Project Evaluation Series 01/2022

Terminal evaluation of the project "Sustainable management of by catch in Latin America and Caribbean trawl fisheries" (REBYC-II LAC)

Project code: GCP/RLA/201/GFF

GEF ID: 621538

Follow-up report

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Recommendation 1. To FAO, project countries and co-executing partners of REBYC-II LAC. Within one to two years after project closure, implement actions to build on the foundation created by REBYC-II LAC to facilitate progress towards long-term impact (GEO and PDO). The project has established an enabling environment for achievement of long-term impact and generated significant momentum in the region and the countries. However, the momentum can be quickly lost and the enabling environment, though generally robust, can be undermined by unforeseen developments. Therefore, it is recommended that actions are taken in a timely manner (within one to two years after project closure, depending on the activity) to build on the project results and promote sustainability and the achievement of long-term impact, by, among others, showcasing and sharing results and experiences including to decision makers and trawl fishing communities; upscaling and mainstreaming results; maintaining partnerships; continuing key activities (including through FAO	Accepted	All the countries defined continuity commitments and follow-up Working Groups. Follow-up meetings will be promoted within the framework of WECAFC. National partner institutions (INVEMAR, INAPESCA, INCOPESCA, etc.) have agreed to keep collecting data and relevant information after the project is closed, to ensure that changes introduced by the project are still in place, or modified whenever is pertinent. There are a number of products derived from the project that also contribute to the sustainability of the achieved impact, such as national legal frameworks, officially adopted follow up and participatory country sectoral planning mechanisms. FAO will coordinate closely with national governments to ensure that any needed further assistance is timely provided so that pending legislations are finally passed.	The Bycatch Reduction Strategy prepared by the project was endorsed by the 18th Session of WECAFC in July 2022, then widely disseminated and posted on the website of the Commission. Information sharing, communication and capacity development tools for informed policy framework in the target fisheries were strengthened in a new project coordinated by the Secretariat of WECAFC, with a grant from the European Union (Improving ecosystem approach to fisheries by advancing fish spawning aggregations information gathering). The regional Shrimps and GroundFish Working Group which has been technically instrumental in the preparation of this strategy, is forecast to contribute to the implementation of the REBYC-III (Strategies, technologies, and social solutions to manage bycatch in tropical Large Marine Ecosystem Fisheries (REBYC-III CLME+) project, as well as the Enhancing capacity for the adoption and implementation of EAF in the shrimp and groundfish fisheries of the North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystem (EAf4SG) project. These two projects will be upscaling and mainstreaming the results of REBYC-II, broadening partnerships, and continuing key activities in	Advancing	National legal framework intervention is a lengthy national process. However, progress was made which led to improvement of the legal framework of the shrimp bycatch in the trawl fishery Resources users' awareness was raised in the use of new technologies that contribute to the reduction of incidental catches and fuel consumption with reduction of CO2 emissions. Women are empowerment throughout the value chain feature ongoing/post REBYC-II activities and pipeline /approved but yet to start projects.

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ongoing programmes, technical cooperation projects); accelerating the endorsement and implementation of pending legislation and management plans; continuing to build capacity in the region for implementation of EAF through legal and policy instruments (by, for example, using the tools and guidelines developed by FAO Law Division); providing incentives to stakeholders; pursuing commercialization of the new value added products; and continuing to build trust among stakeholders.		At an international level, the Bycatch Reduction Strategy being adopted by WECAFC will also be an important information and experience sharing mechanism that will continue to feed the momentum achieved by the project. A number of ongoing and in-pipeline- FAO led projects will continue addressing some the core areas of REBYC-LAC-II. REBYC-III will build on existing results and ensure that bycatch reduction and more sustainable fishing practices are consolidated and rooted in several countries of the Caribbean, including those involved in REBYC-II. FAO is already assisting countries throughout the region, to incorporate the EAF within legal frameworks, sectoral planning instruments and policies. While implementation approaches vary depending on local circumstances, EAF is becoming an important	the four beneficiary countries (Barbados, Guyana, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago). FAO engaged with governments during the project design phase, and beneficiary countries were identified based on their expressed interest. This is fully documented for the REBYC-III and the EAF4SGF which followed the completion of REBYC-II. The REBYC-II beneficiary countries showed commitment in implementing this recommendation, following the illustration of targeted countries' actions though at varying levels of implementation: Colombia: After REBYC-II LAC, important actions have been carried out in Colombia in a new legal framework that has contributed to a long-term positive impact on shrimp fishing and its associated biodiversity: i) creation and operation of the National Bycatch Committee (AUNAP Resolution #035 of 2020), which executes the bycatch management plan (AUNAP Resolution #587 of 2020), the fishing agreement between industrial and artisanal (AUNAP Resolution #2111 of 2017), and the introduction into the Law of the prototype trawl nets evaluated in the REBYC-II LAC project in Colombia (AUNAP Resolution 2988 of 2021); ii) Costa Rica received from Colombia, advice on issues of fishery information systems and on the design and		

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		element of fisheries planning and regulatory frameworks.	analysis of fishing technology assessment cruises; iii) Colombia continues the incidental catches monitoring on board under a standard/official information system, in addition to research cruises applying the EAF; iv) value chain analyzes of industrial and artisanal bycatch in Colombia, have contributed to assess intervention actions in the shrimp fishery taking into account the role of women; and v) the business plan for the introduction of the prototype nets was a great incentive among the fishermen and the Colombian government, which has programmed in 2023 the implementation of a program to replace traditional trawl nets with prototype nets in accordance with the new regulations. Suriname: By the end the project, the REBYC-II national working group was converted into a national Shrimp and Groundfish Working Group, formally established by the Ministry. The working group remains active with quarterly meetings. Other sustainable project results include changes to the fishery license conditions decree in relation to bycatch reduction measures and data collection on bycatch. Despite efforts (FAO support) towards the end of the project, the updated Fisheries Act remains in draft. This has mainly		

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			to do with limited staff and capacity at the fisheries department.				
			Trinidad and Tobago:				
			Further to the updated Fisheries Management Bill (FMB) (which includes provisions for: establishment of Observer, Logbook and other data collection programmes, for which fishers will be mandated to provide data; development of fisheries management plans including for the trawl fishery, as well as bycatch management and discards reduction for all fishing fleets; establishment of stakeholder consultative mechanisms to facilitate participatory / comanagement arrangements which will facilitate the formalization of the National Working Group established to oversee the REBYC-II Project activities) being laid in parliament in October 2020 and being placed				
			before a Joint Select Committee (JSC) of				
			Parliament, the Fisheries Division continues to meet (several times weekly) with the office of				
			the Chief Parliamentary Counsel to review				
			and amend the FMB, as well as the JSC to				
			justify and explain provisions in the Bill and				
			the proposed changes based on stakeholder				
			comments. The JSC process was delayed on several occasions due to change of Chair.				
			Work has also begun on the identification of				
			subsidiary legislation to be made under the				
			FMB as requested by the JSC. In this regard				

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			the following, among others, have been prioritized: adoption and implementation of the trawl fishery management plan including mandatory use of BRDs by non-artisanal trawlers and provision of subsidies for BRDs, as well as closed seasons for trawlers and other time/area closures for the trawl fleets. The Fisheries Division also continues to interact with other agencies such as the Ministry of Trade and Industry on outstanding matters of relevance to progress on the FMB. The Fisheries Division continues to implement the Observer programme introduced under REBYC II, though it is largely restricted to the artisanal trawl fleet, with 77 trips conducted from June 2021 to current time (i.e., 19 May 2023). A Bycatch Reduction Device (BRD) incentive is available under the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries' Incentive Programme, though this has not been accessed by any trawl operators to date.			
Recommendation 2. To FAO GEF Coordination Unit, FAO technical divisions and GEF. To improve the design and implementation of future projects including REBYC-III CLME+, the following are recommended: Project design/follow on projects:	Accepted	These recommendations will be shared with the FAO-GEF Coordination Unit; FAO technical divisions, GEF and those responsible for the design of new projects, including the REBYC III LAC. This is with the intention that the recommendations of	The recommendations were shared with subregional, regional, and global QA groups. The REBYC-III and EAF4SGF projects are typical GEF projects that mainstreamed lessons learned from the design and implementation of REBYC-II, driven from the findings of their respective evaluation missions. The design and formulation process and the key elements of these projects	Good	GEF projects developed following REBYC-II have integrated this recommendation in their design, hence have a more comprehensive structure, with a	

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 i. Set more realistic GEO and PDO, with associated 'SMART' indicators; and ensure the development of an adequate theory of change during the design stage. ii. Incorporate other measures and gear modifications for minimizing trawling impacts on benthic habitats and benthos (e.g., gear modifications that reduce physical contact and the penetration depth of the gear into the seabed, and that minimize ghost fishing). iii. Place more focus on gender and livelihoods, private sector engagement/co-management, incentives for adoption of alternative fishing gear, ghost fishing, and fundamental differences between small-scale and large-scale trawl fisheries in the design of bycatch reduction strategies and other management measures. iv. Align REBYC-III CLME+ with other planned regional projects (PROCARIBE+, EAF4SG) to avoid duplication and build synergies; and minimize the 		Project design/follow on projects; Institutional arrangements and administration; and Stakeholder engagement and partnerships will be considered and monitored. 1-i. FAO's continuous improvement approach is reflected in a series of quality control steps along the project cycle. This ensures that the theory of change of projects is solid and realistic, and indicators are SMART. However, there is always room for improvement and this recommendation will be conveyed to all of the subregional, regional, and global QA groups. It is difficult to foresee external shocks such as the pandemic or climaterelated disasters, therefore indicators are as realistic as these unpredictable factors allow. 1-ii. REBYC-III focuses the development and piloting of smart-gear modifications for both trawl and non-trawl gears (such as gillnets and longlines) for more size- and species selective fishing practices and	endorsed in April 2023 by GEF demonstrate the full enforcement of this recommendation, including the institutional arrangements and administration; and Stakeholder engagement and partnerships are concerned. Both projects development phase was spearheaded by the same task force (FAO technical Units, GEF FLO and teams of regional and national consultants who have extensive knowledge and have most been involved in previous projects implementation (REBYC-II, the Sub-projects shrimps and groundfish/which led to EAF4SGF under the CLME+ Programme) and in the design process of PROCARIBE+. Besides, the Coordination Unit of the CLME+ Project which had an oversight on the development of PROCARIBE+ have been closely engaged during the preparation of both projects, to identify potential areas of synergy to be maximized and avoid duplication. Academic institutions were engaged right from the design phase, likewise NGOs and other partners. This led to a transparent and effective selection of an executing partner, which indeed is an academic entity (the University of West Indies) for REBYC-III and EAF4SGF. Fishing gears and techniques, and targeted fisheries prioritized by the beneficiary countries informed the identification of		successful and relatively shorter time of endorsement, which indeed happened in April 2023.

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time lag between the end of REBYC-II LAC and start of REBYC-III CLME+. Institutional arrangements and administration: i. Where appropriate, consider institutional arrangements for execution in which a technical or academic institute with the required competence is designated to work alongside the government co-executing agency. ii. Promote South-South cooperation between the appropriate countries such as those with high capacity and those with low capacity in specific thematic areas. iii. As recommended by the MTE to FAO, continue to streamline and accelerate administrative and operational mechanisms in order to be more efficient in project implementation and harmonize administrative issues at the various levels at which the project operates (to be completed within one year of project closure).		on strengthening governance for better bycatch management. This will ensure continuity and expansion of REBYC-II achievements. FAO is developing guidelines for global reduction of ghost fishing, through voluntary guidelines whose elements are already been applied by industrial fishing organizations in LAC. Bycatch reduction and management in small-scale fisheries are now part of sectoral legislation in Colombia, Costa Rica, and Brazil, as a result of REBYC-II. Also new projects will build on these results. 1-iii. FAO's gender policies are widely and strictly observed throughout the organization, and this includes project formulation. Just as REBYC-II focused on improving fishing dependent women's access to value addition and better markets in some countries (i.e., Colombia and Costa Rica), FAO will continue to promote and incorporate these issues in future projects, in particular but	expected Outputs of REBYC-III and EAF4SGF. As an illustration: In Component 1 of REBYC-III (Improving fishing practices to manage bycatch and reduce the unaccounted fishing mortality and the negative impacts of fishing gears in CLME+ fisheries, supporting countries implementation of CLME+ SAP priorities) are anticipated in the development and piloting of smart-gear modifications for both trawl and non-trawl gears (such as gillnets and longlines) for more size- and species-selective fishing practices. Component 2 on Strengthening governance and management frameworks and enforcement measures to better manage bycatch and reduce discards in CLME+ fisheries, supporting countries implementation of CLME+ SAP priorities; and Component 3 Encouraging behavioural change for adoption of effective bycatch mitigation and discard reduction measures in target CLME+ fisheries, supporting the implementation of the CLME+ SAP priorities.		

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Stakeholder engagement and partnerships: i. Develop and implement a stakeholder engagement plan and allow adequate time at project start for stakeholder engagement, establishment of partnerships, institutional strengthening, and fostering trust among stakeholders before the start of on the ground activities. ii. Adopt operational modalities that may be more efficient, such as Operational Partners Agreements instead of LOAs. This would allow the engagement of partners from the project design stage and on a long-term basis. iii. Appoint a dedicated consultant to manage stakeholder engagement and partnerships (the knowledge management expert may be able to also serve in this role). Such responsibility should also be included in the terms of reference for the Regional Project Coordinators and national coordinators if		not exclusively, in the REBYC-II countries. 2. A common practice in technically oriented projects is to engage academic institutes. REBYC-II was not different. Specific examples include the partnership developed with the Rural Federal University of Pernambuco in Brazil; the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Institute of Mexico and the Marine Research Institute of Colombia, which were in fact national coexecuting agencies. FAO will continue to engage, right from the design stage and where pertinent, include academic institutions in project formulation and execution. FAO has a very dynamic South-South Cooperation (SSC) strategy whereby technical and policy exchange is facilitated both directly among countries and through technical cooperation projects. REBYC-II had a number of SSC actions. Future projects will continue enhancing capacity building through SSC at institutional			

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they are to support these processes. Make provisions in the project budget for incentives to increase participation by local communities, especially women, including designating male and female members as community champions.		and resource users' level. 3. FAO will continue to promote stakeholder engagement and appropriation of the project by target groups and partners, is undertaken before executing field activities. Whilst there is a careful actor mapping and selection of target groups and potential community champions, there is still room for improvement and the recommendation of having a consultant dedicated to stimulate and manage stakeholder engagement, is well received. FAO will also advise national fisheries authorities and other relevant partners, the importance of adopting the initiative.			
Recommendation 3.	Accepted	The information generated by	Whether in REBYC-III where concerns	Good	Livelihoods, especially
To Participating countries, FAO GEF Coordination Unit and GEF. Support the continuation of initiatives started under REBYC-II LAC for enhanced livelihoods and empowerment of women fish workers under follow-on projects and programmes. These initiatives should build on the results, studies, lessons, and		the project will be available through partners in the countries and at FAO for internal use and learning. Ensuring that new legislation frameworks include these aspects. The pursuit of gender equity and livelihood improvement will continue to	regarding the impacts on women and vulnerable groups will be monitored for appropriate mitigation measures, or in the EAF4SGF and BE:CLME+ projects, the gender equity and livelihoods improvement are planned to be promoted. REBYC-III was developed with focus on closing gender gaps in access to and control over natural resources.		alternative livelihoods for vulnerable groups of the communities, women and indigenous is a systematic approach used in the approved projects, engaging partners at various

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experiences of REBYC-II LAC, with replication and upscaling as feasible. Where the required capacity of the coexecuting partners is limited, involve the appropriate government agencies and institutions with the relevant mandate and expertise related to gender and livelihoods in the design and implementation of these initiatives. The effects of bycatch reduction on women and other vulnerable groups should be monitored and appropriate measures to mitigate potential negative impacts identified.		be promoted and prioritized in FAO and partner projects. As well as the monitoring of their implementation in practice and effectiveness. Training, sensitization and expert participation on gender and livelihoods in project design, implementation and monitoring will be included in further projects. Already a number of projects, including REBYC-III are building on REBYC-III's results and experiences. FAO will continue to work closely with national counterparts and strategic partners, both institutional and academic or civil organizations, to ensure that the achievements and positive changes reached by REBYC-II are consolidated and rooted in fishery and policy practices. There are a number of technological, socioeconomic and policy REBYC-II-derived documents that have already been published globally, containing numerous lessons learned, technical results, evidence and experiences, that	improving women's participation and decision-making; and generating socioeconomic benefits or services for women. During the project design (PPG) phase, the project provided training on gender analysis and equality to project participants, gender awareness and responsiveness to those involved to ensure that gender mainstreaming is maximized in the project design. A project Gender Strategy and Plan was developed during the PPG phase. Consultants in value chains and new products and for development of innovative tools to improve supplier/buyer matching will ensure that benefits to women and vulnerable persons are safeguarded. For smart-gear modifications to improve selectivity, and reduction of the unaccounted fishing mortality and discards, communications media to sensitize the general public and coastal communities, adoption of new forms of mitigation based on financial compensation, etc., which were essential initiatives bolstering the replication and upscaling of results, lessons and experiences of REBYC-II are planned in the REBYC-III Project. Project countries prioritized: Barbados: Pelagic longline.		levels based on their capacity. There is a political advocacy to achieve appropriate social protection for the artisanal fisheries and including the workers with gender lenses.

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		will certainly serve as a reference and a basis for replication in other countries, particularly those of the Large Marine Ecosystems where REBYC-II operated. FAO will make sure that in future projects, monitoring of the effects of bycatch reduction on women, are incorporated.	Guyana: Demersal driftnet (drifting gillnet) targeting groundfish and Crustaceans trawl fisheries, Suriname: Demersal driftnet (drifting gillnet) targeting groundfish and Trawl fishery targeting groundfish and Trawl fishery targeting demersal finfish species. Trinidad and Tobago: Non-artisanal pelagic longline targeting tunas and Artisanal pelagic and demersal gillnets. In sharing the actions undertaken to address this recommendation, the following countries reported: Colombia: Colombia: Colombia, with government resources and support from FAO in small projects with financial support from NORAD, has boosted the results of REBYC-II LAC by strengthening support for women fishery workers (platoneras), who are formalizing their work and the means of life to process bycatch and produce food based on this raw material for vulnerable populations in the Colombian Pacific. Work is continuing with FAO to strengthen the social protection of artisanal fishermen with a gender focus. Likewise, losses and waste from artisanal fishing are being evaluated in a pilot site in the Colombian Pacific. Suriname:		

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			The REBYC-II LAC project has strengthened the existed Fisher Folk Organizations (FFO's) by providing training, capacity building and mentoring. The Fisheries Department continues to support the FFO's and includes their representatives in both institutionalized NICs/WGs (e.g., seabob WG, shrimp and groundfish WG and fisheries advisory committee) and ad-hoc stakeholder meetings. In this way, the concerns of the small-scale fishers are being heard and accounted for, to ensure their livelihoods are not negatively affected by fisheries management decisions. Since the closure of REBYC-II, Fishery Improvement Program (FIP) has started, which has been a private sector initiative to bring the industrial (trawl) and small-scale fishery for groundfish to higher level of sustainability. Recently, the FIP standard (see fisheryprogress.org) has also included social responsibility aspects and improvements are being made on social aspects of the fishery as well. The FIP initiative is fully supported by the Suriname government (Fisheries Department) and took on some of the recommendations made by the REBYC-II LAC (e.g., see study on woman in trawl fishery				
			Trinidad and Tobago: Further to support given under REBYC-II LAC and equipment procured (three stainless steel				

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			tables) for the Claxton Bay Fish Processing Facility in October 2020 to facilitate production of value-added fish products for enhancement of livelihoods in surrounding fishing communities, one person (with one assistant) is currently processing fish at this facility. Further to training conducted by the Caribbean Fisheries Training and Development Institute (CFTDI) in March 2021 under REBYC-II in fish handling, processing, salt curing and drying ten females and twelve males from the trawl community of Otaheite as well as other fisheries stakeholders and representatives from the Orange Valley Wholesale Fish Market), communication was initiated with the Deputy Director of Community Development Division, Ministry of Community Development, Culture and the Arts, who sat on the REBYC-II National Working Group and had expressed the interest of her Ministry in supporting similar training for additional persons in these communities. The CFTDI (through its Training Manager) was requested to prepare a training programme targeted for funding by the Community Development Division. This process has however been stalled/delayed due to several organizational changes taking		

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			functioning at full capacity and is challenged by limited resources.		
Recommendation 4. To the FAO GEF Coordination Unit. Develop an appropriate risk management plan with an adequate budget and incorporate flexibility in the design of new projects to mitigate the potential impacts of any delays in project start up or unexpected political and institutional changes in the participating countries or coexecuting agencies. In the time period between project approval and the start of project implementation, which can be extended, and during project implementation, political, institutional, and social changes might occur that could affect the project context and implementation. Adapting to these changes may require certain modifications to be made, for example, to specific targets and institutional arrangements, to mitigate any potential negative impact on project implementation.	Partially accepted	It is necessary to assume the fundamental need for time and budget for this item by the funders. This is not the first time that this issue has appeared in a Final Project Evaluation. FAO will ensure adequate consideration of the risk of potential externalities that might delay the realization of project activities and consequently the achievement of some of the products and targets. We will propose to donors some margin for time flexibility, should external shocks impose delays. FAO will continue strengthening risk analysis processes to propose the most suitable mitigating actions. While there are many activities that depend partially or exclusively on local official decisions, there are others that can be realized without government approval. FAO will	by limited resources. A proper risk analysis was conducted during the PPG phase and implementing arrangements with national partners made in a way to limit project inception delays. A Risk Mitigation and Assurance Plan was endorsed, the implementation of which by the executing partner (The University of West Indies) will be ensured by the FAOSLC office responsible for timely operational and financial management of GEF resources implemented.	Good	The risk analysis was a thorough exercise conducted at the PPC phase, and subsequent projects structure reflect the needed implementation arrangements, ir paying due attention to the need for timely implementation and the appropriate mitigation measures identified.

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		with national counterparts, that reduce unnecessary delays once the project is approved, to carry out the required activities.			
Recommendation 5. To FAO GEF Coordination Unit and GEF. Make adequate provisions in the project budget for communication and knowledge management throughout project implementation, including: i. Hiring of a dedicated project communication/knowledge management expert from the start of implementation and engaging local communication/knowledge management experts and local 'champions' at the country level for communication with local communities.	Partially accepted	This will depend on the willingness of the funding agency to allocate this. FAO project formulators will incorporate a clear communication strategy and knowledge management plan including associated provisions in the budget.	In the three GEF projects endorsed for implementation, that follow the closure of REBYC-II, provision has been made in the project personnel to include among others: A Knowledge Management and lessons exchange and common capacity building activities). Project monitoring will be led by dedicated Monitoring and Evaluation staff, leveraging existing Monitoring and Evaluation mechanisms in the region.	Good	Budget profiling wardone and reviewer during the formulation process, to ensure that dedicated funds are made available to the executing agency to recruit within the tear the relevant resource persons. There was therefore a good impact of this recommendation of the new projects which implementation success is foreseen.
ii. Preparation of a communication/knowledge management strategy at the start, which includes capacity building in this area for project personnel and partners.					
iii. Allocation of an adequate budget for translation, communication, and					

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	knowledge management activities.					
iv.	Where the Regional Project Coordinator and National Coordinators are expected to support knowledge management, this responsibility should be included in their respective terms of reference.					
V.	Production and dissemination of knowledge management products that are targeted for the general public and local stakeholders.					
vi.	Greater utilization of newsletters and mainstream media (e.g., embedding television personnel with the project).					



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