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# **TERMINAL EVALUATION of the project**

**“Strengthening institutional and technical  
capacities and in the agricultural and forestry  
sectors in Nicaragua in response to the  
requirements of the Enhanced Transparency  
Framework under the  
Paris Agreement”**

**GCP/NIC/042/CBT**

**GEF ID: 10118**

**UNITED NATIONS FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION  
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## **SUMMARY:**

The Terminal Evaluation of the FAO/GEF Project “Strengthening institutional and technical capacities and in the agricultural and forestry sectors in Nicaragua in response to the requirements of the Enhanced Transparency Framework under the Paris Agreement” (CBIT) sought to evaluate the results of the project from January 2021 - January 2024; document lessons learned; and generate recommendations to respond to the requirements of the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF). **(36 interviewees: 16 women / 20 men)**

### **FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:**

**Relevance:** It is aligned with national, regional and global priorities.

**Coherence:** It is complementary to other projects such as the Fourth Communication and GEF 5, 6 and 7.

**Efficiency:** The human, material and financial resources available were managed efficiently; FAO implementation and SCCP execution were evaluated satisfactorily; the Letters of Agreement have been efficient, although there is a lack of better planning and precision regarding the products.

**Effectiveness:** Institutional ownership was ensured, the only deficiency being that the number of institutions which increased their capacities in the use of MRV and in the dissemination of lessons learned was smaller than expected.

**Sustainability:** Financial uncertainties and staff turnover pose a challenge to the sustainability of project results.

**Design and implementation of M&E:** The project design was adequate, although a better mapping of key actors would have been needed.

**GEF Policies:** Female participation in the project was 41%.

**Overall Project Rating: “Satisfactory”.**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**Efficiency:** Streamlining of the procurement process, better planning of the Letters of Agreement, and achievement of greater synergies with other initiatives at the regional level.

**Effectiveness:** Definition of the achievement of a macro-product; enabling greater participation by the universities; regulation of participation in Diploma Courses; development of training programs according to knowledge levels; update of equipment for measurement and data collection; implementation of a permanent monitoring system.

**Sustainability:** Providing support for the formulation of projects and a greater appropriation of knowledge.

**Design and implementation of the M&E system:** Better mapping of key actors; setting a minimum duration of 4 or 5 years.

**GEF Policies:** promotion of greater knowledge sharing; better use of platforms; greater visibility of the project; and regarding gender equity: ensuring at least 40% female participation, positive discrimination, convenient hours for workshops, publishing posts with social media algorithms, and closing women’s skills and knowledge gaps.

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On the other hand, we are grateful for the contributions and comments of the staff of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) under the direction of Milton Castillo as Officer in Charge of the FAO Office in Nicaragua.

The TE was based on the opinion of many stakeholders, including public servants representing the beneficiary institutions, universities and research institutes, whose contributions were fundamental to the work of the TE team. We acknowledge the good will of the project team, with its openness, collaboration and support for the organization of this review.

The TE team consisted of two independent consultants: on the one hand, Gladis María Demarchi, international consultant and in charge of the ET, expert in project evaluations related to the area of climate change, biodiversity, gender equality and human rights; and, on the other hand, Mauricio Rodríguez, national consultant, professional with extensive experience in climate change and the management and conservation of natural resources.

Finally, the TE team thanks everyone who in one way or another has contributed to this review by expressing their opinion.

### **TE Team**

*Lead international consultant: Gladis María Demarchi.*

*National consultant: Mauricio Rodríguez.*

### **FAO staff**

*Milton Castillo, Officer in charge of the FAO Nicaragua Office.*

## Acronyms and abbreviations

AFOLU	Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Uses
AGRIADAPTA	Project for Innovation and Dissemination of Technologies for Adaptation of Agriculture to Climate Change
AWP&B	Annual Work Plan and Budget
BH	Budget Holder
BTR	Biennial Transparency Report
BUR	Biennial Update Report
CBIT	Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency
CCA	Adaptation to Climate Change
CIAT	International Centre for Tropical Agriculture
CNU	National Council of Universities
CO <sub>2</sub>	Carbon Dioxide
CO <sub>2</sub> eq	Carbon Dioxide Equivalent
CODEFOR	Departmental Forestry Commission
CONAFOR	National Forestry Commission
COREFOR	Regional Forestry Commission
COP	Conference of the Parties
ENDE REDD+	National Strategy for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
ER	Evaluation Report
ERPA	Emissions Reduction Payment Agreement
ET	Evaluation Team
ETF	Enhanced Transparency Framework (Paris Agreement)
FAO	UN Food and Agriculture Organization
FAONI	FAO Nicaragua
FCPF	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
FLO	Funding Liaison Officer
FREL	Forest Emissions Reference Levels
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
GON	Government of Nicaragua
GRUN	Government of Reconciliation and National Unity (Nicaragua)
Ha	Hectares
HQ	Technical Officer
INAFOR	National Forestry Institute
INETER	Nicaraguan Institute of Territorial Studies
INIFOM	Nicaraguan Institute for Municipal Development
INTA	Nicaraguan Institute of Agricultural Technology
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ITT	Interinstitutional Technical Team
LoA	Letters of Agreement
LUCLUF	Land Use, Land Use Changes and Forestry
LTO	Lead Technical Officer
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MACCS	Round Table on Agroecology, Climate Change and Soil Use
MARENA	Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources

MEFCCA	Ministry of Family, Community, Cooperative and Associative Economy
MINIM	Ministry of Women
MPG	Modalities, Procedures and Guidelines
MRV	Measurement, Reporting and Verification
NDC	Nationally Determined Contributions
NFC	National Forest Commission
NFI	National Forest Inventory
NICAVIDA	Dry Corridor Rural Family Sustainable Development Project
NPC	National Project Coordinator
OECD – DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Development Assistance Committee
OIG	Office of the Inspector General
PIF	Project Identification Form
PIR	Project Implementation Review
PMU	Project Management Unit
PNCC	National Climate Change Policy
PNDH	National Human Development Programme
NCLP-DH	National Plan to Fight Poverty and for Human Development
PNMACC	National Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Policy
PPG	Project Preparation Grant
PSC	Project Steering Committee
SCCP	Climate Change Secretariat at the President's Office
SDCC	Secretariat for the Development of the Caribbean Coast
SEPAL	System for Earth Observation Data Access, Processing and Analysis for Land Monitoring
SINIA	National Environmental Information System
SNMRV	National Monitoring, Reporting and Verification System
SNGCC	National Climate Change Management System
SNRCC	National Climate Change Response System
SNPCC	National Production, Consumption and Commerce System
SPPN	Private Secretariat for National Policy – Office of the Presidency
TE	Terminal Evaluation
ToR	Terms of Reference
UCC	Climate Change Unit
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WB	World Bank



## Map of Nicaragua



Source: PRODOC, 2019.

## Executive Summary

### INTRODUCTION:

1. The Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the FAO/GEF Project “Strengthening institutional and technical capacities and in the agricultural and forestry sectors in Nicaragua in response to the requirements of the Enhanced Transparency Framework under the Paris Agreement”, GCP/NIC/042/ CBT, GEF ID 10118, hereinafter CBIT for its acronym in English, sought to evaluate the project results and their contribution to the needs and priorities of the counterpart institutions; to document lessons learned; and to generate recommendations for future projects aimed at consolidating national capacities to respond to the requirements of the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF).
2. Time frame: January 2021 to January 2024.<sup>1</sup>
3. Territorial scope: national (interviews with key actors and central level strategic partners in Managua).
4. The evaluation covered the project in general and each of the outputs and outcomes of its components: Component 1: Strengthening institutional capacities to meet the requirements of the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF) of the Paris Agreement in the agricultural and forestry sectors; Component 2: Research and generation of information, with the aim of strengthening reports and following up on progress achieved through mitigation and adaptation actions in the agricultural and forestry sectors; and Component 3: Dissemination of good practices and lessons learned at national and international levels.
5. Sample of interviewees:36 (16 women / 20 men)

### 6. MAIN FINDINGS OF THE TERMINAL EVALUATION

7. **Relevance**: Is the project relevant to GEF and FAO priorities, national development policies and priorities, the needs of beneficiary institutions, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) of the 2030 Agenda?
8. **Relevance Rating: Highly Satisfactory<sup>2</sup>.**
9. **Finding 1**: The project is aligned with the global and regional priorities of the GEF and FAO; with national policies and priorities, mainly with the National Plan to Fight Poverty and for Human Development (PNLCP-DH), the National Climate Change Policy (PNCC), the mandates and needs of national institutions; and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda.
10. **Finding 2**: A change occurred due to the creation of the National Climate Change Management System (SNGCC), the National Climate Change Policy (PNCC) and Climate Change Secretariat at the President’s Office (SCCP)<sup>3</sup>, and the decision of the Steering Committee implying a transfer of the project’s coordination from the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources (MARENA) to the SCCP. Although this change initially represented a challenge for the coordination of all institutions, over time it resulted in greater mainstreaming of climate change and better inter-institutional collaboration.
11. **Coherence**: Is there complementarity with other programs/projects/actions being implemented with similar objectives?

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<sup>1</sup> Although the scope of the TE reaches until January 2024, in some aspects the financial data included were data updated by March 2024, the date of writing the Final Report.

<sup>2</sup> Relevance ratings: Highly Satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (T), Moderately Satisfactory (MS), Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), Highly Unsatisfactory (HU), Unable to assess (UA)

<sup>3</sup> The SNGCC was created by Presidential Decree No. 15-2021, published in the Official Gazette No. 120 on 30 June 2021, and replaced the SNRCC. It is a political-strategic body for consultation, development and monitoring of policies, standards, instruments and strategies to promote compliance with national climate targets.

12. **Coherence Rating: Satisfactory**<sup>4</sup>.
13. **Finding 3:** At the national level, the Capacity-Building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT) is complementary to other projects, such as the Fourth Communication, GEF 5, 6 and 7, the National Forest Inventory, the Project for Innovation and Dissemination of Technologies for Adaptation of Agriculture to Climate Change (AGRIADAPTA), and the Dry Corridor Rural Family Sustainable Development Project (NICAVIDA).
14. **Efficiency:** Were the human, material and financial resources available managed efficiently? Were the implementation and execution of the project adequate?
15. **Efficiency Rating: Satisfactory**<sup>5</sup>
16. **Finding 4:** The project presents an overall budget execution rate of 99.4%, and the human, material and financial resources available were managed efficiently to achieve the expected results in the planned timeframe and with the available financial resources.
17. **Finding 5:** There have been some delays in some procurement processes, mainly in the procurement of equipment, which took longer than expected to arrive in the country; and it would be very beneficial for the institutions to have a broader base of international consultants.
18. **Finding 6:** The synergies and complementarities made with projects such as the Fourth Communication, the GEF 5, 6, 7, UNEP and others, have facilitated the use of human and material resources for the project, as well as for other institutional purposes, improving the efficiency of their use. All in all, greater synergies could be generated with other FAO projects and other international organizations, such as IFAD in Latin America.
19. **Finding 7:** The co-financing amount reported as of June 2023 is 33% of what was committed at the beginning.
20. However, since all co-financing is in kind, it is expected that at the project's formal closure, 100% of the amount will be reported as executed.
21. **Finding 8:** FAO's role as implementing agency was assessed as satisfactory, as arrangements such as Letters of Agreement with other institutions have been considered efficient for the follow-up on outputs, although better planning and precision would be necessary regarding details, scope and delivery time of outputs.
22. **Finding 9:** The executing agency, the SCCP, fulfilled its role and responsibilities related to the management and execution of the project, and measures were adopted to mitigate the risks identified at the beginning; its level of efficiency was satisfactory.
23. **Effectiveness: What expected and unexpected results has the project achieved and how do these contribute to the achievement of its higher objectives.**
24. **Effectiveness Rating: Satisfactory**<sup>6</sup>.
25. **Finding 10:** In general, as to achievements regarding project outputs, outcomes and objective, the project's performance is valued as satisfactory; it only presented some deficiencies in terms of the smaller

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<sup>4</sup> Coherence ratings: Highly Satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (T), Moderately Satisfactory (MS), Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), Highly Unsatisfactory (HU), Unable to assess (UA)

<sup>5</sup> Efficiency ratings: Highly satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Moderately satisfactory (MS), Moderately unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), Highly unsatisfactory (HU), Unable to assess (UA)

<sup>6</sup> Effectiveness ratings: Highly satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Moderately satisfactory (MS), Moderately unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), Highly unsatisfactory (HU), Unable to assess (UA))

than expected number of institutions that increased their capacities in the use of tools and guidelines for national forest monitoring and in the dissemination of good practices, experiences and lessons learned on mitigation and climate change adaptation.

26. **Finding 11:** Among the unintended positive results, the National Forestry Institute (INAFOR) highlights the study on allometric equations of Pine - *Pinus Oocarpa* - in an international scientific magazine; the systematic sampling grid of 14,000 georeferenced points of the Nicaraguan Institute of Territorial Studies (INETER); the Family Farming Map of the Ministry of Family, Community, Cooperative and Associative Economy (MEFCCA); the identification of technologies to be transferred by the Nicaraguan Institute of Agricultural Technology (INTA); the design of the MRV system of the AFOLU sector; and the strengthening of technological capabilities and infrastructure of the Ministry of Agriculture (MAG) in order to contribute to the improvement of information management for the Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) of the Agriculture subsector.
27. **Finding 12:** Capacity building aimed at ensuring individual as well as organizational learning, and its application on the respective environment. However, most institutions would require additional support from FAO to be able to formulate international projects in order to obtain greater resources.
28. **Finding 13:** The application of a new approach to tackling the problem of climate change adaptation from a comprehensive and systemic perspective was confirmed, allowing for better inter-institutional collaboration and a greater impact of national policies.
29. **Finding 14:** Additionality: Based on an analysis of gaps identified at the beginning by the institutions, the project sought to strengthen their technical capacities related to climate change management, in order to achieve a change in attitudes and the application of new practices, thereby ensuring individual and institutional ownership, which not only resulted in better achievement of short and medium objectives but also of the expected long-term impact.
30. **Finding 15:** The project has contributed to building the technical capacities needed to comply with national climate change commitments, and to create the SCCP and the National Climate Change Policy, promoting knowledge and skills, which are further applied in other projects and programs.
31. **Sustainability: How sustainable will the results achieved to date be in the future?**  
*Are there risks that affect the sustainability of the project's achievements?*
32. **Sustainability Rating: Likely<sup>7</sup>**
33. **Finding 16:** The new institutional framework, with a specific guideline in the PNLCP-DH, the SNGCC, the PNCC and the SCCP at the level of the President's Office, plus the institutions aligned to these policies and organizational structures, increase the probability that the project's results will be maintained in the future.
34. **Finding 17:** Financial uncertainties pose a challenge to the sustainability of project results, as capacity development for ETF compliance depends, to a large extent, on international project-based financing, which is not always conducive to staff continuity and covering the costs of operation, maintenance and renewal of appropriate equipment. However, it is expected that in the future, institutions will strengthen their capacities for the formulation of projects and thus have access to green finance.
35. **Design and implementation of the M&E system: Were the project design and implementation of the M&E system adequate for monitoring and achieving results?**
36. **Rating of Design and Implementation of the M&E System: "Satisfactory"<sup>8</sup>**

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<sup>7</sup> Sustainability ratings: Highly likely (HL), Likely (L), Moderately likely (ML), Moderately unlikely (MU), Unlikely (U), Highly unlikely (HU), Unable to assess (UA)

<sup>8</sup> M&E System ratings: (Highly satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Moderately satisfactory (MS), Moderately unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), Highly unsatisfactory (HU), Unable to assess (UA)

37. **Finding 18:** The project design was appropriate for the implementation and achievement of the intended outcomes, although a better mapping of key actors and strategic partners would have been required at the outset, as some actors such as the Ministry of Agriculture (MAG), Ministry of Women (MINIM), and the National Autonomous University of Nicaragua (UNAN) were included almost at the end of it, without a detailed analysis for the initial key actors. The project had a monitoring and evaluation plan and a results matrix with indicators for the achievement of its Objective, Outcomes and Outputs, according to a baseline made in 2019, in which institutional and gender gaps were identified.
38. **Finding 19:** Information has been collected systematically using appropriate methodologies and the Project Steering Committee (PSC) has supervised the execution of the project; FAO's overall support and the technical accompaniment missions of international experts have been positively appreciated by the institutional teams.
39. **Application of GEF policies and guidelines: Were GEF policies and guidelines applied in regarding the participation of the parties, visibility and knowledge management, social and environmental safeguards, and gender equality**
40. **Finding 20:** The parties involved from the beginning of the project, as well as those who were incorporated during its implementation, were informed of the different project activities and timely access to its outputs and the information generated.
41. **Finding 21:** Although the project did not present a communication strategy, it did include activities for the dissemination of results. However, for better ownership, more knowledge management would be necessary for data sharing among institutions, and as a form of dissemination contributing to the future sustainability of the project.
42. **Finding 22:** *In terms of environmental and social safeguards, the project took into account environmental and social impact concerns both in its design and during its execution, reporting in accordance with FAO and GEF requirements on activities related to gender issues, indigenous peoples and stakeholder participation.*
43. **Finding 23:** *Regarding the gender approach, although the project did not establish a minimum participation quota in all its activities, the female participation rate was 41%. However, on the part of the beneficiary institutions, despite the fact that the majority made an effort to achieve a 50/50 balance in accordance with the national policy between female and male participation, in accordance with the national policy, in some of them only a 35% rate of female participation was reached.*
44. **Finding 24:** *The joint work of several institutions based on a cross-cutting and comprehensive perspective to address climate change increases the impact of national policies. Although a significant systematization of adaptation measures to climate change has been achieved, it is necessary to continue providing technical trainings on the use of methodologies and tools for GHG emission monitoring.*
45. **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**
46. **Conclusions:**
47. **Relevance:** The Project is aligned with the global and regional priorities of the GEF and FAO; with national policies and priorities mainly with the National Plan to Fight Poverty and for Human Development (PNCLP-DH) and the PNCC and the mandates and needs of national institutions at the national level; and the SDGs of the 2030 Agenda. A change occurred due to the creation of the SNGCC, the PNCC and the SCCP and the decision of the Steering Committee implying a transfer of the project's coordination from MARENA to the SCCP. Although this change initially represented a challenge for the coordination of all institutions, over time it resulted in greater mainstreaming of climate change and better inter-institutional collaboration.

48. **Coherence:** At the national level, the CBIT has been complementary to other projects, such as the Fourth Communication, GEF 5, 6 and 7, the National Forest Inventory, AGRIADAPTA and NICAVIDA. The products generated in the trainings, such as methodologies, guides and protocols, are being implemented in other projects developed by the beneficiary institutions.
49. **Efficiency:** The project presents a general budget execution rate of 99.4%, and the human, material and financial resources available were managed efficiently to achieve the expected results in the expected time and with the available financial resources. There have been some delays in some procurement processes, mainly in the procurement of equipment, which took longer than expected to arrive in the country; greater synergies could be achieved with other Latin American projects and initiatives Latin America. FAO's role as implementing agency was assessed as satisfactory, as arrangements such as Letters of Agreement with other institutions have been considered efficient for the follow-up on outputs, although better planning and precision would be necessary regarding details, scope and delivery time of outputs.
50. **Effectiveness:** As to achievements regarding project outputs, outcomes and objective, the project only presented some deficiencies in terms of the smaller than expected number of institutions that increased their capacities in the use of tools and guidelines for national forest monitoring and in the dissemination of good practices, experiences and lessons learned on mitigation and climate change adaptation. Among the unintended positive results, the INAFOR highlights the study on allometric equations of Pinus Oocarpa in an international scientific magazine; the systematic sampling grid of 14,000 INETER georeferenced points; the MEFFCA Family Farming Map; the identification of technologies to be transferred by INTA; strengthening the MAG's technological capabilities and infrastructure; and the design of the MRV system. Capacity building efforts aimed at ensuring individual as well as organizational learning, and its application on the respective environment. However, most institutions would require additional support from FAO to be able to formulate international projects in order to obtain greater resources. The application of a new approach to tackling the problem of climate change adaptation from a comprehensive and systemic perspective was confirmed, allowing for better inter-institutional collaboration and a greater impact of national policies.
51. **Regarding Additionality:** adequate institutional learning not only leads to improved achievement of short and medium objectives, but also to the expected long-term impact, as well as improved presentations of international reports with more precise data, which will allow Nicaragua to position itself better to obtain green finance.
52. **Regarding progress towards impact,** the project contributed to building technical capacities for compliance with national climate change commitments, to the creation of the SCCP and the National Climate Change Policy and fostered the appropriation of knowledge which these institutions continue to put into practice in other projects and programs.
53. **Sustainability:** The new institutional framework, with a specific guideline in the PNLCP-DH, the SNGCC, the PNCC and the SCCP at the level of the President's Office, plus the institutions aligned to these policies and organizational structures, increase the probability that the project's results will be maintained in the future. Financial uncertainties pose a challenge to the sustainability of project results, as capacity development for ETF compliance depends, to a large extent, on international project-based financing, which is not always conducive to staff continuity and covering the costs of operation, maintenance and renewal of appropriate equipment. However, it is expected that in the future, institutions will strengthen their capacities for the formulation of projects and thus have access to green finance.
54. **Design and implementation of the M&E system:** The project design was appropriate for the implementation and achievement of the intended outcomes, although a better mapping of key actors and strategic partners would have been required at the outset, as some actors such as MAG, MINIM, and UNAN were included almost at the end of it, without a detailed analysis as for the initial key actors. The

project had a monitoring and evaluation plan and a results matrix with indicators for the achievement of its Objective, Outcomes and Outputs, according to a baseline made in 2019, in which institutional and gender gaps were identified. Although the Project Steering Committee (PSC) has supervised the execution of the project, FAO's overall support and the technical accompaniment missions of international experts have been positively appreciated by the institutional teams.

55. **GEF Policies:** Although the project did not present a communication strategy, it did include activities for the dissemination of results. Although a significant systematization of adaptation measures to climate change has been achieved, it is necessary to continue providing technical trainings on the use of methodologies and tools for GHG emission monitoring. For better ownership, more knowledge management would be necessary for data sharing among institutions, and as a form of dissemination contributing to the future sustainability of the project. In terms of environmental and social safeguards, the project took into account environmental and social impact concerns both in its design and during its execution, reporting in accordance with FAO and GEF requirements, thus complying with these safeguards. Regarding the gender approach, although the project did not establish a minimum participation quota in all its activities, the female participation rate was 41%. However, on the part of the beneficiary institutions, despite the fact that the majority made an effort to achieve a 50/50 balance in accordance with the national policy between female and male participation, in accordance with the national policy, in some of them only a 35% rate of female participation was reached.
56. **The Overall Project Rating: "Satisfactory"**
57. **Recommendations:**
58. **Regarding efficiency:** Streamlining the equipment procurement process; expanding the base of international consultants; and carrying out the timely disbursement of resources upon achievement of outputs; better planning of the Letters of Agreement, with more realistic deadlines and a better definition of details and scopes of the outputs to be delivered, for a better monitoring of the compliance by the beneficiary institutions; building stronger synergies with national platforms promoted by the Livestock and Environmental Management Unit (GAMMA) of the Tropical Agricultural Research and Teaching Center (CATIE), as well as with other projects, programs and initiatives developed by international organizations such as FAO and UNEP; and at a regional level, for example with the GIAHS Chile Program and other projects with Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) in Latin America; with the SAS-Cuba Program; and with the GEF Climate Smart Livestock Project in Uruguay.
59. **Regarding effectiveness:** To strengthen technical capacities: Establishing as part of Component 1 the achievement of a macro-output with cross-cutting content, such as a Strategy for the implementation and sustainability of the MRV system; Enabling greater participation by the universities to adapt academic programs by incorporating climate change as a cross-cutting topic, and award academic certifications; Regulating the participation in Diploma Courses to ensure the participation and commitment of the selected participants; Development of a training program with a common core content and specialized trainings in institutions, according to knowledge levels; Updating of measurement equipment and increasing data storage and processing capacities by the beneficiary institutions, for enhanced standardization of national indicators with internationally used methodologies, facilitating their analysis and required reports; Institutional Monitoring and Evaluation System: a constant data monitoring system is required, with disaggregated data in accordance with the requirements for international reports (ex ante studies, monitoring and impact).
60. **Regarding sustainability:** Providing specific support to institutions for the formulation of international cooperation projects so as to obtain resources from green finance; Promoting greater appropriation of knowledge and good practices, not only at the institutional but also at the community level: local authorities, small- and large-scale farmers and forest farmers, and indigenous communities.
61. **Regarding project design:** A better mapping of key actors representing the relevant sectors for project actions, to achieve their better involvement from the beginning; Establishing a minimum duration of the

project of 4 or 5 years for improved systematization of knowledge and dissemination of results.

62. **In the application of GEF policies and guidelines:** Promoting a greater exchange of knowledge at the national and international level, whether in person or virtual; Promoting a greater exchange of results between institutions and encouraging institutions to carry out more knowledge management by designing manuals, guides and protocols to avoid knowledge gaps due to staff rotation; Making better use of platforms within the SNGCC, or alternatively through the SCCP, to catalyze the exchange of data between participating institutions. the communication strategy: Promoting a greater visibility of the project in a comprehensive and articulated form, as a unique whole and a GEF project with its own approach and identity, both among institutions and the general population.
63. **Gender equality :** An analysis of vulnerability situations; Ensuring at least 40% female participation in trainings, decision-making bodies and access to resources, always aspiring to the Government's 50-50 policy; Using disaggregated data; Positive discrimination in universities for places in degree courses traditionally associated with men; Vocational guidance with emphasis on both the hard and soft skills required; Encouraging actions of positive masculinity, co-responsibility in household tasks, a convenient schedule for women in all activities, which should include travel allowances and accommodation for the children in their care to make them able to attend trainings outside their home region, considering that rural women have more transportation and communication limitations than those who live in the major towns; Publication of advertisements using algorithms on social networks for the enhanced recruitment of women in professions that traditionally tend to be occupied primarily by men; Before carrying out specialized training, always trying to close women's skills and knowledge gaps as much as possible, so that they can participate not only in general workshops or activities, but also in specialized trainings.

GEF Evaluation Criteria Rating Table:

GEF criteria/dimensions	Rating	Summary comments
<b>A. OUTCOMES</b> (relevance, coherence, effectiveness and progress to impact, efficiency)	<b>S</b>	<b>Satisfactory:</b> Regarding its outcomes the project was rated as Satisfactory due to its High level of Relevance, its Coherence with other initiatives and achievements in terms of Efficiency and Effectiveness. <sup>9</sup>
A1. Relevance	<b>HS</b>	<b>Highly Satisfactory</b> for being aligned with GEF strategic priorities, with FAO Global and Regional Frameworks, with national, regional and local policies, with the SDGs of the 2030 Agenda, and with the needs of the beneficiary institutions.
A2. Coherence	<b>S</b>	<b>Satisfactory:</b> At the national level, the CBIT has been complementary to other projects such as the Fourth Communication; GEF 5,6 and 7; the National Forest Inventory; AGRIADAPTA and NICAVIDA. The products generated in the trainings, such as methodologies, guides and protocols, are being implemented in other projects developed by the beneficiary institutions.

<sup>9</sup>The rating of progress to impact was not required



A3. Efficiency	<b>S</b>	<b>Satisfactory:</b> The project presents a general budget execution rate of 99.4%, and the human, material and financial resources available were managed efficiently to achieve the expected results in the expected time and with the available financial resources. However, in the future, procurement processes could be accelerated a little more, and greater synergies could be built with other initiatives developed in Latin America by FAO and other international organizations, such as UNEP and IFAD.
A4. Effectiveness	<b>S</b>	<b>Satisfactory:</b> for the achievement of outputs, outcomes and objective. Some unintended positive results were achieved, such as: a scientific publication, the systematic sampling grid of points for the analysis of land use, and the collaboration with MAG for MRV in agriculture and the design of the MRV system; the trainings promoted a change in attitudes and practices at the individual and organizational levels and in their respective environments, due to the new comprehensive and systemic approach to tackling the problem of climate change adaptation
<b>B. SUSTAINABILITY</b> (financial, sociopolitical, institutional and governance, environmental dimensions including risks to sustainability)	<b>L</b>	<b>Likely:</b> The institutional framework, the alignment of the project with national policies and priorities, and the motivation of the technical teams constitute elements that consolidate governance and favour the future sustainability of the project results. Nevertheless, the financial uncertainties impede the hiring of permanent personnel, the maintenance and replacement of equipment, and the logistics required for desktop and field work, and constitute an element of risk for the sustainability of the project results. However, it is expected that in the future institutions will strengthen their capacities to formulate projects for green finance.
<b>C. IMPLEMENTATION</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>Satisfactory:</b> Project implementation by FAO is considered satisfactory, as the expected results have been achieved and it has been completed within the scheduled time and resources. However, better planning and precision would have been required in the Letters of Agreements regarding the detail, scope and delivery time of outputs.
<b>D. EXECUTION</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>Satisfactory:</b> The SCCP as the executing agency fulfilled its functions of executing and supervising the project and regarding risk management.
<b>M&amp;E plan</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>Satisfactory:</b> The project design was appropriate for the implementation and achievement of the intended outcomes and had a monitoring and evaluation plan with a results matrix with sex-disaggregated indicators; a better mapping of key actors would have been required from the beginning.
<b>M&amp;E Implementation</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>Satisfactory:</b> It collected the information systematically and using appropriate methodologies to guide decision-making, and it could count on FAO's global support.

<p><b>Overall project rating</b></p>	<p><b>S</b></p>	<p><b>Satisfactory:</b> As to Relevance, the project was rated as Highly Satisfactory; its Coherence as Satisfactory for being complementary with other initiatives and projects, especially with the Fourth National Communication; its Efficiency as Satisfactory, although better precision would have been required in the Letters of Agreement; as to Effectiveness, it was generally Satisfactory; its Sustainability is considered Likely or with negligible risks; and its M&amp;E system's design and implementation as Satisfactory, except for the need for a better initial mapping of key actors.</p>
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## 1. Introduction

### Report format and presentation

1. This Terminal Evaluation Report of the Project “Strengthening institutional and technical capacities and in the agricultural and forestry sectors in Nicaragua in response to the requirements of the Enhanced Transparency Framework under the Paris Agreement” - GCP/GCP/NIC/042/CBT - GEF ID: 10118, hereinafter “CBIT Project”, consists of the following parts:
  - Introduction: At first, the background and context of the project is presented with its respective Theory of
  - Change in narrative form and outline.
  - Methodology: This section will address the purpose, scope and objective of the TE, the users, criteria and evaluation questions; the methodology used for data collection and analysis; and its limitations.
  - Project Performance: The following section describes the findings by answering the questions and
  - sub-questions according to each evaluation criterion: relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability; the designs and implementation of the Monitoring and Evaluation System (M&E); and in the Application of GEF Policies and Guidelines: Project partnership and stakeholder engagement will be addressed, as well as communication products, knowledge management and knowledge, social and environmental standards, and gender equality.
  - Finally, the conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned will be presented, followed by the section with Appendices and Annexes.

#### 1.1. Background and context of the project

2. The Paris Agreement established an Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF) with requirements defined in its modalities, procedures and guidelines, approved at the COP 24 in December 2018. These guidelines define the information areas and flows requiring the preparation of different reports the country must submit, the review by technical experts, transition agreements, and a multilateral approach that facilitates progress.
3. The Project “Strengthening institutional and technical capacities and in the agricultural and forestry sectors in Nicaragua in response to the requirements of the Enhanced Transparency Framework under the Paris Agreement” GCP/ GCP/NIC/042/CBT, GEF ID: 10118, was established under the Global Environment Facility (GEF), “Capacity Building for Transparency Initiative” (CBIT), with the objective of creating institutional and technical capacities for the implementation of the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF). All parties shall report implementation progress and scope of the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC). Article. 13.7 (b) of the Agreement. In the case of Nicaragua, it is mainly centred on the Sectors of Energy and Agriculture, Land Use and Land Use Change.<sup>10</sup>
4. The Government of Nicaragua requested the assistance of FAO in the preparation of the Project “Strengthening institutional and technical capacities and in the agricultural and forestry sectors in Nicaragua in response to the requirements of the Enhanced Transparency Framework under the

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<sup>10</sup> UNFCCC; 2023; Technical handbook for developing country Parties on preparing for implementation of the Enhanced Transparency Framework under the Paris Agreement.

Paris Agreement”.

5. For this purpose, FAO Nicaragua prepared the Project Identification Form (PIF) submitted in October 2018, which was approved by the Secretariat of the Global Environment Facility-GEF. The Project Document (ProDoc) was prepared under the FAO-GEF guidelines, submitted to the GEF Secretariat in July 2019, and approved by the GEF on August 24, 2020.
6. Although the project only includes direct investments at the central level, but not locally, it is expected that the enhanced capacities will have an impact in the territories, due to the local presence of the participating institutions and the effects of the application of their policies and exercise of their functions.

## Context:

7. Since 2007, the Government of Reconciliation and National Unity (GRUN) has reoriented public policies towards the fight against poverty and the restitution of rights, implementing an institutional reorganization that articulates the efforts of the Central and Municipal Governments and the Community Organization, to promote real change and positively impact the country's human development and sustainability indicators.
8. In 2022, the World Economic Forum (WEF) Global Gender Gap Report placed Nicaragua in 7th among the countries with the smallest gender gap – in 2007, it ranked 90th (WEF, 2022). The country also tops the international list of cabinets of ministers with the most participation of women, with 51.7%, reaching position 3 on the world list in 2023 (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2023). Nicaragua is the only country in the region that produces approximately 80% of the food it consumes, ensuring sustainability through climate change-resilient agricultural practices.
9. Nicaragua is a proactive country, committed to climate change management, which is evident in the policy framework and the strategies for resilient development. In 2019, the Decree was approved to establish the National Policy for Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change and the creation of the National System for Response to Climate Change (SNRCC). Thanks to the new institutionalization of climate change, coordination capacities, complementarity and climate financing have been reinforced, resulting in the improvement of the National Climate Change Policy in 2022. In 2021 the SNRCC is replaced by the National System for Climate Change Management (SNGCC). The SNGCC is coordinated by the Climate Change Secretariat at the President's Office (SCCP), created in 2021. The System is composed of the heads of 21 institutions, and for the first time includes the Ministry of Women, the Ministry of Youth, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, among others (Government of Nicaragua, 2021).
10. However, the initial context identifies the following main related obstacles: government officials of the participating institutions and members of local and community organizations with limited conceptual, methodological and instrumental capacity in climate change matters have difficulties developing guides and tools for enhanced institutional performance in this regard; limited capabilities for MRV of key variables and for the preparation of biennial reports, NDC-related reports, and others; likewise, for research, technical studies, environmental education and interpretation, sustainable agricultural production with silvopastoral and agroforestry systems; including the lack of information and monitoring systems for biodiversity conservation, which would allow timely and evidence-based decision making<sup>11</sup>.
11. Initially, the general execution and technical responsibility of the project lay in the hands of MARENA. However, due to the subsequent creation of the SCCP and the SGNCC, and by decision of the Project

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<sup>11</sup> Project Document

Steering Committee, project coordination became the responsibility of the Secretariat, with functions of monitoring and supporting the implementation of Nicaragua's commitments to international organizations specialized on climate change, including the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its instruments such as the Paris Agreement and the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF).

12. The SNGCC's main function is to validate and submit for approval to the President of the Republic of Nicaragua the different climate change-related policies, for example: the National Climate Change Management Strategy; National Communications; the National Greenhouse Gas Inventories (NGHGI), the Biennial Update Reports; the National Adaptation Plan and the National Mitigation Plan, Nationally Determined Contributions and their progress reports, climate scenarios, the analysis of climate vulnerability and risks; reports on the Enhanced Transparency Framework and all functions necessary to meet national climate targets.
13. In addition, Nicaragua has a National System of Production, Consumption and Commerce (SNPCC) with its annual plan integrating policies and strategies for the productive sector: i) agricultural productivity, ii) food security, iii) forestry, iv) care and respect for Mother Earth, Mother Nature, adapting to climate change; among others.
14. The Republic of Nicaragua has already submitted the first Biennial Update Report, the Fourth National Communication on Climate Change and its Fifth NGHGI to the UNFCCC; in the preparation of these reports, improvements in the country's climate change-related capacities are already evident, and results stemming from this project or in coordination with other GEF projects are included.
15. Total budget: USD 1,178,842 - USD 863,242 corresponding to the GEF (74%) and USD 309,600 to Co-financing (26%).
16. Execution Period: 36 months (January 2021 to January 2024).
17. Strategic partners: The project includes the following partners in the execution with their specific roles<sup>12</sup>:
  - Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources (MARENA): The proposal was made to synergize the CBIT project with the 4CN/FBUR project and other GEF projects, work with the MRV Roundtable led by MARENA to consolidate it as a coordination mechanism for the ETF in the forestry sector, support the development of the Forest Landscape Recovery Monitoring (increased coverage), and to strengthen SINIA/MARENA.
  - Ministry of Family, Community, Cooperative and Associative Economy (MEFCCA): participated in the adaptation of Monitoring Methodologies and the evaluation of CC adaptation technologies and Case Studies, in accordance with the guidelines of the PNCLP-DH and the PNCC.
  - National Forestry Institute (INAFOR): i) support in the work with CONAFOR as a facilitation mechanism for the ETF in the forestry sector; ii) support in the detection and monitoring of forest degradation; iii) contribution to the improvement of the NGHGI and FREL reporting for the enhancement of knowledge and capacities for the forests and forest resource monitoring and management; preparation of the 2nd National Forest Inventory (NFI) measurement cycle; iv) adaptation of Silva Metricus: System for managing the NFI database, processing, calculations and reporting; access and dissemination of data and construction of allometric models.
  - Nicaraguan Institute of Territorial Studies (INETER): Support for the operation of the INETER MRV Unit for the AFOLU sector; support for the development of the early warning system for deforestation and forest fires with the help of the SEPAL tool.
  - Nicaraguan Institute of Agricultural Technology (INTA): It is the institution in charge of the

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

generation and transfer of agricultural technology. In the project, it is responsible for developing GHG emission factors in agricultural systems, leading the operation of the Agroecology, Climate Change and Soils Roundtable as a facilitation mechanism for the ETF in the agricultural sector, developing the baseline of agroforestry systems resilient to climate change with the help of SEPAL, and for the dissemination of good practices for climate change adaptation and mitigation.

18. Implementing agency: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
19. Executing partner: the Climate Change Secretariat at the President's Office (SCCP) as the highest authority within the framework of the SNGCC<sup>13</sup>. It is the coordinating entity of the National Climate Change Management System (SNGCC) and ensures continued systematization of information and the reporting to the UNFCCC. Likewise, it guarantees compliance with the National Climate Change Policy (PNCC), which establishes Nicaragua's obligation to periodically report at the national and international level on its efforts regarding climate change.<sup>14</sup>
20. Other actors have been incorporated into the new framework of the SNGCC, such as the Ministry of Women (MINIM), the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG), the National Council of Universities (CNU), and the Institute for Agricultural Protection and Health (IPSA)<sup>15</sup>.

## 1.2. Theory of change

21. The evaluation followed the theory of change approach with emphasis on the results chain, seeking to capture the causal relationship between inputs, expected outputs, outcomes to which they should contribute, as detailed in the project results framework, and the conditions under which they occurred.
22. At the beginning, the project identified the main **barriers** that prevent the country from responding to ETF requirements in the agricultural and forestry sectors:
  - Barrier 1: It is necessary to define and implement an articulation and coordination mechanism between the SNGCC and the SPCC.
  - Barrier 2: The lack of standardized and systematic processes to integrate information from different institutions.
  - Barrier 3: Limited number of professionals trained on ETF Modalities, Procedures and Guidelines approved in the Conference of the Parties 24 (COP 24), the GHG inventory and reports to the UNFCCC.
  - Barrier 4: Dispersed institutional platforms to monitor, report and document information on climate change: little dissemination of good practices and technologies for climate change adaptation in the agricultural and forestry sector; the lack of an awareness-raising plan aimed at providing information to different actors (farmers, students of all levels, general population); and the lack of systematization of information about activities and projects, and other information regarding the development and transfer of climate-friendly technology.
23. To counteract these barriers, the following expected **components and outcomes** were defined:
  - **Component 1**: Strengthening institutional capacities to meet the requirements of the Enhanced

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<sup>13</sup> Created by Presidential Decree No. 06-2021, published in the Official Gazette on 10 May 2021

<sup>14</sup> FAO 2024; Project Completion Report.

<sup>15</sup> Government of Nicaragua, 2022; National Climate Change Policy. Republic of Nicaragua.

Transparency Framework (ETF) of the Paris Agreement in the agricultural and forestry sectors.

**Outcome 1:** Capacities of the inter-institutional team of INTA, INAFOR, MARENA, MEFCCA and INETER are strengthened regarding ETF requirements for the implementation of guidelines 1, 5 and 6 of the Mitigation and Adaptation to Change Policy Climate in the agricultural and forestry sectors, as well as the mandates of the National Human Development Plan.

- **Component 2:** Research and generation of information, with the aim of strengthening reports and following up on progress achieved through mitigation and adaptation actions in the agricultural and forestry sectors
- **Outcome 2:** Technical capacities strengthened for purposes of monitoring, quantification and analysis of data necessary to generate GHG emissions reports, monitoring and evaluating the prioritised sectors.
- **Component 3:** Dissemination of good practices and lessons learned at national and international levels
- **Outcome 3:** Improved education, communication and institutional human capacity regarding climate change mitigation, emissions reduction and its effects on prioritized sectors

24. In addition, a series of conditions or **assumptions** necessary to achieve the project objectives were identified:

- The arrangement of timely information is articulated with the availability and access to UNFCCC means of implementation.
- Mechanisms and procedures are implemented to ensure articulation and coordination between the SNGCC and SNPCC.
- Experiences are systematized to improve Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) activities in the AFOLU sector to expand these to other sectors.

25. Below is a diagram with the project's Theory of Change, which includes the assumptions, barriers and expected outcomes to achieve the project objective.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> ToR, op.cit.

Figure 1: Theory of Change Outline (Source: evaluation team)





## 2. Methodology

### 2.1. Purpose, scope and objective of the TE

26. The Terminal Evaluation (TE) was considered in the project document (PRODOC), within the framework of the requirements of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), for the purpose of accountability, learning, as well as to be able to extract lessons learned, good practices and some recommendations for future projects.
27. The TE of the FAO/GEF Project "Strengthening institutional and technical capacities and in the agricultural and forestry sectors in Nicaragua in response to the requirements of the Enhanced Transparency Framework under the Paris Agreement", GCP/NIC/042/CBT, GEF ID 10118, sought to evaluate the project's results and its contribution to the needs and priorities of the counterpart institutions; document lessons learned; and generate recommendations for future projects aimed at consolidating national capacities to respond to the requirements of the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF).
28. Its **purpose** was to determine the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, factors that contributed to its results, and the impact of the interventions, the contributions of the partners involved; cross-cutting issues such as gender and environmental and social safeguards, as well as to identify some lessons learned.  
Likewise, the review made it possible to obtain inputs for the formulation of the projects i) Fifth Communication and First and Second Biennial Transparency Report (BTR1 +2) and ii) CBIT-2.
29. **Time frame:** January 2021 to January 2024<sup>17</sup>
30. **Territorial scope:** national (interviews with key actors and central level strategic partners in Managua).<sup>18</sup>
31. The evaluation covered the project in general and each of the outputs and outcomes of its components: Component 1: Strengthening institutional capacities to meet the requirements of the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF) of the Paris Agreement in the agricultural and forestry sectors; Component 2: Research and generation of information, with the aim of strengthening reports and following up on progress achieved through mitigation and adaptation actions in the agricultural and forestry sectors; and Component 3: Dissemination of good practices and lessons learned at national and international levels.

### Objective of the TE

32. The purpose of the Evaluation was the following:
  - Ensure accountability to respond to the information needs and interests of policy makers and other actors with decision-making power, such as the Government of Nicaragua, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the FAO – GEF Coordination Unit.
  - Evaluate the project in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency and sustainability by providing evidence of the actual final results achieved in accordance with the project objectives, processes and outcomes established during formulation.
  - Identify problems or challenges faced by the project, as well as the causes of any insufficient performance.
  - Understand the reasons why intended and unintended results were achieved; how these were

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<sup>17</sup> Although the scope of the TE reaches until January 2024, in some aspects the financial data included were data updated by March 2024, the date of writing the Final Report.

<sup>18</sup> ToR of review, FAO/GEF, 2024.

achieved; their impact on stakeholders; and their value in relation to national priorities.

- Resume good practices, lessons learned, systematizations and areas with potential for expansion and reproduction, and promote the exchange of knowledge and learning to improve the implementation of other GEF projects underway and in the future.

33. The TE is based on questions to be answered for each of the evaluation criteria: **relevance, coherence, efficiency, implementation and execution, effectiveness, sustainability, M&E system design and application of GEF policies.**

34. The general questions were extracted from the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Evaluation<sup>19</sup>, complemented by new questions and sub-questions in order to obtain more precise information about the results of the project.

35. For each criterion, the evaluation tried to answer the questions and sub-questions using quantitative and qualitative indicators, on the basis of documentary review, interviews with key actors, technicians and officials of institutions involved in project activities. (See Appendix 4 with Evaluation Matrix).

**Table 1. Synthesis of questions by evaluation criteria**

**Relevance: Is the project relevant to the priorities of the GEF, FAO and national development policies and priorities and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda?**

General strategic relevance:

Are the project results relevant to priorities at the global, regional, national and local levels?

Are the project results consistent with GEF strategic priorities and objectives?

Are the project results consistent with FAO's strategic objectives (FAO Strategic Framework 2022 – 2031), FAO Regional and National Priorities (Country Programming Framework)?

Relevance to national priorities:

Was the project design appropriate to address the relevant priorities and needs and achieve the expected results?

Are the project results consistent with the objectives and goals of the National Plan to Fight Poverty and for Human Development 2022 – 2026 and other sectoral policies and programs?

Do the project results respond to the needs of the executing partners?

Do the project results continue to be appropriate to the national context throughout the implementation time?

Has there been any change in the strategic relevance of the project since its formulation, such as the adoption of new policies, plans or programs, that affects the relevance of the project's objectives and goals?<sup>20</sup>

**Coherence: Is there complementarity with other programs/projects/actions being implemented with similar objectives?**

Are the project results complementary with other programs/projects/actions being implemented with similar objectives?<sup>21</sup>

**Efficiency: Were the human, material and financial resources available managed efficiently? Was the implementation and execution of the project adequate?**

To what extent has the project been executed efficiently and effectively, adapting to changing conditions to improve efficiency in its implementation? How well were the resources approved for the execution of the project managed?

Was the project cost-effective in terms of project cost/time versus output/outcomes?

To what extent has management been able to adapt to any changing conditions to improve the efficiency of project execution?

<sup>19</sup> ToR, op.cit.

<sup>20</sup> Relevance ratings: Highly satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Moderately satisfactory (MS), Moderately unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), Highly unsatisfactory (HU), Unable to assess (UA)

<sup>21</sup> Coherence ratings: Highly satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Moderately satisfactory (MS), Moderately unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), Highly unsatisfactory (HU), Unable to assess (UA)

To what extent has the Project taken advantage of existing agreements, initiatives, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other projects, associations, etc., and has it avoided duplication of similar activities?<sup>22</sup>

Co-Financing:

What have been the challenges regarding the financial management of the Project? Has financial execution occurred as planned?<sup>23</sup>

Implementation:

To what extent has FAO exercised its role as implementing agency by providing supervision, guidance and support (technical, administrative and operational) during the identification, formulation, approval, initiation and execution of the Project?<sup>24</sup>

Execution:

To what extent has the executing agency fulfilled its role and responsibilities related to project management and administration effectively?

To what extent have risks and changes been identified and managed?<sup>25</sup>

**Effectiveness: What expected and unexpected results has the project achieved and how do these contribute to the achievement of its higher objectives?**

To what extent did the project deliver the proposed outputs and contribute to the achievement of the results?

To what extent have the project objectives been achieved?

To what extent do the actual outcomes of the project correspond to the expected outcomes?

Have there been any unintended positive or negative results?

What was the response and solution capacity?

To what extent did the intervention enhance target beneficiaries' functional and technical skills and their knowledge?

To what extent did the intervention enhance target beneficiaries' functional and technical skills and their knowledge?

What contextual factors may be influencing the magnitude of the results achieved?

To what extent can the achievement of results be attributed to the GEF-funded component?

Were there any significant barriers or challenges that occurred during the implementation of the project?

To what extent can progress towards long-term impacts be attributed to the project?

Is there any evidence of any changes in the legal/regulatory framework?

Are there any barriers or other risks that may prevent future progress towards long-term impact?<sup>26</sup>

**Sustainability: How sustainable are the results achieved to date for the future? Are there any risks that affect the sustainability of the project's achievements?**

To what extent can the results of the project remain or will they continue to be useful once the Project is completed?

What are the key risks which may affect the sustainability of the project benefits (financial, institutional, environmental, sociopolitical, others)?

Are results, lessons learned and experiences that can be reproduced identified? Which ones are replicable in the near future?

Is there will and commitment from authorities at the national, regional and local level to share information and experiences?

Is there ownership and/or replication of good practices?

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<sup>22</sup> Efficiency ratings: Highly satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Moderately satisfactory (MS), Moderately unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), Highly unsatisfactory (HU), Unable to assess (UA)

<sup>23</sup> According to the GEF template, co-financing did not require qualification.

<sup>24</sup> Implementation ratings: Highly satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Moderately satisfactory (MS), Moderately unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), Highly unsatisfactory (HU), Unable to assess (UA)

<sup>25</sup> Execution ratings: Highly satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Moderately satisfactory (MS), Moderately unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), Highly unsatisfactory (HU), Unable to assess (UA)

<sup>26</sup> Effectiveness ratings: Highly satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Moderately satisfactory (MS), Moderately unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), Highly unsatisfactory (HU), Unable to assess (UA)

Is there a strategy to obtain funds with a view to ensuring the continuity of the project actions?<sup>27</sup>

**Design and implementation of the M&E system: Was the design and implementation of the M&E system adequate for monitoring and achieving results?**

Were the design and implementation of the M&E system adequate for the implementation and achievement of results?

Has the PSC met and made strategic decisions, monitored project execution, and agreed on co-financing to achieve project outcomes? The question also applies to the accompaniment group within FAO (BH, LTO, FLO<sup>28</sup>, Regional and subregional offices, Headquarters).

Has the assistance and support team within FAO provided the technical assistance required by the UCP for the implementation of the project?

Did the project have a monitoring and evaluation plan?

Has the FAO assistance and accompaniment team reviewed the AOPs, Budgets, Performance Progress Reports (PPR) and the Project Implementation Review (PIR)?

Have supervision missions been carried out and has the implementation of the Work Plan been monitored? Has the information been collected systematically, using appropriate methodologies?

Has this information been used to guide decision making?<sup>29</sup>

**Application of GEF Policies and Guidelines: Project Partnerships and Stakeholder Engagement:**

To what extent were second-level stakeholders involved in the formulation and execution of the Project?

Were second-level stakeholders who were not considered in the project design involved in project execution?

How do stakeholders view their commitment to the project?

Communication, knowledge management and knowledge products:

How is the project assessing, documenting and sharing its results, lessons learned and experiences?

To what extent are communication products and activities likely to support the sustainability and scaling-up of project results?

Environmental and social safeguards:

To what extent were environmental and social concerns taken into consideration in the design and implementation of the project?

Gender:

To what extent have gender considerations been mainstreamed in the project, both in design and execution?

Has the project ensured gender equity in participation and benefits?<sup>30</sup>

Lessons learned: What knowledge has been generated from the project results and experiences? Which have a wider value and potential for broader application, replication and use? What elements should be considered for the following projects Fifth National Communication on Climate Change and BTR 1 and 2. and CBIT-2?<sup>31</sup>

*Source: evaluation team*

<sup>27</sup> Sustainability ratings: Highly likely (HL), Likely (L), Moderately likely (ML), Moderately unlikely (MU), Unlikely (U), Highly unlikely (HU), Unable to assess (UA)

<sup>28</sup> Currently, this position corresponds to GEF Technical Officer (former Technical FLO).

<sup>29</sup> M&E System ratings: Highly satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Moderately satisfactory (MS), Moderately unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), Highly unsatisfactory (HU), Unable to assess (UA)

<sup>30</sup> According to the GEF template, the Application of GEF Policies and Guidelines did not need to be assessed.

<sup>31</sup> ToR, op.cit.

## Intended users

36. For accountability purposes, the users of the TE results will be: the FAO – GEF Coordination Unit; the Project Steering Committee; the Coordination Unit; the FAO Team at Headquarters, Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, Subregional Office for Mesoamerica; the FAO Representation in Nicaragua; and the Lead Technical Officer.
37. Regarding the improvement of the program and the development of the organization, these results provide valuable information for those responsible for the operations of the program, the users will be: the FAO Representation in Nicaragua and the Government: the Climate Change Secretariat at the President's Office.<sup>32</sup>

## 2.2. Methodological Design

38. This section describes the methodological approaches and their limitations.

39. The review includes three phases in which the two evaluators participated:

- Initial Review: review of documents, informative meetings with project managers and evaluation planning.
- Interviews with key actors, technicians and officials of participating institutions.
- Analysis of the information collected triangulation and preparation of reports (Draft Report and the Final version of the Report including comments).

### Data collection methods:

40. Data collection included the use of mixed methods:

- Quantitative methods: with sex-disaggregated data, to the extent possible
- Qualitative method: conducting interviews

41. To collect data, the following sources were used:

#### Secondary sources:

Among the documents reviewed, the following stand out<sup>33</sup>:

- ✓ Terms of reference of the Terminal Evaluation
- ✓ Project Document (PRODOC)
- ✓ Baseline and gender report, 2019
- ✓ Project Implementation Review, 2022
- ✓ Project Implementation Review, 2023
- ✓ Project completion report
- ✓ Annual work plans and budget
- ✓ Procurement plans
- ✓ Table of actual expenditure / budgeted expenditure
- ✓ Cofinancing Table
- ✓ Technical reports, reports of missions, support and project supervision
- ✓ Letters of Agreements and agreements with public-private actors.
- ✓ Minutes of committee meetings or meetings between key stakeholders

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<sup>32</sup> ToR, op.cit.

<sup>33</sup> Documents provided by the Project Team

- ✓ Attendance lists at trainings and workshops
- ✓ Terminal Evaluation guide for FAO/GEF projects
- ✓ Strategic Documents of FAO and the country
- ✓ Awareness-raising and communication material: brochures, infographics, study programs and work guides, project presentations; news on radio, press, TV and social networks, etc.
- ✓ FAO website and institutions participating in the project.<sup>34</sup>

#### Primary Sources:

42. For the analysis of project actors considered key for its evaluation, their level of knowledge, their interest in the evaluation results and their level of connection with the project were taken into account, which determined their level of priority, thereby ensuring that the most relevant national actors who participated in the project are represented.
43. To this end, the following were taken into account:
- Partners with participation in project decision-making
  - Implementing agency
  - Actors with direct responsibilities in the project
  - Actors incorporated into the project due to the new context or institutional arrangements
  - Representatives of universities
44. Sample of key actors: Key actors were selected trying to include representatives of government institutions at the national level, executing and strategic partners, FAO and GEF agents and representatives of universities, that is, the actors most directly involved with the implementation of the project. **36 people interviewed: 16 women / 20 men** (See Appendix 1 List of interviewees)
45. The interviews sought to understand the degree of actor involvement and the appropriation of the skills acquired by the beneficiary institutions and the institutionalization of practices:
- Individual or semi-structured group interviews in person and remotely with key stakeholders, technicians and officials of institutions that have been part of project activities.
46. The table in Appendix 1 "List of interviewees" presents an analysis of the stakeholders in the project implementation. This table included the institutional actors defined in its design, as well as the actors incorporated during project execution.

#### Analysis techniques:

47. In order to avoid biases, a triangulation of information was carried out, contrasting the quantitative data with the qualitative data, and an exchange of information was carried out between consultants and the project team to verify the conclusions. Throughout the process of information collection and data analysis, independence, impartiality, transparency, ethics, collaboration, competencies and capabilities, credibility, dissemination and usefulness were guaranteed.
48. A consultative and transparent approach was adopted with internal and external stakeholders throughout the review process. Likewise, collection methods were included that sought to guarantee the participation of women and the incorporation of environmental and social concerns.<sup>35</sup>
49. To guarantee the participation of women, verifying compliance with the objectives of the Global

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<sup>34</sup> ToR, op.cit.

<sup>35</sup> GEF. Updated Policy on Environmental and Social Safeguards. GEF/C.55/07. November 21, 2018. [https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting-documents/EN\\_GEF.C.55.07\\_ES\\_Safeguards.pdf](https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting-documents/EN_GEF.C.55.07_ES_Safeguards.pdf)

Environment Fund: i) gender analysis to implement a national gender policy; and ii) improve women's participation and decision-making<sup>36</sup> in the collection methods, a 44% participation of women was ensured.

50. As to safeguards, environmental and social concerns were taken into account according to the GEF framework.<sup>37</sup>

51. The analysis of capacity development in the institutions was based on the baseline used for the design of the project, which presented an analysis of gaps in ETF implementation and a capacity development plan of the National Forestry Institute (INAFOR), the Nicaraguan Institute of Territorial Studies (INETER), the Nicaraguan Institute of Agricultural Technology (INTA), the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources (MARENA), and the Ministry of Family, Community, Cooperative and Associative Economy (MEFCCA).

52. This instrument consists of four sections and stated the following:

**Section 1. National greenhouse gas inventory report:** MARENA, as responsible for preparing the national GHG inventory, presented the need to improve the processes for collecting and managing data for the refinement of the 2006 IPCC guidelines and also to develop specific emission factors for the agricultural and forestry sector.<sup>38</sup>

**Section 2. Reporting on the implementation progress and scope of the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs):** The institutional arrangements and the monitoring process for the implementation of the NDC were pending to be defined within the framework of the National System for Response to Climate Change (SNRCC).<sup>39</sup> Procedures for data collection and management were available for the forestry sector, although not for the agricultural sector.

**Section 3. Report on Climate Change impacts and adaptation:** The preparation of the National Adaptation Plan was pending; the underlying legal framework needed to be strengthened; and monitoring adaptation expenses for the public sector while its design for the private sector was pending. The data collection and management tools to monitor adaptation actions were for the design.

**Section 4. Reports on financing, technology transfer and institutional capacity building for support required and received:** An institutional framework was in place, the design of activities required to notify the financial support needed and received were pending. Procedures needed to be developed for reporting on necessary and received technology transfer, as well as to prepare the report on necessary and received capacity building.

53. Likewise, the recommendations generated by this instrument for the different institutions were taken into account in the gap analysis that was carried out by the TE.<sup>40</sup>

54. This review was based on international norms and standards such as Better Criteria for Better Evaluation (OECD-DAC 2019)<sup>41</sup>, the UNEG 2016 Evaluation Norms and Standards<sup>42</sup> and the UNEG 2020 Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> FAO Policy on Gender 2020-2030 <https://www.fao.org/documents/card/es?details=CB1583ES>

GEF Policy on Gender [https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting-documents/EN\\_GEF.C.53.04\\_Gender\\_Policy.pdf](https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting-documents/EN_GEF.C.53.04_Gender_Policy.pdf)

GEF-7 Gender Strategy [https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting-documents/EN\\_GEF.C.54.06\\_Gender\\_Strategy\\_1.pdf](https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting-documents/EN_GEF.C.54.06_Gender_Strategy_1.pdf)

GEF Gender Guidelines [https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/Gender\\_Equality\\_Guidelines.pdf](https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/Gender_Equality_Guidelines.pdf)

<sup>37</sup> GEF. Updated Policy on Environmental and Social Safeguards. GEF/C.55/07. November 21, 2018. [https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting-documents/EN\\_GEF.C.55.07\\_ES\\_Safeguards.pdf](https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting-documents/EN_GEF.C.55.07_ES_Safeguards.pdf)

<sup>38</sup> In 2021, the NGHl mandate was transferred from MARENA to the Climate Change Secretariat at the President's Office.

<sup>39</sup> The SNRCC was replaced by the SNGCC through Presidential Decree No. 15-2021, published in the Official Gazette No. 120, on 30

June 2021. This system is a political-strategic entity of consultation, preparation and monitoring of policies, regulations, instruments and strategies to promote compliance with national climate targets.

<sup>40</sup> PRODOC, op.cit

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.oecd.org/development/evaluation/Criterios-evaluacion-ES.pdf>

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1914>

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/2866>

## 2.3. Limitations

55. At the beginning of the TE, the insufficient time available to carry out the interviews in the field had been identified as a limitation for these, so an intentional and representative sample was made, including those actors most directly involved in some project stage or component and representatives of beneficiary institutions.
56. Therefore, the interviews with some key actors were held in person and others through videoconferences.
57. As the mission was made only to Managua and did not include a trip to the regions to determine the participation of local actors in the training of the territorial component on information collection, interviews were made with FAO representatives and, in addition, the information provided by INAFOR was considered, as this institution had carried out virtual trainings for its 19 departmental delegates.
58. Since the project was not subjected to a Mid-Term Review, the main basis of the documented performance of the project have been the PIRs and the output and outcome indicators matrix, which was updated by the project team at the time of the review.
59. Finally, given that there had been some staff turnover in the participating institutions, interviews were made with those representatives who were in charge of them at the time of the review.

## 3. Project Performance

This section presents the findings of the review based on the reading of documentation and opinion of key stakeholders and beneficiary institutions collected in the rounds of interviews:

### 3.1. Relevance

***Is the project relevant to the priorities of the GEF, FAO and national development policies and priorities and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda?***

60. Relevance rating: Highly Satisfactory: This Project is aligned with the global and regional priorities of the GEF and FAO; with national policies and priorities such as the PNCLP-DH and the PNCC; with the needs of the beneficiary institutions, and with the SDGs. Although there was a change in coordination from MARENA to the SCCP, this change resulted in a more comprehensive approach to the treatment of climate change.
61. **Finding 1. The Project is aligned with the global and regional priorities of the GEF and FAO; with national policies and priorities mainly with the PNCLP-DH and the PNCC and the mandates and needs of the institutions at the national level; and the SDGs of the 2030 Agenda.**
62. Are the project results relevant to priorities at the global, regional, national and local levels?
63. The relevance of the CBIT project is justified since the ETF is a recently created international instrument (2019) and whose subject matter is new and not very simple, therefore, in 2021 there was little knowledge of it in Nicaragua. Therefore, these required human, technological and economic capacities had to be strengthened so that the work processes for the MRV were more comprehensive and precise for decision making and timely reporting.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Each party shall regularly provide information necessary to track progress made in implementing and achieving its Nationally



64. Are the project results consistent with GEF strategic priorities and objectives?
65. The CBIT project is aligned with the GEF-7 focal area "Climate change mitigation", in particular with objective 3 "Foster enabling conditions for mainstreaming mitigation concerns into sustainable development strategies", specifically, in "Foster enabling conditions for mainstreaming mitigation concerns into sustainable development strategies through capacity building initiative for transparency."
66. *Are the project results consistent with FAO's strategic objectives (FAO Strategic Framework 2022 – 2031), FAO Regional and National Priorities (Country Programming Framework)?*
67. The scope of FAO cooperation with Nicaragua, defined in its Country Programming Framework (CPF) 2022-2026, is based on the strategic objectives and lines of work of the Government of Nicaragua, as established in the 2022 – 2026 PNCLP-DH, particularly with its First route of change<sup>45</sup>, its outcome 3<sup>46</sup> and its output 3.1<sup>47</sup>. The CPF also considers the commitments, policies and regulations of the Government of Nicaragua and FAO aimed at achieving gender equality and overcoming the gaps faced by indigenous, Afro-descendant and non-indigenous women in the rural world.
68. In addition, the project is aligned with FAO Regional Initiative No. 3 for Latin America and the Caribbean promoting Sustainable use of natural resources, climate change adaptation and disaster risk management, supporting the outcome "Reduce the degradation of natural resources for food production".
69. Likewise, the Project is aligned with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 13<sup>48</sup>, related to urgent measures to combat climate change and its effects, creating greater capacities so that these measures are more effective and timely.
70. *Was the project design appropriate to address the relevant priorities and needs and achieve the expected results?*
71. As the project design was carried out based on a baseline survey on institutional needs and gaps for reporting in the ETF, it was appropriate to achieve the expected results, although other sectors were later incorporated to strengthen the measurement of GHG emissions. Besides developing and implementing plans for evaluation, monitoring and surveillance of GHG emissions for the agricultural and forestry sectors, it was able to develop a methodology to determine the emission factors of enteric fermentation in cattle in response to the requirements of the National Greenhouse Gas Inventory (NGHGI).
72. *Are the project results consistent with the objectives and goals of the 2022 – 2026 National Plan to Fight Poverty and for Human Development and other sectoral policies and programs?*

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Determined Contribution (NDC) (Art.13.7(b)). In the case of Nicaragua, it is mainly oriented to the sectors Energy, Agriculture, Land Use and Changes in Land Use.

<sup>45</sup> The country is not resilient and has a gap in technical capacities and financial resources for the implementation of policies that promote the transformation of food systems towards more sustainable, inclusive and resilient forms.

<sup>46</sup> Result 3: Improved conservation and restoration of ecosystem services and functions, especially the sequestration and storage of GHGs, through sustainable agricultural, fishing, and forestry production, effective management of protected areas, protection of biodiversity and reducing deforestation. Entities of the National Production, Consumption and Commerce System (SNPCC) and the National Climate Change Management System (SNGCC) have resources and technical capabilities to comply with international commitments on climate matters.

<sup>47</sup> Entities of the National Production, Consumption and Trade System (SNPCC) and the National Climate Change Management System (SNGCC) have resources and technical capabilities to comply with international commitments on climate matters.

<sup>48</sup> Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts: 13.1: Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries; 13.3: Improve education, awareness and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning; 13.b Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing States, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities

73. The Project presents high levels of alignment with the strategic priorities of the State of Nicaragua expressed in its 2022-2026 National Plan to Fight Poverty and for Human Development (PNCLP-DH)
74. The relevance of the project is most evident in the Plan's guidelines: i) measures to address the impacts of climate variability and climate change, ii) sustainable management of forests, combating desertification, halting and reversing land degradation, and halting biodiversity loss; iii) promoting the care for, protection, conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity inside and outside protected areas; iv) communications to the Convention and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC).
75. Strategic adjustments to national institutional policy have strengthened the relevance of the project, such as the creation of the Climate Change Secretariat at the President's Office (SCCP) with the objective of strengthening the governance of climate action in the country, given that the project's objectives are highly aligned with the different lines of action followed by the government, both in terms of adaptability to climate change and poverty reduction.<sup>49</sup>
76. The 2022 National Climate Change Policy<sup>50</sup>, establishes pillars and policies that largely coincide or complement the expected project outcomes. The National Climate Change Management System (SNGCC) has been created together with this Policy, integrating 21 institutions from different economic sectors. The SNGCC is coordinated by the SCCP, which is in charge of the execution of the CBIT project and whose functions are to validate and submit all reports generated in the country on climate matters for approval to the President of the Republic. According to the opinion of the interviewees, these strategic political and institutional adjustments have strengthened the project's design, performance and outcomes.

Table 2. presents some of the links between the policy and the project outcomes:

**Table 1: Pillars and Policies of Nicaragua**

N o.	Pillars and Policies		Link to Project Outcomes
	Pillars	Policies	
1	Pillar 1: Systemic capacities for adaptation and resilience to climate variability and change and extreme weather events		
1.1	Adaptation and resilience of the population	Strengthening comprehensive risk management of climate-related disasters at the national, departmental and municipal levels, based on the characteristics and dynamics of the territories, to reduce sensitivity to climate change impacts and enhance articulated response.  Incorporation of territorial planning concepts, tools and methodologies into climate action planning processes.	Outcome 1: Capacities at the interinstitutional technical team (ITT), whose members are INTA, INAFOR, MARENA, MEFCCA and INETER, are strengthened regarding ETF requirements for implementation of PNDH mandates and PNMACC guidelines in the agriculture and forestry sectors.
1.2	Adaptation and resilience of the ecosystems and the water bodies	Fostering the conservation, recovery and restoration of natural ecosystems, management of resilient landscapes, and the provision of ecosystemic goods and services, based on adaptive management, through sustainable production and consumption practices.	

<sup>49</sup> Presidential Decree No. 06-2021, "On Reforms to Decree No. 111-2007, Regulation of Law No. 290, Law of Organization, Competence and Procedures of the Executive Branch", published in the Official Gazette, no. 84 of 10 May 2021.

<sup>50</sup> Presidential Decree no. 04-2022. The Decree reforms article 10 of Presidential Decree no. 15-2021, on the "Creation of the National Climate Change Management System and establishment of the Principles and Guidelines of the National Climate Change Policy", published in Official Gazette no. 120 of 30 2021.

1.3	Adaptation and resilience of farming systems and tourism activities	Promotion of farming and fisheries with greater capacity for climate adaptation and resilience, in order to improve the productivity and competitiveness of value chains, including ecosystem services, the fight against poverty, and food sovereignty and security.	
2	Pillar 2: Integrated mitigation measures	Fostering the reduction of GHG emissions and the increase in carbon sequestration in farming systems within the framework of improved efficiency and productivity, resilience and adaptive capacity.	Outcome 2: Technical capacities strengthened for purposes of monitoring, quantification and analysis of data necessary to generate GHG emissions reports, monitoring and evaluating the prioritised sectors.
4	Pillar 4: Knowledge, research, innovation and transfer of technologies and good agroclimatic practices	Increasing knowledge about the causes and effects of climate change, and disseminate it widely to generate greater awareness, sensitization and commitment to mitigation and adaptation measures, promoting a cultural change among the population.	Outcome 2: Technical capacities strengthened for purposes of monitoring, quantification and analysis of data necessary to generate GHG emissions reports, monitoring and evaluating the prioritised sectors.
		Facilitation of coordinated and articulated processes for generating, obtaining and systematizing information that is relevant, integrated, useful and accessible for decision-making by the institutions of the National Climate Change Management System, the private sector and the general population.	Outcome 3: Improved education, communication and institutional human capacity regarding climate change mitigation, emissions reduction and its effects on prioritized sectors.
5	Pillar 5: Climate action governance	Strengthening the National Climate Change Management System to promote, formulate, implement, monitor and evaluate the Policy and its lines of action, and the plans, programs and projects for climate change mitigation and adaptation	Outcome 2: Technical capacities strengthened for purposes of monitoring, quantification and analysis of data necessary to generate GHG emission reports, monitoring and evaluating the prioritised sectors.
		Fostering effective compliance with the obligations and contributions assumed by Nicaragua towards the UNFCCC and its subsidiary instruments, as well as other climate change-related international instruments	Outcome 1: Capacities at the interinstitutional technical team (ITT), whose members are INTA, INAFOR, MARENA, MEFCCA and INETER, are strengthened regarding ETF requirements for implementation of PNDH mandates and PNMACC guidelines in the agriculture and forestry sectors.

Source: designed by authors, based on the PNCC and Project Document.

77. Do the project results respond to the needs of the executing partners?
78. The institutions involved in the project had initiated work processes related to their mandates, guidelines and governmental commitments, which were strengthened with the CBIT Project: INAFOR, INETER, MARENA, INTA, MEFCCA and MAG.
79. The project coincided with a diagnosis of gaps and needs made by the same institutions, which served as input for the project design, for this reason, its expected outcomes respond to those institutional needs, in accordance with the general policies of the Government of Nicaragua.
80. Do the project results continue to be appropriate to the national context throughout the implementation?

81. With the creation of the 2022 National Climate Change Policy, together with the operation of the SNGCC integrating 21 institutions from different economic sectors, the results of the project continue to be adequate and relevant to the national context; in the future, they may obtain greater relevance given that the Government of Nicaragua has defined Climate Change as a National Priority.
82. **Finding 2: A change occurred due to the creation of the SNGCC, the PNCC and the SCCP, and the decision of the Steering Committee to transfer the project coordination from MARENA to the SCCP. Although this change initially represented a challenge for the coordination of all institutions, over time it resulted in greater mainstreaming of climate change and better inter institutional collaboration.**
83. Has there been any change in the strategic relevance of the project since its formulation, such as the adoption of new policies, plans or programs that affect the relevance of the Project's objectives and goals?
84. Certain strategic adjustments to the national institutional policy have enhanced the project's relevance, such as the creation of the SCCP with the objective of strengthening climate action governance in the country.<sup>51</sup>
85. Following the creation of SCCP<sup>52</sup> and the constitution of the SNGCC to coordinate between executive entities for effective mainstreaming in sectoral policies, programs and projects, the CBIT Project was transferred from MARENA to this Secretariat. This change improved the relevance of the project's objectives and goals.

### 3.2.Coherence

***Is there complementarity with other programs/projects/actions being implemented with similar objectives?***

86. ***Coherence Rating: Satisfactory: At the national level, the CBIT is complementary to other projects such as the Fourth Communication, GEF 5, 6 and 7, with AGRIADAPTA and NICAVIDA; with the methodologies for climate change adaptability approved among the beneficiary institutions, and the strengthening of their capacities to carry out international reports.***
87. ***Finding 3: At the national level, the CBIT has been complementary to other projects such as the Fourth Communication; GEF 5,6 and 7; the National Forest Inventory; AGRIADAPTA and NICAVIDA. The outputs generated in the trainings, such as methodologies, guides and protocols, are being implemented in other projects developed by the beneficiary institutions.***
88. Are the project results complementary with other programs/projects/actions being implemented with similar objectives?
89. The project is complementary to various projects; with the Fourth Communication, institutional capacity to prepare reports for National Communications and for MRV, and a set of climate change and women's participation indicators was strengthened; with GEF projects 5, 6 and 7 of MARENA, Indicators for Monitoring Ecosystem Restoration were strengthened; with other projects, such as AGRIADAPTA and NICAVIDA - initiatives that use the tools generated in the training and capacity-building processes - information shared for the systematization of adaptability measures; with the dissemination of climate change adaptation technologies from INTA to other beneficiary institutions; and through the SCCP, the

<sup>51</sup>Presidential Decree No. 06-2021, «On Reforms to Decree No. 111-2007, Regulations of Law No. 290, Law of Organization, Competence and Procedures of the Executive Branch", published in the Official Gazette, no. 84 of 10 May 2021

<sup>52</sup>Vision of the SCCP: To promote and monitor the implementation of the National Climate Change Policy through coordination with the executive entities, for its effective mainstreaming in sectoral policies, programs and projects; the articulation of actions and decisions for the management of climate investments; strengthening national capacities to fulfill the commitments arising from the signing of international instruments; and the representation of Nicaragua in international and regional climate change negotiations. <https://sccp.gob.ni/>

integration and harmonization of adaptation measures between the beneficiary institutions was carried out.

90. Outputs generated in the trainings, such as methodologies, protocols and guides, have been and are being institutionalized and are implemented in all functions, programs and projects, strengthening the coherence of the project with the work of the institutions
91. However, greater synergies could be achieved with regional initiatives developed by FAO, UNEP and IFAD, as will be seen in the following section on Efficiency.

### 3.3. Efficiency

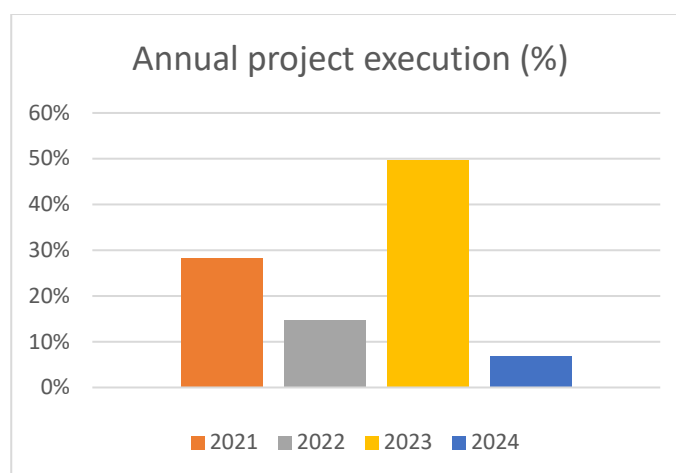
#### ***Were the human, material and financial resources available managed efficiently?***

92. Efficiency rating: Satisfactory: Comparing outcomes-resources-time, the project has achieved its results with a financial execution of 99.4% within the planned period and synergies were achieved with other projects at the national level. However, in the future, procurement processes could be streamlined a little more and greater synergies generated with other initiatives developed in Latin America by FAO and other international organizations, such as UNEP and IFAD.

#### **3.3.1. Budget execution**

93. **Finding 4: The project's overall budget execution rate was 99.4%; the available human, material and financial resources were managed efficiently to achieve the expected outcomes within the planned time frame.**
94. *To what extent has the project been executed efficiently and effectively, adapting to changing conditions to improve efficiency in its implementation? How well were the resources approved for the execution of the project managed?*
95. The project is financed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) with an amount of USD 863,242 and co-financed by different government entities with an amount equivalent to USD 491,524, reaching a total budget of USD 1,354,766.
96. Regarding the amount of resources required to carry out the project actions, it is considered sufficient for the level of ambition in 2019.
97. Project resources were managed effectively and efficiently, based on the financial, human, logistical resources and available time.
98. The 99.4% execution rate for the project budget demonstrates adequate management of costs vs. budget.
99. This project is characterized by its flexibility to adapt to new contextual conditions without affecting the achievement of the expected outcome.
100. In terms of budget execution over time, most was concentrated in the years 2021 and 2023; 2023 represents 50% while 2021 represents 28% of the general financial execution. (See Figure 2)

**Figure 2: Annual Project Execution**



Source: Evaluation Team

101. Was the project cost-effective in terms of cost/time versus outputs/outcomes?

102. The financial monitoring of the project has been results-based, so the efficiency analysis is made at this level. Efficiency at output level would be ideal; however, the breakdown of financial information does not reach that level of detail.

103. The project's financial execution was very close to its budget; it's general budget execution rate was **99.4%**, equivalent to USD 858,190.05; split per outcomes: i) Outcome 1.1<sup>53</sup> was executed to 97.5%, equivalent to USD 257,874.90; ii) Outcome 2.1<sup>54</sup> was executed to 100.4%, equivalent to USD 383,808.86; iii) Outcome 3.1<sup>55</sup> was executed to 99.1%, equivalent to USD 73,363.51.

104. The following table presents the details of the annual execution per outcome, including a balance of what was executed in relation to the project budget, excluding co-financing.

**Table 3: Execution by Project Outcomes**

Outcome	Budget	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total Execution	Balance	Execution (%)
Outcome 1.1	264,604.00	46,278.91	10,724.40	166,364.16	34,507.43	257,874.90	6,729.10	97.5%
Outcome 2.1	382,386.00	69,710.91	03,273.50	98,291.95	2,532.50	383,808.86	- 1,422.86	100.4%
Outcome 3.1	142,252.00	26,214.66	- 3,024.71	111,596.51	8,356.32	143,142.78	- 890.78	100.6%
PMC	74,000.00	1,725.92	16,513.54	52,088.12	3,035.93	73,363.51	636.49	99.1%
<b>Total USD</b>	<b>863,242.00</b>	<b>243,930.40</b>	<b>127,486.73</b>	<b>428,340.74</b>	<b>58,432.18</b>	<b>858,190.05</b>	<b>5,051.95</b>	<b>99.4%</b>
Percentage	100%	28%	15%	50%	7%			

Source: FAONI Financial Department

**105. Finding 5: There have been some delays in some procurement processes, mainly in the procurement of equipment, which took longer than expected to arrive in the country; it would be very beneficial for the institutions to have a broader base of international consultants.**

106. The procurement process of some equipment and hiring of international experts presented a certain

<sup>53</sup> Capacities at the interinstitutional technical team (ITT), whose members are INTA, INAFOR, MARENA, MEFCCA and INETER, are strengthened regarding ETF requirements for implementation of PNMACC guidelines, as well as PNDH mandates.

<sup>54</sup> Technical capacities strengthened for purposes of monitoring, quantification and analysis of data necessary to generate GHG emissions reports, monitoring and evaluating the prioritised sectors.

<sup>55</sup> Technical capacities strengthened for purposes of monitoring, quantification and analysis of data necessary to generate GHG emissions reports, monitoring and evaluating the prioritised sectors.

delay, due to the FAO procurement modality that depends on the supervision of the headquarters in Rome. The delay of up to a month in the disbursement of payment by institutions for some products affected other work processes, such as contracts for organized events, although in cases it was possible to solve this using own resources or loans from third parties, so as not to affect the planning of activities, mainly those that included the convening people in the territories.

107. Although FAO has a pool of international consultants, sometimes it is too limited, and when institutions need to hire experts quickly and these are not available, they cannot do so immediately.
108. *To what extent has management been able to adapt to any changes in conditions to improve the efficiency of project execution?*
109. The relatively lower execution rate in 2022 was mainly due to the transfer of the Project Coordination from MARENA to the SCCP, but although there was a slight reduction, this transfer translated into greater agility in execution in 2023. This means that the project has been executed efficiently and effectively, adapting to these institutional adjustments to improve its efficiency.
110. It is important to note that in 2022 the Government of Nicaragua approved the 2022 National Climate Change Policy, with well-defined pillars and priorities, primarily: i) Adaptation and resilience of the population, its ecosystems, water resources and agro-productive systems; ii) integrated mitigation measures; iii) knowledge, research and good agroclimatic practices and iv) Governance of climate action; aspects that coincide with the objectives and expected impacts of the project, all of which are part of the project outcomes as noted in Table 1 Nicaragua Pillars and Policies, in the Relevance section.
111. **Finding 6: The synergies and complementarities made with projects such as the Fourth Communication, GEF 5, 6, 7, UNEP and others, have facilitated the use of human and material resources for the project as well as for other institutional purposes, thus improving their efficient use. However, greater synergies could be generated with other FAO projects and other international organizations, such as IFAD in Latin America.**
112. *To what extent has the project taken advantage of existing agreements, initiatives, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other projects, associations, etc., and has it avoided duplication of similar activities?*
113. The changes in Project Coordination have allowed to make better use of resources and have optimized time management and execution within the established results framework in terms of coordination and inter-institutional agreements. As to building synergies and complementarities with other projects or institutional initiatives, this was done for example with the projects of the Fourth Communication, GEF 5, GEF 6 and GEF 7 of MARENA (Indicators for Monitoring Ecosystem Restoration), with the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) in terms of technical exchange to strengthen knowledge<sup>56</sup>, with the National Forest Inventory in INAFOR, with the regular updating of thematic maps in the case of INETER, with the dissemination of climate change adaptation technologies from INTA to other beneficiary institutions; and some of them, for example, MAG and INETER, shared the map validation points for crop monitoring.
114. However, more synergies could be taken advantage of with projects and programs developed in Latin America by FAO and other international organizations, such as UNEP and IFAD.
115. In general terms, the project has been executed and achieved its results efficiently, based on the

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<sup>56</sup> Although the value of the in-kind co-financing corresponding to UNEP could not be established, it is known that there was a technical exchange to strengthen knowledge with facilitators of the NDC5 project, an activity in which UNEP provided the facilitators and CBIT provided the logistics.

financial, human, logistical resources and time available.

### 3.3.2. Co-Financing

116. **Finding 7: The co-financing amount reported as of June 2023 is 33% of what was committed at the beginning. However, since all co-financing is in kind, it is expected that at the formal closure of the project, 100% of the amount will be reported as executed.**

117. *What have been the challenges regarding the financial management of the project?*

118. Among the challenges and deficiencies faced in the financial management of the project, one could point out that with the change from MARENA to SCCP there was a delay of 2 or 3 months at the beginning, which was closed in 2023.

119. Regarding the committed resources / contributed resources, according to the PRODOC, the total co-financing amount was going to be \$309,600 (100% in kind). However, at first MARENA's contribution had not been taken into consideration, which was included in the 2023 PIR and whose expected amount at the end of the project is \$181,924: thereby, the total value considered of the Cofinancing will be \$491,524 (an increase by 59%, in relation to the PRODOC).

120. The largest contributions will correspond to MARENA with \$181,924 and INTA with \$118,800. FAO follows with \$64,800; INAFOR with \$43,200; INETER with \$50,400; and finally MEFCCA with \$32,400.<sup>57</sup>

121. However, according to what was reported in the last PIR by the institutions, the total accumulated amount is \$ 163,841 vs. the Total expected amount \$491,524, i.e. 33%. As the total value of the expected co-financing is in kind, it is expected that when the project is closed, it will be reported entirely. (See Appendix 3: Co-Financing Sources)<sup>58</sup>

122. There was no evidence of a search for new sources of co-financing, although some institutions stated that their contribution in kind would ultimately be greater than the initial amount declared.

### 3.3.3. Implementation and Execution

#### Implementation

123. **Implementation Rating: The implementation of the Project by FAO is considered Satisfactory. Since the expected outcomes have been achieved, and the project has been completed within the scheduled time and resources. However, better planning and precision would be required in the Letters of Agreements regarding the detail, scope and delivery time of the outputs.**

124. **Finding 8: FAO's role as implementing agency was assessed as satisfactory, while institutional arrangements such as Letters of Agreement with institutions have been assessed as efficient for monitoring products, although better planning and precision on the detail, scope and delivery time of the outputs.**

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<sup>57</sup>Although it was not reported in the last PIR, a technical exchange to strengthen knowledge took place with facilitators of the UNEP NDC5 project; this activity was not planned at the beginning and its contribution value was not known to the evaluation team.

<sup>58</sup>The Co-financing did not need to be valued according to the indications in Table 6 and 7 of the ToR and the Evaluation Report Template.



125. *To what extent has FAO exercised its role as implementing agency by providing supervision, guidance and support (technical, administrative and operational) during the identification, formulation, approval, initiation and execution of the project?*
126. The general implementation of the project was in the hands of FAO, which has implemented and managed the project resources effectively and efficiently in the scheduled time.
127. Overall, FAO's role was assessed as satisfactory in providing supervision, guidance and technical, administrative and operational support during project design, formulation and approval, as well as during project execution.
128. FAO's timely adaptation to the country's organizational and production forms it is developing with its new policies, intervention mechanisms and goals was highlighted with respectñ all this contributed to the project's efficient administration.
129. The project's implementation has been in accordance with its design, although necessary adjustments have been made along the way, decided according to demand and by consensus with the participating institutions. One of the main adjustments was the change in coordination, which resulted in greater efficiency.
130. The efficient and transparent management of the budget is made evident both in the publication of data in the PIRs and in the hiring of consultants, procurement of equipment and the capacity strengthening actions carried out.
131. In general, institutional arrangements and Letters of Agreement were valued by the partners as efficient for the monitoring of outputs, although some of them lacked more planning and precision regarding the details, scope and deadline for their delivery.
132. Letters of Agreement were signed with INAFOR (2), INTA (2), INETER (1), and MARENA (1).<sup>59</sup>
133. In the cases of INAFOR and INTA, another Letter of Agreement had to be signed with each of them for another 5 months in addition to the time provided in the first letter to be able to deliver all the outputs.
134. The need for closer accompaniment of the regulations stipulated by the Letters of Agreement was determined, since each institution presents a different rhythm.
135. The first letters were executed at a slower pace, hence the need for more realistic planning in accordance with the needs of each institution, also taking into account a longer period for the procurement of equipment.
136. Letters of Agreement (CoA) have been an effective mechanism for learning and shared responsibilities between the implementing agency and the executing institutionsñ however, based on the experiences made, some aspects can be improved.

## **Execution**

137. ***Execution rating: Satisfactory, since the SCCP as the executing agency fulfilled its functions of executing and supervising the project and regarding risk management.***
138. **Finding 9: The executing agency SCCP fulfilled its role and responsibilities as to project management and execution, and measures adopted to mitigate the risks identified at the**

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<sup>59</sup> In the case of MAG and MEFCCA, no LoA was signed as their output consisted only of training of lower value compared to the outputs to be delivered by the other institutions.

### **beginning also reached a satisfactory level.**

139. *To what extent has the executing agency fulfilled its role and responsibilities related to project management and administration effectively?*
140. The transfer of responsibilities from MARENA to the SCCP resulted in a much more active role by the latter; it strengthened the cross-cutting perspective of climate change management, as it was not only seen as an issue that concerns a single ministry.
141. Although Project Coordinators were changed four times, and at the beginning of the project implementation there were certain delays as to the appointment of the SCCP in 2023, the time lost was recovered in order to meet the execution deadline as scheduled at the beginning.
142. The current Project Coordination was well evaluated by the different institutions: the project formed a fairly solid organizational structure, composed of a central team (4) at the SCCP and the institutional technical teams (3-4 people per institution / a total of 20-22 people), which, in light of the outcomes and outputs achieved and considering the formulated goals, has been robust enough to fulfill the tasks and roles of project execution.
143. Since the SCCP's mandate was established according to government priorities, its role is very relevant for the coordination of the various institutions in the SNGCC and for making important decisions.
144. As for the risks identified in the PRODOC at the beginning, first of all the risk related to the lack of support from the authorities: the SCCP's role shows the government's will and commitment to comply with national priorities and report adequately on climate change matters.
145. Regarding a possibly low participation of the institutions, this was prevented by the SCCP's articulation of the institutions by order of the President of the Republic.
146. Finally, regarding the risk for the future sustainability of project outcomes, the FAO capacity building framework ensured individual as well as organizational learning, and its application on the respective environment. So, each institution tried to ensure institutional ownership of the strengthened capacities to close the gaps identified in each of them in the project baseline. However, a differentiated pace was observed in terms of institutionalization of practices, since some institutions have developed manuals, guides and protocols, but others have not yet been able to do so.

### **3.4. Effectiveness**

#### ***What expected and unexpected results has the project achieved and how do these contribute to the achievement of its higher objectives?***

147. ***Effectiveness rating: Satisfactory, for the achievement of outputs, outcomes and objective. Some unintended positive results were achieved, such as: a scientific publication, the systematic sampling grid of points for the analysis of land use, and the collaboration with MAG for MRV in agriculture and the design of the MRV system; the trainings promoted a change in attitudes and practices at the individual and organizational levels and in their respective environments, due to the new comprehensive and systemic approach to tackling the problem of climate change adaptation.***

#### **3.4.1. Progress towards Results**

148. **Finding 10: Regarding project outputs, outcomes and objective, project performance is generally assessed as satisfactory, presenting only some deficiencies in terms of the smaller number of institutions that increased their capacities in the use of tools and guidelines for national forest monitoring and for the dissemination of good practices, experiences and lessons learned in matters of climate change mitigation and adaptation.**

149. *¿To what extent did the project deliver the proposed outputs and contribute to the achievement of the outcomes?*

150. By examining the Results Matrix in Appendix 5 with updated data provided by the project team, the level of achievement of the products by components is as follows:

**Component 1: Strengthening institutional capacities to meet the requirements of the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF) of the Paris Agreement in the agricultural and forestry sectors:**

**Output 1.1.1.:** The national coordination platform brings together an interinstitutional team consisting of members of the National Climate Change Management System (SNRCC) and the National Production, Consumption and Commerce System (SPCC), is consolidated and provides follow-up, evaluates strategies and accompanies policy proposals, as per ETF requirements. (100%)

The SNGCC is coordinated by the SCCP, whose functions are to validate and submit for approval to the President of the Republic all reports generated in the country on climate matters before the SNGCC: The Fourth National Communication, the First Biennial Update Report, the 2019 National Inventory Report, and the MRV System Proposal for the AFOLU sector and the structure of the comprehensive MRV have been submitted.

**Output 1.1.2:** A training programme for the interinstitutional team is designed and implemented, linked to decision-making on the integration of knowledge regarding national processes, in keeping with ETF requirements. (100%)

29 INTA technicians were trained at the central and departmental levels.

**Output 1.1.3:** Design and implementation of an experience exchange programme aimed at the interinstitutional work team, connected to platforms and international research centres on the MRV of emissions, in accordance with the ETF for the agricultural and forestry sectors (100%)

An event was successfully held to build capacities for the Land Use and Land Cover Monitoring System and the Use of Information Technologies, with the technical assistance by FAO regional advisors. Its aim was to update knowledge on good practices for the monitoring of land use and land cover change, on the estimation of uncertainties, and a roadmap was developed to implement improvements in data collection. A total of 33 technicians participated (24% women).

A technical exchange was coordinated between the Climate Change Secretariat, the FAO Project coordination team, and the World Bank. This collaboration allowed to strengthen technical links between the team responsible for the NGHGI and international experts from Mexico and Chile. (51 SNGCC technicians)

**Output 1.1.4:** Capacities are strengthened at the interinstitutional team made up of INTA, MARENA, MEFCCA, INAFOR and INETER, regarding monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of adaptation actions in the agriculture sector, in accordance with guideline 1 of the PNMACC. (100%)

The M&E methodology was designed and validated with the participation of 20 INTA technicians.

**Output 1.1.5:** A national methodological process is adopted by the interinstitutional coordinating entity (road map) for follow-up and submission of reports, as set forth in the ETF. (100%)

The roadmap was prepared within the time established by the ETF MPGs of the Paris Agreement, as a result of a joint effort with the project Enabling Preparation of Nicaragua's Fourth National Communication and the First Biennial Update Report to the UNFCCC.

**Component 2: Research and generation of information, with the aim of strengthening reports and following up on progress achieved through mitigation and adaptation actions in the agricultural and forestry sectors**

**Output 2.1.1:** A National Plan is designed for the evaluation, monitoring and surveillance of GHG emissions in the agricultural and forestry sectors, coordinated by MARENA in the framework of the SNGCC. (100%)

Two plans for the evaluation, monitoring and surveillance of GHG emissions of the agriculture and forestry sectors designed, prepared and implemented according to the ETF.

**Output 2.1.2:** Strengthened INAFOR capacities in the use of tools (second NFI measuring cycle and adaptation of the Silva Metricus) at the National Forest Monitoring System (SMFN). (80%)

INAFOR made notable progress in strengthening the National Forest Inventory (NFI): the development of the Methodological Framework and the field manual for the next NFI cycle; the successful execution of the second cycle of INF measurement through effective collaboration between international technical assistance and the inter-institutional team; the improvement of the SILVA METRICUS tool for data collection and analysis; as well as the development of equations for national forest species and the strengthening of the capacities of its technical staff.

**Output 2.1.3:** INTA capacities are strengthened through specialized technical and methodological tools that help determine emission factors in the agriculture sector, and INAFOR capacities strengthened to calibrate allometric equations in forests and agroforestry systems, which will support the generation of reports, as required by the ETF. (100%)

The methodology was developed to determine Tier 2 emission factors for enteric fermentation in cattle, and the emission factors for dairy cattle and other cattle were obtained as required by the NGHGI.

**Output 2.1.4:** Methodologies for the adjustment and implementation of adaptation activities in the agricultural and forestry sector are identified, as per PNMACC guideline 1. (100%)

In direct collaboration with INTA, a methodology was designed and applied for the systematization, monitoring and evaluation of climate change adaptation technologies in the agriculture sector, with the aim of achieving their highest level of development and measure their impact over time.

**Component 3: Dissemination of good practices and lessons learned at both national and international levels**

**Output 3.1.1:** Lessons learned and exchanges of knowledge take place in the agriculture and forestry sectors, using national and international platforms (e.g. the CBIT global coordination platform) to improve planning and reporting, in accordance with enhanced transparency requirements. (80%)

An important systematization of climate change adaptation measures has been achieved and an exchange of experiences was also developed between FAO-SCCP Nicaragua teams and the CBIT team from Ecuador, regarding MRV automation.

**Output 3.1.2:** A dissemination plan for good climate change adaptation and mitigation practices is designed and implemented, in accordance with PNMACC guidelines 1, 5 and 6, within the enhanced transparency framework. It is aimed at public officials, universities and producers in agricultural and forested zones. (100%)

The following documents were designed and disseminated: National Climate Change Policy; First Biennial Update Report; 2019 National Inventory Report; NFI Methodological Framework; the NFI Field Manual; a Dissemination Strategy and Plan for best practices for the implementation of agricultural technologies for Climate Change Adaptation in Nicaragua.

151. At the level of outcomes, the following can be determined:

**Outcome 1.1:** The capacities of the interinstitutional teams at INTA, INAFOR, MARENA, MEFCCA and INETER are strengthened as regards ETF requirements for the implementation of the mandates of the National Human

Development Plan and PNMACC guidelines 1, 5 and 6 in the agricultural and forestry sectors. **(Highly Satisfactory)**

Due to the increase in the level of participation of the institutions and their staff (MARENA, INTA, MARENA, INAFOR, INETER, MEFCCA), with equal opportunities for women and men, in the preparation of country reports in accordance with the ETF **(100%)**, as well as due to the number of officials of the inter-institutional team with equal opportunities for women and men (INTA, MARENA, INAFOR, INETER, MEFCCA) who are members of the SNGCC and SPCC and increase their capacities to comply with ETF requirements in four prioritized information flows, including gender equality and indigenous and traditional knowledge. **(Goal exceeded 741/50: 41% women)**

**Outcome 2.1:** Technical capacities strengthened for purposes of monitoring, quantification and analysis of data necessary to generate GHG emissions reports, monitoring and evaluating the prioritised sectors. **(Satisfactory)**

Based on the indicator number of evaluation, monitoring and surveillance plans for GHG emissions for the agriculture and forestry sectors were prepared and implemented according to the ETF. **(100%)**

As for the indicator "Number of Institutions composing the Forest MRV Roundtable that increase their capacities for the use of national forest monitoring tools and guidelines": 8/10 institutions participated in capacity-building on monitoring methodologies and tools for the forest sector and other land uses (INETER, MAG, MARENA, INAFOR, SCCP, INTA, MEFCCA and UNAN).<sup>60</sup> **(80%)**

**Outcome 3.1:** Improved education, communication and institutional human capacity regarding climate change mitigation, emissions reduction and its effects on prioritized sectors **(Moderately Satisfactory)**

Number of Bulletins on good practices, experiences and lessons learned regarding climate change mitigation and adaptation disseminated: **5/6 (83%)**.

A significant systematization of climate change adaptation measures has been achieved, and a methodology for the monitoring and evaluation of these measures at the project level has been developed, which is ready to be integrated into current and future initiatives including adaptation components; Nicaragua presented its Fourth National Communication on Climate Change in May 2023.

152. *To what extent have the project objectives been achieved?*

153. The project's objective "To strengthen technical and institutional capacities in the agricultural and forestry sectors in response to the enhanced transparency requirements under the Paris Agreement, in harmony with the Nicaraguan National Human Development Plan (PNDH, acronym in Spanish) and the guidelines set forth in the National Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Policy (PNMACC).", both from the indicator degree to which the capacities of the inter-institutional technical team (MARENA, INTA, INAFOR, INETER, MEFCCA) have been enhanced to generate information in accordance with the ETF and with the largest number of expected beneficiaries (200: 100 men and 100 women monitored), results Satisfactory

154. A significant achievement was the increased level of participation of the institutions and the continuous effort to advance in the ownership of the ETF, each according to their own pace and particular needs.

155. This increase in institutional participation was verified in the signing and implementation of four Letters of Agreement (LoA) - with INTA, INAFOR, MARENA and INETER - to carry out capacity-building activities in the estimation of emission factors and the preparation of land use maps

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<sup>60</sup> Although there are 10 in the PRODOC, in the end only eight institutions could be identified as having institutional competence in the MRV system.

156. Likewise, it is made evident by the close collaboration between the SCCP and the project's technical coordination team, which allowed for better time management and execution within the established results framework.
157. The Agroecological, Climate Change and Soil Roundtable (MACCS), led by INTA, was reactivated based on the design of the MACCS manual and operational strategy and funds for the development of its work sessions.<sup>61</sup>
158. *To what extent do the actual results of the project correspond to the expected outcomes?*
159. In general terms, considering the achievement of the outputs, intended outcomes and progress towards the objective, it is possible to regard the general performance as satisfactory, although with minor deficiencies as for the number of institutions that increased their capacities in the use of national forest monitoring tools and guidelines, and in the dissemination of good practices, experiences and lessons learned regarding climate change mitigation and adaptation.
160. **Finding 11: Unintended positive results are: the publication of the INAFOR study on allometric equations of *Pinus Oocarpa* in an international scientific magazine; systematic sampling grid of 14,000 INETER georeferenced points; the MEFCCA Family Farming Map; the identification of technologies to be transferred by INTA; the design of the MRV system of the AFOLU sector; and the strengthening of technological capabilities and infrastructure of the MAG in order to contribute to the improvement of information management for MRV of the Agriculture subsector.**
161. *Have there been any unintended positive or negative results? What was the response and solution capacity?*
162. Among the unintended positive results, the following stand out:
163. An international publication on the study of allometric equations of *Pinus Oocarpa* by INAFOR with the assistance of FAO in the scientific magazine Forest IMDB
164. Through the use of the SEPAL Platform and the accompaniment by FAO, INETER was able to prepare a systematic sampling grid of 14,000 georeferenced points to analyze land use changes, which is used to calculate GHG emissions, although it also facilitates other studies.<sup>62</sup>
165. MEFCCA's Interactive Family Farming Map identifies 44,270 farmers in all regions of the country out of a total of 233,210 protagonists from all agricultural and forestry sectors to demonstrate their action at the territorial level.
166. INTA identified technologies for climate change adaptation and climate-smart agriculture to be transferred.
167. The CBIT, together with the SCCP and the beneficiary institutions, promoted the design of a MRV system for the AFOLU sector for reporting on land use change, biodiversity and carbon sequestration. This system will serve to improve compliance with the indicator on institutions involved in forest monitoring and will allow Nicaragua to know its financial needs and gaps to be included in its Biennial Transparency Report (BTR).
168. An additional unforeseen achievement was the strengthening of the technological capabilities and infrastructure of the Ministry of Agriculture (MAG) to improve the management of institutional information that is of interest for the MRV of the Agriculture subsector.

### 3.4.2. Capacity development:

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<sup>61</sup> Results Matrix updated as of March 2024 by the project team

<sup>62</sup> Before using the SEPAL Platform to create a mosaic, it took between one or two months just to enter data.

169. **Finding 12: Capacity building aimed at ensuring individual as well as organizational learning, and its application on the respective environment. However, most institutions would require additional support from FAO to be able to formulate international projects in order to obtain greater resources.**
170. *To what extent did the intervention enhance target beneficiaries' functional and technical skills and their knowledge?*
171. According to the opinion of the beneficiaries, the workshops, trainings and diploma courses were generally evaluated as very useful, both the theoretical and practical knowledge taught is applicable to their functions and with respect to the level of complexity on the part of all the institutions, as due to their lack of own resources they would not have been able to strengthen their technical capabilities otherwise.
172. According to the opinions of the beneficiaries, professionals and technicians of each institution, they now have a deeper understanding of climate change from a comprehensive perspective and can better identify its consequences in all areas, and not only in a fragmented view from a particular ministry.
173. Some persons stated that a common training program would have been required with general and specific topics in a logical sequence and with different learning levels, and the need to receive an academic certification that grants credits in the participants' curriculum was expressed.
174. In the case of diploma courses, regulations were suggested to the purpose of adequately selecting participants according to their own degree of interest and the level of requirement from the institutions, in order to avoid drop outs on the one hand, and on the other, for more efficient use of resources by the participants and institutions that really assume the commitment to assist and complete it.
175. *To what extent did the intervention contribute to improving organizational performance and promoting institutional changes?*
176. The institutions have been able to take advantage of the knowledge imparted in the trainings by sharing it among their peers and with the beneficiary population groups for better institutional performance, whether through meetings, workshops, messages, manuals, etc.
177. Furthermore, this appropriation of knowledge can be verified not only in the fulfillment of CBIT outputs, but also in the application to other projects and lines of action in each institution.
178. In some cases, the reduction of the time required to perform tasks in data entry and subsequent analysis is very significant: for example, in the case of INETER, before learning to use the SEPAL platform, previously it could take between two to three months just to form a mosaic with satellite photos in order to proceed with data analysis, whereas now it can be done in a week.
179. Although it constitutes a positive value worth to be highlighted, the inter-institutional collaboration on the use of data could be further improved through a more effective instant exchange of information through virtual platforms at different levels, institutional and public.
180. According to the opinion of interviewees from the majority of institutions, additional support from FAO would be required to be able to formulate international projects in order to obtain more funds.<sup>63</sup>
181. **Finding 13: The application of a new approach to tackling the problem of climate change adaptation from a comprehensive and systemic perspective was confirmed, allowing for better inter-institutional collaboration and a greater impact of national policies.**

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<sup>63</sup> Capacity development did not need to be assessed according to the Template for Terminal Evaluation Reports of GEF projects and programs.

182. *What contextual factors may be influencing the magnitude of the results achieved?*

183. *The concern about and prioritization of climate change and its adverse effects on the lives of the Nicaraguan people and economy at the highest level of government represents an important pillar, as it allows for all sectoral policies to be aligned according to the National Climate Change Policy.*

184. *The timely application of a new approach to tackling the problem of climate change adaptability from a comprehensive and systemic perspective was confirmed, which allows better inter-institutional collaboration and a greater impact of national policies.*

185. *The inter-institutional collaboration promoted by the SCCP, doubtlessly has allowed for better coordination between SNGCC and SPCC institutions and greater impact of the interventions, since their member institutions represent all sectors of interest.*

### **3.4.3. Additionality**

186. **Finding 14: Based on an analysis of gaps identified at the beginning by the institutions, the project sought to strengthen their technical capacities related to climate change management, in order to achieve a change in attitudes and the application of new practices, thereby ensuring individual and institutional ownership, which not only resulted in better achievement of short and medium objectives but also of the expected long-term impact.**

187. *To what extent can the achievement of results be attributed to the GEF-funded component?*

188. *The analysis of institutional gaps identified at the beginning and the respective recommendations point to the following:*

- *The plan to jointly strengthen the knowledge and capacities of MARENA, INETER, INAFOR and INTA officials who share roles and responsibilities for reporting to the UNFCCC and other international commitments, as well as for monitoring in the context of the National Monitoring, Measurement, Reporting and Verification System (SNM-MRV) contributed to improving the following reports: Greenhouse Gas Inventory (NGHGI); Progress in the implementation and scope of Nationally Determined Actions for Climate Change Mitigation (NDC) and Monitoring of Forest Reference Emission Levels (FREL).*
- *Secondly, the capacities of INTA were strengthened, which had a limited number of professionals prepared to get involved in the preparation of the GHG inventory of the agriculture sector and had little knowledge of the quantification methodologies, tools and equipment to determine the emission factors in the agriculture sector.*
- *INTA, MARENA, INAFOR, INTER and MECCA had identified as the main gap the lack of availability of databases or indicators required to prepare national communications with a gender approach, so awareness had to be raised about the gender perspective and its importance for the CC: to build institutional capacities for the technical content in national communications from a gender perspective; to promote and prioritize women's participation in technical and other trainings on climate change issues; to make the role of women more visible, mainly in rural areas, and adjust the templates and data collection instruments to prepare national communications to include women and their activities in the corresponding sector.*
- *In terms of impacts, it would be necessary to create institutional capacities regarding the technical issues of climate change and its impact on women and their differentiated roles in the context of each sector; to strengthen methodologies and instruments for their application; to adjust planning, monitoring and evaluation instruments from the gender perspective; and to carry out further analysis of the adaptation technologies promoted by institutions to specify expenditure estimates and the*



socioeconomic impact of adaptation from a gender perspective.<sup>64</sup>

189. Capacity building, aimed at imparting knowledge so as to achieve a change in attitudes and the application of new practices in order to ensure individual and organizational learning and application of knowledge in the respective environments.
190. In short, adequate institutional appropriation of knowledge not only results in better achievement of short and medium objectives, but also in the expected long-term impact.
191. A better level of reporting by the NCs and submission of international reports with more precise data will allow Nicaragua to position itself better to be able to obtain green finance.
192. *Were there any significant barriers or challenges that occurred during the implementation of the project?*
193. At first, communication between the institutions was somewhat complicated, but then the SCCP assumed the role of coordinating the SNGCC and SPCC, which greatly expedited the progress of the project.
194. Some problems derived from the delay in disbursements and were faced in some cases by the beneficiary institutions with regard to the holding of certain face-to-face events or workshops. This was due to the lack of greater precision of the LoA and a better definition of the delivery time for outputs, as well as a certain inexperience on the part of these institutions in terms of delivering the required outputs in the expected time - all of which which improved as they learnt how to deliver these.
195. There is insufficient involvement on the part of universities to train professionals and technicians with knowledge about climate change adaptability in accordance with to the Paris Agreement.
196. Given the constant changes in the field of knowledge about climate change adaptability, institutions manifest the constant need to build well-structured technical capacities and for adequate equipment to obtain more precise data.

#### **3.4.4. Progress towards impact**

197. **Finding 15: The project has contributed to building the technical capacities needed to comply with national climate change commitments, and to create the SCCP and the National Climate Change Policy, promoting knowledge and skills, which are further applied in other projects and programs.**
198. *To what extent can progress towards long-term impacts be attributed to the project?*
199. The main merit of the project was to place the importance of climate change on the national agenda, and in the country strategy the need to strengthen the capacities of the institutions in charge of reporting on compliance with international adaptability and mitigation commitments.
200. In terms of progress towards long-term impacts, as seen in the fulfillment of the project objective in the Effectiveness section, a significant achievement was the increased level of interest and participation of the member institutions of the Interinstitutional Technical Team. They continuously advance in their ownership of the Enhanced Transparency Framework, each at its own pace, in order to continue strengthening key capacities for the estimation of emission factors, for the preparation of soil and land use maps, and for adaptation actions in the face of climate change.

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<sup>64</sup> According to the indications of the Template for Terminal Evaluation Reports of GEF projects and programs, the Additionality criterion did not need to be rated.

201. Although Nicaragua contributes very little to global emissions - only 0.05%<sup>65</sup> - it is highly vulnerable to the occurrence of natural disasters with strong implications for humans and infrastructure; therefore, it is of utmost relevance for the country to possess accurate data on losses and damages, and others, when preparing its NCs and ETF reports, and to obtain green finance.

202. The project contributed not only to a greater development of technical capacities to comply with national commitments, favoring the appropriation of knowledge that are further put into practice in other projects and programs, but also to the creation of the SCCP and the National Climate Change Policy. In addition to meeting its indicators, the project contributed to creating institutional structures for reporting.<sup>66</sup>

203. *Is there any evidence of any changes in the legal/regulatory framework?*

204. At present, there is no evidence of legal or regulatory changes, due to the will, commitment and interest of the national authorities to continue strengthening the capacities of the institutions in charge of monitoring and reporting national reports in accordance with the ETF.

205. *Are there any barriers or other risks that may prevent future progress towards long-term impact?*

206. According to the risk analysis presented in the Sustainability section, the greatest risk could be the lack of financial resources to continue strengthening the capacities of the technicians of the various institutions once the project ends. For this reason, it is necessary to continue reinforcing the institutional appropriation of practices through the systematization of knowledge that could also be extremely useful for inductions of newly hired employees in the case of rotations of specialized personnel.

#### 4. Sustainability

***How sustainable are the results achieved to date? Can they be maintained in the future? Are there risks which may affect the sustainability of the project's achievements?***

207. **Sustainability assessment: Likely or with negligible risks: The institutional framework, project alignment to national policies and priorities and the motivation of the technical teams constitutes elements that consolidate governance and favour the future sustainability of the results achieved by the project. However, financial uncertainties have an impact on the engagement of permanent staff, the maintenance and replacement of equipment, and the logistics required at the cabinet and field levels. This is an element of risk as regards sustainability of project results. It is expected that going forward, the institutions will strengthen their capacities to formulate projects, compete for and gain access to green finance.**

208. **Finding 16: The new institutional framework and its specific guideline in the PNCLP-DH (SNGCC, PNCC and SCCP at SEPRES, in addition to the institutions aligned to said policies and organizational structure), make it more likely that the results achieved by the project will continue.**

209. *To what extent can project results be expected to remain in place or continue to be useful once the project is completed?*

210. SNGCC and the National Production, Consumption and Commerce System (SNPCC) coordinated by the

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<sup>65</sup> Fourth National Communication on Climate Change, Republic of Nicaragua, 2023

<sup>66</sup> Progress toward impact did not need to be assessed according to the GEF Project and Program Terminal Evaluation Report Template.

SCCP (which also coordinated the project as of 2022), ensured efficient and effective execution. It is therefore expected that the synergies created can be deepened (for instance, with other GEF projects), thus improving prospects for sustainability.

211. As concerns the SNGCC operation, coordination and greater exchange of experiences and information between institutions is still in the process of maturing and will become an important element in favour of sustainability.
212. National development plans and policies, such as the PNCLP-DH and the National Climate Change Policy (PNCC), serve to support sustainability by setting specific guidelines and goals related to climate change that are subject to GON follow-up, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.
213. There are technological gaps and insufficient equipment, which must be renewed periodically in order to ensure sustainability. The professionalization of climate change technicians is of the essence.
214. ***Finding 17: Financial uncertainties pose a challenge to the sustainability of project outcomes, since capacity development for compliance with the ETF, to a large extent, depends on international project-based financing, which is not always conducive to staff continuity. To this must be added the costs of operation, maintenance and renewal of appropriate equipment. However, it is expected that the future institutions will strengthen their capacities to formulate projects, compete for and gain access to green finance.***
215. *What are the main risks that may affect the sustainability of project results (financial, social, economic, institutional, governance, other aspects)?*
216. **Financial risks:** There is a financial risk due to economic uncertainties that pose a challenge to the sustainability of project results. The GON's current plans for future funding of activities related to capacity development leading to meeting the ETF rely heavily on international project-based funding. This is not always conducive to staff continuity, thus reducing capacity development and technical capacity. To this must be added the costs of operation, maintenance and renewal of appropriate equipment.
217. However, given that a new CBIT 2 project that is being formulated, the duration of which will be of 4 to 5 years, it is expected that the institutions will have the time needed to improve their capacities to formulate projects they can submit for access to green finance.
218. **Economic risks:** Some institutions have incorporated the continuity of project results to their budgets, which is a good sign for their sustainability.
219. Some institutions have allocated additional resources from their budgets for continuity of project results. Among the most pertinent are the cases of INAFOR with its National Forest Inventory, of MEFCCA on issues related to the adaptation of the family economy to climate change, and of INTA as regards the generation and dissemination of climate change adaptation technologies.
220. **Institutional risks:** Personnel turnover, whether within or outside the institutions, represents another factor to consider in terms of risk for future sustainability. The development of manuals, guides and work protocols can contribute to reducing the risks of this factor in favor of the sustainability of the capacities strengthened by the project.
221. **Governance risks:** No governance risks are perceived, since the participating institutions reach consensus and meet to follow up on what was planned at the outset.
222. **Social risks:** Most institutional capacity strengthening has been carried out in Managua, the central level of the institutions. An element favouring project sustainability would be to expand these capacities to the territorial units and teams, so that they apply their learnings in the field and generate a greater impact.

223. To ensure greater sustainability of project results, monitoring and support mechanisms are required to provide information to multiple users, such as universities, sectoral and global institutions organizations that finance NGOs and the general public.
224. *Have results, lessons learned and experiences that can be reproduced been identified? Which ones are replicable in the near future?*
225. Continuous and timely support to work processes by FAO, SCCP and the institutions is a practice that contributes to reaching goals.
226. The preparation of letters of agreement between the institutions and FAO with sufficient precision and time for the generation of outputs that can be demanded from the institutions is a good practice that should be continued in projects of this nature.
227. Exchanges of experiences that facilitate the dissemination of knowledge become an institutional memory that can be reproduced with the current and future technical teams.
228. Knowledge management focused on the development of manuals, guides and protocols that can be institutionalized is a good practice by which to standardize work processes and diminish staff turnover.
229. *Is there willingness and commitment from authorities at the national, regional and local levels to share information and experiences? Is there appropriation and/or replication of good practices?*
230. There is willingness and commitment from authorities at the national, regional and local levels to share information and experiences in order to report accurate information to international forums.
231. Most of the tools generated in the training, such as geospatial analysis capabilities, the systematic sampling grid as a basis for carrying out studies, a national forest inventory with its own methodology, allometric equations for different species, CC adaptation technologies and the conservation of biodiversity, among others, have been institutionalized. Dissemination within the same institutions and towards their grassroots favours sustainability.
232. *Is there a strategy to obtain finance to ensure the continuity of the project's actions?*
233. Among members of teams interviewed at the institutions there are expectations regarding the approval and execution of the CBIT 2 Project, in which the inclusion of other SNGCC institutions is expected to take place, in order to ensure continuity, expand project results and cover other needs. However, it is already clear that the CBIT 2 budget will not be sufficient to cover the needs of all participating institutions.
234. To improve the chances of sustainability of project results, some institutions mentioned the need to strengthen their capacities for the conceptualization and design of projects with greater scope and budget that allow them to heighten their levels of ambition.

### **Design and implementation of the M&E system**

***Were the design and implementation of the M&E system adequate for follow-up and achievement of results?***

#### **5.1 M&E system plan**

***Evaluation of the M&E System Plan: "Satisfactory" Project design was appropriate to the implementation and achievement of the intended results. A monitoring and evaluation plan was in place, with a results matrix and indicators, broken down by gender, although from the outset there should have been a more accurate mapping of key actors.***

## 5. Design

**Finding 18: The project design was appropriate for the implementation and achievement of expected results, although from the outset there should have been a more realistic mapping of key actors, given that the Ministry of Agriculture (MAG), the Ministry of Women (MINIM) and the National Autonomous University of Nicaragua (UNAN) only joined when the project was nearing conclusion. The project had an M&E plan and a Results Matrix with indicators for the achievement of its objective, results and outputs, according to a 2019 baseline which identified institutional and gender gaps.**

235. *Was the project design adequate for implementation and achievement of results?*

236. The project design was appropriate for the implementation and achievement of the intended results, although some actors were incorporated only at project conclusion (MAG, MINIM, UNAN) for the purpose of undertaking some specific activities.

237. According to the Results Matrix, good coherence is evident in the project's causal logic.

238. As concerns the feasibility of time terms for meeting objectives, more time was required in order to better systematise knowledge at project level and at each of the beneficiary institutions.

239. Likewise, during implementation, it was decided to include cattle emissions in the AFOLU MRV System, as per ETF requirements.

240. *Did the project have a follow-up and evaluation plan?*

241. The SCCP, one of the main actors identified by this Evaluation, has updated specific and specialized profiles, thus partially mitigating other responsibilities some of the institutions have in this matter and that go beyond the project's objectives and scope.

242. The project has a Results Matrix with indicators for the fulfilment of its objective, results and outputs, according to a 2019 baseline in which institutional gaps were identified, including as concerns gender.

243. However, the matrix did not include a minimum % of female participation in all activities undertaken by the project.

244. The report on project performance describes its outputs and results. This allowed for identifying weaknesses or risks.

### **Implementation of the M&E system**

***Assessment of the Implementation of the M&E System: "Satisfactory" The information was collected systematically using appropriate methodologies in order to guide decision-making, with overall accompaniment from FAO.***

**Finding 19: Information has been collected systematically using appropriate methodologies. The Project Steering Committee (PSC) has supervised implementation. Overall support from FAO and the technical accompaniment missions of international experts have been favourably assessed by the institutional teams.**

245. Has information been collected systematically using appropriate methodologies? Has this information been used to guide decision-making?

246. The project has carried out a systematic collection of information with methodologies suitable for decision-making and data broken down by gender.

247. Has the Project Steering Committee (PSC) met and made strategic decisions, supervised project execution and agreed on co-financing to achieve its results? This question also applies to the support group within FAO (BH, LTO, FLO, regional and subregional offices, headquarters).
248. According to PRODOC, the Project Steering Committee (INTA, INETER, INAFOR, MEFCCA), chaired initially by MARENA and later by the SCCP, was to meet twice a year for purposes of: i) supervision and quality assurance of the technical aspects of results; ii) strengthening links between the project and other projects and programmes relevant to it; iii) ensuring the timely availability and effectiveness of co-financing support; iv) ensuring the sustainability of key project results, including scale-up and replication; v) exercising effective work coordination among government partners; vi) approving the biannual project progress reports and financial reports, the annual work plan and the budget; and vii) making management decisions by consensus when the National Project Coordinator (NPC) requires guidance.
249. Although they met in May and September of each year to share information on project progress, the institutions did not fully learn about the results achieved by their peers, since meetings were more about coordination and monitoring activities, and only to a lesser extent about sharing results.
250. For its part, FAO was responsible for: i) supervising the implementation of the draft agreement with the project document, work plan, results-based budget, co-financing plan and FAO and GEF standards and procedures; ii) providing technical guidance and project quality assurance to ensure timely delivery of inputs and outputs by implementing partners and the achievement of project outcomes; iii) carrying out at least one supervision mission per year; iv) reporting project progress to the GEF Secretariat and Evaluation Office, through the Annual Project Implementation Review (s); and iv) submitting financial reports to the GEF trustee.
251. Despite FAO support, including the BH, LTO, FLO and the regional, subregional and country office in Nicaragua, perhaps support could have been stronger for financial accountability regarding outputs.
252. Has the assistance and accompaniment team at FAO provided the technical assistance required by the UCP for project implementation?
253. In general, overall support from FAO, and in particular from the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) to project implementation is acknowledged. Also much appreciated is the flexibility shown in the adaptation of certain mechanisms leading to successful achievement of the outputs. In addition, there were 18 visits from technical accompaniment missions made up of international FAO experts. During the evaluation, the institutional teams shared their positive assessment of this support.
254. Has the FAO assistance and support team reviewed the APO, budgets, Performance Progress Reports (PPR) and Project Implementation Report (PIR)?
255. The project has presented the APO, budgets, the PPR and the PIR reports for 2022 and 2023. Have supervision missions been carried out and has the implementation of the Work Plan been monitored?
256. Several supervision missions came to Nicaragua and held meetings with the representatives from institutions, projects, local technicians, producers and authorities at the country's departments to discuss the monitoring of project implementation, as well as to exchange information.

## 6. Application of GEF policies and guidelines<sup>67</sup>

**Were GEF policies and guidelines applied as regards stakeholder participation, visibility and knowledge management, social and environmental safeguards and gender equality?**

### 6.1. Project partnerships and stakeholder participation

262. **Finding 20: The parties involved from project outset and those who were incorporated during implementation had knowledge of the various activities undertaken and timely access to the outputs produced and the information it.**
263. *To what extent were second-level stakeholders involved in project formulation and implementation?*
264. Some institutions, such as MAG, MINIM and UNAN, were not considered at the beginning and were incorporated as the project was about to conclude, in order to carry out specific activities (MAG to gather data on farmers that can be used in the report on the AFOLU sector; MINIM to mainstream gender actions in addressing climate change; and of UNAN to hold specialized training activities).
265. In line with the guidelines of the GEF Participation Policy, stakeholders at national level who are part of the project declare they have been able to freely express their points of view and approaches, knew of the various activities being undertaken, and have had access to the outputs produced and information generated by the project.
266. *Were second-level stakeholders who were not considered in the project design involved in project implementation?*
267. MAG participated in training on tools for monitoring land use and in work sessions for the development of an MRV in the AFOLU sector.
268. MINIM developed a proposal with gender and climate change indicators for reporting purposes, and has been actively participating in SNGCC meetings.
269. UNAN participated in training on methodologies for the implementation of the National Forest Inventory and in the use of the Silva Metricus software.
270. *How committed are stakeholders to the project?*
271. MAG indicated an interest in greater participation, and not only at the end of the project. In addition, participants pointed to the need to acknowledge the value of the producers with whom they work and not see them merely as a source of data.

### 6.2. Communication and knowledge outputs, knowledge management

**273. Finding 21: Although the project did not have a communications strategy, it included activities by means of which to disseminate the results and thus strengthen ownership. For stronger making of ownership, better knowledge management is needed, e.g. the sharing of data between institutions as a dissemination strategy contributing to project sustainability.**

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<sup>67</sup> The additionality criterion did not need to be assessed (Table 6 and 7 of the ToR's and Template for Final Evaluation Reports, GEF projects and programmes).

274. *How is the project evaluating, documenting and sharing its results, lessons learned and experiences?*  
*Although the project does not have a communication strategy, it includes knowledge management activities for purposes of disseminating results, with support from the PCU at FAO.*
275. The following documents were designed and disseminated: the National Climate Change Policy; the First Biennial Update Report; the 2019 National Inventory Report; the Methodological Framework of the National Forest Inventory and its Field Manual.
276. Significant systematization of the climate change adaptation measures implemented through the AGRIADAPTA and NICAVIDA projects has been achieved; a methodology for monitoring and evaluating these measures was developed and will be integrated into current and future initiatives if they include adaptation components.<sup>68</sup>
277. An exchange of experiences on MRV automation took place between the FAO-SCCP Nicaragua teams and the Ecuador CBIT team.
278. For its part, each institution has been sharing its results at the various workshops and meetings and in some cases they have been able to develop manuals, guides and protocols, such as for example, the field manual and protocols for technicians developed by INAFOR.
279. However, knowledge management would be improved if the various results achieved were shared between institutions and if there were more synergy in the use of databases between some of them.
280. In terms of project visibility, some institutions have published more products than others, mainly through channels such as workshops, meetings, messaging, press, TV, websites and social networks. However, a dissemination action would have been required to make the project visible as a single effort, in order to better communicate the achievement of its results.
281. *To what extent can communication products and activities contribute to the sustainability and spreading of project results?*
282. The institutionalization of technical practices and procedures are essential for the sustainability and spreading of project results. The dissemination of its outputs may encourage greater ownership by the actors involved.
283. The development of protocols, manuals and guides could not only contribute to reducing induction times in the face of staff turnover but could also ensure the continuity of the application of practices and procedures adopted.

### 6.3. Environmental and social safeguards

- 284. Finding 22. In terms of environmental and social safeguards, the project took into account in both the design phase and during its execution the pertinent environmental and social impact concerns, and reported on these in accordance with FAO and GEF requirements regarding activities undertaken on the issues of**

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<sup>68</sup> The CBIT complementary project, which is the Fourth Communication, titled "Enabling the preparation of the Fourth National Communication of Nicaragua and the First Biennial Update Report to the UNFCCC", GCP /NIC/046/GFF, in October 2023 engaged a consultant to develop a strategy and Plan for the dissemination of good practices as concerns the use of agricultural technologies for Adaptation to Climate Change in Nicaragua. This strategy has an objective, target audience, channels, messages and dissemination phases.



## **gender, indigenous peoples and stakeholder participation.**

285. *To what extent have environmental and social concerns been taken into account in project design and execution?*

286. Since the CBIT project objective is to “Strengthen institutional and technical capacities. the agricultural and forestry sectors of Nicaragua in response to the requirements of the Enhanced Transparency Framework under the Paris Agreement”, environmental considerations were taken into account in project design and execution.

287. As the CBIT did not include actions in indigenous territories and the only territorial component were online workshops carried out by INAFOR for the 19 CODEFOR delegates, with the aim of strengthen their knowledge in ETF management and climate change, the Paris Agreement should not have been applied (meaning the Free and Informed Consent mechanism usually required in such cases. However, in both the PRODOC and the PIRs, instruments required by FAO/GEF were reported such as: stakeholder participation, gender and indigenous communities (336 persons: 240 men/ 96 women).

288. Because project implementation began in late 2020, in the midst of the COVID 19 pandemic, when it was necessary to protect against contagion, many of the training and workshops adopted the hybrid or on-line modality.

### **6.4. Gender**

**6. Finding 23: As for the gender perspective, although the project did not establish a minimum participation quota for all project activities, an overall average of 41% female participation was achieved. However, on the part of the beneficiary institutions, despite the fact that the majority made an effort to achieve the 50/50 national policy and to equate female with male participation in some of them, the percentage was of only 35%.**

7. *To what extent have gender considerations been taken into account in project design and execution?*

8. The National Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change Policy (PNMACC), promulgated in February 2019, raises a principle consistent with the objectives of the Nicaraguan Equal Rights and Opportunities Law, which is to ensure the incorporation of women in actions, measures, plans and strategies leading to the mitigation and adaptation to climate change at all levels.

9. In 2021, Nicaragua received an International Award on Gender Equality from IFAD and is ranked 7<sup>th</sup> among 90 countries in female empowerment actions.

10. The government's policy is to comply with 50/50 participation of men and women.

11. Gender was considered from the design phase, given Nicaragua's high degree of vulnerability to extreme natural events and the greater vulnerability of women to these, in particular those living in rural areas who have less access to land, financing, training and information.

12. A diagnostic carried out in 2019 recommended, among other things, making gender explicit as a relevant data-based topic and that in the analysis to be included in the NC sections, staff with experience on gender issues be part of the project team; consider gender-related costs for capacity building, data collection and analysis in the project budget; engage gender specialists from government, the private sector and civil society to develop a gender analysis framework for GHG data collection across sectors in the national context; collect data broken down by sex, including the perspective of indigenous peoples; process

data broken down by gender to analyse differences in vulnerability between men and women in all reports and evaluations; highlight the situation and difficulties in accessing and controlling resources; and promote the dissemination of good practices and case studies in local media.<sup>69</sup>

13. During project execution, a Letter of Agreement was signed with MINIM to mainstream the gender issue in addressing climate change and developing gender indicators to be used in national reports intended for the Fourth Communication project. However, although this project is complementary to the CBIT and a set of gender and climate change indicators was in fact created, it is necessary to promote this topic, carry out vulnerability analysis and do more work with indigenous communities.

14. *Has the project ensured gender equity in participation and benefits?*

15. Although the matrix of indicators did not establish a minimum participation quota in all project activities, overall female participation reached 41%.

16. On the part of beneficiary institutions, most of them try to achieve the 50/50 national policy and make a concerted effort to equate female with male participation. However, some of them could reach only 35% of female participation, seeing as some careers, such as forestry engineering, for traditional and cultural reasons, still maintain a more male-oriented approach. The same goes for areas such as statistics or advanced applied science.

**17. Finding 24: The joint work of several institutions, from a cross-cutting and comprehensive perspective aimed at addressing climate change, enables a greater impact of national policies. Although an important systematization of adaptation measures to climate change has been achieved, it is necessary to continue technical training for the use of methodologies and tools for monitoring GHG emissions.**

18. *What knowledge has been generated from project results and experiences? Which are the most valuable and have potential to be applied, replicated and used more widely?*

19. Given the variability of conditions for adaptability to climate change and the preparation of precise and well-prepared national and international MRT reports, the use of new methodologies, tools and equipment and the strengthening of institutional capacities becomes an ongoing need.

20. The joint work of several institutions from the different agricultural, forestry, food, energy, waste and gender sectors enables a more comprehensive view and to verify a greater impact of national policies.

21. An important systematization of the climate change adaptation measures implemented through the AGRIADAPTA and NICAVIDA projects has been achieved. However, it is necessary to continue technical training to carry out GHG measurements before and after the use of technologies on the economy of agricultural producers.

22. Some institutions have developed technical manuals, work guides and protocols. Those who have not yet done so need to develop and/or update manuals and guides.

23. With a differentiated scope, the institutions have sought to radiate the knowledge acquired among their technical staff, to their regional and departmental delegates, as well as to local producers and communities.

24. Capacities were strengthened according to specific needs at each institution, based on a diagnostic of

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<sup>69</sup> Final Report of the Gender Consultancy. María Rosa Renzi, 30 May 2019.

institutional gaps. However, greater exchange of data and results between institutions is still required.

25. *What elements should be considered for the following projects: Fifth National Communication on Climate Change and BTR 1 and 2 and CBIT-2?*

26. Among the elements that should be considered for the upcoming Fifth National Communication on Climate Change, BTR 1 and 2 and the CBIT-2 projects are:

- Project term: although for CBIT 1 three years of duration were adequate, to truly improve knowledge systematization would require an additional year or two.
- There is a need for more realistic planning regarding the duration of the Letters of Agreement in order to carry out more adequate monitoring of the work done by each institution to achieve its proposed outputs.
- There could have been more exchange of knowledge, both nationally and internationally.
- More exchange of information and results between institutions and stronger promotion of knowledge management through the development of manuals, guides and protocols should be emphasised going forward.
- Regarding gender equality, the project should ensure at least 40% female participation, while striving to meet the GON's 50-50% policy.
- Enable greater participation by universities, encouraging them to adapt their academic programs to climate change and grant academic certifications to trained human resources.
- Develop a training programme with a common block and specific training at institutions, by levels of knowledge (logical and pedagogical sequence).
- There could be more synergy with other FAO projects, programmes and initiatives and other international organizations at national and regional levels.
- Work to ensure a better use of platforms within the SNGCC, so participating institutions can exchange data.
- FAO should become more agile when it comes to equipment procurement and the timely disbursement of resources.<sup>70</sup>

**27. Overall , the project is rated as "Satisfactory": As regards Relevance, the project is rated as High; in Coherence it is rated as "Satisfactory", due to its complementary with other initiatives and projects, especially the Fourth National Communication; in Efficiency it is rated as "Satisfactory", although the Letters of Agreement could have been formulated more precisely; in Effectiveness it is rated "Satisfactory"; Sustainability is "Probable or with negligible risks"; and with regard to the design and implementation of the M&E system, it is rated "Satisfactory", except for the mapping of key actors, which could have been more accurate.**

## 7. Conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned

### 7.1 Conclusions

**28. Conclusion 1 – Relevance: The Project is aligned with GEF and FAO regional priorities; with national policies and priorities, in particular the PNCLP-DH, the National Climate Change Policy (PNCC) and the mandates and needs of participating institutions at national level; and the 2030 Agenda SDGs.**

29. A change occurred due to the creation of the SNGCC, the PNCC, the SCCP and the decision taken by the Steering Committee to transfer project coordination from MARENA to the SCCP. Although this change initially meant a challenge in terms of coordinating the institutions, over time it

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<sup>70</sup> These needs will be taken up in the Table of Recommendations.

resulted in better mainstreaming of climate change as a central issue and improved the inter-institutional work.

30. **Conclusion 2 – Coherence: At national level, the CBIT has been complementary to other projects such as the Fourth Communication; GEF 5, 6 and 7; the National Forest Inventory; AGRIADAPTA and NICAVIDA. The outputs generated by the training provided, such as methodologies, guides and protocols, are being implemented in other projects being carried out by beneficiary institutions.**
31. **Conclusion 3 – Efficiency: The project’s budget execution reached 99.4% and the human, material and financial resources available were managed efficiently, thus achieving the expected results in the planned timeframe and with the financial resources available. There were some delays in the procurement processes, mainly regarding the purchase of equipment, which took longer than expected to arrive in Nicaragua. It would be very beneficial for institutions to have on hand a broader base of international consultants. Were this to be the case, increased synergies could be created with other FAO, UNEP and IFAD project taking place in Latin America.**
32. Co-financing reported as of June 2023 stood at 33% of the amount committed at the outset. However, since all co-financing is in kind, it is expected that by the formal closure of the project, 100% of the amount will be reported as executed.
33. FAO's role as implementing agency was assessed as satisfactory, while institutional arrangement such as LoAs with institutions have been assessed as efficient for monitoring outputs, although there could have been better planning and more precision regarding detail, scope and delivery time.
34. Meanwhile, the executing agency (SCCP), fulfilled its role and responsibilities related to project management and execution. Measures were adopted to mitigate the risks identified at the beginning, thus also reaching a satisfactory level.
35. **Conclusion 4 – Effectiveness: Regarding achievements of outputs, results and objectives, the project had few deficiencies, among them the lower-than-expected number of institutions that increased their capacities in the use of tools and guidelines for national forest monitoring and the dissemination of good practices, experiences and lessons learned as concerns mitigation and adaptation to climate change. Among the unexpected positive results, INAFOR highlights the study on allometric equations of pine (*Pinus oocarpa*) that was published in an international scientific dissemination magazine; INETER's 14,000-point systematic sampling grid; the MEFCCA Family Farming Map; the identification of climate adaptation technologies for transfer from INTA; the design of the MRV system in the AFOLU sector; and the strengthening of MAG's technological capabilities and infrastructure. Within the framework of capacity building, an effort was made to ensure individual ownership, at organizational level and in the application in its environment. However, most institutions still require additional support from FAO in order to formulate international projects aimed at obtaining more resources.**
36. **Additionality:** Adequate institutional ownership not only leads to better achievement of short and medium-term objectives, but also bolsters expected long-term impact and improves formulation of international reports by using more precise data that will allow Nicaragua to position itself to compete for green finance. progress towards impact: the application of a new approach to the treatment of the problem of adaptability to climate change seen from a

comprehensive and systemic perspective allows for better inter-institutional work and bolsters the impact of national policies.

- 37. Conclusion 5 – Sustainability: The new institutional framework, with a specific guideline for the PNCLP-DH, SNGCC, PNCC and SCCP at the Office of the Presidency, as well as at the institutions aligned to said policies and organizational structure, facilitate the probability that project results prove sustainable going forward.**
38. Financial uncertainties pose a challenge to the sustainability of project results, since capacity development for compliance with the ETF, to a large extent, depends on international project-based financing, which is not always conducive to the continuity of the staff. To this must be added the costs of operation, maintenance and renewal of appropriate equipment. However, it is expected that in the future institutions will strengthen their capacities to formulate projects and thus gain access to green finance.
39. **Conclusion 6 – Design and implementation of the M&E system:** Project design was appropriate to the implementation and achievement of the intended results, although better mapping of key actors and strategic from the beginning would have avoided that towards the end additional institutions had to be incorporated (MAG, MINIM, UNAN) to take on specific tasks.
40. The Project had a monitoring and evaluation plan and a Results Matrix with indicators for the fulfilment of its objective, results and outputs, according to a baseline taken in 2019 in which institutional and gender gaps were identified.
41. The Project Steering Committee (PSC) met and made strategic decisions, supervised project execution and agreed on co-financing to achieve results. Overall, FAO support is acknowledged and the technical accompaniment missions of international experts have been assessed favourably by the interinstitutional technical teams (ITT).
42. **Conclusion 7 – Implementation of GEF policies and guidelines:** Although the project did not have a communication strategy, it included activities for the dissemination of results. While an important systematization of adaptation measures to climate change has been achieved, it is necessary to continue technical training in the use of methodologies and tools for monitoring GHG emissions. Stronger ownership and better knowledgemanagement is needed when it comes to the use of data between institutions, and more widespread dissemination can contribute to project sustainability.
43. In terms of environmental and social safeguards, the project took into account environmental and social impact concerns both in the design and during execution, reporting in accordance with FAO and GEF requirements, in compliance with these safeguards.
44. As concerns the gender perspective, the project did not establish a minimum participation quota in all of its activities. Still, 41% female participation was achieved. However, on the part of beneficiary institutions, despite the fact that most made an effort to achieve the 50/50 national policy and to equate female and male participation, in some of them only 35% female participation was achieved.
45. In sum, and taking into account the findings described above, based on all criteria, the Overall Project Rating: is "**Satisfactory**".

## 7.2 Recommendations

46. In the table shown below, recommendations and sub-recommendations are described based on the findings made and conclusions reached by the Evaluation Team. For each recommendation an entity is shown that will be responsible for monitoring it. The “traffic light” indicates degree of urgency.

**Table 3: Evaluation Recommendations**

Recommendation	Rationale	Sub-recommendations	Responsible	Calendar of actions <sup>71</sup>
<b>Efficiency</b>				
A.1. Better planning for product delivery and creation of broader synergies.	More efficiency is needed in the procurement processes, better planning in the Letters of Agreement. more synergies at regional level.	A.1.1. Seek to streamline the equipment procurement process; expand the base of international consultants to have more offers and availability in case one of them is not promptly available to offer a consultancy and ensure timely disbursements.	FAO	Upcoming projects
		A.1.2 Improve planning in Letters of Agreement by setting more realistic deadlines and establishing detailed descriptions and scope of the outputs to be delivered. This will lead to better monitoring of compliance with the results to be achieved by the beneficiary institutions.	FAO	
		A.1.3 Create greater synergies with national platforms promoted by the Livestock and Environmental Management Unit (GAMMA) of the Tropical Agricultural Research and Teaching Centre (CATIE and other projects, programmes and initiatives developed by international organizations such as FAO and UNEP, or at regional level, for example, with the World Important Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS) Chile Programme and other GIAHS projects in Latin America; the SAS- Cuba Programme; and the GEF Climate-Smart Livestock Project in Uruguay.	FAO; SCCP; beneficiary institutions.	
<b>Effectiveness</b>				
B.1. Capacity strengthening techniques and update of methodologies, as well as measurement and data-gathering equipment.	Develop a macro-product and a training programme with a logical and pedagogical sequence, for the purpose strengthening technical capacities.	B.1.1. Establish as part of Component 1 the achievement of a macro-product with cross-cutting contents, such as a strategy for the implementation and sustainability of the MRV system	FAO	Upcoming projects
		B.1.2 Enable greater participation by universities and assist them so they can adapt their majors by including climate change as a cross-cutting topic and grant academic degrees on the subject.	Project Coordination Unit (PCU)	
		B.1.3 Develop a training programme with a common block and specific training in institutions, according to knowledge levels.	Universities	
		B.1.4 Regulate attendance at diploma courses, so as to ensure the participation and commitment of candidates selected.	Project Steering Committee	
	Standardization of indicators using international methodologies; update the equipment used to take measurements.	B.2.1. Updating of measurement equipment and greater data storage and processing capacity by the beneficiary institutions, leading to better standardization of national indicators with internationally used methodologies to facilitate their analysis and comply with the required reports.	Beneficiary institutions	Upcoming projects
		B.2.2 Monitoring and evaluation system at institutions: a constant data monitoring system is required with data broken down according to requirements for international reports (ex-ante studies, monitoring and impact).	Beneficiary institutions	

<sup>71</sup> Traffic lights key ref. degree of urgency: short term (red); medium term (yellow); long term (green).

<b>Sustainability</b>				
C.1. Escalation and project replication	Escalation and project replication	C.1.1 Provide specific support to institutions for the formulation of international cooperation projects in order to obtain green finance.	FAO	Upcoming projects
		C.1.2 Promote greater ownership of knowledge and good practices, not only at institutional but also at territorial level: local authorities, small and large agricultural and forestry producers, indigenous communities.	Beneficiary institutions	
D.1. Project design and deadline	Stronger involvement of all key actors from the outset, with	D.1.1. During project formulation, ensure better mapping of key actors representing all sectors pertinent to project actions and activities. This will make for stronger involvement from the beginning.	FAO	Upcoming projects
	longer time-terms in which to carry out the systematization of results.	D.1.2. Include from design stage a plan for systematizing knowledge and disseminating results, ensuring there will be adequate financing over a 4–5-year duration.	FAO	
<b>GEF Policies</b>				
E.1 Application of GEF policies and guidelines	Needs: Better knowledge systematisation and platform exploitation; greater and more visibility of results; and gender equity.	E.1.1 Promote more exchanges of knowledge at the national and international levels, whether in person or on-line.	PCU	Upcoming projects
		E.1.2 Promote more exchanges of results between institutions and encourage institutions to manage knowledge by developing manuals, guides and protocols intended to address gaps caused by staff turnover.	PCU; beneficiary institutions	
		E.1.3 Seek better use of platforms at the SNGCC and, failing that, through representation at the SCCP, to ensure the exchange of data between participating institutions.	SCCP; beneficiary institutions	
		E.1.4. Communication strategy: Promote project visibility as a single entity, as well as GEF with its own identity, at both institutional and population levels.	PCU	
		E.1.5 Gender strategy: Carry out an analysis of vulnerability situations; ensure there is at least 40% female participation in training events, decision-making spaces and access to resources, always aiming for the GON 50-50% policy, shown by means of disaggregated data. - Positive discrimination at universities to ensure places in majors traditionally reserved for men, accompanied by vocational guidance, with emphasis on both the hard and soft skills required. - Encourage activities that lay stress on positive masculinity, such as joint responsibility for household tasks. Design a convenient schedule for women in all activities, considering payment for the transport and accommodation of their children, so they are able to attend training events outside their regions (rural women face more transportation and communication limitations than those living in large towns or in Managua. - Publication of ads using algorithms on social networks for recruitment in careers that traditionally tend to be occupied primarily by men, in order to reach more women. - Before carrying out specialized training, insofar as possible, always try to level women up so that they can participate not only in workshops or general activities but also in specialized training of all kinds.	PCU; beneficiary institutions	

Source: Evaluation Team

### 7.3 Lessons learned

47. The National Climate Change Management System (SNGCC); the Production, Consumption and

Commerce System (SPCC); the Departmental Forestry Commission (CODEFOR); and the Agroecological Roundtable at central level and in the territories represent an opportunity for the dynamization, scaling and sustainability of project results.

48. FAO is a development cooperation agency which, beyond its executing or project manager functions, takes advantage of its capabilities, experiences and tools in order to achieve successful or more advanced regional programmes in the field by improving the support provided and the quality and scope of its training products.
49. Systematic follow-up and project monitoring, with continuous participation by the PSC, the timely technical support of the executing and administrative entity, combined with monthly progress reports, are effective project management tools and lead to effectiveness and efficiency.
50. The project training has been theoretical and practical, with good support from facilitators. At all institutions, training has taken place as a work tool which can be improved through the formulation of training programmes (in-person and on-line), with a comprehensive curriculum at different levels that is recognised by national or regional academic entities.
51. The theoretical-practical training, with its focus on results and using real data, is effective and generates genuine technical- scientific products, inventory methodologies, allometric equations and geospatial analysis tools (systematic sampling grid), among others.
52. Better coordination, articulation and exchange of results and experiences with participating institutions are an important mechanism that could potentiate and scale training results.
53. The LoAs between the institutions and FAO have been effective, although expected outputs can be defined more precisely and additional time must be allowed for (3-4 years). More precise planning would improve compliance and generate excellence in the quality of the results obtained.
54. Capacity strengthening is a continuous process, mainly on the topic of climate change, which is novel and complex. This is why it is essential to continue strengthening human, technological and organizational capacities among specialists, field technicians and producers.
55. The overload of training workshops without added value to fill institutional and gender quotas may demotivate participants. Training must be in accordance with the real needs and capacities of the institutions, and regulated in such a way as to encourage the commitment of the trainee to the institution.
56. The processes of exchanging experiences, at both national and international levels, are an expensive but very effective training modality. The systematisation of these experiences can have even greater positive effects on other actors, both inside and outside the project.



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**FAO** Financial reports. (Budget, POA and Co-financing Table)

**FAO** Letters of Agreement with institutions.

**FAO** Results Matrix, Project Team, 2024.

## Appendix 1: List of actors interviewed

No.	Last name	Name	Position	Organization/Location
1.	Aburto	America	Specialist in Natural Heritage and Biodiversity	MARENA / Managua
2.	Arana Márquez	Delmis	GIS and geospatial analysis specialist	INETER / Managua
3.	Baltodano	Karen	GIS and geospatial analysis specialist	INETER / Managua
4.	Cano Mora	Francisco	Family Agriculture Directorate	MEFCCA / Managua
5.	Castellón	Liseth	National Operations Officer at FAONI	FAO Nicaragua / Managua
6.	Cruz Torrez	Luis Enrique	Forestry specialist	INAFOR / Managua
7.	Flores Garcia	Armando	SCCP Climate Change Specialist	SCCP at SEPRES / Managua
8.	Castillo	Milton	National Programme Officer at FAO Nicaragua.	FAONI / Managua
9.	García Amador	Alfonso	External Cooperation Directorate	MEFCCA Central / Managua
10.	González	Jonathan	Responsible for transversal issues, technical and management support of the SCCP	SCCP at SEPRES / Managua
11.	Juárez	Carlos	Landscape Restoration Specialist	MARENA / Managua
12.	López Madrigal	Carolina	Operational Technical Project Coordinator	FAONI / Managua
13.	López	Tyrone	CC, Forests and REDD+ Specialist	FAONI / Managua
14.	Malespín Vásquez	Douglas	GIS and geospatial analysis specialist	INETER / Managua
15.	Medrano	Rebeca	MAG Monitoring Manager	MAG / Managua
16.	Market S.	Yader	Head of the Clean Patio Directorate at the Ministry of Family, Community, Cooperative and Associative Economy	MEFCCA / Managua
17.	Milan	José	CC and RR specialist consultant	MARENA, INETER, local governments, universities, others
18.	Montalván Duarte	Danilo	Planning Specialist	INTA / Managua
19.	Montoya Pérez	Michelle	Forestry specialist	INAFOR / Managua
20.	Guido Palacios	Yosdany Rafael	GIS and geospatial analysis specialist	INETER / Managua
21.	Pérez Mangas	Oswaldo	Project technical assistant, based on results and operational coordination	FAONI / Managua
22.	Prado V.	Vladimir	General Director of Territorial Planning, INETER technical liaison with the project	INETER Central / Managua

23.	Ramírez Zea	Carla	Lead Technical Officer (LTO) of the project and member of the technical coordination team.	FAO
24.	Reina	Juan Bautista	Head of National Agreements Management	MARENA / Managua
25.	Rocha	Diana	Financial specialist of the GEF project portfolio at FAO NI	FAONI / Managua
26.	Rodríguez Acuña	Iam	Technology transfer specialist	INTA / Managua
27.	Rodríguez	José Ramón	Head of Research Section, Cattle and Smallstock Division and INTA technical liaison with project	INTA / Managua
28.	Rodríguez	Mauricio	CBIT Project Baseline Consultant	Managua
29.	Sánchez	Maria Fernanda	Coordinator of the GEF Portfolio of FAONicaragua.	FAONI / Managua
30.	Sandy Rios	Hannia	Specialist in project formulation and evaluation, Planning Department	MAG Central / Managua
31.	Siu	Alexandra	Specialist in GHG inventories in the agricultural sector	FAONI / Managua
32.	Solís	Carolina	GIS and geospatial analysis specialist	INETER / Managua
33.	Valerio	Luis	Director of Forest Monitoring and Information at INAFOR, technical liaison with the project	INAFOR / Managua
34.	Varela Rostrán	Tatiana	Insemination Programme Manager	MAG Central / Managua
35.	Vega Lanza	William	Technology Director of the Monitoring Directorate	MAG Central / Managua
36.	Zambrana Sevilla	Yaoska	External Cooperation, Planning Directorate	INAFOR / Managua

## Appendix 2: GEF Criteria Scoring System and Table

GEF criteria/dimensions	Rating	Summary comments
<b>A. RESULTS</b> (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, progress regarding impact and efficiency)	<b>S</b>	<b>Satisfactory:</b> Regarding results, the project was rated as satisfactory due to its high level of relevance, its coherence with other initiatives and its achievements in terms of efficiency and effectiveness. <sup>8572</sup>
A1. Relevance	<b>HS</b>	<b>Highly Satisfactory:</b> The project is aligned with GEF strategic priorities; the FAO global and regional frameworks; national, regional and local policies; UN 2030 Agenda SDGs and the needs of beneficiary institutions.
A2. Coherence	<b>S</b>	<b>Satisfactory:</b> At national level, CBIT has been complementary with other projects such as the Fourth Communication; GEF 5, 6 and 7; the National Forest Inventory; AGRIADAPTA and NICAVIDA. The products generated during training, such as methodologies, guides and protocols are being implemented in other projects undertaken by the beneficiary institutions.
A3. Efficiency	<b>S</b>	<b>Satisfactory:</b> The project presents a general budget execution of 99.4% and the human, material and financial resources available were managed efficiently to achieve the expected results in the expected time frame and with the available financial resources. However, in the future, procurement processes could be streamlined a little more and generate greater synergies with other initiatives developed in Latin America by FAO and other international organizations such as UNEP and IFAD.
A4. Effectiveness	<b>S</b>	<b>Satisfactory:</b> The expected objective, products and results were achieved. There were also some unexpected positive results, such as a scientific publication, the systematic sampling grid for land use analysis, the collaboration of MAG in MRV in agriculture and the design of the MRV system. The training sought to promote a change in attitudes and practices at the individual, organizational and environmental levels. There is now in place a new comprehensive and systemic approach to the problem of adaptability to climate change.
<b>B. SUSTAINABILITY</b> (financial, sociopolitical, institutional and governance, environmental dimensions, including risks to sustainability)	<b>L</b>	<b>Likely:</b> The institutional framework, project alignment with national policies and priorities, and the motivation of the technical teams constitute an element that consolidates governance and favours the future sustainability of the results achieved by the project. However, financial uncertainties have an impact when contracting permanent staff, on the maintenance and replacement of equipment and on the logistics required at the office and field levels. This situation represents an element of risk as concerns maintaining project results. However, it is expected that in the future institutions will strengthen their capacities to formulate projects and compete for green finance.
<b>C. IMPLEMENTATION</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>Satisfactory:</b> Project implementation by FAO is considered satisfactory because the expected results have been achieved and it has been completed within the time provided and resources available.
<b>GEF criteria/dimensions</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Summary of comments</b>
		However, better planning and precision is required in the Letters of Agreements regarding detail, scope and delivery time.
<b>D. EXECUTION</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>Satisfactory:</b> The SCCP as the executing agency fulfilled the functions related to project execution and supervision, as well as risk management.
<b>M&amp;E plan</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>Satisfactory:</b> The project design was appropriate for the implementation and achievement of the intended results and had a monitoring and evaluation plan with a results matrix and indicators broken down by gender, although better mapping of key actors from the beginning would have avoided the late addition of three institutions (MAG, MINIM, UNAN).
<b>Implementation of the M&amp;E system</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>Satisfactory:</b> With support from FAO, the project collected the information systematically, using appropriate methodologies in order to guide decision-making.
<b>Overall project assessment</b>	<b>S</b>	<p><b>Satisfactory.</b></p> <p><b>Relevance: Highly Satisfactory</b></p> <p><b>Coherence: Satisfactory, because complementary with other initiatives and projects, especially the Fourth National Communication</b></p> <p><b>Efficiency: Satisfactory, although more precise LoAs were required</b></p> <p><b>Effectiveness: Satisfactory</b></p> <p><b>Sustainability is considered probable, with only negligible risks</b></p> <p><b>Design and implementation of the M&amp;E system: Satisfactory, with the exception of the need for better initial mapping of key actors</b></p>

<sup>72</sup> No rating was required for Progress Toward Impact.

## Rating Scale: Outcome

Ratings	Description
Highly Satisfactory (HS)	The results exceed the objectives and are very relevant and profitable in terms of cost/benefit.
Satisfactory (T)	The level of results achieved meets the objectives. The results are relevant and profitable in terms of cost/benefit.
Moderately satisfactory (MS)	The level of results achieved was generally close to the objectives. Most of the goals were met or almost met, but some were not. The results are generally relevant and profitable in terms of cost/benefit.
Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)	In general, the level of results achieved is below the goals, although some results were substantially achieved. The results are generally relevant but not sufficient given the costs or, alternatively, generally profitable but not relevant enough.
Unsatisfactory (U)	The expected results were not achieved, or the achievements were substantially lower than expected, and/or the results achieved are not relevant. Alternatively, the result was cost ineffective compared to the alternatives.
Highly unsatisfactory (HU)	A negligible level of results was achieved and/or the project had substantial negative consequences that outweigh its benefits.
Unable to assess (UA)	The information available does not allow for evaluation of degree to which project results were achieved.

## Sustainability ratings

Rating	Description
Very likely (HL)	The risk to continued benefits is negligible and, based on progress made so far, the long-term project objectives are expected to be achieved.
Probable (L)	Either the risk to continued benefits is negligible or there are some risks, but the magnitude of their effect is small and/or the probability of their occurring is small. Overall, the net project benefits are likely to continue.
Moderately probable (ML)	There are some risks to sustainability and, if they materialise, these could have some effect on continued benefits. However, the probability of these risks materializing is low. Net profits are more likely to continue than decline.
Moderately unlikely (MU)	There are significant risks to sustainability. The effect on continued benefits would be substantial if these risks were to materialise and the likelihood of this occurring is significant. Overall, net project benefits are likely to decline.
Unlikely (U)	Due to the high risks, it is unlikely that net project benefits will continue to accrue and the progress made so far is likely to be lost. The project is unlikely to achieve its long-term objectives.
Highly unlikely (HU)	The project is not expected to achieve its long-term objectives. Material risks have already materialised and have halted the accrual of net benefits or have a high probability of materialising soon and will halt the accrual of net benefits when they materialize.
Unable to assess (UA)	The expected incidence and magnitude of sustainability risks cannot be assessed.

## Implementation and Execution Ratings

Ratings	Implementation	Execution
Highly satisfactory (HS)	The performance of the GEF Agency was exemplary. Project preparation and execution were solid. The Agency ensured that relevant GEF policies were applied in project preparation and implementation. Project oversight was strong: the Agency identified and addressed emerging concerns in a timely manner. The GEF Agency ensured that project implementation remained on track and was completed on time.	The performance of the executing agency or agencies was exemplary. The execution of project activities was timely and of high quality. Relevant GEF policies and requirements were met. Guidance from the GEF Agency was followed and, when necessary, corrective action was taken promptly. The executing agency also took steps to mitigate risks to sustainability and is taking steps to support project monitoring. Project activities were completed on time.
Satisfactory (T)	The GEF Agency's performance met expectations and had no notable weaknesses. Project preparation and implementation were sound and relevant GEF policies were implemented. The GEF Agency monitored the project well: it identified and addressed emerging concerns in a timely manner. The GEF Agency ensured that project implementation was on track.	The performance of the executing agency met expectations and did not present any notable weaknesses. The execution of project activities was timely and of good quality. Relevant GEF policies and requirements were applied. Guidance from the GEF Agency was followed. The executing agency also took measures to mitigate risks to the sustainability of project results.
Moderately satisfactory (MS)	Overall, the GEF Agency's performance met expectations. Project preparation and implementation were adequate and relevant GEF policies were applied, although there are some weak areas. The GEF Agency adequately monitored the project: it identified and addressed emerging concerns, although some of them may not have been adequately addressed. Project implementation had minor delays and some activities may have been abandoned.	The performance of the executing agency had some weaknesses but, in general, it met expectations. The execution of project activities was generally timely, but with some cases of delay. Relevant GEF policies and requirements were applied, although some minor errors were noted. The GEF Agency's guidance was followed and problems were solved. There are some areas where the performance of the executing agency was below average, although its overall performance was adequate.
Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)	Overall, the GEF Agency did not meet expectations, although there were some areas of strong performance. Project preparation and execution had deficiencies, although not too serious. Supervision was somewhat weak. Although most emerging concerns were identified, many remained unaddressed or were addressed inadequately. Project implementation was delayed and some activities were abandoned or reduced in scale due to issues that were largely within control of the GEF Agency.	While there were some areas of strong performance, the overall performance of the executing agency did not meet expectations. The execution of project activities was delayed. The observed capacities of the executing agency were a limitation to project execution. Several errors were observed in the application of GEF policies and requirements. In general, the GEF Agency's guidance was followed and problems were resolved, but these actions were generally not taken in a timely manner. There are several areas for improvement in execution.
Unsatisfactory (U)	The GEF Agency did not achieve the expected level of performance. Project preparation and implementation were weak. The GEF Agency did not identify emerging concerns in a timely manner and they were not addressed or were addressed inadequately. M&E implementation was poor: activities were not implemented on time or were not carried	The executing agency did not meet expectations. The implementation of project activities was delayed and at least some activities were abandoned due to factors largely under the control of the executing agency. Many errors were observed in the application of GEF policies and requirements. GEF guidelines were not implemented or only after



<b>Ratings</b>	<b>Implementation</b>	<b>Execution</b>
	out. Project implementation was delayed and several activities were abandoned or reduced in scale.	considerable delay.
Highly unsatisfactory (HU)	There were serious deficiencies in the quality of implementation. The GEF Agency mismanaged project implementation and oversight was poor. Emerging concerns were not identified in time, including those that should have been obvious. Although cases of mismanagement were discovered, no corrective measures were taken. Project activities were poorly implemented and several had to be abandoned.	There were serious deficiencies in project execution. There were several cases of mismanagement. Emerging concerns were not addressed in a timely manner, including those that should have been obvious. Most activities were poorly executed, delayed, or abandoned. GEF policies and requirements were not applied.
Unable to assess (UA)	The information available is not sufficient to allow a performance rating.	The information available is not sufficient to allow a performance rating.

## M&E Ratings

Ratings	M&E	Implementation of M&E
Highly satisfactory (HS)	The project's M&E plan is good practice and did not have any weaknesses; its alignment with the project's theory of change is strong. Complete reference data has been provided. The specified indicators were appropriate and the arrangements for the implementation of the M&E plan were adequate. Overall, the M&E plan exceeds expectations and is exemplary.	The implementation of the M&E plan was excellent. Weaknesses in the M&E plan, if present, were promptly addressed. M&E activities were carried out in a timely manner and M&E data were used to improve project implementation. Overall, M&E implementation exceeded expectations and was exemplary.
Satisfactory (T)	The project monitoring and evaluation plan was strong and had no or only minor weaknesses: alignment with the project theory of change is strong. The reference data provided or its collection is planned at the beginning of the project. The specified indicators were appropriate and the arrangements for the implementation of the M&E plan were adequate. The plan meets expectations.	Implementation of the M&E plan was generally according to plan. M&E gaps were addressed in a timely manner. M&E activities were carried out in a timely manner and M&E data were used to improve project implementation. Overall, M&E implementation meets expectations.
Moderately satisfactory (MS)	Overall, the project's monitoring and evaluation plan was solid. The specified indicators were generally appropriate and the arrangements for the implementation of the M&E plan were adequate. The alignment of the M&E plan with the project theory of change is strong. There were areas where the M&E plan could be strengthened, but overall the plan was adequate.	Implementation of the M&E plan was generally according to plan. M&E gaps were generally addressed, although some remained. Some M&E activities were delayed. M&E data were used for reporting but had little use in improving project implementation. Overall, M&E implementation meets expectations, although in some areas performance is poor.
Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)	Overall, the GEF Agency did not meet expectations, although there were some areas of strong performance. Project preparation and execution had deficiencies, although not too serious. Supervision was somewhat weak. Although most emerging concerns were identified, many remained unaddressed or were addressed inadequately. Project implementation was delayed and some activities were abandoned or reduced in scale due to issues that were largely within the control of the GEF Agency.	While there were some areas of strong performance, the overall performance of the executing agency did not meet expectations. The execution of project activities was delayed. The observed capacities of the executing agency were a limitation in the execution of the project. Several errors were observed in the application of GEF policies and requirements. In general, the GEF Agency's guidance was followed and problems were resolved, but these actions were generally not taken in a timely manner. There are several areas for improvement as concerns execution.
Unsatisfactory (U)	The M&E plan had serious deficiencies. Alignment with the project's theory of change is weak. No baseline data or any indication that it would be collected at the start of the project was provided. The indicators do not adequately address project and other outcomes. For several outcomes, no relevant indicators were specified. There are gaps in the arrangements for implementing the M&E plan. An inadequate or no budget was provided for M&E.	The implementation of the M&E plan was flawed and/or did not address serious weaknesses in the M&E plan. Several M&E activities were abandoned or left incomplete. The data collection methodology was not robust. M&E data were not reported in a timely manner. There is little evidence to suggest that the data was used to improve project implementation, and therefore M&E does not meet expectations.
Highly unsatisfactory (HU)	No M&E plan was prepared.	M&E activities were negligible or non-existent, apart from conducting the project evaluation.
Unable to assess (UA)	M&E unable to assess because the pertinent project documents are not available.	M&E unable to assess because the final evaluation does not adequately cover its implementation.

### Appendix 3: Sources of Co-Financing

Name of co-financing institution	Co-financing country or agency	Type of co-financing	Co-financing expected at project conclusion (in USD)			Co-financing provided cut at 30 June 2023 (in USD)		
			In-kind	Cash	Total	In-kind	Cash	Total
Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources (MARENA)	Government of Nicaragua (GON)	In-kind	181,924	-	181,924	60,641	-	60,641
Nicaraguan Institute of Agricultural Technology (INTA)	GON	In-kind	118,800	-	118,800	39,600	-	39,600
National Forest Institute (INAFOR)	GON	In-kind	43,200	-	43,200	14,400	-	14,400
Nicaraguan Institute of Territorial Studies (INETER)	GON	In-kind	50,400	-	50,400	16,800	-	16,800
Ministry of Family, Community, Cooperative and Associative Economy (MEFCCA)	GON	In-kind	32,400	-	32,400	10,800	-	10,800
FAO – United Nations Agency	GEF Agency	In-kind	64,800	-	64,800	21,600	-	21,600
<b>Total expenses (in USD)</b>			<b>491,524</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>491,524</b>	<b>163,841</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>163,841</b>

Source: PIR, 2023

## Appendix 4: Terminal Evaluation Matrix

Evaluative Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
<b>1. Relevance: Is the project relevant to GEF, FAO and national development policies and priorities, as well as to the 2030 Agenda SDGs</b>			
Question 1. Are project results relevant to priorities at global, regional, national and local levels?	Degree of alignment with environmental priorities at a global, national, regional, national and local levels  Perception of key actors	Strategic documents, project and progress reports  Opinion of key actors	Desk review, interviews with key actors
Question 2. Are project results consistent with GEF strategic priorities and objectives? Are they aligned with the objectives of the 2030 Agenda?	Degree of alignment with GEF priorities and strategic objectives  Alignment with the objectives of the 2030 Agenda	Strategic documents, project and progress reports  Opinion of key actors	Desk review, interviews with key actors
Question 3. Are project results consistent with the FAO Strategic Framework 2022 – 2031 as well as FAO regional and national priorities (Country Programming Framework)?	- Degree of alignment with FAO's strategic objectives, management frameworks and priorities at regional and national levels  - Perception of key actors	Strategic documents, project and progress reports  Opinion of key actors	Desk review, interviews with key actors
Question 4. Was the project design appropriate to address the relevant priorities and needs and therefore to achieve the expected results?	- Degree of alignment of project design with national, regional and local development priorities and plans  - Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions	Strategic documents, project and progress reports  Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions	Desk review, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions
Question 5. Are project results consistent with the objectives and goals of Nicaragua's National Human Development and Fight Against Poverty Plan 2022 – 2026 and other sectoral policies and programmes?	- Degree of alignment with the objectives and goals of the National Human Development and Fight Against Poverty Plan 2022 – 2026, sectoral policies and programmes.	Strategic documents, project and progress reports  Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions	Desk review, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions

Question 6. Do project results meet the needs of implementing partners?	Degree of alignment with the needs of implementing partners Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions	Strategic documents, project and progress reports Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions	Desk review, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions
Question 7. Do project results continue to be appropriate to the national context throughout implementation time?	Evidence of need for adjustments or changes Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions	Strategic documents, project and progress reports Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions	Desk review, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions
Question 8. Has there been any change in the project's strategic relevance since its formulation, such as the adoption of new policies, plans or programmes that affect the relevance of its goals and objectives?	Number and type of changes made Evidence of achievements leading to change Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions	Strategic documents, project reports progress reports Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions	Desk review, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions
<b>2. Coherence: Is there complementarity with other programmes/projects/actions being implemented that have similar objectives?</b>			
Question 9. Are project results complementary with other programmes/projects/actions being implemented that have similar objectives?	Level of coherence with programmes/projects/actions being implemented which have similar objectives. Evidence of overlap or gaps with other interventions Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions	Strategic documents, project and progress reports Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions	Desk review, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions
<b>3 Efficiency: Were the human, material and financial resources available managed efficiently? Was project implementation and execution adequate?</b>			

<p>Question 10. To what extent has the project been executed efficiently and effectively, adapting to changing conditions in order to improve efficiency in its implementation? How well were the resources approved for project execution managed?</p>	<p>Budget execution level: resources/time</p> <p>Budget received / budget assigned</p> <p>Transparent budget management actions (tenders and contracts)</p> <p>Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</p>	<p>Strategic documents, project and progress reports, financial reports and budget</p> <p>Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</p>	<p>Desk review, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</p>
<p>Question 11. Was the project beneficial in terms of cost/time versus outputs/results?</p>	<p>Committed resources / scheduled activities</p> <p>Expenses budgeted / expenses incurred</p> <p>Deadline extensions due to delays in project execution</p> <p>Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</p>	<p>Strategic documents, project and progress reports, financial reports and budget</p> <p>Opinion of key actors</p>	<p>Desk review, interviews with key actors</p>
<p>Question 12. To what extent has management been able to adapt to changes in conditions, thus improving the efficiency of project execution?</p>	<p>Level of adaptation to contextual conditions</p> <p>Reassignments of budget items</p> <p>Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</p>	<p>Strategic documents, project and progress reports, financial reports and budget</p> <p>Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</p>	<p>Desk review, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</p>
<p>Question 13. To what extent has the project taken advantage of agreements, initiatives, data sources, existing synergies and complementarities with other projects, associations, etc. for the purpose of avoiding overlapping or duplication of similar activities?</p>	<p>Number and quality of agreements intended to take advantage of synergies, alliances and associations and avoid overlapping and duplication of actions</p> <p>Lines of complementarity and association of actions</p> <p>Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary</p>	<p>Strategic documents, project and progress reports, financial reports and budget</p> <p>Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary</p>	<p>Desk review, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</p>

<p>Question 14. What have the main challenges been regarding the project's financial management?</p>	<p>Evidence of challenges and deficiencies in the financial management of the project</p> <p>Perception of key actors</p>	<p>Strategic documents, project and progress reports, financial reports and budget</p> <p>Opinion of key actors</p>	<p>Desk review, interviews with key actors</p>
<p>Question 15. Has financial execution occurred as planned?</p>	<p>Committed resources / contributed resources</p> <p>Evidence of search for new sources of co-financing</p> <p>Perception of key actors</p>	<p>Strategic documents, project and progress reports, financial reports and budget</p> <p>Opinion of key actors</p>	<p>Desk review, interviews with key actors</p>
<p>Question 16. To what extent has FAO exercised its role as implementing agency by providing supervision, guidance and technical, administrative and operational support during Project identification, formulation, approval, initiation and execution?</p>	<p>Quantity and quality of FAO technical, administrative and operational advice</p> <p>Perception of key actors</p>	<p>Strategic documents, project and progress reports</p> <p>Opinion of key actors</p>	<p>Desk review, interviews with key actors</p>
<p>Question 17. To what extent has the implementing agency effectively fulfilled its role and responsibilities as regards project management and administration? Have the institutional arrangements implemented been efficient?</p>	<p>Degree of compliance with responsibilities and performance of the implementing agency</p> <p>Degree of efficiency of institutional arrangements and letters of agreement implemented</p> <p>Perception of key actors</p>	<p>Strategic documents, project and progress reports</p> <p>Opinion of key actors</p>	<p>Desk review, interviews with key actors</p>
<p>Question 18. To what extent have risks and changes been identified and managed?</p>	<p>Risk plans and capacity to react and solve problems</p> <p>Perception of key actors</p>	<p>Strategic documents, project and progress reports</p> <p>Opinion of key actors</p>	<p>Desk review, interviews with key actors</p>

<b>4. Effectiveness: What expected and unexpected results has the project achieved and how do these contribute to reaching its higher objectives?</b>			
Question 19. To what extent did the project deliver the proposed outputs and contribute to achieving the expected results?	Degree of achievement of planned outputs and results  Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions	Strategic documents, project and progress reports  Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions	Desk review, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions
Question 20. To what extent have project objectives been achieved?	Level of contribution to the achievement of project objectives  Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions	Strategic documents, project and progress reports  Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions	Desk review, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions
Question 21. To what extent do actual project results reflect intended results? Is there evidence that adjustments were made?	Extent to which actual results reflect expected results  Evidence of adjustments made  Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions.	Strategic documents, project and progress reports  Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions	Desk review, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions
Question 22. Have there been any unforeseen positive or negative results? What was the reaction and solution capacity?	Evidence of unexpected, unwanted, negative or positive results  Level of adaptability to changes  Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions	Strategic documents, project and progress reports  Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions	Desk review, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions



Question 23. To what extent did the intervention improve functional and technical skills and increase knowledge at beneficiary institutions?	Evidence of improvements in capacity development Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions	Strategic documents, project and progress reports Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions	Desk review, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions
Question 24. To what extent did the intervention contribute to improving performance and promoting institutional changes?	Improvements in organizational and institutional performance Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions	Strategic documents, project and progress reports Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions	Desk review, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions
Question 25. What contextual factors may have influenced the scope of the results achieved?	Evidence of factors favourable and unfavourable to the achievement of results achieved Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions	Strategic documents, project and progress reports Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions	Desk review, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions
Question 26. To what extent can the achievement of results be attributed to the GEF-funded component?	- Level of attribution to GEF as regards achievement of results - Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions	- Strategic documents, project and progress reports - Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions	Desk review, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions
Question 27. Were there any important barriers or challenges during project implementation?	- Evidence of barriers and challenges faced - Mitigation measures adopted - Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions	- Strategic documents, project and progress reports - Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions	Desk review, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions

Question 28. To what extent can progress towards long-term effects be attributed to the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Degree to which long-term impacts can be attributed to the project</li> <li>- Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic documents, project and progress reports</li> <li>- Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	Desk review, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions
Question 29. Is there any evidence of changes in the regulatory/legal/regulatory framework?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There is evidence of the need to adapt to new normative / legal / regulatory frameworks</li> <li>- Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic documents, project and progress reports</li> <li>- Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	Desk review, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions
Question 30. Are there obstacles or other risks that could hinder future progress toward the achievement of long-term effects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Evidence of obstacles or risks on long-term effects</li> <li>- Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic documents, project and progress reports</li> <li>- Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	Desk review, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions
<b>5. Sustainability: How sustainable are the results achieved to date? Can they be maintained in the future? Are there risks that affect the sustainability of the project's achievements?</b>			
Question 31: To what extent can project results remain in place or continue to be useful once it comes to an end?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Existence of plans to institutionalize results</li> <li>- Strategies to ensure their continuity over time</li> <li>- Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic documents, project and progress reports</li> <li>- Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	Desk review, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions

<p>Question 32. What are the main risks that may affect the sustainability of project results (financial, economic, social, institutional, governance, others)?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Evidence of financial, socio-economic, institutional, governance and environmental risks</li> <li>- Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic documents, project and progress reports</li> <li>- Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<p>Desk review, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</p>
<p>Question 33. Have results, lessons learned and replicable experiences been identified? If so, which ones are replicable in the near future?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Systematization of knowledge and dissemination of results</li> <li>- Evidence of project experience replication</li> <li>- Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic documents, project and progress reports, websites</li> <li>- Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<p>Desk review, visit to websites, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</p>
<p>Question 34. Is there a willingness and commitment from authorities at national, regional and local levels to share information and experiences? Is there evidence that ownership has been taken of good practices, or that that these have been replicated?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Level of commitment of authorities at national, regional and local levels</li> <li>- Evidence of ownership taken or replication of good practices</li> <li>- Existence of strategies and plans for disseminating results</li> <li>- Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic documents, project and progress reports, letters expressing interest or commitment, websites</li> <li>- Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<p>Desk review, visit to websites, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</p>
<p>Question 35. Is there a strategy to obtain funds in order to ensure the continuity of the project's actions?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategies to catalyse resources</li> <li>- Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic documents, project and progress reports, letters expressing interest or commitment,</li> <li>- Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<p>Desk review, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</p>

<b>5. Design and implementation of the M&amp;E system: was the design and implementation of the M&amp;E system adequate for monitoring and achieving results?</b>			
Question 36. Was project design adequate for implementation and achievement of results?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Degree of adequacy of the project design</li> <li>- Degree of project causal logic coherence</li> <li>- Feasibility of deadlines for meeting objectives</li> <li>- Perception of key actors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic documents, project and progress reports</li> <li>- Opinion of key actors</li> </ul>	Desk review and interviews with key actors
Question 37. Has the Project Steering Committee met and made strategic decisions, supervised project execution and agreed on co-financing, in order to achieve project results? This question also applies to the FAO support group(BH, LTO, GTO, regional and subregional offices, headquarters).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Resources committed / resources contributed</li> <li>- Evidence of impact on results due to a deficit in provision of committed contributions</li> <li>- Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic documents, project and progress reports</li> <li>- Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	Desk review, visit to social networks, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions
Question 38. Has the FAO assistance and support team provided the technical assistance required by the PMU for project implementation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quantity and quality of FAO technical advice</li> <li>- Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic documents, project and progress reports</li> <li>- Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	Desk review, visit to social networks, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions
Question 39. Did the project have a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Evidence of an M&amp;E system and plan</li> <li>- Level of data breakdown</li> <li>- Perception of key actors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic documents, project and progress reports</li> <li>- Opinion of key actors</li> </ul>	Desk review and interviews with key actors
Question 40. Has the FAO assistance and support team reviewed the APOs, budgets, PPR and PIR reports?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Degree of adequacy of monitoring mechanisms for taking operational and management decisions.</li> <li>- Perception of key actors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic documents, project and progress reports</li> <li>- Opinion of key actors</li> </ul>	Desk review and interviews with key actors

Question 41. Have supervision missions been carried out and has the implementation of the Work Plan been monitored?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of missions and monitoring visits</li> <li>- Perception of key actors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic documents, project and progress reports</li> <li>- Opinion of key actors</li> </ul>	Desk review and interviews with key actors
Question 42. Has the information been collected systematically, using appropriate methodologies? Has this information been used to guide decision-making?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Systematization of information with appropriate goals and indicators</li> <li>- Perception of key actors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic documents, project and progress reports</li> <li>- Opinion of key actors</li> </ul>	Desk review and interviews with key actors
<b>Application of GEF policies and guidelines: Were GEF policies and guidelines regarding party participation, knowledge visibility and management, social and environmental safeguards, and gender equality applied?</b>			
Question 43. To what extent were second-level stakeholders involved in project formulation and execution?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of government agencies, civil society organizations and universities that participated in project formulation and implementation</li> <li>- Participation mechanisms</li> <li>- Level of commitment by the parties involved</li> <li>- Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic documents, project and progress reports, social networks</li> <li>- Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	Desk review, visits to social networks, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions
Question 44. Were second-level stakeholders not considered in project design involved in project execution?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of institutions and organizations incorporated during project implementation</li> <li>- Participation mechanisms</li> <li>- Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic documents, project and progress reports, social networks</li> <li>- Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	Desk review, visits to social networks, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions

<p>Question 45. How do stakeholders view FAO commitment to the project?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Level of involvement and commitment of second-level stakeholders not included in project design</li> <li>- Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic documents, project and progress reports, social networks</li> <li>- Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<p>Desk review, visits to social networks, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</p>
<p>Question 46. How is the project evaluating, documenting and sharing its results, lessons learned and experiences?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Systematization of knowledge and dissemination of results</li> <li>- Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic documents, project and progress reports, websites and social networks</li> <li>- Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<p>Desk review, visits to websites and social networks, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</p>
<p>Question 47. To what extent can communication regarding outputs and activities contribute to the sustainability and expansion of project results?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Communication strategy between partners</li> <li>- Project presentation campaigns and plans to disseminate results to the general public</li> <li>- Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic documents, project and progress reports, websites and social networks</li> <li>- Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<p>Desk review, visits to websites and social networks, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</p>
<p>Question 48. To what extent have environmental and social concerns been taken into account in project design and implementation?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development of plans and strategies to address environmental and social concerns</li> <li>- Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic documents, project and progress reports</li> <li>- Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<p>Desk review, visits to social networks, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</p>

<p>Question 49. To what extent have gender considerations been taken into account in project design and execution?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inclusion of the gender perspective starting from the design stage</li> <li>- Number of women participating in the project</li> <li>- Data disaggregation level</li> <li>- Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic documents, project and progress reports</li> <li>- Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<p>Desk review, visits to social networks, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</p>
<p>Question 50. Has the project ensured gender equity in participation and benefits?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Level of participation by women</li> <li>- Number of women participating in the project</li> <li>- Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic documents, project and progress reports</li> <li>- Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<p>Desk review, visits to social networks, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</p>
<p>Question 51. What knowledge has been generated from project results and experiences? Which have the greatest value and potential to be applied, replicated and used more widely?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Systematization of lessons learned and good practices</li> <li>- Practical manuals, guides, dissemination material, etc.</li> <li>- Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic documents, project and progress reports, websites</li> <li>- Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<p>Desk review, visits to websites and social networks, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</p>
<p>Question 52. What elements should be considered for the following projects: Fifth National Communication on Climate Change; BTR 1 and 2; and CBIT-2?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Actions to be taken in order to improve future projects</li> <li>- Perception of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic documents, project and progress reports</li> <li>- Opinion of key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</li> </ul>	<p>Desk review, visits to social networks, interviews with key actors and representatives of beneficiary institutions</p>

## Appendix 5: Results matrix

Goals	Indicators	Baseline	Project goal	Level (colour-coded red, yellow or green) <sup>86</sup>	Rating	Rationale
<p><b>Objective:</b> To strengthen technical and institutional capacities in the agriculture and forestry sectors, for the purpose of meeting enhanced transparency framework (ETF) requirements under the Paris Agreement, in harmony with Nicaragua's National Human Development Programme (PNDH) and the guidelines of its Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Policy (CCAMP).</p>	<p><b>Indicator 1:</b> Degree to which the capacities of the inter-institutional technical team (MARENA, INTA, INAFOR, INETER, MEFCCA) has been expanded to generate information in accordance with ETF modalities, procedures and guidelines (MPGs) in support of guidelines 1, 5, 6 and 7 of the CCAMP.</p> <p>(Scale: 0 - 4)</p>	0	3	Achieved	S: Satisfactory	<p>A significant achievement has been the increase in participation by the institutions. The entities that make up the Interinstitutional Technical Team (ITT) continue to take ownership of the ETF and are adapting their work pace according to their specific needs.</p> <p>Areas for strengthening have been identified at each institution to ensure continued and balanced progress.</p> <p>This increase in institutional participation has translated into a series of tangible achievements, as follows:</p> <p>The signing and implementation of four Letters of Agreement (LoAs) with the inter-institutional technical teams at INTA, INAFOR, MARENA and INETER. These will facilitate activities intended to strengthen key capacities needed to calculate emission factors and prepare land use maps.</p> <p>Close collaboration between the SCCP technical team and the project technical coordination team has optimized time management and execution within the established results framework.</p>

<sup>86</sup> GEF Scale: Highly satisfactory and Satisfactory (green); Moderately satisfactory and Moderately unsatisfactory (yellow); Unsatisfactory and Highly unsatisfactory (red).



	Indicator 2: Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as a co-benefit of the GEF investment	0	200 (100 men and 100 women)  Monitored	Achieved	S: Satisfactory	<p>The SNGCC is coordinated by the SCCP and its functions include validating and submitting for approval to the President of Nicaragua all reports on climate matters generated in the country. Following this mandate, the SCCP has introduced to the SNGCC and to the President the Fourth and Fifth National Greenhouse Gas Inventories, the Fourth National Communication on Climate Change and the First Biennial Transparency Report. These were also submitted to the UNFCCC.</p> <p>Reactivation of the Agroecological, Climate Change and Soil Roundtable (MACCS), which is led by INTA, through the design of the MACCS manual, operational strategy and financing made available for the holding of its work sessions.</p>
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Component 1: Strengthening institutional capacities to meet the requirements set forth in the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF) under the Paris Agreement in the agriculture and forestry sectors.

Outcomes	Indicators	Baseline	Project goal	Level (colour-coded red, yellow or green) <sup>86</sup>	Rating	Rationale
Outcome 1.1: Capacities of the inter-institutional technical team (INTA, INAFOR, MARENA, MEFCCA and INETER) strengthened as regards the requirements set forth in the ETF. This is intended to ensure compliance with the mandates of the National Human Development Programme, as well as guidelines 1, 5 and 6 of the Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Policy in the agriculture and forestry sectors.	Indicator 3: Increase in the level of participation of the aforementioned institutions and their staff, with equal opportunities for women, in the preparation of country reports and in accordance with ETF modalities, procedures and guidelines (MPGs) (Scale: 1 - 4)	2	3	100%	Highly satisfactory	<p>The goal of increase the level of participation by institutions to 3 on the scale of the project outcomes framework was achieved.</p> <p>The goal set for the number of trained officials has been significantly exceeded.</p> <p>Staff trained: 741 (41% women)</p>

	<p>Indicator 4:  Number of ITT staff and members of the SNGCC and SPCC who under equal opportunities for women and men increase their capacities to meet the requirements of the ETF in the four prioritized information flows, including gender equality and indigenous and traditional knowledge.</p>	0	50	741 persons, (41% women) Goal exceeded		
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Component 2: Research and generation of information to strengthen reporting and monitoring of progress achieved in mitigation and adaptation actions in the agriculture and forestry sectors

Outcomes	Indicators	Baseline	Project goal	Level (colour-coded red, yellow or green) <sup>86</sup>	Rating	Rationale
Outcome 2.1: Strengthened technical capacities for monitoring, quantification and analysis of data necessary for the generation of greenhouse gas (GHG) reports and monitoring and evaluation in prioritized sectors	Indicator 5: Number of evaluation, monitoring and surveillance plans for GHG emissions in the agriculture and forestry sectors prepared and implemented, according to ETF MPGs	1	2	100%	S: Satisfactory	Eight institutions INETER, MAG, MARENA, INAFOR, SCCP, INTA, MEFCCA and UNAN participated in the related processes of capacity building on methodologies and tools for monitoring the forest sector and other land uses. (80% of the final goal).  The selection of the 8 previous institutions was based on the relevance of the topics to their institutional work.
	Indicator 6: Number of institutions that make up the Forest MRV Roundtable increase their capacities in the use of tools and guidelines for national forest monitoring	0	10	80%		

Component 3: Dissemination of good practices and lessons learned at the national and international level

Outcomes	Indicators	Baseline	Project goal	Level achieved (colour-coded red, yellow or green) <sup>86</sup>	Rating	Rationale
Outcome 3.1: Improved education, communication, and human / institutional capacity regarding climate change mitigation, emissions reduction and its effects on prioritized sectors	Indicator 7: Number of bulletins disseminated on good practices, experiences and lessons learnt regarding mitigation and adaptation to climate change	0	6	5 83%	MS: Moderately satisfactory	An important level of systematization of the climate change adaptation measures implemented through the NICAVIDA, NICADAPTA and AGRIADAPTA projects has been achieved.  In addition, a methodology for monitoring and evaluating these measures at project level has been formulated, which is now ready to be integrated to current and future initiatives that have CC adaptation components.  As part of this progress, Nicaragua presented its Fourth National Communication on Climate Change in May 2023.  In addition, an exchange of experiences was held between the FAO-SCCP Nicaragua teams and the CBIT team from Ecuador, on the subject of MRV automation.

Outputs of outcome 1.1	Indicators	Baseline	Project goal	% achieved	Rating	Rationale
<p>Output 1.1.1. The national coordination platform, made up of the ITT of the National Climate Change Management System (SNGCC) and the National Production, Consumption and Commerce System (SNPCC) has been consolidated. It will monitor and evaluate strategies and accompany policy proposals as per ETF requirements.</p> <p>Activity 1.1.1.1 Facilitate the use of the ETF by the MRV Table Activity 1.1.1.2 Facilitate the use of the ETF by the CNF Activity 1.1.1.3 Facilitate the use of theETF by the MACCS</p>	<p>Indicator 4: Number of ITT staff and members of the SNGCC and SPCC who under equal opportunities for women and men increase their capacities to meet the requirements of the ETF in the four prioritized information flows, including gender equality and indigenous and traditional knowledge.</p>		<p>Convoke periodical SNGCC meetings, for the purpose of presenting and discussing specific outputs, strategies and next steps, all aimed to meet ETF requirements</p>	<p>100% The SNGCC is coordinated by the SCCP. Among its functions is to validate and submit for approval to the President of Nicaragua all reports generated in-country on climate-related matters. In keeping with this mandate, the SCCP has introduced to the SNGCC for validation: - The Fourth National Communication - The First Biennial Update Report - 2019 National Inventory Report - A proposal for the comprehensive structure of an MRV System to be used in the AFOLU sector</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>Output 1.1.2. A decision-making training programme was designed for the ITT. It is linked to the integration of knowledge of national processes, as per ETF requirements.</p> <p>Activity 1.1.2.1 Design a Training Programme for the ITT Activity 1.1.2.2 Ensure the inclusion of gender equality in the training programme</p>	<p>Indicator 4: Number of ITT staff and members of the SNGCC and SPCC who under equal opportunities for women and men increase their capacities to meet the requirements of the ETF in the four prioritized information flows, including gender equality and indigenous and traditional knowledge.</p>		<p>Design and train the ACC in methodology monitoring and evaluation of agricultural technologies (INTA).</p>	<p>100% Twenty-nine (29) INTA technicians at central and departmental level were trained.  This achievement also contributes to reaching P.1.1.4</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>

<p>Output 1.1.3. A programme for the exchange and capture of experiences was designed and implemented for the ITT. It includes platforms and international research centres linked to the MRV of emissions, as per the ETF for the agriculture and forestry sectors.</p> <p>Activity 1.1.3.1 Design a programme for the exchange and capture of experiences in the forestry sector</p> <p>Activity 1.1.3.2 Implement a work programme with SEPAL</p> <p>Activity 1.1.3.3 Design and train a programme for MRV in the agriculture sector</p> <p>Activity 1.1.3.4 Implement a work programme to develop an MRV in the agriculture sector</p>	<p>Indicator 4: Number of ITT staff and members of the SNGCC and SPCC who under equal opportunities for women and men increase their capacities to meet the requirements of the ETF in the four prioritized information flows, including gender equality and indigenous and traditional knowledge.</p>		<p>Facilitate the inclusion of SEPAL to the INETER platform, in order to ensure other institutions are granted access. Design and implement a programme by means of which to gather and exchange experiences.</p>	<p>100%</p> <p>A successful event took place at which knowledge was strengthened regarding the Land Cover and Use Monitoring System and the application information technology, due to the technical assistance provided by regional FAO advisors. During the event, knowledge was updated on good practices for monitoring changes in soil use and cover, as well as es on how to estimate uncertainty. In addition, a road map was prepared based on which to implement improvements in data collection related to these topics.</p> <p>A total of 33 technicians participated, of which 24% were women. The technicians belong to key institutions as regards generating information on soil use (INETER, MAG, INTA, MEFCCA, INAFOR and MARENA).</p> <p>As concerns NGHGI, a technical exchange was coordinated between the CCS and the FAO PCT team with the World Bank. This collaboration allowed for strengthening technical links between the team in charge of NGHGI and international experts from Mexico and Chile. The exchange allowed for strengthening knowledge among 51 SNGCC technicians.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
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<p>Output 1.1.4. ITT team capacities strengthened</p>	<p>Indicator 4: Number of ITT staff and members of the SNGCC and SPCC who under equal opportunities for women and men increase their capacities to meet the requirements of the ETF in the four prioritized information flows, including gender equality and indigenous and traditional knowledge.</p>		<p>Design a proposal for M&amp;E of technologies in agriculture</p>	<p>100% The M&amp;E methodology was prepared with the participation of twenty (20) INTA technicians during the design and validation process.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>and linked to the M&amp;E of adaptation actions in the agriculture sector, in accordance with guideline 1 of the national CCAMP.</p>			<p>systematization of adaptation technologies, the definition of indicators, the application of an evaluation methodology and capacity-strengthening.</p>		
<p>Activity 1.1.4.1 Adapt and train in M&amp;E methodologies for adaptation to climate change Activity 1.1.4.2 Design and include gender equality in the training programme Activity 1.1.4.3 Conduct case studies on M&amp;E methodologies for adaptation to change</p>					

<p>Output 1.1.5. A national methodological process (road map) for monitoring and reporting was established and adopted by the SNGCC, as per ETF requirements. Activity 1.1.5.1 Design a road map for reporting Activity 1.1.5.1 Support the implementation of the road map</p>	<p>Indicator 4: Number of ITT staff and members of the SNGCC and SPCC who under equal opportunities for women and men increase their capacities to meet the requirements of the ETF in the four prioritized information flows, including gender equality and indigenous and traditional knowledge.</p>		<p>Design road map for the submission of reports</p>	<p>100%</p> <p>The road map has been prepared in response to the deadlines established by the ETF MPGs contained in the Paris Agreement. Currently, the roadmap is used for decision-making by management in support of the required continuity of reports.</p> <p>This achievement was reached as a joint effort with the project, thus enabling the preparation of Nicaragua's Fourth National Communication and the First Biennial Update Report to the UNFCCC.</p>		
				<p>In order to ensure the adoption of the methodological process and continuity of reports it is necessary to have a country road map.</p>		
<p>Outputs of outcome 2.1</p>	<p>Indicators</p>	<p>Baseline</p>	<p>Project end goal</p>	<p>% achieved</p>	<p>Rating</p>	<p>Rationale</p>

<p>Output 2.1.1. A national plan for evaluation, monitoring and surveillance of GHG emissions in agriculture and forestry sectors was designed. This action was coordinated by MARENA within the framework of the SNGCC.</p> <p>Activity 2.1.1.1 Design the National Mitigation/MRV Plan for the AFOLU sector Activity 2.1.1.2 Support the implementation of the National Mitigation/MRV Plan</p>	<p>Indicator 5: Number of evaluations, monitoring and surveillance plans for GHG emissions for the agriculture and forestry sectors prepared and implemented, according to ETF MPGs.</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>100% 2 Plans for evaluation, monitoring and surveillance of GHG emissions for the agriculture and forestry sectors prepared and implemented, according to ETF MPGs.</p> <p>An additional achievement, not originally included, was the strengthening of technological capacities and infrastructure of at the Ministry of Agriculture (MAG), for the purpose of contributing to the improvement of the information generated and managed by the institution and that is of interest to the MRV in the agriculture subsector. This had not been considered earlier because the need had not been taken into account during the design of the MAGproject.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
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<p>Output 2.1.2. Capacities strengthened at INAFOR in the use of tools (second cycle of National Forest Inventory (NFI) measurement of and adaptation of the Sila Metricus software for national forest monitoring.</p> <p>Activity 2.1.2.1 Design training in the use of tools for the National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS). Activity 2.1.2.1 Implement the training programme.</p>	<p>Indicator 6: Number of Institutions that make up the Forest MRV roundtable increase their capacities in the use of tools and guidelines for national forest monitoring.</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>80%</p> <p>INAFOR has made notable progress in strengthening the NFI. These achievements include the development of a methodological framework and field manual for the next NFI cycle and the successful execution of the second cycle of NFI measurement through effective collaboration between international technical assistance and the ITT, the improvement of the Sila Metricus software for data collection and analysis, as well as the development of equations for national forest species and capacity strengthening among INAFOR personnel. These advances represent a significant step towards more efficient forest management and a better understanding of forest resources in Nicaragua.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
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<p>Output 2.1.3. Capacities at INTA strengthened through specialized technical and methodological tools, in order to determine emission factors in agriculture and at INAFOR for purpose of calibrating allometric equations of forests and agroforestry systems. Being able to do so will support the generation of reports in accordance with ETF requirements.</p> <p>Activity 2.1.3.1 Design and train staff on GHG emission factors in the agriculture sector Activity 2.1.3.2 Validate the emission factor methodology in the agriculture sector Activity 2.1.3.3 Train staff in allometric equations for forests and agroforestry systems Activity 2.1.3.4 Validate the allometric equations methodology Activity 2.1.3.5 Prepare and publish the final document</p>	<p>Indicator 5: Number of evaluation, monitoring and surveillance plans for GHG emissions for the agriculture and forestry sectors prepared and implemented, according to ETF MPGs.</p>	1	2	<p>100%</p> <p>Two (2) evaluation, monitoring and surveillance plans for GHG emissions in the agriculture and forestry sectors prepared and implemented, according ETF MPGs.</p> <p>The methodology was developed so as to determine emission factors for enteric fermentation of level 2 cattle and the emission factors for dairy and other types of cattle. These were obtained in accordance with NGHGI requirements.</p>	Not applicable	Not applicable
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<p>Output 2.1.4. Methodologies were identified for the adaptation and application of adaptation actions in the agriculture and forestry sectors, according to guideline 1 of the CCAMP.</p> <p>Activity 2.1.4.1 Review and train in methodologies on the adoption of adaptation actions Activity 2.1.4.2 Train to incorporate gender equality and interculturality Activity 2.1.4.3 Validate adaptation methodologies and actions</p>	<p>Indicator 5: Number of evaluation, monitoring and surveillance plans for GHG emissions for the agriculture and forestry sectors prepared and implemented, according to ETMPGs.</p>	<p>1</p>		<p>100% Through technical assistance, and in direct collaboration with INTA, it was possible to design and apply a methodology for the systematization, monitoring and evaluation of technologies for adaptation to climate change in the agriculture sector. The process took into account the technologies promoted in Nicaragua, for the purpose of reaching the forefront in these, as well as measuring their impact over time.</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>
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Outputs Result 3.1	Indicators	Baseline	Project end goal	% achieved	Rating
<p>Output 3.1.1  Lessons were learnt and gathered, and knowledge exchanges took place in the agriculture and forestry sectors. These were shared on national and international platforms (e.g. CBIT Global Coordination Platform) with the goal of improving programming and reporting, as per ETF requirements.</p> <p>Activity 3.1.1.1 Identify good practices and lessons learned in mitigation and adaptation.</p> <p>Activity 3.1.1.2 Strengthen the information platform at SINIA.</p>					

<p>Output 3.1.2 A dissemination plan on the implementation of good practices for adaptation and mitigation to climate change in accordance with guidelines 1, 5 and 6 of the national CCAMP is designed and implemented, in the enhanced transparency framework. It is geared toward public officials, Universities, farmers/cattle ranchers and forest owners.</p> <p>Activity 3.1.2.1 Design a dissemination plan on good adaptation and mitigation practices Activity 3.1.2.2 Implement the dissemination plan</p>	<p>Indicator 7: Number of bulletins issued on good practices, experiences and lessons learned regarding mitigation and adaptation to climate change.</p>	0	6	<p>100%</p> <p>The following documents were designed and disseminated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National Climate Change Policy</li> <li>- First Biennial Update Report</li> <li>- 2019 National Inventory Report</li> <li>- NFI Methodological Framework</li> <li>- NFI Field Manual</li> </ul> <p>Technical assistance for the monitoring and evaluation of adaptation technologies in the agriculture sector generated a strategy and plan for the dissemination of good practices regarding the implementation of agricultural technologies that contribute to the adaptation to climate change in Nicaragua.</p> <p>Additionally, an achievement not considered originally was the publication in the scientific dissemination magazine Forest IMDB of the study on allometric equations for <i>Pinus oocarpa</i> carried out by INAFOR, with assistance from FAO,</p>	Not applicable	Not applicable
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## **ANNEX 1: Terms of Reference**

### **Terminal Evaluation**

**Terms of reference (ToRs), terminal evaluation of the project titled “Strengthen institutional and technical capacities in the agriculture and forestry sectors of Nicaragua in response to the requirements of the Enhanced Transparency Framework under the Paris Agreement”**

**GCP/NIC/042/CBT**

**GEF ID: 10118**

**UNITED NATIONS FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION  
Nicaragua, October 2023**

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## Abbreviations and acronyms

B.H	Budget Holder
CP	Country Programming
DEX	FAO Direct Implementation Modality
EM	Evaluation Manager
ET	Evaluation Team
EO	Framework Strategic Objective
CCAMP	Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Policy
ENDE REDD+	Strategy for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
ETF	Enhanced Transparency Framework
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
GHG	Greenhouse gases
INTA	Nicaraguan Institute of Agricultural Technology
INAFOR	National Forestry Institute
INETER	Nicaraguan Territorial Studies Institute
LoA	Letter of Agreement
LTO	Lead Technical Officer
MARENA	Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources
MEFCCA	Ministry of Family, Community, Cooperative and Associative Economy
MACCS	Agroecology, Climate Change and Soil Measurement Roundtable
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PNDH	National Human Development Programme
PIR	Project Implementation Report
PSC	Project Steering Committee
SCCP	Climate Change Secretariat, Office of the Presidency
SNGCC	National Climate Change Management System
SNPCC	Production, Consumption and Commerce System
TE	Terminal Evaluation



General information, project/programme background and purpose of the evaluation.

1. This document describes the Terms of Reference (ToRs) for the Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the project titled “Strengthen institutional and technical capacities in the agriculture and forestry sectors of Nicaragua in response to the requirements of the Enhanced Transparency Framework under the Paris Agreement”, GCP/NIC/042/CBT. The TE is planned for in the project, is a Global Environment Facility (GEF) requirement and will allow for showing the results obtained, identifying additional needs and generating recommendations for future projects. The aim is to consolidate national capacities so they are in a position to meet the requirements of the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF).
2. The project is part of the 7<sup>th</sup> GEF replenishment period. The idea for the project idea was presented on 22 October 2018, with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) as the implementing agency and the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources (MARENA) as the implementing entity. The original project was approved on 30 October 2018. The full Project Document was approved by GEF on 24 August 2020.

**Table 1. Basic project information**

<p><b>Qualification:</b> Strengthening institutional and technical capacities in the agriculture and forestry sectors of Nicaragua in response to the requirements of the Enhanced Transparency Framework under the Paris Agreement</p> <p><b>FAO Code:</b> GCP/NIC/042/CBT</p> <p><b>GEF ID:</b> 10118</p> <p><b>Replenishment of GEF resources and focal area:</b> 7 “Climate change mitigation” (CCM)</p> <p><b>Beneficiary country:</b> Nicaragua</p> <p><b>Implementing agency:</b> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).</p> <p><b>Executing agency:</b> Climate Change Secretariat at the President’s Office (SCCP).</p> <p><b>Project duration:</b> EOD 14 January 2021 – NTE 13 January 2024</p> <p><b>Implementation modality:</b> Direct (DEX)</p> <p><b>Budget:</b> USD 1,172,842 USD. GEF contribution: USD 863,242 (74%); national in-kind co-financing: USD 309,600 (26%).</p>
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3. Initially the general execution and technical responsibility for the project was a MARENA responsibility. However, due to the subsequent creation of the Climate Change Secretariat at the President’s Office (SCCP)<sup>73</sup> and by decision of the Project Steering Committee, project coordination was turned over to the Secretariat. The SCCP's functions include monitoring and supporting the execution of Nicaragua's commitments to international and specialized organizations on climate change, among which is the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its instruments, among them the Paris Agreement and the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF).
4. The SCCP was assigned its responsibility by the government of Nicaragua (GON) for ensuring technical quality and obtaining the results anticipated in the project. FAO has overall responsibility vis-à-vis GEF and GON for the proper management of resources allocated under the Direct Implementation (DEX) modality.
5. The project management scheme at the time of approval indicated MARENA as the implementing entity (figure 1). However, with the creation of the SCCP the management scheme was modified to include its role as implementing entity (figure 2):

<sup>73</sup> Created by Presidential Decree No. 06-2021, published in the Official Gazette, 10 May 2021.

Figure 1. Original Project organization scheme

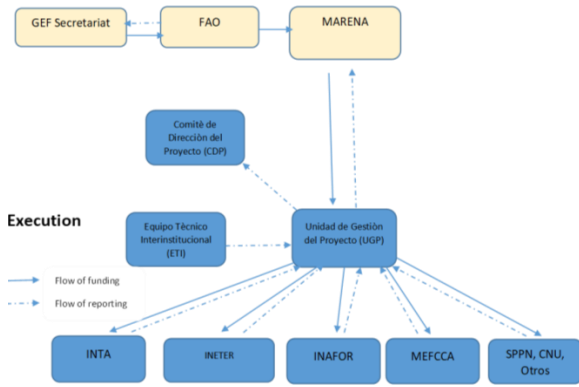
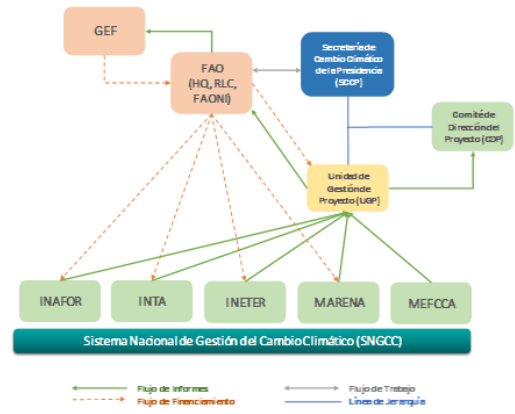


Figure 2. Adjusted project organization scheme



6. The SCCP chairs the Project Steering Committee (PSC), which is the main governing body of the project. The PSC approves annual work plans and budgets, and provides strategic guidance to the Project Management Unit (PMU) and all implementing partners. The PSC is made up of the SCCP, MARENA, MEFCCA, INAFOR, INETER, INTA and FAO. If necessary, any of the 21 entities that make up the National Climate Change Management System (SNGCC) can also be summoned to join.<sup>74</sup>
7. For project execution purposes, the FAO Project Coordination Unit–SCCP was formed. It is physically located at the offices of the Secretariat of the Presidency (SEPRES). The unit is made up of the Technical Project Coordinator, a specialist in greenhouse gas inventories, a technical support assistant for the preparation of the fifth INGHG and an Operational Technical Assistant. The Coordination Unit performs the same functions for the project GCP/NIC/046/GFF Fourth National Communication on Climate Change and First Biennial Update Report (BUR).
8. The implementation of project activities, as well as decision-making, is jointly coordinated by the FAO–SCCP Unit. On the part of the Secretariat, decision-making falls to the Secretary of Climate Change as the top authority. The Programme Area of the FAO office in Nicaragua is the counterpart body for technical operational monitoring and project monitoring, for which it has designated a GEF project portfolio coordinator who interacts directly with all projects financed by the aforementioned fund. Additionally, technical support is forthcoming from the project’s lead technical officer (LTO) and the FAO-GEF task manager for Mesoamerica, both located in the FAO Subregional Office for Mesoamerica in Panama.
9. Project implementation partners are the Ministry of Family, Community, Cooperative and Associative Economy (MEFCCA), the National Forestry Institute (INAFOR), the Nicaraguan Institute of Territorial Studies (INETER) and the Nicaraguan Institute of Agricultural Technology (INTA). Within the project implementation framework, Letters of Agreement (LoAs) were signed with MARENA, INETER, INAFOR and INTA, for the purpose of developing specific outputs. In the particular case of MEFCCA, it has not had financial responsibility, but has participated in the capacity-strengthening processes promoted by the project. The total project budget is of USD 1,172,842.00, of which the GEF is contributing USD 863,242.00 (74%) and the remaining USD 309,600.00 (26%) reflects national in-kind co-financing.

**Table 2. Project co-financing**

Source of co-financing	Co-financing agency	Type of co-financing	Amount of co-financing (USD)
National government	INTA	In-kind (recurring expense)	118 800
	INAFOR	In-kind (recurring expense)	43 200
	INETER	In-kind (recurring expense)	50 400
	MEFCCA	In-kind (recurring expense)	32 400
GEF Agency	FAO	In-kind (recurring expense)	64 800
Total co-financing			309 600

10. The project’s objective is to strengthen technical and institutional capacities in the agriculture and

<sup>74</sup>Created by Presidential Decree No. 15-2021, published the Official Gazette, No. 120, 30 June 2021. The SNGCC is the direct successor of the National Climate Change Response System (SNRCC) and is a political-strategic instance for consultation, development and monitoring of policies, standards, instruments and strategies by which to further compliance with national climate targets.

forestry sectors and thus meet the requirements set forth in the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF) under the Paris Agreement, in harmony with Nicaragua's National Human Development Programme (PNHD) and the guidelines of the Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Policy (CCAMP). The project consists of three components: the first aims to strengthen the articulation between the National Climate Change Response System (SNRCC) and the National Production, Consumption and Commerce System (SPCC) for the agriculture and forestry sectors by strengthening their capacities to report on changes in the climate, as per the ETF. The second component is intended to improve the systematic generation of greenhouse gases (GHG) data and the monitoring of mitigation actions through the National Climate Change Response System (SNRCC). Finally, the third component is aimed at improving the institutional capacities for communication, exchange and dissemination of good practices on climate change mitigation, emissions reduction and their effects on prioritized sectors.

**Component 1.** Strengthening institutional capacities to meet the requirements of the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETR) of the Paris Agreement in the agriculture and forestry sectors. It was aimed at strengthening the capacities of ITT staff at INTA, INAFOR, MARENA, MEFCCA and INETER, with respect to ETF requirements for the execution of the mandates set forth in the National Human Development Programme and guidelines 1, 5 and 6 of the Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Policy in the Agriculture and Forestry sectors, including the consolidation of the national coordination platform made up of ITT staff at the National Response to Climate Change System and the National Production, Consumption and Commerce System, in the latter two cases for the purpose of monitoring and evaluating strategies and accompanying policy proposals, in accordance with ETF requirements.

**Component 2.** Research and generation of information to strengthen reports and monitoring of progress achieved with mitigation and adaptation actions in the agriculture and forestry sectors. It has for a **result** to strengthen technical capacities for monitoring, quantification and analysis of the data necessary to generate GHG reports and to monitor and evaluate the prioritized sectors.

**Component 3.** Dissemination of good practices and lessons learned at the national and international level. Its **outcome** is to achieve improvements in education, communication and human and institutional capacity as regards climate change mitigation, emissions reductions and their positive effects in the prioritized sectors.

The project is aligned with national climate priorities. It helps Nicaragua meet its commitments under the UNFCCC, including the Paris Agreement. The project objective and results are aligned with the 2018–2021 National Human Development Plan (PNHD), the National Policy for Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change (PNMACC), the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), the Strategy for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (ENDE REDD+), the Emissions Reduction Programme (ERPD) and the National Forest Programme (NFP). Finally, the project supports the functions of the National Climate Change Response System (SNRCC), as defined in article 9 of Decree 07-2019, which is linked to ETF article 13 under the Paris Agreement.

11. The project is aligned with the GEF-7 focal area "Climate Change Mitigation" (CCM), in particular with its objective 3, which is to "Promote enabling conditions for incorporating mitigation concerns into sustainable development strategies". Specifically, it applies to CCM3-8: "Foster enabling conditions for incorporating mitigation concerns into sustainable development strategies through the transparency capacity-building initiative." The project will contribute to the improvement of local and global environmental conditions through greater transparency of coordinated actions and planning activities, as well as capacity-building at Nicaragua's National Climate Change Response System for monitoring and reporting. Greater transparency will contribute to the implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), including the Paris Agreement.
12. The project is aligned with FAO strategic objective 2: "Increase and improve the provision of goods and

services from agriculture, forestry and fisheries in a sustainable manner” (SO2). In particular, the project aligns with (i) Organizational outcome 2.3: Stakeholders support/adopt international (including regional) instruments and governance mechanisms related to support for sustainable agricultural production systems; and (ii) Organizational outcome 2.4: Stakeholders make evidence-based decisions in the planning and management of the agriculture and natural resources sectors, in support of the transition to sustainable production systems in the former through monitoring, gathering of statistics, evaluation and analysis.

The project is aligned with FAO Regional Initiative No. 3 for Latin America and the Caribbean: promote the sustainable use of natural resources, adaptation to climate change and disaster risk management. At national level it is aligned with Priority Area 3 of the 2018-2021 Country Programming Framework (MPP): “Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and Climate Change”, result 3.2: “SNPCC has better capacities, mechanisms and tools for the generation and dissemination of climatic and agroclimatic information, in order to meet information requirements derived from international commitments and productive decisions at the national level.” Corporate indicator 2.4.3: In 2020, SNPCC acquires strengthened institutional capacities for preparing, monitoring and reporting, in accordance with international commitments on climate change. In 2021, there are strengthened technical research, quantification and data analysis capacities for generating GHG reports in the agriculture and forestry sectors.

During project formulation, it was identified there is a need to coordinate actions with other project formulation and/or implementation initiatives, particularly in the Fourth National Communication and Nicaragua’s first BUR project (GCP/NIC/046/GFF), which are also financed by GEF. It was decided that the implementation of both projects would cover the priority needs for capacity building in the topics related to the updating of the National GHG Inventories for the period 2000-2015, the updating of the First Biannual Inventory for the period 2016-2018, as well as a set of tasks related to the ETF modalities, procedures and guidelines (MPGs) which were approved in decision 18 at COP 24 (December 2018). Capacity development to prepare the contents of the Biennial Transparency Report (BTR) was also to be initiated through both projects.

- Project Document describes MARENA, MEFCCA, INAFOR, INTA as key national actors. With the subsequent creation of the SCCP and its designation as the executing entity, it is now included as a fundamental actor. Table 3, below, is a stakeholder analysis matrix of project implementation.

**Table 3. Stakeholder analysis matrix**

Key stake-holders (break down as appropriate) <sup>75</sup>	What is his/her function in the project?	What is the reason for his/her inclusion or exclusion from the Terminal Evaluation?	TE priority (1-3) <sup>76</sup>	When and how should he/she get involved in the Terminal Evaluation?
<b>1. Active stakeholders with direct responsibility for the project (e.g. FAO implementing partners)</b>				
Javier GutiérrezRamírez	Technical approval of project activities, with support from Project Coordination. Member of the Project Steering Committee.	Secretary for Climate Change at the SCCP and authority in senior decision-making. He is also the GEF Operational Focal Point in Nicaragua.	1	From the onset, in order to ensure the prompt exchange of information between the SCCP and the TE teams

<sup>75</sup> Include the names of the pertinent persons, if known, and be as specific as possible.

<sup>76</sup> 1 = fundamental; 2 = desirable; 3 = if time and resources allow

Armando Flores Garcia	Technical accompaniment to Project Coordination and other institutions involved	SCCP Climate Change expert. Has the historical institutional memory of Nicaragua's commitments regarding climate matters	1	From the onset, in order to ensure the prompt exchange of information between the SCCP and the TE teams
Heydin Calderón	Undertakes capacity and technological strengthening activities	Minister of MARENA, one of the entities participating in the project	2	In the information collection phase, to systematise experiences gathered from capacity-strengthening processes
Ivan León	In charge of the budget	Responsible for the	1	From the onset,
FAO Representative, Nicaragua	Member of the Project Steering Committee	Operational, administrative and financial management of GEF resources		To ensure facilitation of the TE process by FAONI
Milton Castillo. National Programme Officer, FAO Nicaragua	Provide technical accompaniment to project implementation, in coordination with the FAO representative and the GEF portfolio Coordinator at FAONI	Member of the Interdisciplinary Working Group created to accompany project implementation	1	From the onset, to ensure facilitation of the TE process by FAONI
Lisbeth Castellón. National Operations Officer at FAONI	Accompany and supervise operational project processes at FAONI	Member of the Interdisciplinary Working Group created to accompany project implementation	1	From the onset, to ensure facilitation of the TE process by FAONI
Maria Fernanda Sánchez, Coordinator of the GEF Portfolio at FAONI	Manage and coordinate project implementation	Member of the Interdisciplinary Working Group created to accompany project implementation	1	From the onset, to ensure facilitation of the TE process by FAONI
Carla Ramírez Zea	Provides advisory and technical support for project tasks	She is the project's Lead Technical Officer (LTO) and a member of the technical coordination team.	1	From the onset, to ensure facilitation of the TE process by FAONI
Carolina López Madrigal	Coordinates and supervises technical tasks and operational / financial activities	The project's technical-operational coordinator	1	From the onset, to ensure facilitation of the TE process by FAONI
Oswaldo PérezSleeves	Technically assists task execution and achievement of results and coordinates operational activities under the guidelines of the Coordinator of the GEF Portfolio and the Coordinator of the project	Technical assistant	1	From the outset, to ensure facilitation of the TE process at FAONI and the availability of information related to project implementation

Diana Rocha	Financial portfolio specialist for GEF projects	Provides follow-up to the financial execution and the letters of agreement signed with participating entities	1	From the outset, in charge of financial monitoring
Juan Carlos Blandón	Programmatic technical assistant for GEF project portfolio	Provides follow-up to technical aspects of project implementation, specifically the work with INAFOR and procurements	1	From the outset, to ensure facilitation of the TE process at FAONI and the availability of information related to project implementation
<b>2. Active stakeholders with authority to take decisions regarding the project (e.g. members of the PSC).</b>				
Luis Valerio	Coordinates the INAFOR work plan activities in the framework of the CBIT project	Director of Forest Monitoring and Information at INAFOR and technical liaison to project	1	At the information collection phase, for the purpose of systematising experiences garnered from capacity-strengthening processes
Vladimir Prado	Coordinates the INETER work plan activities in the framework of the CBIT project	Director General of Territorial Planning and INETER technical liaison to the project	1	At the information collection phase, for the purpose of systematising experiences garnered from capacity-strengthening processes
José Ramón Rodríguez	Coordinates the INTA work plan activities in the framework of the CBIT project	Research Section Manager for cattle and smallstock and INTA technical liaison to the projec	1	At the information collection phase, for the purpose of systematising experiences garnered from capacity-strengthening processes
Nasser Carrillo	Coordinate activities of the INTA work plan within the framework of the CBIT project	Planning Director and INTA technical liaison to the project	1	At the information collection phase, for the purpose of systematising experiences garnered from capacity-strengthening processes
Institutional technicians, central level, INAFOR and INETER	Participate in capacity-strengthening processes and activities	Participants in capacity-strengthening processes on Methodologies by which to monitor natural resources (forest, land use, soils, changes in land cover, etc.)	2	At the information collection phase, for the purpose of systematising experiences garnered from capacity-strengthening processes
<b>3. Secondary stakeholders (only affected indirectly or temporarily)</b>				
Ministry of Agriculture (MAG)	Participates in technological capacity-strengthening processes and activities	MAG is the institution charged with monitoring and following up on the production and generation of statistics on agriculture. Not a direct participant. There is potential for strengthening and increasing technical collaboration.	2	At the information collection phase, for the purpose of systematising experiences garnered from capacity-strengthening processes

Ministry of Family, Community, Cooperative and Associative Economy (MEFCCA)	Participates in technological capacity-strengthening processes and activities	MEFCCA is one of the entities participating directly in the project	2	At the information collection phase, for the purpose of systematising experiences garnered from capacity-strengthening processes
<b>4. Community-level stakeholders who benefit directly or indirectly from the intervention (disaggregated by gender if possible).</b>				
<b>5. Stakeholders at community level who do not benefit from the intervention (disaggregated by gender if possible).</b>				
<b>6. Other stakeholders that do not participate directly in the intervention (e.g. development agencies working in the same geographical area, civil society organizations).</b>				
Departmental branches of CODEFOR / COREFOR institutions: - INAFOR - MARENA - MEFCCA - MAG - IPSA  Municipal governments and Caribbean Coast regional governments	Participate in capacity-strengthening activities	Participate in capacity-strengthening sessions to assimilate concepts found in the ETF	2	Identification and systematization of capacity-strengthening experiences

Cut at 30 September 2023, project execution has been USD 715,680.00, equivalent to 84% of the total budget (852,000 USD). The funds execution model at participating institutions has taken place based on Letters of Agreement (LoA) signed between FAO and these entities for the development of specific products and the carrying out of strategic activities defined in the projects results framework. FAO signed one LoA with MARENA; one LoA with INETER; two LoAs with INTA; and two LoAs with INAFOR.

15. Project financial execution by component and year has been as follows:

**Table 4. Project financial execution**

Component	Expenditure 2021	Expenditure 2022	Expenditure 2023	Total budget execution
<b>Component 1</b>	USD 46,552	USD 11,106	USD 161,579.72	USD 219,237
<b>Component 2</b>	USD 169,618	USD 103,159	USD 238.17 <sup>85</sup>	USD 358,015
<b>Component 3</b>	USD 26,035	USD (1,021)	USD 102 410.32	USD 104,137
<b>PMC</b>	USD 1,726	USD 4,243 USD	USD 34,506.69	USD 50,475
<b>Total</b>	USD 243,930	USD 127,487	USD 383,735	USD 755 152.04

Budget execution cut at 24 October 2023. Source: FPMIS



16. Among the advances described in the latest Progress Implementation Report (PIR) for July 2022 –June 2023, the following stand out:
  17. **Component 1:** It has been possible to improve the degree of participation of institutions of the original project ITT, which was made up of MARENA, INTA, INAFOR, INETER and MEFCCA and to which the SCCP has now been incorporated. The direct involvement of institutions in processes aimed at strengthening knowledge and ownership of the conceptualization, scope and implications of the ETF of the Paris Agreement is highlighted; The transmission and exchange of knowledge was aimed at meeting the requirements for the preparation of increasingly robust and exhaustive climate reports, considering national circumstances and identifying the strengths of each institution according to their work areas.
  18. One of the collaboration mechanisms that has allowed the increase in institutional participation has been the signing of Letters of Agreement (LoAs) with INTA, INETER and INAFOR. As a result, these institutions have carried out tasks and generated outputs aimed at strengthening capacities in the calculation of emission factors and forest monitoring (agriculture and forest sectors), and the preparation of land use and land cover maps. These are key inputs for national GHG inventories and the evaluation of status of natural resources.
  19. Workshops have been held to promote knowledge regarding ETF modalities, procedures and guidelines among institutions of the National Climate Change Management System and international support organizations. This knowledge has also had a territorial scope through INAFOR, which held promotion workshops with departmental forestry commissions (CODEFORs).
  20. An event took place to strengthen capacities in the use of tools for monitoring land use and land cover was developed with technical assistance from FAO international specialists (NFO/NFOD). From this activity, a strategic result was obtained, namely a roadmap for the implementation of improvements in the collection of land use and land cover change data.
  21. **Component 2:** Regarding monitoring and quantification of emissions from the forest sector, INAFOR has developed a new Methodological Framework and Field Manual for the new measurement cycle of the National Forest Inventory. It has also incorporated the use of Silva Metricus software into its field data collection tools and has developed the first two allometric equations in Nicaragua for two forest species of national importance, Cedar and Pine (*Pinus oocarpa*).
  22. The Agroecological, Climate Change and Soil Roundtable, led by INTA, was reactivated by the project. This is a platform for exchanging technical knowledge with different government institutions involved in the agriculture sector, as well as producer and support organizations. Support was provided for the design of an operations manual and work plan for the Roundtable, aimed at becoming a space for technical exchange of information on climate action and management.
  23. INTA is also in the final process of formulating emission factors for cattle enteric fermentation, with international technical assistance from FAO. To date, the methodology has been defined by IPCC Guidelines and primary information has been collected in selected study areas under a multi-criteria analysis.
  24. For its part, INETER prepared the 2020 Land Use and Coverage Map. This technical input is being used to develop analysis of change in land use and coverage between 2018-2020 and is to be reported on in Nicaragua's First Biennial Update Report (BUR).
  25. **Component 3.** INTA, with technical assistance from FAO, is developing a methodology for monitoring and evaluating adaptation technologies transferred to the agriculture sector. To date, 121 technologies transferred by this institution have been identified and a selection was made under different expert criteria. These are to be evaluated, based on their contribution to the adaptation of agricultural productive systems.
  26. INTA is also in the process of developing a plan to disseminate practices and technologies for adaptation to climate change in the agriculture sector. These were prioritized by means of the aforementioned

evaluation.

27. As part of the dissemination of knowledge regarding the stage of climate change management in Nicaragua, through the project and in conjunction with the SCCP, 12 workshops have been held for the purpose of presenting the Fourth National Communication on Climate Change to territorial actors in the departments and Caribbean Coast autonomous regions.

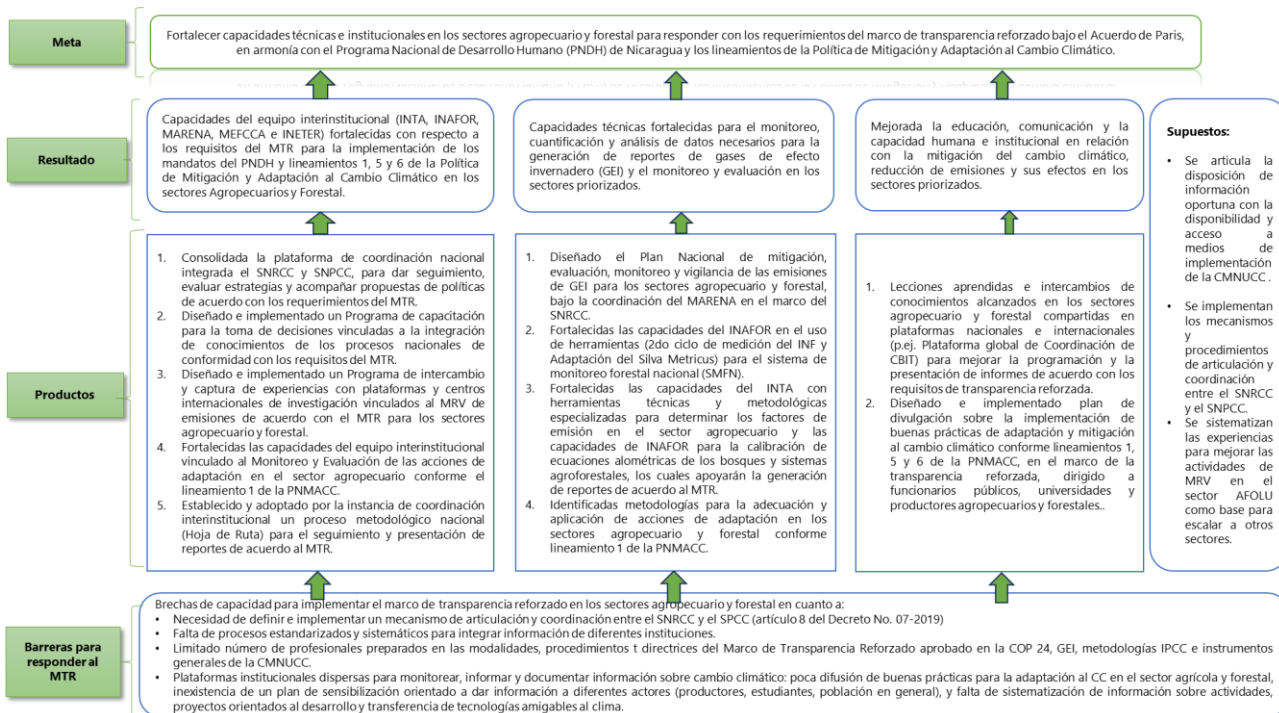
28. Through technical collaboration with institutions, the project has generated several technical documents of interest which must be disseminated. In this regard, it has been possible to carry out the design and dissemination of these technical documents, among which the National Climate Change Policy, the Methodological Framework, the Field Manual for the new measurement cycle of the National Inventory and the Forestry and the Study of Allometric Equations stand out.

29. The project was not subject to a Mid-Term Review (MTR).

### Theory of change

The Project Document does not have a theory of change (ToC) as such. However, it highlights that the strategy by which to meet ETF requirements in the agriculture and forestry sectors is based on the Government of Reconciliation and National Unity (GRUN) policy, which favours economic and social development by protecting the most vulnerable population sectors, through a direct work model with families and communities, capacity-strengthening, knowledge and behaviours that allow the population to face risks and recover from disasters, as well as a work model in alliance with the productive sector and in permanent dialogue intended to deal with the challenges posed by economic development, job creation and poverty reduction.

**Figure 3. Theory of Change (indicative, from Project Document)**



## Scope, objectives and evaluation questions:

30. In accordance with GEF guidelines, this TE has a dual purpose, namely accountability and learning. It evaluates project results and its contribution to the needs and priorities of the counterpart institutions, documents lessons learned and generates recommendations for future projects, aimed at consolidating national capacities to meet ETF requirements.

31. The TE has been undertaken for the following purposes:

- To ensure accountability when working to meet information needs and interests of policy makers and other actors with decision-making power (e.g. GON, FAO and the FAO–GEF Coordination Unit).
- To evaluate project performance in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, and provide evidence of the actual end results achieved, in accordance with project objectives, processes and results decided upon during its formulation.
- To identify issues or challenges faced by the project and learn the causes of any underperformance.
- To understand the reasons how and why there were intended and unintended results, respectively, the extent to which the former were achieved, their impact on stakeholders and their value in relation to national priorities.
- To generate knowledge concerning good practices, key contributions, lessons learned, systematizations and areas with potential for scale-up and replication, disseminate success stories and promote the exchange of knowledge and learning, including the identification of lessons learned that may lead to improvements in the implementation of other GEF projects already underway and the formulation of future projects.

32. The Terminal Evaluation (TE) is an independent assessment of achievements, outputs and results versus budget execution. It is carried out by direction of the Budget Manager, working with a team of independent, external evaluators, with technical accompaniment by the OED. It is carried out in a transparent, impartial and independent manner and covers all project activities from its beginning to the date of the evaluation. During the TE, participation by the main stakeholders, partners and beneficiaries of the training processes will be encouraged, including FAONI itself and other partners related to project implementation (see table 3 for guidance). Its purpose is to determine the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the interventions and the contributions made by the partners involved.

33. The ET will focus on project progress, achievements and performance, including management, a review of implementation agreements and degree of compliance with these, as well as administrative, procurement and training processes. It will also analyse project design and provide a systematic analysis of the information collected and included in the Monitoring and Results Plan, including indicators and means of verification of the project's logical framework matrix.

**Table 5. Purposes and main TE recipients**

Purpse		Recipient
Accountability. Satisfy information needs and interests of policy makers and other decision-making agents.	Adoption of well-founded decisions.  Accountability	FAO-GEF Coordination Unit. Project Steering Committee Coordination Unit FAO Team at headquarters, Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, Subregional Office for Mesoamerica FAO Representation in Nicaragua Lead Technical Officer (LTO)

<p>Improvement. Programme improvement and organizational development provide valuable information to those in charge of programme operations.</p>	<p>Make recommendations for formulation processes now underway (5th Communication, 1 and 2 BTR and CBIT-2)</p>	<p>FAO representation in Nicaragua  Secretariat of the Presidency (SCCP)</p>
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34. The TE objective is to evaluate project performance in terms of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, taking into account the different factors involved throughout its implementation, lessons learned and good practices; accountability and the generation of recommendations that strengthen new formulation processes leading to the consolidation of national capacities for the fulfilment of national commitments on climate-related matters.

By undertaking this process and bringing it to a satisfactory conclusion it is expected to:

- Analyse the results achieved by the project in relation to the implementation time, including the evaluation of the role of the implementation partner (SCCP) and the GEF implementation agency (FAO).
- Examine the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of the project in terms of achieving its objectives, results, potential impacts, partner involvement and expected outputs, as well as sustainability.
- Identify key learnings and factors in the design, implementation and sustainability of results, so these are taken into account in future GEF projects or interventions with other potential donors, partners or national counterparts.
- Assess the relevance of the intervention in relation to strengthening the needs of the institutions involved, the Country Priorities Framework, the FAO Strategic Objectives (SO) 2 and those of the GEF.
- Obtain inputs for the formulation of projects through i) the Fifth National Communication on Climate Change and BTR 1 & 2; and ii) CBIT-2.

35. The ET will analyse project achievements as detailed in the OED Manual for project evaluation and decentralized offices. These are as follows:

**Strategic relevance.** The extent to which the intervention design and intended outcomes were consistent with environmental priorities and policies (local and national) and the strategic priorities and objectives of the GEF and FAO, and remained appropriate to the contextual conditions over time, including complementarity with existing interventions and relevance for project stakeholders and beneficiaries.

**Effectiveness and progress towards impact.** The extent to which the intervention achieved outcomes (outputs, outcomes and effects, including contribution to Global Environmental Benefits - GEB) taking into account the main factors influencing these.

**Efficiency.** The extent to which the intervention has made resources acquire value by converting inputs (funding, personnel, expertise, equipment, etc.) into results, in the timeliest and least costly manner possible compared to other alternatives.

**Sustainability.** The (probable) continuation of the positive effects of the intervention once it has ended and its potential to be expanded and/or replicated. The evaluators may also consider other factors that in their opinion may affect sustainability. When analysing the environmental aspect, the evaluators must also determine the catalytic effect of the project/programme and the probability of replicating it.

Project design and implementation. The quality of project design and factors affecting its ability to commence

in a timely manner, including degree of preparedness of implementing partners at project outset and changes in the context between its formulation and onset of operations.

**Quality of project implementation.** To what extent did those involved effectively fulfil their role and responsibilities in day-to-day project management and administration, as well as the appropriate and timely use of funds, procurement and contracting of goods and services.

**Financial management and financing.** Quality, effectiveness and timeliness of the project's financial planning, control of financial resources and reporting. The analysis should examine the actual versus planned level of disbursement for each year and comment on any changes or trends. Any financial management issues that have affected performance, timeliness or quality of project delivery should be highlighted.

**Project partnerships and stakeholder engagement.** Level and quality of stakeholder participation, as well as project partnership agreements during the design and execution phase, based on the description of the stakeholder participation plan that was approved in the design phase. The ET must examine three related and often overlapping processes: a) the active participation of stakeholders in project design, the implementation of their activities and decision-making; b) consultations with and among stakeholders; and c) the dissemination of information related to the project to and among stakeholders.

**Communication, knowledge management and knowledge products.** The effectiveness of project communication of its objectives, progress achieved, results and main messages to date, as well as any structured learning and exchange of experiences between project partners and stakeholders that have emerged from the project.

36. Overall quality of monitoring and evaluation. During the process, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) should be analysed according to two main elements: M&E design and budgeting and M&E implementation, including the production of reports (for this section, please see the 2019 GEF Monitoring Policy).
37. Lessons learned and good practices. To be identified for fundamental, methodological or procedural issues, which may be relevant to design and implementation (management, partnerships, M&E, etc.) of similar projects/programmes.
38. The Terminal Evaluation report should be structured on the basis of the main evaluation questions corresponding to the aspects indicated above (see Annex 3B for Terminal Evaluation Reports of FAO-GEF projects).

### 39. Evaluation questions

40. The Terminal Evaluation will be guided by the questions detailed in Table 6. In order to ensure a thorough analysis of the key questions, the ET must formulate additional sub-questions in an evaluation matrix. This is to be done when planning the Terminal Evaluation.

**Table 6. Proposed evaluation questions**

Criterion	Proposed question
<p>A. Strategic relevance (requires a score)</p>	<p><u>General strategic relevance:</u>            Are project results relevant to priorities at the global, regional, national and local levels?            Are project results consistent with GEF strategic priorities and objectives?</p> <p>Are project results consistent with FAO's strategic objectives (FAO Strategic Framework 2022 – 2031), FAO Regional and national priorities (Country Programming Framework)?</p> <p><u>Relevance to national priorities:</u>            Was project design appropriate to address relevant priorities and needs and to achieve the expected results?</p> <p>Are project results consistent with the objectives and goals of the National Human Development and Fight Against Poverty Plan 2022 – 2026 and other sectoral policies and programs?</p> <p>Do project results meet the needs of implementing partners?</p> <p>Were project results appropriate to the national context throughout the implementation time?</p> <p>Has there been any change in the strategic relevance of the Project since its formulation, such as the adoption of new policies, plans or programs that affect the relevance of its objectives and goals?</p> <p>Complementarities with existing interventions:            Are project results complementary with other programs/projects/actions being implemented with similar objectives?</p>
<p>B. Efficacy (requires a score )</p>	<p><u>Evaluation of project results:</u>            To what extent did the project deliver the proposed outputs and contribute to the achievement of the expected results?</p> <p>To what extent have project objectives been achieved?</p> <p>Have there been any unforeseen positive or negative results? What was the reaction and solution capacity?</p> <p>To what extent do actual project results reflect the intended results?</p> <p>To what extent did the intervention improve the beneficiaries' functional and technical skills and knowledge?</p> <p>To what extent did the intervention contribute to improving organizational performance and promoting institutional changes?</p>

Criterion	Proposed question
	<p>What contextual factors may be influencing the magnitude of the results achieved?</p> <p>To what extent can the achievement of results be attributed to the GEF-funded component?</p>
<p>C. Efficiency (requires a score)</p>	<p>To what extent has the project been executed efficiently and effectively, adapting to changing conditions in order to improve the efficiency of its implementation?</p> <p>Was the project worthwhile in terms of cost-benefit (cost and time invested as compared to outputs and results achieved).</p> <p>To what extent has management been able to adapt to any changes in conditions to improve the efficiency of project execution?</p> <p>To what extent has the project taken advantage of existing agreements, initiatives, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other projects, associations, etc., and has it avoided duplication of similar activities?</p>
<p>D. Sustainability of project results (requires a score)</p>	<p>To what extent can project results remain in place or continue to be useful once the project is completed?</p> <p>What are the main risks that may affect the sustainability of project results (financial, economic, social, institutional, governance, other aspects)?</p> <p>Have results, lessons learned and experiences that can be replicated been identified? Are any of these replicable in the near future?</p>
<p>E. Factors that affect project results (requires a score)</p>	<p><u>Design:</u></p> <p>Was the project design adequate for implementation and achievement of results?</p> <p><u>Implementation:</u></p> <p>To what extent has FAO exercised its role as implementing agency by providing supervision, guidance and support (technical, administrative and operational) during the project identification, formulation, approval, initiation and execution?</p> <p><u>Execution:</u></p> <p>To what extent has the implementing agency fulfilled its role and responsibilities related to project management and administration effectively?</p> <p>To what extent have risks and changes been identified and managed?</p> <p><u>Follow-up:</u></p> <p>Has the PSC met and made strategic decisions, monitored project implementation, and agreed on co-financing to achieve project results? This question also applies to the support group within FAO (BH, LTO, FLO, regional and subregional offices, headquarters).</p> <p>Has the assistance and support team within FAO provided the technical assistance required by the UCP for purposes of project implementation?</p> <p>Did the project have a monitoring and evaluation plan?</p> <p>Has the FAO assistance and support team reviewed the APO, budgets, and the PPR and PIR reports?</p>

Criterion	Proposed question
	<p>Have supervision missions been carried out and has implementation of the Work Plan been monitored?</p> <p>Has the information been collected systematically, using appropriate methodologies? Has this information been used to guide decision-making?</p> <p><u>Financial management:</u></p> <p>What have been the challenges regarding project financial management? Has financial execution occurred as planned?</p> <p><u>Partnerships and stakeholder engagement:</u></p> <p>To what extent were second-level stakeholders involved in project formulation and implementation? Were second-level stakeholders which were not considered in the project design involved in project implementation? How do stakeholders view FAO commitment to the project?</p> <p><u>Communication, knowledge management<sup>9177</sup> and knowledge products:</u></p> <p>How is the project evaluating, documenting and sharing its results, lessons learned and experiences?</p> <p>To what extent can communication products and activities contribute to the sustainability and expansion of project results?</p>
F. Environmental and social safeguards	To what extent have environmental and social concerns been taken into account in project design and execution project?
G. Gender	<p>To what extent have gender considerations been taken into account in project design and implementation?</p> <p>Has the project ensured gender equity in participation and benefits?</p>
H. Progress made towards long-term effects	<p>To what extent can progress toward long-term effects be attributed to the project? Is there any evidence of changes in the regulatory/legal/regulatory framework?</p> <p>Are there barriers or risks that could impede future progress toward long-term effects?</p>
I. Lessons learned	<p>What knowledge has been generated from project results and experiences? Which of these have the most value and potential to be applied, replicated and used more widely?</p> <p>What elements should be considered for the following projects: Fifth National Communication on Climate Change / BTR 1 and 2 / CBIT-2?</p>

<sup>77</sup> For further reference, see Stocking, M. et al. Managing knowledge for a sustainable global future. Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel to the Global Environment Facility. Washington, D.C. (2018).



41. GEF Terminal Evaluation Guidelines <sup>78</sup> indicate that final evaluations must provide ratings (a score), in accordance with the following criteria: results, sustainability, implementation, execution and monitoring & evaluation. Ratings will be made on an even-number Likert scale. These may be provided in a table placed in the main body of the report, as an annex thereunto or be included in the appropriate sections of the report on each topic. The rating is assigned to each criterion as indicated in Table 7, below. More details on how performance should be rated against these criteria are shown in Appendix 3.

**Table 7. GEF Ratings**

Criteria and dimensions	Classification	Criteria Rating Scale
Results	YES	Six points (from highly satisfactory to highly unsatisfactory)
Relevance	YES	
Coherence	YES	
Effectiveness	YES	
Additionality	NO	
Efficiency	YES	
Sustainability	YES	Six points (from very likely to very unlikely)
Implementation (performance of GEF agency)	YES	Six points (from highly satisfactory to highly unsatisfactory)
Execution (performance of the executing agency)	YES	Six points (from highly satisfactory to highly unsatisfactory)
Monitoring and evaluation design	YES	Six points (from highly satisfactory to highly unsatisfactory)
Implementation of monitoring and evaluation	YES	
Co-financing	NO	
Implementation of GEF policies and guidelines	NO	

42. Based on international norms and standards such as Better Criteria for Better Evaluation (OECD-DAC 2019)<sup>79</sup>, Norms and Evaluation Standards (UNEG 2016)<sup>80</sup> and Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation (UNEG2020)<sup>81</sup>, the GEF asks its agencies to evaluate the areas included in the table above.

### 43. Methodology

44. The Terminal Evaluation (TE) will meet the evaluation norms and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG)<sup>82</sup> and must be in line with the OED Manual and its methodological guidelines and practices. Throughout the evaluation process, the TE will adopt a consultative and transparent approach toward internal and external stakeholders. The triangulation of the evidence and information collected will support its validation and analysis and be used to support conclusions and recommendations.

45. The TE will follow a theory of change approach, with emphasis on the results chain. The theory of change is intended to capture the causal relationship between the inputs, the expected outputs as detailed in the project results framework, the outcomes to which they should contribute, and the conditions under which they should occur.

46. The Evaluation Team will review the stakeholder mapping included in the Terms of Reference to identify additional users of the evaluation and plan the information collection phase, thus ensuring that all counterparts are identified.

47. To answer the key questions, an evaluation matrix will be developed detailing the indicators, the evaluation criteria, the sources of information to monitor said indicators, as well as the methods and instruments to be used to meet the evaluation criteria. The ET will further develop the main evaluation questions presented in these ToR and divide them into sub-questions capable of capturing specific characteristics of the implementation of the project/programme at national level, taking into account specific project characteristics.

48. The ET will adjust the methodology to the characteristics of the project, and will integrate GEF criteria and requirements for the Final Evaluations.<sup>97</sup><sup>83</sup> In this framework, the EF will assess the project according to the following criteria: results, sustainability, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and the quality of both implementation and execution, using the GEF classification scheme (Evaluation Criteria Scoring System). In addition, there is a review of financial and co-financing data.

49. In general, the following qualitative methods and sources will be used to collect primary and secondary data for the purpose of answering the evaluation questions:

- Document review of progress reports, technical and supervision reports, as well as project documents, such as quarterly, semi-annual and annual progress reports, national strategies, technical and FAO support mission reports, as well as any other texts that may be identified during the evaluation.
- Review of project products, including technical documents generated during implementation.
- Semi-structured interviews with key actors, stakeholders at central level and protagonists of training processes, based on interview protocols prepared by the evaluation team.
- Focus group discussions (in-person or remotely) with project participants and stakeholders.
- Online surveys of key actors not interviewed in person.

50. The identification of key documents, as well as the selection of people to be interviewed will be carried out based on consultations with the project team and the Country Office.

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<sup>79</sup> Available <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/revised-evaluation-criteria-dec-2019.pdf>

<sup>80</sup> Available [Detail of Norms and Standards for Evaluation \(2016\) \(unevaluation.org\)](http://www.unevaluation.org/Detail/1914)

<sup>81</sup> Available [Detail of UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation \(unevaluation.org\)](http://www.unevaluation.org/Detail/1914)

<sup>82</sup> <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1914>

<sup>83</sup> The GEF Guidelines for Agencies in Conducting Terminal Evaluation for Full-sized Projects was published in April 2017 and is available in English at the following link: <https://www.gefio.org/sites/default/files/ieo/evaluations/files/gef-guidelines-te-fsp-2017.pdf>

51. The TE will be carried out between November 2023 and March 2024. At the beginning of the research phase, the protocol for the interviews will be formulated according to the type of actor to be interviewed and the topic to be addressed.
52. The OED Capacity Development Evaluation Framework will be the basis for evaluating the measures, approach, performance and results of the activities that were implemented throughout the capacity-strengthening project. The interview protocols will seek to measure the level of knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP model) of beneficiaries.

Finally, the evaluation schedule must be presented (even if tentative) as shown in Table 4, below.

**Table 4: Evaluation period**

Task	Dates	Liability (OED)
Evaluation onset	Six months before project NTE	BH/EM
Finalization of ToR	15 October 2023	EM with input from the Project Task Force (PTF) and key stakeholders
Identification and recruitment of the team		EM
Mission planning		EM, with PTF support
Reading basic documentation provided by PTF		Evaluation Team
Evaluation team briefing		Project Implementation Office (PIO) team focal point for EM, Lead Technical Officer (LTO) and Project Evaluation Office (PEO) (when necessary)
Initial Report		ET (in consultation with the EM)
Organization of the evaluation mission (travel arrangements, meeting arrangements with stakeholders and project partners, field visits, etc.)		EM (with PIO support)
Evaluation mission takes place		Evaluation Team (ET)
Presentation of preliminary results to key stakeholders (FAO – including GEF CU – and external actors)		ET, with EM team support
First draft of the Evaluation Report ready for distribution		Evaluation Team and EM team (feedback and quality control)
Final draft of the Evaluation Report for circulation		Evaluation and EM team for feedback and quality control
Final Report, including editing and graphic design		EM
Management response	Within a month after issuance of the Final Report	BH
Monitoring report	Within one year after management response is issued	BH

## Functions and responsibilities

### Roles and Responsibilities in Evaluations Managed by the BH

#### Phase 1: Planning

Evaluation planning, formulation phase	Project formulators and BH, in consultation with the ODE project evaluation team (authorizations given during the formulation phase)
Appointment of the evaluation manager (EM)	BH in consultation with the OED

#### Phase 2: Design and preparation

Preparation of draft Terms of Reference for the Final Evaluation	Evaluation Manager (EM) appointed by BH, with guidance from the EO
Selection of the evaluation team	EM with guidance and support from the OED
Engagement of team members for the evaluation	EM
Definition of the evaluation methodology	External evaluation team

#### Phase 3: Information collection and data analysis, report preparation

Organization of the field mission	EM
Carrying out the evaluation	External evaluation team
Preparation of the draft report	Head of the external evaluation team with contributions from the other teams (and OED quality control)
Sending draft evaluation report for comments	EM
Incorporating comments and finalizing the evaluation report	Head of the external evaluation team
Management Response Request (MR)	EM
Preparation of the MR	

#### Phase 4: Dissemination and monitoring

Presentation of the Final Report and the administration's response before dissemination	EM
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53. Budget holder (BH). The budget holder is in charge of the evaluation process and subsequent reporting and is responsible for initiating, directing and completing the process. He and the Evaluation Office (EO) appoint the Evaluation Manager (EM). The BH provides inputs for the first version of the terms of reference (ToRs), in particular the description of the background and context. He also provides input to identify potential consultants and organize missions. He/she must provide the evaluation team (ET) with all project documents necessary for the terminal evaluation (TE). The budget holder is also responsible for sharing the Terminal Evaluation report with the GEF Operations Coordinator, implementing partners, the project team and national partners. He/she must lead and coordinate the preparation of the FAO Management Response and Evaluation Monitoring Report, with support from the Lead Technical Officer (LTO) and other members of the Project Task Force (PTF). The OED Guidelines for Management Response and Monitoring Report provide the necessary details on this process. The participation of the different members of the PTF will depend on their respective functions and level of involvement in the project.
54. The Evaluation Manager (EM). The evaluation manager is charged with preparing the first draft of the ToR, with input from the PTF. These ToR include the theory of change (ToC). In addition to drafting and finalizing the ToR, he/she is responsible for selecting the members of the ET and informing them about the evaluation methodology and process. Likewise, and in order to ensure quality, it is necessary to review (in coordination with the OED) the presentation, compliance with the ToR and the timely submission of the final draft of the evaluation report. He/she must also ensure the quality, clarity and solidity of the evidence provided in said report and the analysis on which its conclusions and recommendations are based. Along with the BH, the Regional Evaluation Specialist (RES) is also responsible for preparing and monitoring the management response in a timely manner. He/she is also responsible for sharing the Terminal Evaluation report with the EDP, the GEF Operational Focal Point, the GEF Coordination Unit (Monitoring and Reporting Team), the implementing partners, the project team and other national partners.
55. Chief Technical Officer and the Project Group. The GEF Coordination Unit (in particular the Funding Liaison Officer) is responsible for participating in the debriefing with the ET once the research phase is completed. This could take the form of a presentation of preliminary findings or a workshop at which to hold discussions on possible recommendations and their implementation, depending on the size and complexity of the project.
56. GEF Operations Coordinator at country level. According to minimum requirement number 4 ("Participation of operations coordinators") of the GEF Evaluation Policy (2019): "The GEF operations coordinators will be informed of the final evaluation. Where appropriate and feasible, they will also be informed at the onset of assessment missions and will be held accountable at the end of these.
57. They will receive a draft evaluation report for comment, and are to be invited to contribute to the management response (where applicable). Further, they will receive the Terminal Evaluation report within a period not to exceed 12 months upon project completion.
58. GEF Operations Coordinators play a critical role in facilitating access to staff from government institutions participating in GEF projects during evaluations. They can promote the use and follow-up of evaluation recommendations related to GEF matters and handled at regional, national, and project levels, as well as actions related to said recommendations. They also play an important role in fully consulting, informing and involving national stakeholders (including civil society organizations involved in GEF activities) in the plans, implementation and results of GEF evaluation activities related to the country.
59. The ET is responsible for carrying out the evaluation, refining and applying the methodology, and preparing the report. All members of the evaluation team (including the Team Leader) must participate in the debriefing and end-of-mission meetings, in the various discussions and in the field visits. They must also contribute in

writing to the final draft and the final report. The ET must agree on the general lines of the report at the beginning of the process, based on the model provided by the OED. Additionally, they may expand the scope, criteria, questions and issues listed above and can develop their own evaluation tools and framework. The foregoing must take place in accordance with the established deadlines and available resources, based on discussions with the Evaluation Manager and consultations with the BH, and the PTG, whenever necessary. The ET is fully responsible for its report and it does not necessarily reflect the views of the country government or FAO. The ET is not subject to FAO technical clearance, although the Evaluation Office is responsible for ensuring the quality of all evaluation reports.

60. The head of the ET guides and coordinates team members in their specific work areas; analyses their findings, conclusions and recommendations; and prepares the final draft and final report, in which the team members' contributions are consolidated with his/her own work.

61. The OED Decentralization Support Team (particularly the EO Support Officer) should provide quality assurance by providing feedback on individual products and providing technical support during the evaluation process.

62. The Supervisor of the Regional Evaluation Specialist in the corresponding regional office is responsible for the final authorization of the evaluation products, in both the ToR and the ER.

63. Evaluation product (deliverables)

64. This section describes the key evaluation products ET is responsible for producing. At a minimum, these should include:

- i. **Initial report.** The ET should prepare an Initial Report before beginning the full data collection exercise. It should include the project results framework, a stakeholder mapping, a revised theory of change, an evaluation matrix showing how each evaluation question will be answered through indicators, methods, data sources and data collection procedures. The Initial Report should also include a flexible plan, with different scenarios for the research phase when it is not possible to fully plan in advance for field/country visits. The Initial Report should include a proposed schedule for tasks, activities and deliverables, a stakeholder analysis and the Terminal Evaluation matrix. The main outline for the ER must also be provided, with reference to the outline for project evaluations. Please refer to the GEF reporting outline templates for reference.
- ii. **Zero draft evaluation report.** A clear, concise, professionally written and high-quality draft evaluation report is expected. The maximum length is set between 30 and 50 pages (depending on the complexity of the evaluation), including appendices and excluded annexes. The report must be written in Spanish and written in accordance with the FAO Style.<sup>84</sup> For reference, examples of FAO evaluation reports can be accessed at [https:// www.fao.org/evaluation/evaluation-digest](https://www.fao.org/evaluation/evaluation-digest) The evaluation team and/or evaluation director should submit the zero draft to the budget holder for comments and approval, and it will then be distributed for comments to internal and external stakeholders.
- iii. The evaluation must be keyed to practical use, so it must be flexible and foresee **additional products as deemed necessary** by the evaluation director in consultation with the ET and the PTF. These should be listed in this section and in the Initial Report.
- iv. **Supporting evidence.** Electronic or hard copies of the survey data and report, minutes or notes of

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<sup>84</sup> <https://www.fao.org/3/i7429en/i7429EN.pdf>

interviews and discussions, and other sources of primary data/information collected by the ET must be sent to EO or the EM. Sources of secondary data/information used in the report must be cited in the text and included in the list of documents which were used to prepare the ET.

- v. **Terminal Evaluation report.** This is the result of incorporating the comments received into the zero draft. The final report will be presented by the relevant EO/FAO unit to all stakeholders, and will be reviewed by an editor and graphic designer, before publication by the EO and on the website of the relevant FAO Office.

65. The ER must be prepared in MS Word format and submitted electronically by the ET leader to the OED or RES. As the lead author of the report, the relevant FAO technical office will make the final decision on how the report should be written.

- ✓ The evaluation report should include a summary of 200 to a maximum of 400 words and an executive summary, and illustrate the evidence found that answers the evaluation questions listed in the ToR.
- ✓ All GEF evaluation reports must have a full English translation (excluding annexes but including appendices) if prepared in another UN language. This is a responsibility of the FAO DEO.
- ✓ Evaluation reports should have numbered paragraphs, following the GEF OED reporting scheme. Supporting data and analysis should be attached to the report when it is considered important to complement the main report.
- ✓ Assessment summaries and other knowledge products or participation in knowledge sharing events, if applicable.

66. The Evaluation Report must include the GEF evaluation criteria rating table.<sup>85</sup>

**Table 5. GEF Rating Table**

<b>GEF criteria/dimensions</b>	<b>Rating</b> 86	<b>Summary of comments</b> <sup>87</sup>
<b>A. RESULTS</b> (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, progress made, impact, efficiency) <sup>88</sup>	<b>HS-HU</b>	
A1. Relevance		
A2. Coherence		
A3. Effectiveness		
A4. Efficiency		
<b>B. SUSTAINABILITY</b> (financial, sociopolitical dimensions, Institutional, governance and environmental aspects, including sustainabilityrisks)	<b>HL-HU</b>	
<b>C. IMPLEMENTATION</b>	<b>HS-HU</b>	
<b>D. EXECUTION</b>	<b>HS-HU</b>	
<b>Monitoring and evaluation plan</b>	<b>HS-HU</b>	
<b>Implementation of monitoring and evaluation</b>	<b>HS-HU</b>	
<b>Overall project rating</b>	<b>SA - HU</b>	

<sup>85</sup> See Appendix 5 for more information on GEF ratings

<sup>86</sup> See grading scheme in Appendix 5

<sup>87</sup> Include reference to relevant sections of the report

<sup>88</sup> Other dimensions may be considered, as indicated in section 2.1 (table of evaluation questions)



## Annex 1. Documents to be reviewed by the evaluation team

- Project Identification Form (PIF)
  - Comments received from the GEF Secretariat, the GEF Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) and members of the GEF Council on project design and FAO responses
  - FAO Concept Note and Report of the FAO Project Review Committee
  - GEF Executive Director Support Request
  - FAO-GEF Project Preparation Grant (PPG) Document<sup>89</sup>
  - Project Document
  - Project Initial Report
  - FAO Semi-Annual Project Progress Reports (PPR)
  - Annual work plans and budgets (including budget reviews)
  - All annual GEF Project Implementation Review Reports (PIRs)<sup>90</sup>
  - Any documentation detailing any changes to the project framework and components, for example, changes to outcomes and products as originally designed.
  - List of stakeholders
  - List of project sites and site location. maps (for planning mission itineraries and field work)
  - Execution Agreements in case under Operating Partner Implementation Modality (OPIM) and Letters of Agreement (LOA)
  - Relevant project technical, support and supervision reports, including return to office reports (BTOR) from relevant project and FAO staff, and any reports on technical support provided by FAO headquarters staff FAO or regional office
  - Minutes of meetings of the FAO Project Steering Committee (PSC), Project Working Group (PTF) and other relevant meetings
  - Any environmental and social safeguards analysis and mitigation plan prepared during the project cycle period and records online in FPMIS.
  - Any awareness and communication materials produced by the project, such as leaflets, brochures, presentations made at meetings, project website address, etc.
  - FAO policy documents, for example, related to FAO strategic objectives and gender
  - All other monitoring reports prepared by the project.
  - Completed GEF focal area Tracking Tools (TT) in CEO approval and updated mid-term TT for GEF-5 projects or review of contribution to GEF-7 core indicators (repurposed) for GEF-6 projects, and to GEF-7 core indicators for approved GEF-7 projects
  - Financial management information including: an updated co-financing table; summary report on the financial management and expenditure of the project to date; a summary of any financial reviews performed on the project and its purpose; and copies of any completed audit for comment (as applicable).
  - GEF Policy on Gender Equality, GEF Gender Implementation Strategy, and GEF Guidance to Promote Gender Equality in GEF Projects and Programmes
  - ETF/MTE report and management response
  - FAO Country Programme Framework Document; FAO Guide to the Project Cycle; FAO Environmental and Social Management Guidelines and Policies; FAO Policy on Gender Equality; Guide to incorporate the gender perspective in the FAO project cycle; and Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) Manual
- Programmes**
- Endorsement/approval of the executive director of children's projects within the programme framework
  - Programme framework document (PFD) and titles or concepts of secondary projects

<sup>89</sup> Applicable to full-size projects, medium-size projects, and projects under programmes for which the Project Preparation Grant (PPG) was approved by the GEF.

<sup>90</sup> A project progress report (PPR) is a FAO requirement which must be submitted every six months, with deadlines of 31 July for a reporting period from 1 January to 30 June, and 31 January for a reporting period from July 1 to December 31 of each year. The Project Implementation Review (PIR) is a GEF requirement and must be submitted each year (generally beginning in July) until project closure for projects that have been underway for one year or more.

## Appendix 2. GEF Rating Descriptors

67. The overall project rating will be based on the following criteria: relevance, coherence, effectiveness and efficiency.
68. Below are the performance descriptors<sup>10591</sup> for each specific qualification. In most cases, actual performance may not fully reflect any of the rating descriptions. Therefore, the rating will be based on the description that provides the best fit based on the evidence. When the available evidence is insufficient to rate performance, it must be described as "unable to assess".  
Performance will be rated on a six-point scale.

### Results ratings

Ratings	Description
Highly Satisfactory (HS)	The results exceed the objectives and are very relevant and profitable.
Satisfactory (T)	The level of results achieved meets the objectives. The results are relevant and profitable.
Moderately satisfactory (MS)	The level of results achieved was generally close to the objectives. Most of the goals were met or almost met, but some were not. The results are generally relevant and profitable.
Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)	In general, the level of results achieved is below the goals, although some results were substantially achieved. The results are generally relevant but not sufficient given the costs or, alternatively, generally profitable but not relevant enough.
Unsatisfactory (U)	The expected results were not achieved, or the achievements were substantially lower than expected, and/or the results achieved are not relevant. Alternatively, the result was cost ineffective compared to the alternatives.
Highly unsatisfactory (HU)	A negligible level of results was achieved and/or the project had substantial negative consequences that outweigh its benefits.
Unable to assess (UA)	The information available does not allow for evaluating the degree to which project results were achieved.

## SUSTAINABILITY

69. Sustainability will be assessed taking into account the risks related to the financial, sociopolitical, institutional and environmental sustainability of the project results. The evaluator may also take into account other risks that may affect sustainability. Overall sustainability will be assessed using a four-point scale:

### Sustainability ratings

Classification	Description
Very likely (HL)	<i>The risk to continued benefits is negligible and, based on progress made so far, the long-term objectives of the project are expected to be achieved.</i>
Likely (L)	<i>Either the risk to continued benefits is negligible or there are some risks, but the magnitude of their effect is too small and/or the probability of their realization is too small. Overall, the net benefits of the project are likely to continue.</i>
Moderately likely (ML)	<i>There are some risks to sustainability and, if they materialise, they could have some effect on continued benefits. However, the probability of these risks materializing is low. Net profits are more likely to continue than decline.</i>
Moderately unlikely (MU)	<i>There are significant risks to sustainability. The effect on continued earnings would be substantial if these risks were to materialize and the likelihood of these risks materializing was significant. Overall, the net benefits of the project are likely to decline.</i>

<sup>91</sup> The 2022 final draft of the GEF Terminal Evaluation Guidelines introduces new descriptors that are reported here.

Unlikely (U)	<i>Due to the high risks, it is unlikely that net benefits from the project will continue to accrue and the progress made so far is likely to be lost. The project is unlikely to achieve its long-term objectives.</i>
Highly unlikely (HU)	<i>The project is not expected to achieve its long-term objectives. Material risks have already materialized and have stopped the accrual of net benefits or have a high probability of materializing soon and will stop the accrual of net benefits when they materialize.</i>
Unable to assess (UA)	<i>The expected incidence and magnitude of sustainability risks cannot be assessed.</i>

## PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND EXECUTION

*The quality of implementation and execution will be rated separately. Quality of implementation refers to the role and responsibilities played by GEF agencies that have direct access to GEF resources. Quality of execution refers to the roles and responsibilities performed by national or regional counterparts that received GEF funds from GEF agencies and implemented the funded activities on the field (which could be FAO itself with co-executing partners or an implementing partner identified by an FAO operational agreement). Performance will be rated on a six-point scale.*

### Implementation and Execution Qualifications

Ratings	Implementation	Execution
Highly Satisfactory (HS)	The performance of the GEF Agency was exemplary. Project preparation and execution were solid. The Agency ensured that relevant GEF policies were applied in project preparation and implementation. Project oversight was strong: the Agency identified and addressed emerging concerns in a timely manner. The GEF Agency ensured that project implementation remained on track and was completed on time.	The performance of the executing agency or agencies was exemplary. The execution of project activities was timely and of high quality. Relevant GEF policies and requirements were met. Guidance from the GEF Agency was followed and, if necessary, corrective action was taken promptly. The executing agency also took steps to mitigate risks to sustainability and is taking steps to support project monitoring. Project activities completed on time.
Satisfactory (T)	The GEF Agency's performance met expectations and had no notable weaknesses. Project preparation and implementation were sound and relevant GEF policies were implemented. The GEF Agency monitored the project well: it identified and addressed emerging concerns in a timely manner. The GEF Agency ensured that project implementation was on track.	The performance of the executing agency met expectations and did not present any notable weaknesses. The execution of project activities was timely and of good quality. Relevant GEF policies and requirements were applied. Guidance from the GEF Agency was followed. The executing agency also took measures to mitigate risks to the sustainability of project results.
Moderately satisfactory (MS)	Overall, the GEF Agency's performance met expectations. Project preparation and implementation were adequate and relevant GEF policies were applied, although there are some weak areas. The GEF Agency adequately monitored the project: it identified and addressed emerging concerns, although some of them may not have been adequately addressed. Project implementation had minor delays and some activities may have been abandoned.	The performance of the executing agency had some weaknesses but, in general, it met expectations. The execution of project activities was generally timely, but with some cases of delay. Relevant GEF policies and requirements were applied, although some minor errors may also have been noted. The GEF Agency's guidance was followed and the problems were resolved. There are some areas where the performance of the executing agency was below average, although overall the performance of the executing agency was adequate.
Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)	Overall, the GEF Agency did not meet expectations, although there were some areas of strong performance. The preparation and execution of the project had deficiencies, although not too serious. Supervision of the project was somewhat weak. Although most emerging concerns were identified, many remained unaddressed or were addressed inadequately. The execution of the project was delayed and	While there were some areas of strong performance, the overall performance of the executing agency did not meet expectations. The execution of project activities was delayed. The observed capacities of the executing agency were a limitation in the execution of the project. Several errors were observed in the application of GEF policies and requirements. In general, GEF Agency guidance was followed

Ratings	Implementation	Execution
	some activities were abandoned or reduced in scale due to issues that were largely under the control of the GEF Agency.	and problems were solved, but generally these measures were not taken in a timely manner. There are several areas for improvement in execution.
Unsatisfactory (U)	The GEF Agency did not achieve the expected level of performance. Project preparation and implementation were weak. The GEF Agency did not identify emerging concerns in a timely manner and they were not addressed or were addressed inadequately. M&E implementation was poor: activities were not implemented on time or not carried out at all. Project implementation was delayed and several activities were abandoned or reduced in scale.	The executing agency did not meet expectations. The implementation of project activities was delayed and at least some activities were abandoned due to factors largely under the control of the executing agency. Many errors were observed in the application of GEF policies and requirements. The GEF Agency's guidance was not implemented or was implemented with considerable delay.
Highly unsatisfactory (HU)	There were serious deficiencies in the quality of implementation. The GEF Agency mismanaged the implementation of the project and its oversight was poor. Emerging concerns were not identified in time, including those that should have been obvious. Although cases of mismanagement were discovered, no corrective measures were taken. Project activities were poorly implemented and several had to be abandoned.	There were serious deficiencies in the execution of the project. There were several cases of mismanagement. Emerging concerns were not addressed in a timely manner, including those that should have been obvious. Most activities were poorly executed, delayed, and abandoned. GEF policies and requirements were not applied.
Unable to assess (UA)	The information available is not sufficient to allow a performance rating.	The information available is not sufficient to allow a performance rating.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The quality of project M&E will be assessed in terms of: i) quality of project M&E plan design and ii) quality of project M&E during implementation. The following table presents relevant descriptors for each rating.

### M&E Ratings

Rating	Monitoring and evaluation plan	Implementation of monitoring and evaluation
Highly satisfactory (H.S.)	The project's M&E plan is good practice and did not have any weaknesses; its alignment with the project's theory of change is strong. Complete reference data has been provided. The specified indicators were appropriate and the arrangements for the implementation of the M&E plan were adequate. Overall, the M&E plan exceeds expectations and is exemplary.	The implementation of the M&E plan was excellent. Weaknesses in the M&E plan, if present, were promptly addressed. M&E activities were carried out in a timely manner and M&E data were used to improve project implementation. Overall, M&E implementation exceeded expectations and was exemplary.
Satisfactory (S)	The project monitoring and evaluation plan was strong and had no or only minor weaknesses: alignment with the project theory of change is strong. The reference data provided or its collection is at the beginning of the project. The specified indicators were appropriate and the arrangements for the implementation of the M&E plan were adequate. The plan meets expectations.	Implementation of the M&E plan was generally according to plan. M&E gaps were addressed in a timely manner. M&E activities were carried out in a timely manner and M&E data were used to improve project implementation. Overall, M&E implementation meets expectations.
Moderately satisfactory (M.S.)	Overall, the project's monitoring and evaluation plan was solid. The specified indicators were generally appropriate and the arrangements for the implementation of the M&E plan were adequate. The alignment of the M&E plan with the project theory of change is strong. There were areas where the M&E plan could be strengthened but overall the plan was adequate.	Implementation of the M&E plan was generally according to plan. M&E gaps were generally addressed, although some remained. Some M&E activities were delayed. M&E data were used for reporting but had little use in improving project implementation. Overall, M&E implementation meets expectations, although in some areas performance is poor.
Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)	Overall, the GEF Agency did not meet expectations, although there were some areas of strong performance. The preparation and execution of the project had deficiencies, although not too serious. Supervision of the project was somewhat weak. Although most emerging concerns were identified, many remained unaddressed or were addressed inadequately. Project implementation was delayed and some activities were abandoned or reduced in scale due to issues that were largely within the control of the GEF Agency.	While there were some areas of strong performance, the overall performance of the executing agency did not meet expectations. The execution of project activities was delayed. The observed capacities of the executing agency were a limitation in the execution of the project. Several errors were observed in the application of GEF policies and requirements. In general, the GEF Agency's guidance was followed and problems were resolved, but these actions were generally not taken in a timely manner. There are several areas for improvement in execution.
Unsatisfactory (U)	The M&E plan had serious deficiencies. Alignment with the project's theory of change is weak. No baseline data or any indication that it would be collected at the start of the project was provided. The indicators do not adequately address project and other outcomes; For several outcomes, no relevant indicators have been specified. There are gaps in the arrangements for the implementation of the M&E plan: no budget or an inadequate budget was provided for M&E.	The implementation of the M&E plan was flawed and/or did not address serious weaknesses in the M&E plan. Several M&E activities were abandoned or left incomplete. The data collection methodology was not robust. M&E data were not reported in a timely manner; There is little evidence to suggest that the data was used to improve project implementation. The implementation of M&E does not meet expectations.
Highly unsatisfactory (HU)	No M&E plan was prepared.	No or negligible M&E activities were implemented apart from conducting project evaluation.
Unable to assess (UA)	Impossible to evaluate because project documents are not available.	Cannot be assessed because the Terminal Evaluation does not adequately cover the implementation of M&E.

