

Project evaluation series

**Mid-term evaluation of
"Integrated management of marine and
coastal areas of high value for
biodiversity in continental Ecuador"**

GCP/ECU/084/GFF

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
Rome, 2019**

Response by recommendation

In this section, Management should address each recommendation, discussing them in the order presented in the executive summary of the evaluation report. This should be done in the format of the Management Response matrix below and include:

- a. The recommendation number and text copied from the evaluation report;
- b. Indication of whether the recommendation is accepted fully, partially, or rejected;
- c. Description of the actions to be taken, with comments as required on the conditions to be met during implementation, or on reasons leading to a partial acceptance or rejection of a recommendation;
- d. The responsible party or FAO unit for implementing the action/s;
- e. The time-frame for implementation and/or an implementation schedule, if required;
- f. Indication if further funding from FAO or a resource partner is required for implementing the recommendation.

Management response matrix¹

Management response to the mid-term evaluation of "Integrated management of marine and coastal areas of high value for biodiversity in continental Ecuador" GCP/ECU/084/GFF					23/09/2019
Evaluation Recommendation (a)	Management response (b) Accepted, Partially Accepted or Rejected	Management plan			
		Actions to be taken, and/or comments about partial acceptance or rejection (c)	Responsible unit (d)	Time frame (e)	Further funding required (Y or N) (f)
<p>Recommendation 1: To adapt the project to changes in the national context and correct some shortcomings in its design, the MCP must consider the changes to the project logical framework this evaluation proposes (Appendix 4), as soon as possible. To this end, FAO must seek prior approval from GEF, the PMC must agree to the proposal, the PSC must give its approval and FAO must announce the decision in the next PIR.</p> <p>Suggestions:</p>	Partially accepted	<p>Two Management Committees have been organised. These assessed the changes to the project logical framework suggested by the evaluation team and a new matrix has been drawn up with the changes proposed by the project partners.</p> <p>The members of the Project Steering Committee have approved the changes to the logical framework.</p> <p>The changes to the logical framework, reported in the 2018-2019 PIR and sent to the FAO-GEF unit, have been included for the information of the GEF.</p>	GEF Portfolio Coordinator. Project technical team (MAE-CI-Hivos-FAO).	30 August 2019	N

¹ Each column is cross-referenced to the bullet letters above.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meanwhile, the PMC must adapt the 2019 AOP to the changes in the logical framework. With the implementation of the AOP, the PTT must focus solely on the prioritised areas and implement the activities strictly related to the outputs that are crucial to achieving the outcomes. 	Accepted	The 2019 AOP has been readjusted and focused towards achieving the new goals.	Project technical team (MAE-CI-Hivos-FAO).	30 September 2019	N
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure alignment with the environmental objective and the additionality of the project, the PMC must immediately select the prioritised areas for the creation of conservation areas, outside of current protected areas, based on scientific (abundance and distribution of species and ecosystems, analysis of hazards) and practical (feasibility with respect to achieving the outcomes) criteria. 	Partially accepted	The Organic Environmental Code Regulation (CODA) states that "Integrated Coastal Management Plans" must be drawn up. This includes "Plans for the Management of Beaches and the Adjacent Area", which should define "Ecologically Sensitive Zones" not "Conservation Areas"; this is why the changes have been made to the logical framework while taking the legislation in force into account.	Project technical team (MAE-CI-Hivos-FAO).	30 September 2019	N
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assess and visualise the achievements relating to equality and inclusion, the PTT must consider including indicators that make it possible to measure gender equality or the empowerment of women and/or vulnerable groups. 	Accepted	Training is being offered on gender topics for the empowerment of women in the fisher folk organisations that have Agreements for the Use and Custody of Mangroves. Indicators will be included that make it possible to measure gender equality.	Project technical team (MAE-CI-Hivos-FAO).	June 2019	N

<p>Recommendation 2: In order to rely on realistic time to generate outputs, FAO could consider extending the project by 10 months. Before this possible extension request, efficiency and the inter-institutional relationship should be improved (see relevant recommendations) and the PMC must produce an AOP for the entire remaining period. The AOP must be realistic, feasible and present clear commitments. In requesting the extension, it must be considered that the proportion of expenses for human resources cannot be increased at the expense of activities in the field. It must also be ensured that the extension does not involve undue additional costs for any of the partners.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>In accordance with the existing balances in the Marine and Coastal Project budget, it will only be possible to extend the period of the project by 4 months, in other words, until June 2020 for the technical activities and until October 2020 for the administrative and financial closing. The FAO-CI Implementing Agreement will be amended to modify the date of conclusion of the project.</p>	<p>GEF Portfolio Coordinator. Project technical team (MAE-CI-Hivos-FAO).</p>	<p>June - October 2019</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>Recommendation 3: To strengthen the possibility of local adoption of plans to manage conservation areas, create and implement IMC systems and increase the effectiveness and control of fishery management plans, the PTT needs to establish multidisciplinary processes that enable an ongoing and constructive relationship with the DAGs and institutions from other relevant sectors (fishery, tourism). This must be started immediately with the inception of the</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>The 6 towns in which the Beach Management Plans will be realised have been prioritised. Progress has been made in different meetings with municipal authorities. There are focal points in each province within the DAGs and MAE, to prepare the plans for managing the prioritised beaches. The PMC will train 6 coastal DAGs for the adoption of integrated management of coastal areas (IMC) systems to control</p>	<p>Project technical team (MAE-CI).</p>	<p>September 2019 - June 2020</p>	<p>N</p>

<p>new authorities and in collaboration with other organisations and initiatives present in the areas of work.</p>		<p>negative pressures that affect turtle nesting beaches.</p> <p>The PMC will create the local institutional relationship structures for the IMC and offer technical assistance.</p>			
<p>Recommendation 4: The project must focus on fulfilling actions and generating outputs as well as on the sustainability of outputs and outcomes. This is why, once the MTE report has been approved; the PTT must develop a sustainability strategy for the project outcomes within 30 days. This strategy must identify the likely state of progress of the outputs and outcomes at the end of the implementation of the project. Based on this and on a detailed assessment of the sustainability risks and opportunities, the PTT must define a strategy with actions, managers, partners and budget, for each output and outcome. The implementation of this strategy must be monitored as part of the system for monitoring & evaluation of the project execution, with a view to mainstreaming adaptive management (continuous adjustments based on new progress, new understandings or changes in situation).</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Accepted</p>	<p>Each of the goals per component have been assessed in the management committees and changes have been made to the logical framework.</p> <p>One of the most important aspects for achieving the new goals established is the preparation of the Beach Management Plans with the DAGs, and as such an integrated management of coastal areas strategy was prepared, including activities, a timeline and key agents.</p> <p>Good progress is being made in the rest of the project goals and their full achievement is programmed for June 2020.</p> <p>A workshop will take place with PTT and UMCM to design the sustainability strategy and incorporate it into the Monitoring System.</p>	<p>Project technical team (MAE-CI-Hivos-FAO)</p>	<p>December 2019</p>	<p>N</p>

<p>Recommendation 5: Half a year before closing the project, the PTT must complement the sustainability strategy with an exit plan identifying responsible person, budget and date for each of the necessary actions. Once the exit strategy has been agreed upon, the PMC must ensure specific agreements for the implementation of each of the sustainability actions included in the strategy, based on feasible and measurable commitments. The PSC must review and, where applicable, approve the sustainability strategy.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>The sustainability strategy and the respective exit plan will be realised, with the managers, budgets and dates.</p> <p>A workshop will take place with PTT and UMCM to complement the sustainability strategy with the exit plan and for coordination with new projects in the marine and coastal area.</p>	<p>GEF Portfolio Coordinator.</p>	<p>January - March 2020</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>Recommendation 6: From now on, the MAE and CI must, in the new initiatives under their control (PMA Network project, CFI and GCF mangroves), identify the opportunities to give continuity to key activities and to contribute to the sustainability of the MCP outcomes as well as ensure their alignment in the respective AOP in order to implement such possibilities. In addition, they should reach out to the initiatives of other institutions with similar activities (GIZ, Heifer), as well as academic and research institutions to strengthen the inter-institutional links and seek greater alignment for the sustainability of outcomes.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>The Marine and Coastal Project has reached out to other projects and institutions to work in coordination and cooperation with them, such as Heifer, Espírito Santo University (UEES), the Coastal Fisheries Initiative (CFI) and the PMCA Network Project.</p> <p>Resume meetings internally at the MAE with the project managers; and form part of an inter-institutional coordination board to exchange information.</p>	<p>Project technical team (MAE-CI-Hivos-FAO).</p>	<p>June 2019 - June 2020</p>	<p>N</p>

<p>Recommendation 7: The partner organizations of the project (FAO, MAE, CI and HIVOS) must create a positive and constructive relationship among them.</p> <p>Suggestions:</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>A positive and constructive relationship continues to be forged among the project partners, by means of ongoing communication and coordination meetings, as well as integration activities and recreational group activities.</p>	<p>Project technical team (MAE-CI-Hivos-FAO).</p>	<p>June 2019 - September 2020</p>	<p>N</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is proposed that the MAE calls and chairs a special meeting of the PMC, with all of the relevant technical and administrative personnel as observers, to identify all queries, possible inconsistencies and other challenges relating to the operation and administration of the project, in order to clarify and agree on the route to take for the rest of the project. Once all of the queries and lack of clarity have been resolved, the PMC must agree on a series of actions that can improve operational and administrative efficiency. 	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>A special Management Committee meeting took place in which the National Director of the Marine and Coastal Project completed an integration activity.</p> <p>In this meeting, the progress and achievements accomplished were assessed and priorities were identified to fulfil the goals until completion of the project.</p>	<p>Project technical team (MAE-CI-Hivos-FAO).</p>	<p>July 2019</p>	<p>N</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taking into consideration the context in which the project is implemented at field level, the actions to improve administration can be guided by the principle of "applying the greatest efficiency and flexibility possible within the fiduciary rules" instead of "applying the fiduciary rules as carefully as possible". 	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>There is an Operating Manual which has been approved by the Steering Committee that establishes the administrative mechanisms that have been operating normally.</p> <p>The partners' administrative response times have improved and there is transparency with the valid administrative rules.</p> <p>In the event of lack of transparency regarding specific administrative matters, the partners will be called to meetings to resolve any issues.</p>	<p>GEF Portfolio Coordinator. Administration of FAO Ecuador.</p> <p>Project administrative team (CI-Hivos).</p>	<p>June 2019 - June 2020</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>Recommendation 8: To achieve greater effectiveness in decision-making, the periodic meetings of the project's governing committees (SC and PMC) must solely consist of official delegates and only invite other people as guests and observers when it is relevant. Members of the PSC do not participate in the PMC and vice versa. The PSC meetings must focus on their fundamental tasks and avoid discussions and decision-making on the completion of activities, and delegate said discussions and decisions to the PMC. If the unresolved questions and other open questions in the PSC or PMC</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>The Management Committees were organised in accordance with the circumstances that arose in the implementation of the project. All of the members, the technical team of the Marine and Coastal Project and the UMCM participated.</p> <p>All of the administrative and technical matters have been dealt with that required management decisions. Only the far-reaching matters were proposed for consideration of the Steering Committee, such as the extension of the project period</p>	<p>Project Manager and GEF Portfolio Coordinator.</p>	<p>July 2019 - September 2020</p>	<p>N</p>

<p>meetings involve the delay or postponement of activities, these must be monitored immediately (via virtual meetings or voting by email) so as not to have to wait until the next meeting.</p>		<p>or the approval of changes to the outcomes framework.</p> <p>Emails were also used for the prompt approval of resolutions by the Steering Committee.</p>			
<p>Recommendation 9: To improve the information for the public in the project implementation sites and in the country in general, with the support and involvement of the MAE and the other MCP partners, the PTT must immediately increase its efforts to distribute communication material. This distribution of information should not be limited to the official channels and instead make the most of the distribution channels available in the four organizations. To this end, active collaboration is required between the partners' communication teams.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>Different communication activities have been strengthened, from the creation of the graphic line to the preparation of different materials for awareness-raising campaigns, preparation of videos to build awareness of organisations with Agreements on the Sustainable Use and Custody of Mangroves, quarterly informative bulletins, tweets, posts, etc.</p>	<p>GEF Portfolio Coordinator. Project technical team (MAE-CI-Hivos-FAO).</p>	<p>September 2019</p>	<p>N</p>

<p>Recommendation 10: To ensure the access of the beneficiaries, interested parties and the public in general, to the information and outputs generated by the project, the PTT must establish a system for handling knowledge, located on a website so that it is accessible to everyone. This system must be accompanied by a manual for its handling, monitoring and sustainability.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>A website is being prepared to provide the general public with the outcomes obtained from the Marine and Coastal Project.</p>	<p>GEF Portfolio Coordinator. Project technical team (MAE-CI-Hivos-FAO).</p>	<p>September - December 2019</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>Recommendation 11: Taking into account that the IRS has not made progress with the VAT reimbursement to CI and HIVOS, creating accounting challenges, before the next financial reporting period, FAO must make a decision about VAT accounting. The recommendation is to assess the eligibility of expenses for VAT payment and to create a clause for the use of the funds in the event there is a reimbursement in the final year of the project.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>It was agreed to charge the VAT amount to expenses, and as such the actual balances will be available.</p>	<p>GEF Portfolio Coordinator. Project technical team (MAE-CI-Hivos-FAO).</p>	<p>October 2019</p>	<p>N</p>