

Project Title: Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity in the Northwestern Landscape (Boeny Region) - Madagascar

<i>Executing Agency:</i>	General Directorate for the Environment, Madagascar Biodiversity Fund (FAPBM), Directorate of the Protected Area System, and CI-Madagascar
<i>Duration:</i>	June 2019 – December 2023
<i>GEF Grant Amount:</i>	USD 6,817,431
<i>Date of Evaluation:</i>	October 2023 - January 2023
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The CI-GEF and partners are providing a management response to the terminal evaluation report prepared by Baastel. The following are recommendations/comments from the management team in relation to the content of the draft evaluation report.

General Comments:

Lessons Learned

1. Directing a portion of the project funding towards capitalizing a conservation endowment fund serves as a successful exit and sustainable strategy, ensuring the continued realization of certain project results. This approach not only aligns more closely with conservation objectives but also contributes to supporting the implementation of PAs' management plans. By doing so, it effectively addresses financial gaps and prevents disruptions in crucial conservation activities. Nonetheless, there is still some risk in limiting the diversification of funds provided to for conservation activities as it is dependent on the fluctuation of financial markets.
2. Considering socioeconomic aspects in conservation management is indispensable to achieve conservation objectives, especially in areas where local communities and vulnerable groups such as migrants, are highly depending on natural resources to fulfil their basic needs. In this sense, a landscape approach such as the one promoted by the project is highly relevant. Moreover, integrating vulnerable groups into conservation actions and objectives can really contribute to conservation objectives and reduce pressures and threats.
3. The project's success in supporting IGAs stresses the importance of complementarity and collaboration with other TFPs for enhanced success and impact of project activities. For example, building on previous interventions especially for IGAs are particularly effective and ensures better success towards acceptance of sustainable alternative socioeconomic models adapted to communities' needs. Nevertheless, it is not sufficient to scale-up and replicate on-going initiatives but it should go one step further through additional support throughout value-chains to ensure the sustainability of results.
4. The PMU's institutional arrangements integrating governmental partners and the implementing agency for project management is an effective way to ensure effective project management without too much influence from political instability.
5. When executing partners have limited capacities support from the implementing agency / PMU becomes crucial to guarantee the quality of reporting in accordance with the requirements of the funding agency.
6. In order to tackle an increasing risk to project objectives, it is important to continuously monitor it during project implementation in the M&E system to make sure it is addressed adequately. For example, the increased pressure on ecosystems caused by migrant

communities settlements around PAs, despite being partly addressed through project activities, was not monitored nor reported on in the M&E system, while being an evolving risk during project implementation. It is therefore difficult to evaluate if the measures/activities put in place are adequately tackling the risk.

7. The complete adoption of the AGM in Madagascar will take time. This is an important consideration for future projects in Madagascar, as the absence of filed concerns or grievances may be attributed to either stakeholder satisfaction with the project or their ongoing adjustment and hesitancy in utilizing the AGM to report concerns or grievances.
8. Developing gender-disaggregated indicators does not suffice to ensure the participation of women in project activities, especially in countries where tasks and responsibilities are culturally gender-based.

No.	Recommendation	CI-GEF Agency response to recommendations
1	<p>In regards to the project design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue emphasizing the integration of socioeconomic aspects in conservation management, particularly in areas where local communities and vulnerable groups highly depend on natural resources. In this sense, continue adopting a landscape approach to ensure the interconnection between conservation and socioeconomic factors. Consider a more thorough capacity analysis of executing partners into the project design phase to guarantee sufficient resources at project management level to be able to follow up and to support capacity development when needed. Contemplate adjusting to some extent the CI M&E and reporting system when feasible, to adapt to formats already in place by the executing partners in order to reduce multiplication of formats and contribute to better efficiency and timeliness in the context of limited resources at hand on the executing partner's side. 	<p>Agree on the first point. As for the second point, an in-depth analysis of the capacities of the implementing partners was carried out since the beginning of the project. The Project Management Unit had sufficient resources, both financial and human, to monitor and strengthen the capacity of the partners.</p> <p>Regarding the M&E and reporting system, consulted the M&E and reporting system in place were consulted. To be able to collect the data/information necessary for the preparation of the quarterly and annual reports, the Project Management Unit found that it was necessary to develop an M&E system for the project. For the reporting system, a simplified format following the reporting format requested by the GEF was developed.</p>
2	<p>Regarding monitoring risks and plan adequate mitigation measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure to closely monitor increasing risks to PAs. In the case of the PAs targeted by the project, the increasing settlement of migrant communities around PAs should be closely monitored by PA managers to better anticipate and implement adequate solutions. PA managers should also closely monitor the potential adverse effect of successful IGAs on PA as it could generate increasing production activities in the area. It could also attract additional community groups looking for better livelihood conditions and therefore increase pressure on PAs and their ecosystem. 	<p>During the 4 years of project implementation, any negative effect of the success of the IGAs on the PA was observed. Beneficiaries of income-generating activities are members of existing VOI (grassroots communities) or formal associations of fishermen or wild silk producers. Beneficiaries of income-generating activities must participate in environmental conservation activities, such as the establishment and maintenance of firebreaks.</p>
3	<p>Regarding sustainable fundings for PAs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> While pursuing the strategy in supporting conservation trust funds, which ensures the continuity of daily conservation activities and contributes to improved PA management effectiveness. CI could explore the integration of complementary financial mechanism options from the project design phase to further support the sustainability of project results. Complementary financial 	<p>Within the framework of this project, complementary activities to ongoing local initiatives (Plan d'Aménagement et de Gestion des APs and the Schema d'Amenagement Communal) were carried out to improve sustainable production. It's true that the project did not develop complementary financing</p>

	<p>mechanisms could include: payment for ecosystem services, resource use fees, among others. The appropriate financial mechanisms that complement each other should therefore be thoroughly examined with regard to the unique context and circumstances of the beneficiary PAs targeted by future projects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For PA managers to continue reducing the financial gap of PAs, consider complementary innovative financial mechanisms, such as ecotourism or REDD+ among others to provide additional financial support to their activities in the long-term. 	<p>mechanisms such as payment for ecosystem services, resource use fees and others. However, the project supported beneficiaries in the implementation of 19 sustainable production initiatives to improve livelihoods and 07 value chains developed and implemented.</p> <p>For the second point, four of the 5 Protected Areas supported by the project are already developing ecotourism.</p>
4	<p>Regarding future support in IGAs project activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustain the approach established in this project to support IGAs by scaling them up and replicating them, acknowledging their demonstrated success. Additionally, continue collaboration and coordination with other TFPs for effective complementary to reinforce the effectiveness of such initiatives. • Further expand/develop support to value chains by thorough market analysis during project design and further develop the strategies to address potential bottlenecks to market development. 	<p>The project was able to sustain the approach established in this project by scaling them up and replicating them thanks to the additional funding available for the 5 targeted PAs attributable to the contribution of 4.5 million USD to FAPBM's capital. FAPBM has also committed to fundraising for the 5 Protected Areas. Currently, the 5 PAs receive funding from KfW which increases funding in addition to the GEF funding.</p> <p>For the second point, Initially the project planned to support three value chains-: Beekeeping, Handcrafts, Green charcoal but during its implementation the project supported other value chains: Silk, Salt, Market gardening, lemon transformation. So, the project supported in total 7 value chains.</p>
5	<p>PAs management should continue to closely monitor the potential adverse effects of successful IGAs as it could result in attracting additional groups seeking support to develop IGAs while increasing pressure on PAs.</p>	<p>During the 4 years of project implementation, any negative effect of the success of the IGAs on the PA was observed. Beneficiaries of income-generating activities are members of existing VOI (grassroots communities) or formal associations of fishermen or wild silk producers. Beneficiaries of income-generating activities must participate in environmental conservation activities, such as the establishment and maintenance of firebreaks.</p>
6	<p>In future project ensure to integrate ESS activities directly into project activities for better follow up and more effective adaptive measures.</p>	<p>AGM was integrated directly into project activities. It was the M&E Manager who was responsible for monitoring AGM.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For AGM specifically, it is advisable to recognize that achieving full use of the AGM in Madagascar will be a gradual process. Future projects in Madagascar should take into account that the absence of filed concerns or grievances may stem from stakeholder satisfaction with the project or their ongoing acclimatization to the AGM, indicating a lack of confidence in reporting concerns or grievances. Consequently, it is recommended that CI/GEF places heightened emphasis on closely monitoring awareness-raising activities related to the AGM especially for projects in Madagascar and/or countries with similar challenges. • Integrating gender considerations in a more proactive way is essential to ensure the participation of women in project activities. Developing gender-disaggregated indicators is not sufficient but specific measures and activities sought from the project design phase should proactively contribute to further adopt a gender-mainstreaming approach, especially in countries with cultural gender-based roles and responsibilities. • For stakeholder engagement, while continuing the engagement strategy promoted by CI, further explore the integration of local knowledge and know-how into socioeconomic support activities as communities knowledge on local context are often underestimated. 	<p>For gender consideration, specific activities were identified during the development of the Gender Mainstreaming Plan, but problems arose during project implementation.</p> <p>Concerning stakeholder engagement, local know-how in socio-economic support activities was always considered. Local communities were always consulted before decisions were taken on the livelihood activities to be carried out during the project.</p>
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