

**Project evaluation series
02/2020**

**Mid-term Evaluation of
“Securing Biodiversity Conservation
and Sustainable Use in Huangshan
Municipality”**

**GCP/CPR/049/GFF
GEF ID: 4526**

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

Management response matrix¹

Mid-Term Evaluation of "Securing Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use in Huangshan Municipality"					
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)	Timeframe (e)	Further funding required (Y or N) (f)
<p>Recommendation 1</p> <p>A. With regards to the co-management pilot projects, these should be reduced to three based on justification given and vetted in the meeting with the stakeholder and the visit to the pilots. The viability of the co-management sites are critical to showcase success and biodiversity-friendly practices. The scope of this endeavour was overambitious and the learning and adaptive management have determined that the three which have already started are the ones</p>	Accepted	<p>A. HSAC as the national execution partner, will revise the project logic framework, workplan and budget to confirm the three co-management pilot sites and organize a PSC meeting for approval.</p> <p>B. HSAC will revise the workplan to consolidate related activities, and recruit a national consultant to design the overall training plan with the support of the new CTA, as well as the Monitoring and Evaluation consultant who has been missing in the previous implementation of the project.</p>	HSAC	By 31 October 2019	N

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

<p>that should go forward. Focus should be on three pilot results, and on documenting and sharing for scaling good biodiversity management and other practices.</p> <p>B. Because the project is running out of time and needs to be accelerated, it will be important to consolidate all the IT, learning and monitoring, knowledge sharing and networking activities as one work area such that there are results contributing to the expected results on sustained learning. The MTE suggests the PMO immediately design and scale up the work on the knowledge NR networking, training and learning strategy - include a strategy for indirect strengthening of capacities of tiers three and four per the information management portal, schools and teacher training, the documenting and sharing of good practices and finally the development of web interface for data collection and a knowledge portal.</p>					
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<p>Recommendation 2</p> <p>A. Based on the delays in project implementation, the GEF/FAO/GOC in consultation with the Steering Committee should grant the project a no-cost extension for minimum of two years.</p> <p>B. As the Steering Committee and technical committees are not fully functioning to enable substantive FAO oversight and communications and there has been no effective formal way for FAO to guide or provide technical support, a critical priority is to establish a functioning project Steering Committee to oversee and guide implementation including to ensure the project has full staffing and fully negotiated adapted work plans linked to the log frame. The PMO can also amalgamate the two biodiversity technical groups. Only one is needed and they serve a similar function.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>A. HSAC has applied for a no-cost extension of 2 years (until September 2021) for the approval of Ministry of Finance and FAO.</p> <p>B. A PSC meeting is scheduled in August to discuss the post-MTE implementation, especially the key issues of establishing a full staffing PMO and recruitment of a provincial CTA.</p> <p>C. HSAC has proposed to cancel 4 posts of international consultants. If this was agreed by the PSC, FAO will use the savings for a provincial CTA with related experience and sign the contract for 2019. The extended contracts could be signed annually by FAO or the PMO.</p>	<p>FAO and HSAC</p>	<p>By October 2019</p>	<p>N</p>
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<p>C. In response to the issues flagged throughout this report concerning the lack of FAO technical oversight, the project must include a competent CTA to technically vet and accelerate the project implementation with an eye on the end results in two years. The CTA would: 1) conceptualize the work programme into the key areas discussed and consider larger strategic institutional contracts for implementation and 2) prioritize a review of technical implementation for good and negative practices i.e. invasive species, exclusion of marginalized groups and communities. The CTA position might be cost shared by FAO and Government of China. This position should remain until the end of the project and be jointly monitored by and GOC and the FAO Representation in China. The position profile is a proven advisor with knowledge of the interlinkages to forestry, communities fisheries and agriculture and the ability to put forth the GEF and FAO value</p>					
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<p>added and support and institutionalize the cross sectoral approaches. If this is not agreed to, then as a fundamental MTE condition for success this project should be stopped.</p>					
<p>Recommendation 3</p> <p>A. As flagged throughout the report, the project IT, monitoring system, network learning and sharing aspects are weak, and so a priority for technical assistance is: to scope an integrated monitoring system, undertake a knowledge and capacity needs assessment including the most relevant way to set up a NR network to meet project goals. The MTE discussed options for institutionalizing the network portal with the PM and implementing experts team and endorsed the option: to integrate three IT-based portals across components, namely, a computer-based NR network, an integrated monitoring system for</p>	<p>partially accepted</p>	<p>A. Partially accepted. HSAC will recruit a Monitoring and Evaluation consultant. However, the web-based activities depend on the government policies, because the government system is reducing the numbers of official websites, and will be further clarified in the revised workplan.</p> <p>B. Partially accepted. HSAC will recruit a national consultant to investigate the training needs of tiers three and four before designing the overall training plan. Again, web-based activities depend on the government policies. As for technical support, the national consultant team, including CTA, takes major responsibilities to provide overall technical support to the project implementation. The LTO plays a supervision role and will provide technical support upon the request of the PMO.</p> <p>C. Partially accepted. The recruitment of a gender specialist will be discussed by the PSC. If the M&E officer had gender experience, he/she could cover the role.</p> <p>D. Partially accepted. The M&E consultant could also take the role of knowledge</p>	<p>FAO and HSAC</p>	<p>By the end of 2019</p>	<p>N</p>

<p>Huangshan This would entail web monitoring for the species and knowledge learning platform into the currently government public promotion project “Digital Huangshan” as a cost-effective measure to sustain GEF/ FAO program results.</p> <p>B. Also, key would be the scoping of knowledge and learning needs of tiers three and four in consideration of the web design with functionality linked to the monitoring of fragile species work area. In relation to this problem, the PMO— with support of FAO—should take measures to network all NRs through the training plan. Additionally, the inclusive development of the learning network (knowledge needs and baseline study) should contribute to, and benefit from, the holistic Huangshan NR network planning and management in order not to scatter project work across components. In relation to the “learning” results, the PMO,</p>		<p>management. The communication officer is a different person who will support communication, promotion and experience sharing in general. It is suggested to be a full-time position.</p> <p>E. Partially accepted. FAO will discuss with the PMO on the training needs and provide trainings as a session of the PSC meeting.</p>			
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<p>supported by the LTO and CTA (TBH), should undertake a scoping of all biodiversity-friendly practices across the project area tiers one to four. They could review all management work and policies developed to ensure integration of key linkages and learning from cases. A technical workshop can be held. This needs some thinking around the linkages to FAOs value added including peoples (focus on women's) livelihoods, fisheries and forestry, and resilience approaches.</p> <p>C. To ensure that the expected results on gender are properly captured and reported, it is recommended that the PMO (with support of FAO) undertake gender assessment. A gender specialist can be integrated to develop a plan for priority gender mainstreaming across the co management pilots, and other activities: by linking work to national priorities, including Eco-Compensation and</p>					
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<p>Ecological Poverty Reduction with gender considerations that fit with local.</p> <p>D. In relation to the cross-cutting implementation gaps including capacity development, monitoring and communications, the PMO should hire a KM, communication and monitoring officer for the project. The PMO (supported by the FAO Representation in Beijing) should focus implementation and activities on visibility, documenting, sharing results-knowledge management and communicating. Since this project is even more relevant to the national priorities on biodiversity mainstreaming, the result can be shared to contribute to national policies on resilience and park priorities. The PMO can develop a communication and partnership strategy for scaling up learning including work with GEO Park and developing and targeting a bimonthly</p>					
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<p>newsletter for sharing at the national and provincial levels. This work also includes the need to document and share the research and biodiversity-friendly practices and co-management cases: research can be shared broadly in journals. Through a project information network, a public awareness and education strategy can be devolved with schools economized by using a training of trainers approach with teachers. More public information can be disseminated by making concrete partnership and linkages in the geo-centre and by partnering with other NR media and learning activities, i.e. communicating project messages on billboards and creating new exhibits in the 12 NRs. Project results could be prepared to be showcased at COP 22 in <i>two years' time</i>.</p> <p>E. In response to the need for better project reporting that imparts a better understanding of the project expected results</p>					
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<p>to PMO staff, FAO Beijing host a results-based project management (RBM) training. It will be critical to ensure the RBM training is speaking to this project's key messages, good practices and interlinkages, amplifying the GEF and FAO value added in biodiversity work- resilience strategies, digital finance, and innovation in technology, such as Alibaba partnership, fisheries, forestry, sustainability, women, livelihoods, and education and farmers schools on conservation agriculture.</p>					
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