

Decentralized Evaluation Series

**Terminal evaluation of the project
“Forest Resources Assessment and
Monitoring to Strengthen Forestry
Policy and Knowledge Framework”**

Project code: GCP/AZE/007/GFF

Management response

Management response to the terminal evaluation of the project “Forest Resources Assessment and Monitoring to Strengthen Forestry Policy and Knowledge Framework”					10/2022
Evaluation recommendation	Management response Accepted, Partially accepted or Rejected	Management plan			Further funding required (Y or N)
		Actions to be taken, and/or comments about partial acceptance or rejection	Responsible unit	Time frame	
<p>Recommendation 1 (operational).</p> <p>Narrow the scope and focus of the project and gradually scale up the project activities in similar strategic dimensions. In this regard, instead of merging different topics (e.g. the NFI, FMP, income generation, and pasture rehabilitation), it is highly recommended to keep focused on one specific strategic dimension (e.g. focusing on only the NFI and scaling it up to cover other regions of the country, or focusing only on FMP work and scaling it up). Moreover, the project design needs to address all three layers of capacity development along with a timeline approach (legal framework and policy, institutional and individual capacity layers) to secure project sustainability. Altogether, these layers create a supportive ecosystem to strengthen and maintain state capacity over time to achieve different development objectives, including those related to SFM.</p>	Accepted	All recommendations will be taken into consideration during project proposal development for future GEF projects with the involvement of relevant FAO Technical Officers.	FEAZE Natural Resource Program Team Members	01/01/2023	No
<p>Recommendation 2 (strategic).</p> <p>Continue developing the capacity of the Government of Azerbaijan in the sustainable forest and soil management domain and encourage the participation of relevant staff in cross-country or regional technical working groups. Moreover, when it comes to the project SC’s composition, it is also advisable to engage other relevant agencies and not only the FDS and the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources. Over time, this working group</p>	Accepted	The mentioned issue is related to almost all projects implemented by FEAZE. Unfortunately, lack of coordination among the respective governmental units remains the major problem in the country, especially in the environmental sector. For this specific case, the forestry sector is considered as the sector under direct management by the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources and its relevant units. During the project	FEAZE Natural Resource Program Team Members	01/06/2022	No

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might serve as an advisory forum on climate change and degradation matters at the national level. It might even contribute to strengthening internal lobbying and advocacy on SFM issues.		implementation period, the project team tried to involve some other stakeholders in at least the discussion process. However, in all future projects it will be considered a major important point. FAO will advocate for high level attendance from Steering Committee Members, which could be used as a tool to build up such coordination committees. There is an on-going FTFP project (GCP/SEC/021/GFF) under which there are planned capacity building-related actions to be implemented in coming months/years. FEAZE will also consider the recommendation on cross-country or regional technical working groups and encourage the participation of relevant governmental staff in these groups.			
Recommendation 3. Reconsider the means of validating co-financing contributions from partners based on their actual involvement and monetary contributions to the project, which also implies regularly collecting information and updated statements detailing co-financing contributions.	Accepted	An M&E system will be established to identify means of validating of contributions with the participation of partners, and methodology to ensure timely collection of relevant data and means of verification of contributions from partners.	FEAZE Natural Resource Program Team Members	01/06/2022	No
Recommendation 4 (operational). FAO needs to improve the M&E system through the development of a consolidated results framework with SMART indicators and targets. It also needs to ensure that the staff possesses the capacity to	Accepted	A gender-sensitive M&E plan will be developed by FAO M&E Specialist at the early stages of the project implementation with the contribution of program staff during the inception phase of relevant projects. FAO	FAO Regional Office Programme Support team and FEAZE	01/10/2022	No

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develop a detailed and gender-sensitive M&E plan. In this regard, it would also be highly advisable to strengthen FAO personnel capacity on M&E practices.		M&E Specialists that will be requested from the regional office will provide training on M&E plan implementation for relevant M&E consultants as well as the project staff.	Natural Resource Program Team Members		
Recommendation 5 (strategic). It would also be advisable to continue dialogue with the Government of Azerbaijan about necessary legal and policy changes that would secure the sustainability of the project’s achievements and address all of the associated risks to sustainability (i.e. financial-, legal-, and policy-level gaps). This dialogue might address either changes in the outdated Forest Code or the financial and human resources challenges faced by the FDS in scaling up the results of the project (given its dependence on the state budget and inability to attract additional resources to fulfill its mandate).	Accepted	FEAZE closely collaborates with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources in different areas related to environment and the Natural Resource Management. As per forestry sector, FEAZE will continue to support the government under the on-going FTFP project. Apart from this, it is planned to discuss possible new GEF-8 cycle projects on forestry sector, mostly related to strengthening the enabling environment.	FEAZE program	01/01/2023	No

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