (April 2014) for Mixteca project
UNEP. 2010. Project Document "Integrating tradeoffs between supply of ecosystem services and land use options into poverty alleviation efforts and development planning in Mixteca"; Incl appendices
UNEP. 2010. Request for CEO endorsement of Mixteca project
UNEP. 2010. PRC review sheet for Mixteca project
UNEP. 2013. Biennial Programme of Work and budget for 2014–2015
UNEP. 2015. Terms of Reference for the terminal evaluation of the project ""Integrating tradeoffs between supply of ecosystem services and land use options into poverty alleviation efforts and development planning in Mixteca "
UNEP-WWF 2010. Project Cooperation Agreement for Mixteca project
UNEP-WWF Half Yearly Progress Report October 2010 - January 2011 for Mixteca project
UNEP-WWF GEF PIR Fiscal Years 2012, 2013, 2014 for Mixteca project

Annex C: List of documents and individuals to be consulted during the main evaluation phase

The evaluator will consult the following additional documents (generic)

- Project design documents
- Project supervision plan, with associated budget
- Correspondence related to project
- Supervision mission reports
- Steering Committee meeting documents, including agendas, meeting minutes, and any summary reports
- Project progress reports, including financial reports submitted
- Cash advance requests documenting disbursements
- Annual Project Implementation Reports (PIRs)
- Management memos related to project
- Other documentation of supervision feedback on project outputs and processes (e.g. comments on draft progress reports, etc.).
- Project revision and extension documentation
- Updated implementation plan for the recommendations of the Mid-Term Evaluation
- Project Terminal Report (draft, if final version not available)
- GEF and UNEP strategic papers related to programmatic areas of the project
- National and regional policy documents, related to the project
- GEF Tracking Tool for the relevant focal area
- Products produced by the project
- Products (publications, brochures) related to project activities, produced by third parties

The evaluator hopes to be able to interview the following persons:

- UNEP task manager and country staff
- Current and past project staff (WWF, consultants)
- Representatives of project partners (CONANP, CONAFOR); including persons that participate in PSC.
- (Planned) IWG members y Stakeholder Advisory Committee (Conagua, CEA, SEMARNAT SEDER, SAGARPA, SEDESOR, CONAZA, CONAZA, IEEO, CDI, SRA, INAH, INEGI, SECTUR)
- Selection of representatives of external partners (Universities, Research Institutions, NGO)
- Local municipalities
- Community Based Organizations (producer organizations, farmers organizations, indigenous organizations)
- Individual land users, beneficiaries of project activities.