Multiplying Environmental and Carbon Benefits in High Andean Ecosystems

Terminal Evaluation Report

Evaluation Office of UN Environment

September 2019

Evaluation Office of UN Environment

Photos Credits:
Front cover: Robert Hofstede

@UN Environment/ (Robert Hofstede), UN Environment Evaluation Mission (2019)

This report has been prepared by independent consultant evaluators and is a product of the Evaluation Office of UN Environment. The findings and conclusions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of Member States or the UN Environment Senior Management.

For further information on this report, please contact:

Evaluation Office of UN Environment
P. O. Box 30552-00100 GPO
Nairobi Kenya
Tel: (254-20) 762 3389
Email: unenvironment-evaluation-director@un.org

Multiplying environmental and carbon benefits in high Andean ecosystems
GEF ID 4750
September 2019

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Terminal evaluation was prepared for the Evaluation Office of UN Environment by Robert Hofstede. The report benefits from a peer review conducted within Evaluation Office of UN Environment.

The Evaluation Office of UN Environment would like to thank CONDESAN and the Ecoandes project teams in Ecuador and Peru for their contribution and collaboration throughout the Evaluation process. The partner organizations Tungurahua Páramo Fund and Nature and Culture International (Piura) are acknowledged for their support during the field visits. Sincere appreciation is also expressed to the Project Steering Committee members who took time to provide comments to the draft report. The Evaluation Office of UN Environment would also like to thank the Ministries of Environment in Ecuador and Peru for their active involvement in this Evaluation. All stakeholders who were visited and interviewed are thanked for their time, hospitality and for the detailed and honest comments.

Short biography of the evaluator – Robert Hofstede is an accomplished conservation programme and project evaluator based in Quito, Ecuador. He is well acquainted with civil society organizations in Latin America, especially regarding conservation, protected area management, forestry, climate change and integrated land management. He brings subject matter expertise in a variety of fields, including ecosystem services, policy development, environmental planning and knowledge dissemination. He has worked extensively as a consultant for several international agencies focusing on project and programme development and evaluation and environmental studies. During his professional career, Mr. Hofstede directed the Climate Change programme at the International Development Research Centre (IDRC, Canada) and the South America regional programme for the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), which provided him with experience at the continent and global level in programme development and assessment, policy advocacy and high-level diplomacy. He also worked in international management positions in CGIAR and the University of Amsterdam.

Evaluation Consultant
Robert Hofstede – Consultant

Evaluation Office of UN Environment
Janet Wildish – Evaluation Manager
Mela Shah – Evaluation Programme Assistant

ABOUT THE EVALUATION[1]

Joint Evaluation: No

Report Language(s): English (Spanish Executive Summary)

Evaluation Type: Terminal Project Evaluation

Brief Description: This report is a terminal evaluation of a UNEP/GEF project implemented between 2014 and 2018. The Ecoandes project sought to develop an enabling environment for integrated ecosystem management in the high Andean ecosystems of Ecuador and Peru, and likewise to develop and validate the application of integrated land management approaches through selected demonstration practices in the wider landscape at five intervention sites (two in Peru and three in Ecuador). In the direct areas of influence, specific research activities and SLM/SFM practices were implemented; whereas the areas of indirect influence included entire political administrative territorial units, that were expected to be affected by the project mainstreaming and up-scaling activities directed towards local governments and their local policy frameworks. The evaluation has two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UN Environment, the executing partner Consortium for the Sustainable Development of the Andean Eco-Region (CONDESAN), the relevant agencies of the project participating countries and the GEF Secretariat.

Key words: sustainable land management; sustainable forest management; ecosystem management; CONDESAN; greenhouse gases.

[1] This data is used to aid the internet search of this report on the Evaluation Office of UN Environment Website – https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment/evaluation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abbreviations

CONDESAN	Consortium for the Sustainable Development of the Andean Eco-Region
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FONAG	Fund for the Protection of Water
GAD	Local Decentralized and Autonomous Governments
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
GHG	Green House Gas
GIZ	German Technical Cooperation
INRM	Integral Natural Resource Management
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ISS	Intermediate States
LUCC	Land-use and Land-cover Change
LULUCF	Land Use, Land-Use Change and Forestry
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAE	Ministry of Environment - Ecuador
MAG	Ministry of Agriculture and Cattle Raising (Ecuador; after 2017)
MAGAP	Ministry of Agriculture, Cattle Raising and Fishing (Ecuador; until 2017)
MINAM	Ministry of Environment - Peru
MRV	Monitoring Report and Verification
NCI	Nature and Culture International
NGA	National Governmental Agency
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PES	Payment for Ecosystem Services
PIR	Project Implementation Review
PPG	Project Preparation Grant
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
RPP	Readiness Preparedness Plan
PY	Project Year
RF	Results Framework
SC	Project Steering Committee
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SNGA	Subnational Governmental Agency
SGCAN	Andean Community General Secretariat
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timely Indicators
SNAP	National System of Protected Areas
SO	Strategic Objective
TE	Terminal Evaluation
ToC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
TT	Tracking Tools
UN Environment	United Nations Environment Program
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

UN-REDD	United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Project summary table[2]

GEF Project ID:	4750		
Implementing Agency:	UN Environment	**Executing Agency:**	CONDESAN
Sub-programme:	Ecosystems	**Expected Accomplishment(s):**	A and C
UN Environment approval date:	13 June 2014	**Programme of Work Output(s):**	POW 2012-13 SP 1: Climate Change SP 3: Ecosystem Management SP 4: Environmental Governance
GEF approval date:	19 March 2014	**Project type:**	FSP
GEF Operational Programme #:	Multi-Focal Area	**Focal Area(s):**	BD, CC, LD, SFM
		GEF Strategic Priority:	BD-2; CCM-5; LD-3; SFM/REDD+-1; SFM/REDD+-2;
***Expected* start date:**	01 April 2014	**Actual start date:**	01 April 2014
***Planned* completion date:**	31 March 2018	**Actual completion date:**	15 December 2018
***Planned* project budget at approval:**	USD 20'956,190	**Actual total expenditures reported as 30.11.18**	USD 23'050,478
GEF grant allocation:	$4'796,364	**GEF grant expenditures reported as of 30.11.18**	USD 4'751,364
Project Preparation Grant - GEF financing:	$130,000	**Project Preparation Grant - co-financing:**	N/A
***Expected* Full-Size Project co-financing:**	USD16,159,826	**Secured Full-Size Project co-financing:**	18.299,114.34
First disbursement:	01 August 2014	**Date of financial closure:**	July 2019
No. of revisions:	5	**Date of last revision:**	01.01.19
No. of Steering Committee meetings:	**5**	**Date of last/next Steering Committee meeting:**	**Last:** 28 June 2018 / **Next:** -
Mid-term Review/ Evaluation *(planned date):*	April 2016	**Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (actual date):**	**October 2016**
Terminal Evaluation *(planned date):*	April 2018	**Terminal Evaluation (actual date):**	April 2019
Coverage - Country(ies):	Ecuador, Peru	**Coverage - Region(s):**	Andean Ecosystem
Dates of previous project phases:	0	**Status of future project phases:**	N/A

[2] Data from PIR FY18

Executive Summary

Introduction

1. This document presents the report of the Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the UN Environment/GEF project "Multiplying environmental and carbon benefits in high Andean ecosystems" (hereafter called "Ecoandes project"). The evaluation was executed during May and June 2019, by an external evaluator, Robert Hofstede. The TE was undertaken at completion of the project to assess project performance and determine outcomes and impacts stemming from the project, including their sustainability. The evaluation had two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UN Environment and Executing Agency. The target audience for the results of this evaluation are (a) UN Environment staff related to GEF projects, division/regional offices and evaluation office. (b) the participating ministries of environment the two national governments as well as environmental and agriculture/forestry divisions of the local governments in the project intervention sites (c) other governmental agencies at different levels, (d) local beneficiaries (farmers, farmer organizations), (e) EA and other partners in the implementation.

2. The Ecoandes project sought to develop an enabling environment for integrated ecosystem management in the high Andean ecosystems of Ecuador and Peru, and likewise to develop and validate the application of integrated land management approaches through selected demonstration practices in the wider landscape at five intervention sites (two in Peru and three in Ecuador). It included four sequentially linked components (1) knowledge and tools, (2) mainstreaming and capacity building (3) demonstration and intervention (4) Up Scaling and Outreach. The intervention logic of the project is based on an interaction of activities and results at different levels. The multiple scale intervention approach of this project implied areas of direct and indirect project influence within the intervention sites. In the direct areas of influence, specific research activities and SLM/SFM practices were implemented; whereas the areas of indirect influence included entire political administrative territorial units, that were expected to be affected by the project mainstreaming and up-scaling activities directed towards local governments and their local policy frameworks. At each level, different groups of stakeholders are involved in various ways.

3. This bi-national project was executed between 2014 and 2018. It was a multi focal area-project, contributing to strategic objectives in biodiversity, climate change, land degradation and sustainable forest management. Its total project was USD 20,956,190, of which GEF contributed USD 4,796,364. UN Environment was the Implementing Agency (IA) for this project and the Consortium for the Sustainable Development of the Andean Eco-Region (CONDESAN) was designated as Executing Agency (EA) to manage the project at the international, bi-national and national levels. For the implementation of project activities in several intervention sites, collaboration agreements were established with Partner Agencies (the *Fondo de Páramos y Combate de la Pobreza en Tungurahua* - Tungurahua Páramo Fund-, Nature and Culture International, Imaymana foundation and the Program.

Main findings

4. The main findings of the evaluation included a high relevance to local, national and international priorities. Because of its response to actual insights from the global policy and academic debates, the project`s objectives and strategy helped to shape local stakeholder

needs and subnational policies rather than responding to them. The project was complementary to a suite of initiatives of the project partners and government partners, including national environmental incentive programs. Early during project implementation, there was a strong change in the project context which resulted, among others, in strongly decreased funding for these programs. However, the project adapted efficiently and transparently and this contributed to the effectiveness of the project, even though this implied that several outputs were achieved differently than planned.

5. The project was considered effective: it produced a higher than planned number of outputs in most components. In particular, the academic output met the highest international standards. Stakeholders participated in the generation of outputs and results were adequately shared among these. Six out of eight planned outcomes were achieved, as well as the four intermediate states identified in the Theory of Change of this evaluation. The evaluation found that two outcomes were partially achieved. During implementation, the project already managed generated positive environmental impact (increased biodiversity and carbon stocks) at the level of the intervention sites.

6. Overall the project was well implemented. It was managed professionally by a well-functioning team with high quality, committed staff. The project governance provided effective and efficient oversight. The project fully included project partner agencies in decision making, implementation of activities and consolidation. The financial management was according to planning and followed financial and operational standards of UN Environment. The project was efficiently executed according to the original time and financial planning. In comparison to other, similar projects, Ecoandes achieved many outputs in relation to its financial investment. No specific cost- or time-saving measures were necessary to attain achievements. Although there were some weaknesses in project design related to indicators and stakeholder participation, the monitoring and evaluation plan of the project (including risk monitoring) was well arranged, had dedicated budget and staff. A weak aspect of the project was the absence of a clear gender strategy, expertise, objectives and monitoring.

7. The sustainability of the project was considered moderately likely. The social basis for conservation and ecosystem management is generally increasing in the project intervention areas which explained good ownership of the project by local stakeholders. The overall environmental policies of partnering governmental agencies (national and local) remain fairly constant but other policies (mining, agriculture, planning) can negatively affect sustainability. There is political commitment and several (funded) follow-up initiatives to support continuation of field activities, replication and upscaling. However, the implementation of the supported plans and policies need public funding, which is less likely. Although the project has no exit or sustainability plan agreed among project partners, local project partners ensure the sustainability of results in most intervention areas.

Main conclusions

8. The overall project performance is rated as “Satisfactory”. In spite of some weaknesses, the project was conceptually and strategically well designed. The project goal and strategies were highly relevant for the participating agencies at national and subnational level as well as for the donor agencies and the global debate on biodiversity, land degradation and carbon stocks. The academic research approach of the project was innovative and ensured high quality outputs. The good quality and high number of outputs

formed the basis for a satisfactory achievement of outcomes and initial impact on the conservation of biodiversity and carbon stocks in the intervention sites.

9. The sustainability of the project's results is rated as "Moderately Likely". In general, the project team achieved an adequate participation of directly relevant stakeholders in project planning, decision making and implementation. It supported the development of tools and instruments and strengthened capacities of local institutions to improve an enabling environment for landscape restoration and monitoring and conservation of biodiversity and carbon stocks. To consolidate and sustain these results, continued political commitment and institutional support is required which is available to a variable level and degree.

10. The project underachieved in social aspects: while it did work on three value chains for sustainable livelihoods, its social assessments and integrated livelihood strategies to improve sustainable land and forest management was underdeveloped, especially considering the large areas where improved management was promoted. While institutional stakeholders and farmer representation agencies were targeted during project execution, grassroot communities were not and individual farmers only marginally. The project did not apply a gender, equity and human rights approach in its implementation.

11. The main conclusions of the evaluation are:

- The strong academic approach of the project brought new knowledge and tools to subnational governments and local beneficiaries. Therefore, at subnational level the project was agenda setting rather than following.
- Because of strategic and practical collaboration with local government agencies, the impact of changes in local administration affected the success of this project less than other similar projects
- Thanks to good management by a well-functioning professional project team and active collaboration with local stakeholders, most outputs were generated in a timely manner. The project overachieved in delivering the total number of outputs.
- The project effectively achieved most of the expected outcomes satisfactory. This was done based on the timely delivery of outputs of good quality, adequate adaptive management and continued collaboration and interest of institutional stakeholders at the intervention sites.
- The project has been contributing to positive impact on carbon stocks and biodiversity at the level at plot and site level. There is considerable likelihood that it will contribute to impact at subnational/national level.
- The project has generated little social impact because it did not achieve to strengthen or diversify local livelihood strategies at a scale that supported sustainable land and forest management at the intervention sites and social impact.
- While outcomes and impact were generated everywhere, there were large differences between intervention sites: there was much more budget, activity, outcomes and impact in Ecuador than in Peru and particularly in the Pichincha site
- The different project partner agencies mobilized more co-financing than committed, although their contribution to project goals is not always clear.

- The project applied close monitoring of its activities and achievements, which was used to inform adaptive management and reporting. Weaknesses in the design of the monitoring and evaluation system were mostly corrected during implementation.
- There are enough new initiatives underway to support continuation and replication of the activities implemented by the project.
- The project was adequately supervised by a lean steering committee and efficient backstopping by UN Environment.

Summarized rating table

Criterion	**Rating**
A. Strategic Relevance	Highly Satisfactory
B. Quality of Project Design	Satisfactory
C. Nature of External Context	Favourable
D. Effectiveness	Satisfactory
E. Financial Management	Highly Satisfactory
F. Efficiency	Satisfactory
G. Monitoring and Reporting	Satisfactory
H. Sustainability	Moderately Likely
I. Factors Affecting Performance	Moderately Satisfactory
Overall Project Rating	**Satisfactory**

Main lessons

12. Observing the project experiences, good practices and successes which could be replicated in similar contexts, the evaluator identified the following lessons:

- Different SMART indicators are needed along the project impact pathway (output, outcome and impact)
- A high dependency on public sector investments constituted a considerable risk to project success, even though these funds were confirmed.
- The project could generate academic-quality research to be directly applied to land management, thanks to optimal stakeholder involvement in research, good capacity building, clear protocols and adequate knowledge transfer.
- A suite of different tools for stakeholder involvement, increased involvement and ownership.
- Concrete collaboration with SNGA staff enhanced impact and sustainability.
- Without project strategies targeting social benefits, gender and equity, positive impact on livelihoods that support sustainable forest and land management practices was unlikely
- A project executed with different level of budget and activities in two countries, resulted in an unequal distribution of results but not necessarily in poor performance.
- An NGO acting as EA for this GEF project increased efficiency but might have implied less NGA ownership.

Main recommendations

13. Based on the project findings and conclusions, the evaluator developed a series of recommendations for the sustainability of the results. They provide roles and opportunities for each of the project partners. The main recommendations are:

- *To CONDESAN:* Recognizing the crucial role of the EA for providing institutional sustainability and considering there are many ideas and initiatives for the sustainability of results and concrete achievements but no agreed plan, CONDESAN should develop a sustainability plan through meetings with the main project partners to agree on tasks from each of the partners to sustain activities where needed, support the consolidation of results and activities to achieve impact.
- *To CONDESAN and lead local project Partner agencies:* Considering that compared to the environmental benefits, the Ecoandes project underperformed in the inclusion of social benefits and recognizing that social benefits, human rights and equity are well-known requisites for the consolidation and wider uptake of environmental benefits, the commitments and actions included in the above mentioned sustainability plan should highlight how social benefits will be achieved in the future, through the ongoing or new initiatives. This is particularly relevant where, in spite of not having applied gender mainstreaming or directed livelihood strategies, a social basis and expectation has been created anyhow.
- *To National and Subnational Governmental Agencies:* Considering that the project provided important input to national and subnational policies, strategies and plans, these need commitment, designated staff and action from national level governmental partners to become effective. While many of these tools have been adopted by the Governmental Agencies, others have still not been adopted and agencies should pursue adoption. The Governmental Agencies should develop and communicate to the other project partners what has been done after the project ended and what will be done to consolidate project results.
- *To CONDESAN:* Given the wealth of gathered field data, generated information and established research plots but recognizing there is not one single depository of this information beyond CONDESAN archives, CONDESAN should ensure that the established geoportal is a fully transparent and accessible knowledge platform. Also, it should be shared with National Government Agencies divisions or Institutes that have a statuary role for knowledge management.
- *To UN Environment:* Some achievements and insights from the project are of regional and global importance and contribute to the expected accomplishments of UN Environment. To consolidate these results at international level, UN Environment should identify these achievements and develop direct follow-up actions to insert them in existing (ongoing) projects and new initiatives underway.
- *To UN Environment:* This project was a successful example of globally relevant research, effectively applied to national and subnational policy and practice that it constitutes a good example for other projects to follow. However, broad communication and collaboration with other Global Environmental Facility projects was limited. Therefore, UN Environment should develop communication strategies for such successful projects, over and above final 'lessons learned documents', to ensure the experience is used in other projects.

- *All project partners*: The project generated an amount of well-established field experience, pilot plots, information and tools and protocols. All project partners share the responsibility to replicate these experiences and bring them to the adequate scale. This can be done through the inclusion of project experiences and vision in new projects for the Global Environmental Facility or other donors and therefore, it is recommended as part as immediate follow-up activities.

Resumen Ejecutivo

Introducción

14. Este documento presenta el informe de la evaluación final del proyecto de Medio Ambiente de las Naciones Unidas (ONU Ambiente)/Fondo para el Medio Ambiente Mundial (FMAM) "Multiplicar los beneficios ambientales y de carbono en los ecosistemas altoandinos" (en adelante denominado "Proyecto Ecoandes"). La evaluación fue ejecutada durante mayo y junio de 2019, por un evaluador externo, Robert Hofstede. La evaluación se realizó al finalizar el proyecto para evaluar el desempeño del proyecto y determinar los resultados e impactos derivados del proyecto, incluida su sostenibilidad. La evaluación tuvo dos propósitos principales: (i) proporcionar evidencia de los resultados para cumplir con los requisitos de rendición de cuentas, y (ii) promover la mejor operatividad, el aprendizaje y el intercambio de conocimientos a través de los resultados y las lecciones aprendidas entre la Agencia de Ejecución (EA) y ONU Ambiente. Los destinatarios de los resultados de esta evaluación son (a) el personal de ONU Ambiente relacionado con los proyectos del FMAM, las oficinas regionales / de división y la oficina de evaluación, (b) los ministerios de medio ambiente participantes, los dos gobiernos nacionales, así como las divisiones de medio ambiente y agricultura / silvicultura de los gobiernos locales en los sitios de intervención del proyecto, (c) otras agencias gubernamentales a diferentes niveles, (d) beneficiarios locales (agricultores, comunidades rurales, organizaciones de base), (e) EA y otros socios en la implementación.

15. El proyecto Ecoandes ha tratado de desarrollar un entorno propicio para la gestión integral de los ecosistemas en los ecosistemas alto andinos de Ecuador y Perú, y del mismo modo desarrollar y validar la aplicación de la gestión integrada de la tierra a través de prácticas de demostración seleccionadas en el panorama más amplio en cinco sitios de intervención (dos en Perú y tres en Ecuador). Se incluyeron cuatro componentes secuencialmente ligados (1) conocimiento y herramientas, (2) integración y desarrollo de capacidades (3) demostración e intervención (4) escalamiento. La lógica de intervención del proyecto se basa en una interacción de actividades y resultados a diferentes niveles. El enfoque de intervención a escala múltiple de este proyecto implicó áreas de influencia directa e indirecta dentro de los sitios de intervención. En las áreas de influencia directa, se implementaron actividades de investigación específicas y prácticas de manejo sustentable de tierras y de bosques; mientras que las áreas de influencia indirecta incluían unidades políticas administrativas territoriales enteras, que se esperaba que se vieran afectadas por las actividades de integración y ampliación del proyecto dirigidas hacia los gobiernos locales y sus marcos de políticas locales. En cada nivel, diferentes grupos de las partes interesadas participaron de diversas maneras.

16. Este proyecto binacional se ejecutó entre 2014 y 2018. Fue un proyecto de múltiples áreas focales del FMAM, que contribuyó a objetivos estratégicos en biodiversidad, cambio climático, degradación de la tierra y manejo forestal sostenible. Su presupuesto total fue de USD 20,956,190, de los cuales el FMAM contribuyó con USD 4,796,364. ONU Ambiente fue la Agencia Implementadora (IA) para este proyecto y el Consorcio para el Desarrollo Sostenible de la Eco-Región Andina (CONDESAN) fue designado como Agencia Ejecutora (EA) para administrar el proyecto a nivel internacional, binacional y nacional. Para la implementación de las actividades del proyecto en varios sitios de intervención, se establecieron acuerdos de colaboración con agencias asociadas (el Fondo de Páramos y Combate de la Pobreza en

Tungurahua , Naturaleza y Cultura International, la fundación Imaymana y el Programa de desarrollo económico sostenible y manejo de recursos naturales (Perú).

Hallazgos principales

17. Entre los principales hallazgos de la evaluación se encuentra su gran relevancia para las prioridades locales, nacionales e internacionales. Debido a su respuesta a las ideas reales de la política global y los debates académicos, los objetivos y la estrategia del proyecto ayudaron a dar forma a las necesidades de los interesados locales y las políticas subnacionales en lugar de responder a ellas. El proyecto fue complementario a un conjunto de iniciativas de los socios del proyecto y socios gubernamentales, incluyendo los programas nacionales de incentivos ambientales. En el inicio de la implementación del proyecto, hubo un fuerte cambio en el contexto del proyecto que resultó, entre otros, en una gran disminución de la financiación de estos programas. Sin embargo, el proyecto se adaptó de manera eficiente y transparente lo que contribuyó a la efectividad del proyecto, a pesar de que esto implicaba que varios resultados se lograron de manera diferente a lo planeado.

18. El proyecto se consideró efectivo: produjo una cantidad de productos mayor a la prevista en la mayoría de los componentes. En particular, la producción académica cumplió con los más altos estándares internacionales. Las partes interesadas participaron en la generación de productos y los resultados se compartieron adecuadamente entre ellos. Se lograron seis de los ocho resultados planificados, así como los cuatro estados intermedios identificados en la teoría del cambio de esta evaluación. Dos otros resultados se lograron parcialmente. Durante la implementación, y con el proyecto ya gestionado se generó un impacto ambiental positivo (mayor biodiversidad y reservas de carbono) a nivel de los sitios de intervención.

19. En general, el proyecto fue bien implementado. Fue administrado profesionalmente por un equipo que funcionaba bien y que tuvo un personal comprometido y de alta calidad técnica. La gobernanza del proyecto proporcionó una supervisión efectiva y eficiente. El proyecto involucró a las agencias socias del proyecto en todo el proceso de la toma de decisiones, implementación de actividades y consolidación. La gestión financiera se realizó según la planificación y siguió los estándares financieros y operativos de ONU Medio Ambiente. El proyecto se ejecutó eficientemente de acuerdo con el tiempo original y la planificación financiera. En comparación con otros proyectos similares, Ecoandes logró muchos resultados en relación con su inversión financiera. No se necesitaron medidas específicas de ahorro de tiempo o costos para alcanzar los logros. Aunque hubo algunas debilidades en el diseño del proyecto relacionadas con los indicadores y la participación de las partes interesadas, el plan de monitoreo y evaluación del proyecto (incluido el monitoreo de riesgos) estaba bien organizado, tenía un presupuesto y personal dedicados. Un aspecto débil del proyecto fue la ausencia de una estrategia clara de género, ni experiencia humana, objetivos y monitoreo de este tema.

20. La sostenibilidad del proyecto se consideró moderadamente probable. La base social para la conservación y el manejo del ecosistema generalmente está aumentando en las áreas de intervención del proyecto, lo que explica la buena apropiación del proyecto por parte de las partes interesadas locales. Las políticas ambientales generales de las agencias gubernamentales asociadas (nacionales y locales) se mantienen bastante constantes, pero otras políticas (minería, agricultura, planificación) pueden afectar negativamente la

sostenibilidad. Existe un compromiso político y varias iniciativas de seguimiento (financiadas) para apoyar la continuación de las actividades de campo, la replicación y la ampliación de escala. Sin embargo, la implementación de los planes y políticas respaldados requiere financiamiento público, lo cual es menos probable. Aunque el proyecto no tiene un plan de salida o sostenibilidad acordado entre los socios del proyecto, los socios locales del proyecto aseguran la sostenibilidad de los resultados en la mayoría de las áreas de intervención.

Conclusiones principales

21. El desempeño general del proyecto se califica como "Satisfactorio". A pesar de algunas debilidades, el proyecto fue conceptual y estratégicamente bien diseñado. El objetivo y las estrategias del proyecto fueron muy relevantes para las agencias participantes a nivel nacional y subnacional, así como para las agencias donantes y el debate global sobre biodiversidad, degradación de la tierra y reservas de carbono. El enfoque de investigación académica del proyecto fue innovador y garantizó resultados de alta calidad. La buena calidad y el alto número de productos formaron la base para un logro satisfactorio de los resultados y el impacto inicial en la conservación de la biodiversidad y las reservas de carbono en los sitios de intervención.

22. La sostenibilidad de los resultados del proyecto se califica como "Moderadamente probable". En general, el equipo del proyecto logró una participación adecuada de las partes interesadas directamente relevantes en la planificación, la toma de decisiones y la implementación del proyecto. Apoyó el desarrollo de herramientas e instrumentos y fortaleció las capacidades de las instituciones locales para mejorar un entorno propicio para la restauración del paisaje y el monitoreo y la conservación de la biodiversidad y las reservas de carbono. Para consolidar y mantener estos resultados, se requiere un compromiso político continuo y apoyo institucional que esté disponible en diferentes niveles y grados.

23. El proyecto fue menos éxitoso en aspectos sociales: si bien trabajó en tres cadenas de valor para medios de vida sostenibles, las evaluaciones sociales y estrategias integradas de medios de vida para mejorar la gestión sostenible de la tierra y los bosques estuvieron subdesarrolladas, especialmente teniendo en cuenta las grandes áreas donde se promovió una gestión mejorada. Si bien las partes institucionales interesadas y las agencias de representación de los agricultores fueron un grupo meta importante durante la ejecución del proyecto, las comunidades de base no lo fueron y los agricultores individuales solo marginalmente. El proyecto no aplicó un enfoque de género, equidad y derechos humanos en su implementación.

24. Las principales conclusiones de la evaluación son:

- El fuerte enfoque académico del proyecto aportó nuevos conocimientos y herramientas a los gobiernos subnacionales y a los beneficiarios locales. Por lo tanto, a nivel subnacional, el proyecto ayudó en desarrollar la agenda de conservación en lugar de seguirla.
- Debido a la colaboración estratégica y práctica con las agencias del gobierno local, el impacto de los cambios en la administración local afectó menos a este proyecto que a otros proyectos similares.

- Gracias a la buena gestión de un equipo de proyecto profesional que funciona bien y la colaboración activa con los interesados locales, la mayoría de los resultados se generaron de manera oportuna. El proyecto superó la cantidad total de productos.
- El proyecto logró efectivamente la mayoría de los resultados esperados. Esto se realizó con base en la entrega oportuna de productos de buena calidad, manejo adaptativo adecuado y colaboración e interés continuo de los actores institucionales en los sitios de intervención.
- El proyecto ha estado contribuyendo a un impacto positivo en las reservas de carbono y la biodiversidad a nivel de parcela y de sitio. Existe una probabilidad considerable de que contribuya a este impacto a nivel subnacional / nacional.
- El proyecto ha generado poco impacto social porque no logró fortalecer o diversificar las estrategias locales de medios de vida a una escala que apoyara el manejo sostenible de la tierra y los bosques en los sitios de intervención y el impacto social.
- Si bien en todos los sitios de intervención se generaron importantes resultados e impacto, hubo grandes diferencias entre ellos: hubo mucho más presupuesto, actividad, resultados e impacto en Ecuador que en Perú y particularmente en el sitio de Pichincha.
- Las diferentes agencias asociadas al proyecto movilizaron más cofinanciamiento que el comprometido, aunque su contribución a los objetivos del proyecto no siempre fue clara.
- El proyecto aplicó un minucioso seguimiento de sus actividades y logros, que utilizó para informar la gestión adaptativa y la presentación de informes. Las debilidades en el diseño del sistema de monitoreo y evaluación se corrigieron principalmente durante la implementación.
- Hay suficientes iniciativas nuevas en marcha para apoyar la continuación y la replicación de las actividades implementadas por el proyecto.
- El proyecto fue supervisado adecuadamente por un comité directivo eficiente y con un buen respaldo por parte de ONU Ambiente.

Tabla de calificación resumida

Criterio	**Clasificación**
A. Relevancia estratégica	Altamente Satisfactorio
B. Calidad del diseño del proyecto	Satisfactorio
C. Naturaleza del contexto externo	Favorable
D. efectividad	Satisfactorio
E. Gestión financiera	Altamente Satisfactorio
F. Eficiencia	Satisfactorio
G. Monitoreo e informes	Satisfactorio
H. Sostenibilidad	Moderadamente probable
Factores que afectan el desempeño	Moderadamente satisfactorio
Calificación general del proyecto	**Satisfactorio**

Lecciones principales

25. Al observar las experiencias del proyecto, las buenas prácticas y los éxitos que podrían replicarse en contextos similares, el evaluador identificó las siguientes lecciones:

- Se necesitan diferentes indicadores SMART a lo largo del camino de impacto de la teoría de cambio del proyecto (producto, resultado e impacto).
- La alta dependencia de las inversiones del sector público constituyó un riesgo considerable para el éxito del proyecto, a pesar de que estos fondos fueron confirmados inicialmente.
- El proyecto puede generar una investigación de calidad académica para ser aplicada directamente a la gestión de la tierra, gracias a la participación óptima de los interesados en la investigación, el buen desarrollo de capacidades, protocolos claros y la transferencia adecuada de conocimientos.
- Un conjunto de herramientas diferentes para la participación de las partes interesadas, una mayor participación y propiedad.
- La colaboración concreta con el personal de SNGA mejoró el impacto y la sostenibilidad.
- Sin estrategias del proyecto dirigidas a los beneficios sociales, género y equidad, el impacto positivo en los medios de vida que apoyan las prácticas sostenibles de manejo de bosques y tierras es poco probable.
- Un proyecto ejecutado con diferentes niveles de presupuesto y actividades en dos países, resultó en una distribución desigual de los resultados, pero no necesariamente en un desempeño deficiente.
- Una ONG que actúa como EA para este proyecto del FMAM aumentó la eficiencia, pero podría haber implicado menos propiedad de las agencias gubernamentales.

Recomendaciones principales

26. Con base en los hallazgos y conclusiones del proyecto, el evaluador desarrolló una serie de recomendaciones para la sostenibilidad de los resultados. Proporcionan roles y oportunidades para cada uno de los socios del proyecto. Las principales recomendaciones son:

- *Para CONDESAN:* Reconociendo el papel crucial de la EA para proporcionar sostenibilidad institucional y considerando que hay muchas ideas e iniciativas para la sostenibilidad de los resultados y logros concretos pero no hay un plan acordado, CONDESAN debe desarrollar un plan de sostenibilidad a través de reuniones con los principales socios del proyecto para acordar las tareas de cada uno de los socios para mantener las actividades donde sea necesario, apoyar la consolidación de los resultados y actividades para lograr el impacto.
- *Para CONDESAN y agencias asociadas del proyecto local:* Considerando que en comparación con los beneficios ambientales, el proyecto Ecoandes tuvo un desempeño inferior en la inclusión de beneficios sociales y reconociendo que los beneficios sociales, los derechos humanos y la equidad son requisitos para la consolidación y una mayor adopción de beneficios medioambientales, los

compromisos y las acciones incluidas en el plan de sostenibilidad mencionado anteriormente deben explicar cómo se lograrán los beneficios sociales en el futuro, a través de iniciativas nuevas o en curso. Esto es particularmente relevante cuando, a pesar de no haber aplicado la transversalización de género o estrategias dirigidas de medios de vida, se ha creado una base social y una expectativa de todos modos.

- *Para las agencias gubernamentales nacionales y subnacionales:* Teniendo en cuenta que el proyecto proporcionó aportes importantes a las políticas, estrategias y planes nacionales y subnacionales, estos necesitan compromiso, personal designado y acción de los socios gubernamentales a nivel nacional para ser efectivos. Si bien muchas de estas herramientas han sido adoptadas por las agencias gubernamentales, otras aún no han sido adoptadas y las agencias deben buscar esta adopción. Las agencias gubernamentales deben desarrollar y comunicar a los otros socios del proyecto lo que se hizo después de que el proyecto terminó y lo que se hará para consolidar los resultados del proyecto.
- *Para CONDESAN:* Dada la gran cantidad levantada de datos de campo, información generada y parcelas de investigación establecidas, pero reconociendo que no hay un solo depósito de esta información más allá de los archivos de CONDESAN, CONDESAN debe garantizar que el geoportal establecido sea una plataforma de conocimiento totalmente transparente y accesible. Además, debe compartirse con las divisiones o institutos de las agencias gubernamentales nacionales que tienen un papel oficial en la gestión del conocimiento.
- *Para ONU Ambiente:* Algunos logros e ideas del proyecto son de importancia regional y global y contribuyen a los logros esperados de ONU Medio Ambiente. Para consolidar estos resultados a nivel internacional, el Medio Ambiente de la ONU debe identificar estos logros y desarrollar un seguimiento directo - las acciones para insertarlos en los proyectos existentes (en curso) y las nuevas iniciativas en marcha.
- *Para ONU Ambiente:* Este proyecto fue un ejemplo exitoso de investigación relevante a nivel mundial, aplicado efectivamente a las políticas y prácticas nacionales y subnacionales que constituye un buen ejemplo para otros proyectos a seguir. Sin embargo, la comunicación y colaboración con otros proyectos del Fondo para el Medio Ambiente Mundial fue limitada. Por lo tanto, ONU Medio Ambiente debe desarrollar estrategias de comunicación para estos proyectos exitosos, más allá de los 'documentos de lecciones aprendidas' finales, para garantizar que la experiencia se utilice en otros proyectos.
- *Todos los socios del proyecto*: el proyecto generó una cantidad de experiencia de campo bien establecida, parcelas piloto, información, herramientas y protocolos. Todos los socios del proyecto comparten la responsabilidad de replicar estas experiencias y llevarlas a la escala adecuada. Esto puede hacerse mediante la inclusión de experiencias y visión de proyectos en nuevos proyectos para el Fondo para el Medio Ambiente Mundial u otros donantes y, por lo tanto, se recomienda como parte de las actividades de seguimiento inmediato.

I. Introduction

27. This document presents the report of the Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the UN Environment/GEF project "Multiplying environmental and carbon benefits in high Andean ecosystems" (hereafter called "Ecoandes project"). The evaluation covered implementation during the entire project execution period (from April 2014 to December 2018) and covered all activities of the project. The total project budget, as presented in the project document (Prodoc), was USD 20,956,190, of which GEF contributed USD 4,796,364 (23%). The planned co-financing was USD16,159,826, of which USD 7,167,000 was expected to be in cash (34%).

28. The GEF designated UN Environment as the Implementing Agency (IA) for this project following requests by the Governments of Ecuador and Peru, through their respective national environmental authorities. UN Environment managed this project through the Ecosystems Division with the Task Manager based in the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (Panama). In consultation with these authorities, the Consortium for the Sustainable Development of the Andean Eco-Region (CONDESAN) was designated as Executing Agency (EA) to manage the project at the international, bi-national and national levels. The national environmental authorities have assigned high-ranking officials to facilitate project operations, who worked side-by-side with CONDESAN in the implementation the project.

29. The project was approved by GEF on 19 March 2014 and formally started 1 April 2014, while UN Environment and CONDESAN signing their cooperation agreement on 13 June 2014. It was accepted as a multi focal area-project by GEF, contributing to strategic objectives in biodiversity, climate change, land degradation and sustainable forest management. It was developed to be aligned with UN Environment's Programme of Work (POW) 2012-13, contributing to three strategic programs (SP 1: Climate Change, SP 3: Ecosystem Management, and SP 4: Environmental Governance).

30. In line with the UN Environment Evaluation Policy [3] and the UN Environment Programme Manual[4], the TE was undertaken at completion of the project to assess project performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine outcomes and impacts (actual and potential) stemming from the project, including their sustainability. The evaluation had two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UN Environment and Executing Agency. Therefore, the evaluation will identify lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation and implementation. In 2016, the project received a Mid-Term Review (MTR) that was managed by the EA. The present TE refers to this MTR in several instances, particularly to assess if the performance significantly changed and if and how recommendations were implemented.

31. A key aim of this evaluation is to encourage reflection and learning by UN Environment staff and key project stakeholders. Therefore, the target audience for the results of this evaluation are UN Environment staff related to GEF projects, division/regional offices and

[3] http://www.UN Environment.org/eou/StandardsPolicyandPractices/UN EnvironmentEvaluationPolicy/tabid/3050/language/en-US/Default.aspx

[4] http://www.UN Environment.org/QAS/Documents/UN EnvironmentProgrammeManualMay2013.pdf . *This manual is under revision.*

evaluation office. Among project stakeholders, the participating ministries of the two national governments as well as environmental and agriculture/forestry divisions of the local governments in the project intervention sites are expected to appreciate the findings. It is expected that most recommendations to ensure sustainability of project results and progress towards long term impact will be targeting the responsible governmental agencies at different levels, as well as local beneficiaries. Finally, the EA and other partners in the implementation will benefit from the results of this evaluation for their future initiatives

32. The evaluation was executed during May and June 2019, by an external evaluator, Robert Hofstede (hereafter referred to as "the evaluator"). In May, an inception report was developed, containing a thorough review of the project context and its project design quality; a proposal for a reconstructed Theory of Change for the project, the evaluation framework and a tentative evaluation schedule [5]. During inception, initial conversations with the CONDESAN Project Manager and the UNEP Task Manager took place to plan for the data gathering of the evaluation. Fieldwork for data-gathering was undertaken from May 27 to June 15 in Ecuador and Perú.

II. Evaluation Methods

33. A combination of methods and tools were applied during the evaluation to collect the qualitative and quantitative data necessary to answer the evaluation questions in an evidence-based, objective manner. The evaluation included seven phases: inception, document review, stakeholder interviews, field visits, information processing and analysis, elaboration of findings, conclusions and recommendations, and report elaboration.

- *Inception Stage.* During inception, the evaluator focused on familiarizing himself with the project, planning the evaluation and developing the exact evaluation questions. An initial review was done of the project design documents, the MTR report and Project Implementation Reviews (PIR). Initial conversations were held with the executing and implementing agencies (CONDESAN and UN Environment) about the scope and logistics of the evaluation. Also, the Theory of Change (ToC) included in the Project Document (ProDoc) was revised and adapted. This was done based on the project documentation and complementing the existing ToC. The resulting reconstructed Theory of Change (ToC) that implicitly underlays the project was validated through initial conversations with IA and EA members and used for the adjustment of the evaluation questions. Finally, the inception report was elaborated and presented.
- *Document Review.* The evaluator undertook a thorough review of all project-related documents, provided by the IA and EA. The Evaluator complemented these with relevant documents produced by other project agencies and third-party agencies, and with publicly available documents (publications). The various types of documents provide information for aspects of the project context, evaluation questions, the different evaluation criteria and for assessing the outputs and outcomes. The evaluation matrix (Annex 1) shows what type of documentation was used to explore

[5] Inception report available at UN Environment Evaluation Office

which specific evaluation question. The full list of documents that was consulted is included in Annex 2.

- *Stakeholder Interviews.* The evaluator undertook a series of semi-structured interviews with a representative number of stakeholders. The selection of stakeholders to be interviewed was made by the evaluator, in agreement with the EA and the IA. During inception, the EA delivered a list of 80 stakeholders and the evaluator made a selection from this list, aiming at establishing a complete list of key informants (project managers, IA, Steering Committee members, focal point in public agencies, local champions and beneficiaries) and a representation of all stakeholders. The final selection of project implementation sites was also a key factor to select stakeholders to be interviewed: in these sites the evaluator selected a wide representation of project partners, local government agencies and project beneficiaries while at the sites that were not visited, the evaluator only interviewed a small representation of field coordinators and local governments. Especially in the selection of local beneficiaries, care was taken that the interviewed stakeholders were also representative in terms of gender, age and ethnicity.

  In total, 69 people were interviewed directly (20 women), in 39 semi-structured interviews (with 1 or 2 persons) and 8 group conversations (three persons or more). These consisted of one representative form IA, 15 from EA, 8 from partner agencies, 19 local beneficiaries[6],12 representatives from National Governmental Agencies (NGA), 11 from Subnational Governmental Agencies (SNGA), 5 from academy. A full list of people interviewed is provided in Annex 3.

  The majority of the interviews were bilateral (one on one), but in some cases, when there were more than two persons, the interviews were organized by focal group. A template was designed for the interviews with specific questions (Annex 4). This template was based on the evaluation questions. These questions were open-ended and allowed the evaluator and interviewee to have a wider conversation of relevant issues. The template was adapted for the type of interview (bilateral or focal group) and for each group of actors so that depending on the group it could go deeper into different subjects. The data from each interview was registered in writing and also audio-recorded (after having received explicit permission from the interviewees). Interviews were mostly in person, but on a few occasions telephone or Skype interviews took place, especially for stakeholder intervention sites that could not be visited. The response to each interview question was associated with the relevant evaluation question for its due processing in the data analysis and elaboration of the findings. Although interviews were not accompanied by representatives from the EA or IA, during the entire evaluation process, contact with the EA was maintained to validate some specific information obtained, or to adjust evaluation sub-questions or the interviewed population in order to triangulate and verify information.

  At the start of each interview, the evaluator explained the goal of the evaluation, highlighted the independence of the evaluator, explained that participation was voluntary (every interviewee could start of stop the interview when s/he wished and decide whether to answer any question, or not) and that all information would be

[6] One of the group conversations, in the Totora community in Piura, was attended by 42 people (14 women) but only some of these actively participated in the conversation.

treated as confidential and anonymous (names only to be included in an annex to the report but no specific expression to be attributed to specific persons).

- *Field Observations*. Several indicators of progress and performance of the project were validated through visits to the intervention areas of the project, with direct observations and conversations with the local beneficiaries. Because of logistical restrictions, the evaluator could not visit all sites but in agreement with the IA and EA decided to visit two areas in Ecuador (Pichincha and Tungurahua) and one in Peru (Piura). This selection was based on two criteria: the amount of implemented activities and the availability of examples of both positive and negative performance indicators. During the field missions, the evaluator focused on obtaining direct information on the impact indicators of the outcomes (area managed sustainably, area restored, sustainable livelihood practices). Apart from direct evidence, the perceptions of local decision makers and beneficiaries were assessed in conversations. Regarding the sites that were not visited (Huancavelica and Carchi), the evaluator made additional telephone calls with local stakeholders to validate the general narrative of these sites. In the detailed overview of the evaluation mission (Annex 5) the specific field sites that were visited are presented.
- *Processing and Validation of Data.* Once the gathering of the data from document review, stakeholder interviews and field visits was completed, this was organized according to the criteria and evaluation questions. Information that supported indicators was compared with the project reporting on these indicators, to validate the reported information. In the cases were the data from certain interviews demonstrated a trend of coincidence and complementarity, this was used directly to sustain findings. In the cases where this did not coincide, information was validated through a process of confrontation (with the Project Team and partner agencies) or triangulation (with additional informants).
- *Elaboration of Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations*. Based on the data compiled during the information gathering phases and its processing, the evaluator identified preliminary findings. Each finding was a partial answer to the evaluation questions and is strictly evidence-based (data found during information gathering). On June 27, these initial findings were presented to IA and EA evaluation for reflection. Based on the feedback received, the evaluator refined the final findings and the conclusions of the evaluation. The conclusions sustain the rating of evaluation criteria according to the scale[7] mentioned in the Terms of Reference (TOR). As final elements of the evaluation, and referring to findings and conclusions, the evaluator identified a series of lessons and recommendations. The lessons learned during the execution of the project are good (or not-so-good) practices in the design, implementation, governance or in the context of the project that are worth being considered in future similar projects. The recommendations are directed towards agencies of implementation and execution and refer to the immediate corrective actions, future activities or recommendable practices to increase the sustainability of the project outcomes, the probability of achieving the impact or replication to another geographical area or at an increased scale.

[7] https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/id/c6598799-b95b-4c0a-aae5-74b603e0a22c/2_Evaluation_Criteria_17.04.18.doc

- *Report Development and Revision.* In line with the ToR for this evaluation, the evaluator submitted a draft report to the evaluation manager, who reviewed it and shared the cleared draft report with the Project Manager and Task Manager, for them to identify any factual errors or substantive omissions. Comments were shared with the Evaluation Consultant for his response and a subsequent draft shared with all those who had been interviewed for any further comments and/or corrections of fact.

34. The evaluator developed an evaluation framework for this evaluation, presented in a matrix of detailed evaluation questions, indicators and sources of verification (Annex 1). In general, the evaluation questions are distilled from the ToR for this evaluation, from the example questions managed by UN Environment[8] and arranged around the evaluation criteria. The main evaluation questions of the ToR are included under effectiveness. The evaluator included additional questions, specifically under the criteria for effectiveness (to reflect the reconstructed ToC and project design assessment). Several other evaluation questions from the ToR and UN Environment examples were adapted to the specific context of the project. Based on the analysis of the project design, the reconstructed ToC and interviews during the inception phase, the evaluator has identified a few themes that required specific attention and that were translated in additional, specific evaluation questions. Where possible, indicators from the project Results Framework were included and where these were not available, the evaluator proposed new indicators. Evaluation indicators have been analysed using the project's own reporting mechanism (PIR and half year reports) and have been validated through a careful revision of both documents and products and through the stakeholder interviews.

35. There have been few limitations to the implementation of this evaluation. The IA and EA have been collaborative and transparent in terms of providing the evaluator with all required information and all stakeholders have been open to be interviewed. Three (minor) limitations were identified. Due to time constraints, the evaluator could not visit all implementation sites so there was less detail of gathered information (direct observations and number of interviewed stakeholders) in Huancavelica and Carchi than in Piura, Tungurahua and Pichincha. This was mitigated by making several telephone calls to stakeholders from the sites that were not visited. Also, the evaluation was executed after project closure. While this is positive from an evaluation-technical point of view (providing a truly ex-post evaluation), it did present some logistical challenges for instance with the contracting of the evaluator, organizing logistics in the field and contacting (past) staff. Finally, in both countries, local administration changed in early 2019 (after project closure) and therefore, many local government agency staff had changed. This was mitigated by interviewing where possible, both previous and incoming agency staff. The evaluator judges that the limitations did not affect the reliability and usefulness of the evaluation: in general, a representative enough sample of project partners was consulted and the gathered information was enough to develop sustained findings.

III. Project Description

A. PROJECT CONTEXT

[8] https://wedocs.UN Environment.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/27348/20PossibleEvaluationQuestions.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

36. Upper montane forests, alpine grasslands and wetlands found in the Tropical Andes are major contributors to the globally significant carbon stocks and biodiversity. These ecosystems also play a fundamental role in sustaining the livelihoods of millions of people, providing essential ecosystem services such as water and food. These high Andean ecosystems are continuously being degraded and suffered biodiversity loss by **threats** such as deforestation, habitat fragmentation and soil erosion. In some areas, agriculture encroachment, pastures expansion and unsustainable exploitation of native forests are direct causes of forests loss and degradation, while the improper use of tree species in afforestation, land restoration and agroforestry programs have frequently been part of ineffective and unsustainable processes encouraged throughout the region. A high proportion of the land in the Andes is characterized by water erosion on steep slopes and due to inappropriate land use practices. In some areas, intensive use of agrochemicals depletes soil nutrients and contaminates water sources. More recently, infrastructure development and mining has become an increasing threat to highland ecosystems and rural livelihoods, as Andean governments are fostering investments to achieve substantial financial returns to the economy.

37. According to the Prodoc, the **root causes** of biodiversity loss, deforestation and land degradation in the high Andes include a set of interacting forces operating at different levels. Aside from natural and climatic conditions that help to explain the diversity and fragility of Andean ecosystems, major root causes include demographic, economic, institutional, cultural and technological factors. The Andes are relatively high dense areas, with a broad percentage of its population within poverty levels. Economic trends in the Andes countries and growing urbanization processes have transformed the urban-rural relations and have fostered the market links of rural dwellers. In particular, migration—including cyclical or permanent in-out patterns—pose a heavy influence on households' land use decisions and the landscape configuration. In some cases (e.g. Carchi, Ecuador), the rent-seeking behavior among newly arrived inhabitants are contributing to forest degradation given the weak enforcement of the law and land tenure issues among smallholders. At the local level, political and institutional factors including weak governance, unclear allocation rights, improper incentives in place and insufficient information to support decision making and land use planning are a common setting within the Andes. Additionally, contradictory sectorial policies promoting or encouraging production in fragile lands, without proper or innovative technology, often turn out as perverse incentives against sustainable manage. Lastly, a lack of awareness—especially among decision-makers—of the functions and value of critical ecosystem services and biodiversity to human wellbeing, the persistence of misguided cultural values—particularly those related to the use of fire—and individual behaviour patterns are social constraints that undermine efforts for sustainable management in the Andes.

38. According to the Prodoc, the main **barriers** impeding the conservation of critical Andean ecosystems, hence of biodiversity and carbon stocks, are:

- *Incomplete and insufficient knowledge regarding the functions and values of the ecological services being affected by degradation and deforestation processes*.
- *Lack of appropriate resources, inputs and tools to support decision-making processes*.
- *Lack of coherence among cross-sectoral policies that undermine the conservation of high Andean ecosystems and critical environmental services*.

- *Unfeasible sustainable management practices promoted in the Andes*.
- *Limited capacity at local and national levels to endure mid-and-long term processes and upscale interventions*.

39. There is a growing political commitment and associated core investments being made by both Andean countries to protect biodiversity and reduce GHG emissions:

- **Ecuador**'s Organic Code for Environment (Código Orgánico del Ambiente CODA, 2018) establishes minimum measures for adaptation and mitigation, for example restoration of degraded areas and ecosystems. The National Development Plan *(Plan Nacional de Desarrollo - Toda una Vida 2017-2021)* highlights environmental aspects, implemented through the initiative "Reverdecer Ecuador" (Greening Ecuador). This includes a specific target on a new management model for ecosystem restoration, in close cooperation with the private sector, to guarantee ecosystem services (water, air, subsistence) for local people. Earlier, in 2009 Ecuador´s Ministry of Environment (MAE) issued the High-mountain Ecosystem Policy that promotes the conservation and sustainable management of biodiversity and agro-biodiversity contained in these systems. In 2012, MAE carried out an actualization of the National Forestation and Reforestation Plan which contains an incentive programme for the protection and conservation of forests, regulated and coordinated by MAE and a programme for the establishment of commercial plantations, coordinated and executed by Ministry of Agriculture and Cattle Raising (MAG). This was complemented in 2014 with a National Forest Restoration Plan *(Plan Nacional de Restauración Forestal,* PNRF). Since 2008, Ecuador has been implementing the Socio Bosque Program that provides direct incentives to private land-owners and communities for forest and paramos conservation.

- The National Agreement of **Peru** establishes policies with specific targets for sustainable environmental and climate risk management. The National Strategic Plan for Development 2010-2021 - PLAN PERU issued by CEPLAN establishes the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources and biodiversity as a national goal (Objective 6), through the promotion of healthy, viable and functional ecosystems. The Ministry of Environment (MINAM) approved the National Environmental Action Plan (PLANAA Peru 2011-2020), which aims to promote the sustainable development of the country through the prevention, protection and recovery of the environment and its component. The main policy instrument related to climate change in Peru is the National Strategy on Climate Change (D.S N° 086 – 2003 – PCM), issued on 2003. The Action Plan for Adaptation and Mitigation of Climate Change, issued in 2010, includes a series of programs, projects and actions for the short and medium term. In 2008, the Forests Conservation Program for Climate Change Mitigation *(Plan Bosque)* was launched with an expected duration of 10 years, providing incentives to land-owners.

40. At local level, there are also numerous policies, plans and strategies aiming at conserving biodiversity and carbon stocks. Among others, in Ecuador Carchi has a Development and Territorial Management Plan and Tungurahua has its Territorial Agenda. The Municipality of Quito has established three instruments to direct environmental and territorial management (Development and Territorial Plan, Environmental Agenda and Climate Change Strategy). Likewise, in Peru the Huancavelica Regional Government has issued its Regional Environmental Policy, the Regional Environmental Action Plan and its Environmental Agenda; and the Piura Regional Government has issued its Climate Change Strategy, approved by ordinance on 2011. Both Regional Governments have generated their

Ecological and Economic Zoning (ZEE) as a fundamental input for the Regional Territorial Management Plans, currently under construction.

B. PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND COMPONENTS

41. As a response to the threats and barriers, the Ecoandes project sought to develop an enabling environment for integrated ecosystem management in the high Andean ecosystems of Ecuador and Peru, and likewise to develop and validate the application of integrated land management approaches through selected demonstration practices in the wider landscape at five intervention sites (two in Peru and three in Ecuador, Figure 1). The project aimed at mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and its multiple benefits into cross-sectoral planning tools and policy instruments across the wider landscape as well as into relevant productive sector practices (i.e. agriculture, forestry). Likewise, the project aimed to ensure that decision-makers at different levels had increased access to science-based knowledge and Sustainable Land Management (SLM)/ Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) strategies through decision support tools that enable the conservation and sustainable management of high-Andean Ecosystems.

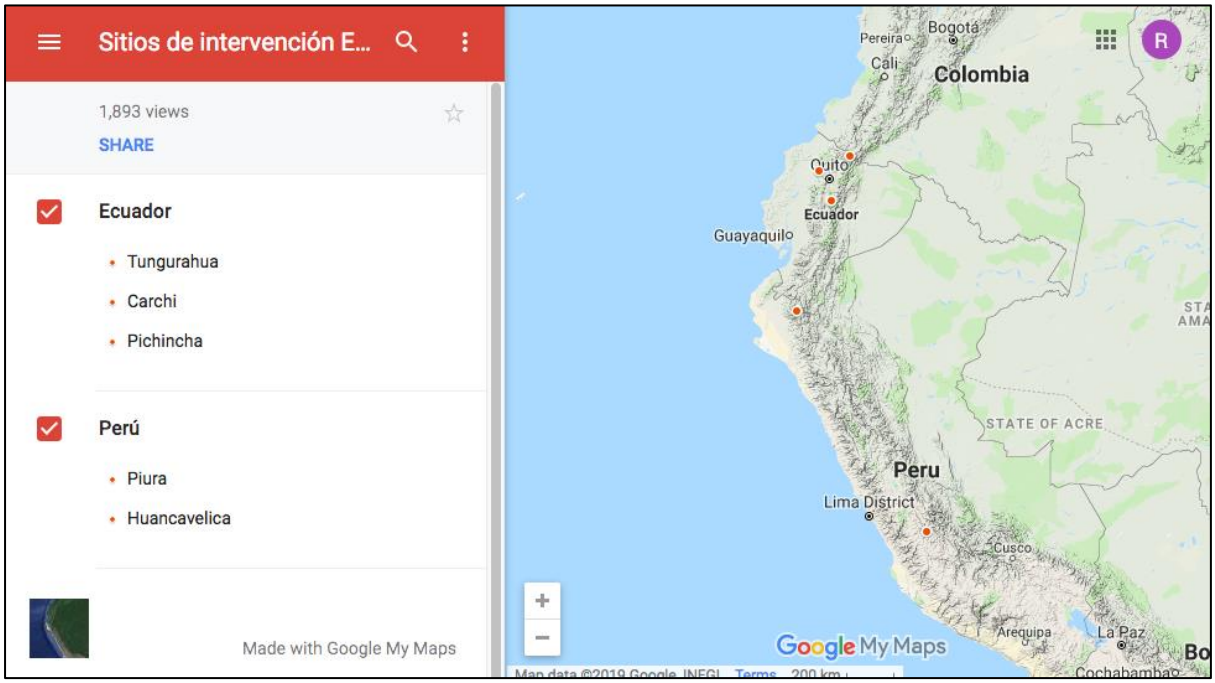
42. The **objective** of the project was to protect critical high-Andean ecosystems at selected intervention sites by mainstreaming scientifically-validated and integrated SLM tools and practices that preserve and enhance biodiversity and carbon stocks while contributing to the mitigation of climate change. The project objective intended to contribute to the conservation and enhancement of globally important biodiversity and carbon benefits embracing sustainable land and forest management at multiple scales in the Andes of Ecuador and Peru.

43. To overcome the barriers impeding the conservation of these critical ecosystems and achieve the objectives, according to the Prodoc, the project included four sequentially linked components. These included eight **outcomes,** organized in four project components[9].

- Component 1: Knowledge and Tools.
  - Outcome 1.1: Knowledge base expanded on high Andean ecosystem dynamics and the effects that Global Environmental Changes (GEC) have on biodiversity and carbon stocks and on the multiple environmental and social benefits they provide.
  - Outcome 1.2: Decision makers at different levels have increased access to science-based knowledge and SLM strategies through decision support tools that enable conservation and sustainable management of high-Andean Ecosystems.

[9] The complete results framework for this project is included as Annex 6

Figure 1. *Intervention sites (red dots) of the Ecoandes project, from North to South Carchi, Pichincha, Tungurahua, Oiura, Huancavelica*[10]



- Component 2: Mainstreaming and Capacity Building.
  - Outcome 2.1: Enabling environment in place to integrate multiple benefits in cross-sectoral planning tools at the wider landscape.
  - Outcome 2.2: Institutional capacities enhanced to apply knowledge and INRM tools that support policies, integrated land use plans and ongoing programs for the conservation and sustainable management of critical high-Andean ecosystems, including Andean forests.
- Component 3: Demonstration and Intervention Sites.
  - Outcome 3.1: Sustainable livelihood strategies and key productive value chains strengthened at intervention sites to address barriers and support SLF/SFM practices.
  - Outcome 3.2: Biodiversity, carbon and social benefits enhanced through SLM/SFM investments and practices on forest and non-forest lands in the high Andes.
- Component 4: Up Scaling and Outreach.
  - Outcome 4.1: National environmental authorities in Ecuador and Peru incorporate science-based knowledge and tools developed by the project into their MRV systems and financial incentive programs.
  - Outcome 4.2: Knowledge, tools and lessons learned disseminated among other local governments and key stakeholders outside the project intervention sites.

[10] Taken from project document

44. The project was designed to generate academic-quality knowledge to inform good policy and practice. The intervention logic of the project is based on an interaction of activities and results at different levels. The multiple scale intervention approach of this project implied areas of direct and indirect project influence within the intervention sites. In the direct areas of influence, specific research activities and SLM/SFM practices were implemented; whereas the areas of indirect influence included entire political administrative territorial units, that were expected to be affected by the project mainstreaming and up-scaling activities directed towards local governments and their local policy frameworks. At each level, different groups of stakeholders are involved in various ways. Component 1 focuses on research and monitoring at local scale (plot-level). This is done with academic partners and local beneficiaries. This information is the basis for the development of an enabling environment at local (community, local government) level, developing plans and capacities among these key stakeholders. In component three, concrete conservation practice is being implemented at community level. This is done with implementation partners (other NGO, local governments, private sector and local beneficiaries). Finally, component 4 deals with national and international level for outreach and upscaling, in collaboration with national governments and thematic, strategic and academic (national and international) networks.

C. STAKEHOLDERS

45. **Rural population** in the five project intervention areas: the target area of this project, the high Andes of Ecuador and Peru, pertains to the poorest regions of both countries. The population is a mix of indigenous and mestizo people. There is an enormous difference in socio-economic and ethnic conditions. Tungurahua and Huancavelica have mostly an indigenous population with extremely high indices of poverty[11]. Pichincha and Carchi have generally a mestizo population and more profitable economic conditions, because of good infrastructure, their closeness to Quito (Pichincha) and the profitability of the potato-milk productive system in Carchi. The different socio-economic and cultural conditions imply that it is expected that the intervention strategy, the participatory approach and the activities to improve livelihoods would be very different from one region to another.

46. **Decision makers** at different levels: national-level authorities are key partners to develop and support policies, plans and tools. Local governments are possibly even more important for this project because they are directly responsible for natural resource planning and management at the level of the intervention sites. In the context of long-term decentralization processes in both countries and subsidiarity principles, the lower scale the governmental authority is the more relevant for local livelihoods and natural resource management. However, there are large capacity gaps at the level of parishes (the lowest scale organization in Ecuador) and district municipalities (in Peru).

47. **Academy and NGO**: the Ecoandes project has a strong focus on information generation to fill important knowledge gaps for the combined management of biodiversity, carbon and water. According to the project design, there are several universities and research institutes involved in the generation of academic level information, from Peru and Ecuador but also from other parts of the world. These are also the main partners in thematic networks on ecosystem monitoring. The project included several non-governmental organizations with

[11] https://www.manosunidas.org/proyecto/ninas-ninos-ejercen-su-derecho-educacion-intercultural

specific expertise in high Andean ecosystems. The inclusion of academic partners and NGOs was in part based on existing or previous collaboration in earlier (GEF and non GEF) projects in the Andean region.

48. This terminal evaluation recognizes the different groups of stakeholders and placed specific attention on (a) the benefits received by the main target groups; (b) the level of participation by the different agencies associated with countries and intervention zone's environment and development and; (c) the communication between the project, its stakeholders (participating in implementation) and beneficiaries.

D. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURE AND PARTNERS[12]

49. Following requests by the Governments of Ecuador and Peru, through their respective national environmental authorities, the IA for the project is the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment). In this capacity, UNEP has had overall responsibility for the implementation of the project, project oversight, and co-ordination with other GEF projects. During the entire implementation of the project, the person with the position as regional focal point for GEF biodiversity and land degradation for Latin America was the project Task Manager at UNEP, he represented the organization in the project's Steering Committee. As Executing Agency (EA) CONDESAN managed the project at the international, bi-national and national levels. National environmental authorities have assigned high-ranking officials as focal points to facilitate project operations. These focal points worked side-by-side with CONDESAN in the implementation of the project. The project also worked jointly with the local governments at different levels (province, municipality, district, parish) at the intervention sites. It was expected that these institutions would also name high-ranking officials to facilitate and participate in the implementation of project activities. CONDESAN collaborated with the local governments and rural communities, including farm families, to implement the intervention or demonstration sites.

50. The highest decision-making body of the project was its Steering Committee (SC), made up of high-ranking officials of the Ministry of Environment of Ecuador (MAE) and the Ministry of Environment of Peru (MINAM), CONDESAN Executive Director and the UN Environment Task Manager (chair). The Task Manager (UNEP) was the chair and the Project Manager, CONDESAN, functioned as secretary of SC. The SC was responsible for ensuring that the project met goals described in the project's Result Framework by helping to balance conflicting priorities and resources. Decisions and recommendations by the SC were to be used by UN Environment and CONDESAN to modify implementation strategies, annual work plans and the resource allocation budget and, when necessary, to adjust the project's Result Framework. It was planned that the committee would meet every six months. In the intervention sites, local Coordination Committees were established among CONDESAN, local government agencies and Partner Agencies, to coordinate the intervention activities, agree on work plans and analyse and validate products. These committees met once or two times per year. In addition, the Prodoc had foreseen Bi-national Technical Working Groups, consisting of experts selected from national ministries and Regional Governments and supported by project staff and national or international consultants, which would assist in the implementation of specific aspects of the project. It is noted that these groups, in practice, were not activated during the project implementation but technical coordination

[12] See Appendix 10 of Prodoc for detailed description and graphical representation of project management structure

with experts from governmental agencies and international experts took place through other means (see Findings 20, 41).

51. The Project Headquarters were located in the CONDESAN office in Quito (Ecuador). CONDESAN established a Project Team (PT), responsible for day-to-day implementation of all project activities, either directly or through management of sub-grants, and for coordination of all activities among the project implementing partners and other institutions. The PT also supported Steering Committee meetings and other project governance activities and managed project finances. The PT received continuous technical and administrative support from CONDESAN director and administrative staff. PT included a Project Manager (PM), a Monitoring and Evaluation Officer in Ecuador and an Administrative Assistant. An additional Monitoring and Evaluation Officer was contracted in Peru, working from the CONDESAN office in Lima and in charge of the logistic coordination of the activities in Peru and maintaining coordination with the Peruvian governmental and partner agencies. The coordinator of the Swiss funded *Programa Bosques Andinos* (Andean Forests Programme, PBA), executed by CONDESAN and fully complementary with Ecoandes at the Pichincha site, served as Special Advisor to the PT. The PT also had three Technical Experts to coordinate components 1, 2 and 3 (the PM supervised component 4) and an advisor to support components 1, 2 and 4.

52. To support implementation and coordination of field-based activities, the PT included four field-based technical assistants, to coordinate activities in Pichincha (one), Carchi (two) and Huancavelica (one). For the implementation of project activities in Tungurahua and Piura, collaboration agreements were established with Partner Agencies (the *Fondo de Páramos y Combate de la Pobreza en Tungurahua* - Tungurahua Páramo Fund- and Nature and Culture International - NCI) who were responsible for the local execution of the project. Under these agreements, these agencies contracted local coordinators. In Pichincha, while the execution was directly done by CONDESAN, the Imaymana foundation was contracted to execute several specific project activities. Also, the technical assistant of the Project in Pichincha also fulfilled this role for the Andean Forests Project (PBA); he is a member of Imaymana and the technical director of the Commonwealth of Parishes. In Huancavelica a collaboration agreement was established with the Program for the Sustainable Economic Development and Natural Resources Strategic Management (PRODERN) to coordinate field implementation. This agreement was a zero-cost agreement which is why CONDESAN also hired a Technical Assistant. In addition, a series of local and international consultants were hired to support project execution.

E. CHANGES IN DESIGN DURING IMPLEMENTATION

53. There have been no major changes in project design during implementation. Minor changes (methodological approaches, specific activities, small changes between budget lines, forms of collaboration with partners, implementation period) were implemented as part of adaptive management (¶72, 73).

F. PROJECT FINANCING

Table 1. Expenditure by Outcome/Output (US$)

Component/outcome	Estimated cost at design	Actual expenditure[13]	Expenditure ratio (actual/planned; %)
Component 1	1'201,506	1'294,582	108
Outcome 1.1	*512,593*		
Outcome 1.2	*688,913*		
Component 2	1'099,943	1'288.534	117
Outcome 2.1	*607,143*		
Outcome 2.2	*492,800*		
Component 3	1'387,943	1'283,437	92
Outcome 3.1	*584,400*		
Outcome 3.2	*803,543*		
Component 4	878,546	702,364	80
Outcome 4.1	*610,143*		
Outcome 4.2	*268,403*		
Project Administration	228,376	182,446	80
TOTAL	**4'796,314**	**4'751,364**	**99**
Planned (terminal evaluation)		45,000	1

Table 2: Co-financing

Co financing (Type/Source)	UN Environment own Financing (US$1,000)		Government (US$1,000)		Other* (US$1,000)		Total (US$1,000)		Total Disbursed (US$1,000)
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	
– Grants			5,417	9,163	1,750	3,702	7,167	12,865	12,865
– Loans									
– Credits									
– Equity invest.									
– In-kind support	3,450		4,723	4,992	820	440	5,543	5,432	5,432
– Other (*)									
Totals	3,450		10,140	14,155	2,570	4,142	12,710	18,297	18,297

IV. Theory of Change at Evaluation

54. During inception, the Evaluator assessed the Theory of Change (ToC) included in the Prodoc. he observed that rather than a full-fledged theory of change that would underpin the results framework (RF), it is presented as a critical-thinking exercise to identify the Intermediate States (IS) that occur between the project outcomes and the ultimate impacts. The ToC presented a causal relationship from outcomes to impact, including IS and

[13] The project administration followed UNEP countability standards and did not account spending per outcome or component. The actual expenditure per component was established specifically for this evaluation by the evaluator based on data provided for this purpose by the CONDESAN office manager.

assumptions. It did not include elements that are generally considered as important in a ToC, such as actions or strategies (only titles of components are mentioned), outputs and result chains or impact pathways [14]. Also, there is no differentiation between assumptions[15] or drivers. Finally, the ToC is presented as a diagram without a narrative description. Though incomplete, according to the Mid-Term Review (MTR) this ToC did fulfil its role during project implementation and was used as a support-framework for monitoring and evaluation.

55. The evaluator notes that the UN Environment Evaluation Office defines outputs at the level of 'beneficiary gains' (i.e. when products and services have been delivered or disseminated to the intended beneficiaries and not just when the provider has developed them) and defines outcomes as the use, uptake or adoption of those outputs (i.e. when the intended beneficiaries who gained from the outputs have applied or adopted them in their own contexts). These levels are typically captured in the verbs of results statements. The results statements for this project are not formulated at these levels, however, the indicators and targets associated with the results do reflect this understanding. During the evaluation, performance against the results statements were made in conjunction with an assessment of planned indicators and their targets.

56. The evaluator used the elements of the ToC and RF of the Prodoc to complement the more complete reconstructed ToC at evaluation for the project (Figure 2). The outputs (yellow boxes) that are generated by the actions of the four components are included and how they are expected to generate the eight outcomes (light blue) is shown. The diagram shows how the project outcomes logically transition into impacts (green) via IS (blue). The evaluator has organized the IS as presented by the ToC in Prodoc directly relating them to the components. He also slightly changed their formulation to align them with the current definition of outcomes by UN Environment (previous paragraph). The scale and intervention relationship among the components of the project (as shown in Figure 2 of the Prodoc) is visualized in the reconstructed ToC at evaluation by showing the interdependence between the four IS. The assumptions (white boxes) included in the RF and the ToC in the PRoDoc are presented in the transitions where they are most relevant. The evaluator differentiated drivers (presented in italics) from assumptions. Finally, as a complement to the overall project logic, the reconstructed ToC at evaluation includes a few additional elements (two drivers and one impact), presented in blue letters. This reconstructed ToC at evaluation was validated with the main project stakeholders during the evaluation because the achievements of outcomes, IS, transitions, assumptions and drivers form the basis of the evaluation questions.

57. The reconstructed ToC at evaluation that was used as the basis for this evaluation includes an additional impact which is implicit in the project's design: improved livelihoods for the inhabitants of the five implementation sites. The evaluator added this impact because improved livelihood strategies are included at the level of outcomes but there is no social impact statement. Also, the reconstructed ToC ate evaluation differentiates between the impact statement included in the ToC of the Prodoc (Biodiversity and carbon stocks maintained or enhanced at intervention site) with the stated overall goal of the project, as

[14] See UN Environment EOC document "Use of theory of change in project evaluations"; https://wedocs.UN Environment.org/bitstream/id/8b45f5ff-c37b-4aac-b386-6b6b8e29aaed/11UseofTheoryofChangeinProjectEvaluation26.10.17.pdf

[15] Understood as 'contributing conditions' necessary for the intended change processes to take place, *assumptions* are seen as factors outside the direct control of the project and its partners and *drivers* are seen as factors within the influence of the project.

presented in the RF (Maintain and enhance globally important biodiversity and carbon benefits of critical high-Andean ecosystems). The first is a concrete impact at the intervention-site level, while the goal is at a more general level.

58. Based on the project intervention logic and the ToC in the ProDoc, the evaluator identified three impact pathways that underlie the project. The main impact pathway is on the level of **intervention sites** (blue arrows in diagram). The outputs in component 2 generate an enabling environment (outcome 2.1) and institutional capacities (outcome 2.2) through the development of development plans and policy instruments and training programs for technicians and decision makers (outputs). In component 3. the tangible field level outcomes (3.1: enhancement of sustainable livelihoods and 3.2: land under sustainable management, (SLM/SFM)) are generated based on community work and conservation practices. There are two important considerations (one assumption and one driver) related to the continued interest of local governments and communities to take interest in biodiversity and carbon mainstreaming and to collaborate to implement plans and programs, that permit transition to the Intermediate State that 'Stakeholders implement plans and development programs that properly deal with threats/barriers to Andean ecosystems' (IS2), as well as 'Reduced land degradation as a result of conservation schemes and best land and forestry practices implemented at intervention sites' (IS3). Intermediate state 3 is directly generated from the outcomes of component 3 but is also interdependent on the outcome and IS2, the enabling environment. For that transition to happen, the evaluator included an additional driver, "Plans are effectively implemented and monitored". When the outcomes at local level are achieved and the assumptions on eventual negative impacts of large-scale infrastructure projects and extreme weather and climate variations hold, both project impacts on improved livelihoods and maintenance of biodiversity of carbon stocks and biodiversity can be achieved. In addition, this impact pathway contributes to the IS at national/regional level that 'local governments support upscaling conservation and best land and forestry practice' (IS4)

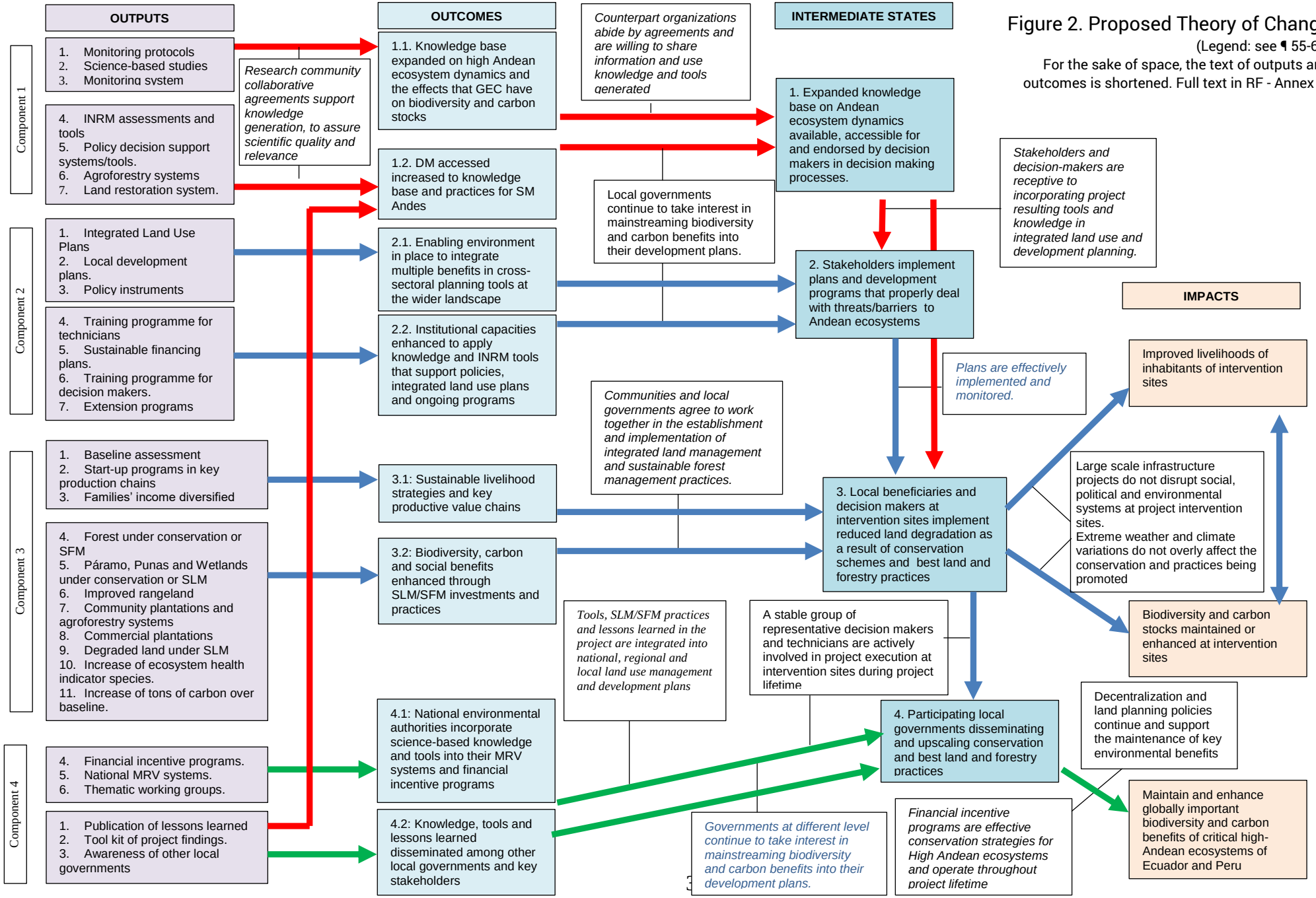
59. The **knowledge generation and dissemination pathway** (red arrows) is generated through studies and the development of monitoring protocols and systems, as well as scientifically developed decision support tools and management practices. These outputs generate an expanded knowledge base (outcome 1.1), which is available for decision makers (outcome 1.2), when the research community effectively supports knowledge generation, to assure scientific quality and relevance. To ensure that the information and knowledge is available and disseminated, the evaluator includes a link from the fourth component, where the communication activities are included. These outcomes transition to the IS4 of the expanded knowledge base that is accessible for decision making processes, if counterpart organizations are willing to share information and use knowledge and tools generated, and if the assumption holds that local governments continue to take interest in mainstreaming biodiversity and carbon benefits into their development plans. The expanded knowledge base is a fundamental outcome to generate effective, information-based plans in the sites as well as the actual sustainable practice in these sites (IS2 and IS3) and contribute to the impact generation through the intervention site-level pathway.

60. A third identified pathway is the **outreach and upscaling impact pathway**. Through the outputs of component 4 (national level programs and working groups, and communication and awareness raising), the project should ensure that the generated knowledge is widely known (outcome 4.2) and included in national incentive and monitoring programs (outcome

4.1). This will transition into the upscaling of conservation and best land and forestry practices (IS4) considering several key drivers and assumptions related to the actual inclusion of SLM/SFM practices and lessons learned into development plans at different levels, the continued interest of government agencies at all levels and the continuity of staff and technicians at key counterpart agencies. If IS4 is achieved by this impact pathway and supported by the other pathways, then the project goal of maintaining biodiversity and carbon stocks at a larger level can be achieved in the longer term. Again, several important assumptions should hold, among others the continuity and effectiveness of the financial incentive programs and the continuity of decentralization processes that empower local governments.

Figure 2. Proposed Theory of Change

(Legend: see ¶ 55-60;
For the sake of space, the text of outputs and outcomes is shortened. Full text in RF - Annex 6)



V. Evaluation Findings (according to evaluation questions presented in inception report)

61. The findings presented in this section provide a summative analysis of all gathered and triangulated information relevant to the parameters of the evaluation criteria. Evaluation findings are objective and evidence-based and directly relate to the Evaluation Questions (EQ) under each criterion (see evaluation framework; Annex A to inception report).

A. STRATEGIC RELEVANCE

EQ: Were the objectives and implementation strategies consistent with: i) the expectations and needs of key stakeholder groups (ii) Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities, (iii) UN Environment Medium Term Strategy[16] (MTS) and Program of Work (POW), and (iv) GEF Strategic Priorities?

EQ. Were the objectives and implementation strategies complementary with existing interventions from the project partners?

Finding 1: By focusing on multiple environmental benefits, the project contributed to several goals of UN Environment's Medium-Term Strategy and Programme of Work as well as to four GEF Focal Area Strategies. It responded to a demand for field-based academic information, particularly on forest carbon and restoration at the landscape level, identified in global academic and policy-development debates

Finding 2: Because of its response to actual insights from the global policy and academic debates, the project`s objectives and strategy helped to shape local stakeholder needs and subnational policies rather than responding to them.

Finding 3: The project was designed to complement a suite of initiatives of the project partners (UN Environment, government agencies and NGO) as well as ongoing initiatives of local government partners.

62. The project goals and approach are a response to actual academic and policy-development debates at the time the project was designed. Back then, there were data available showing the large potential carbon stocks in the vegetation and soil of mountain ecosystems, but its quantification was considered difficult and its potential inclusion in mitigation policies uncertain [17]. Similarly, at that time the concept of forest landscape restoration was developed broadening existing concepts of ecological restoration and soil conservation to application of combined strategies to restore the ecological functions of the wider landscape and include human livelihoods as part of the concept (e.g. Bonn Challenge, 20x20 Intiative[18]). The project aimed at providing key information and practical experience to this debate and was therefore highly relevant to the global and regional institutions that supported it (UN Environment, GEF).

63. The Prodoc includes a clear table showing how the project planned to generate national and global benefits [19]. The project`s overall approach to conserve multiple environmental benefits at the landscape level, made it eligible for no less than three GEF focal areas (biodiversity, climate change and land degradation) and one cross cutting theme (sustainable forest management/REDD-PLUS). The project addressed land-use and cover change trends, which are a major driver of biodiversity loss and GHG

[16] UN Environment's Medium Term Strategy (MTS) is a document that guides UN Environment's programme planning over a four-year period. It identifies UN Environment's thematic priorities, known as Sub-programmes (SP), and sets out the desired outcomes, known as Expected Accomplishments, of the Sub-programmes.

[17] See, among others: Gibbon et al. (2010). Ecosystems, 13, 1097-1111; Tonneijck et al. (2010) European Journal of Soil Science, 61, 392-405. Zimmermann et al. (2010) Ecosystems, 13, 62-74; Review on SOC in IPCC: https://www.slideshare.net/ExternalEvents/ipcc-and-soil-organic-carbon-key-findings-of-the-5th-assessment-report-plans-and-progress-for-upcoming-reports

[18] http://www.bonnchallenge.org/content/forest-landscape-restoration; https://initiative20x20.org/

[19] Prodoc, Table 3, pg 37

emissions in Ecuador and Peru, maintaining and enhancing carbon stocks in the soils and biomass of high Andean ecosystems through SLM/SFM practices and policies. A central rationale of this project was to foster important synergies between GEF focal areas as a strategy to accomplish the project's goal. The project aimed at contributing to the creation of an enabling environment in both countries to mainstream biodiversity conservation, promote climate change mitigation and upscale SLM/SFM in the wider landscape. Given the interdependence between soil organic carbon, biodiversity, and hydrological functions, this project would have an impact on reducing land degradation and maintaining critical ecological functions which contribute to sustain local rural livelihoods.

64. The project is aligned with several Strategic Objectives (SO) of the various Focal Areas[20]. The project contributes to SO2 in Biodiversity Focal Area[21]. Particularly, component 3 contributes directly to SO2 outcome 2.1 (Increase in sustainably managed landscapes and seascapes that integrate biodiversity conservation) and components 2 and 4 contributes to BD outcome 2.2 (Measures to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity incorporated in policy and regulatory frameworks). The project contributes to SO5 of the Climate Change focal area[22]. Specifically, component 3 of the project contributes to all three outcomes (Good management practices in LULUCF adopted both within the forest land and in the wider landscape; Restoration and enhancement of carbon stocks in forests and non-forest lands; GHG emissions avoided and carbon sequestered). The project contributes to SO3 in Land Degradation[23]. Particularly, component 2 contributes to LD outcome 3.1 (Enhanced cross-sector enabling environment for integrated landscape management) and component 3 is aligned with LD outcome 3.2 (Integrated landscape management practices adopted by local communities. The evaluator identified an additional alignment with SO1 of Land degradation (Maintain or improve flow of agro-ecosystem services sustaining the livelihoods of local communities), because in component 3, there are definitely some activities that improve agricultural management (outcome 1.2 of LD FA). Finally, the project contributes to the and SO1[24] and SO2[25] in Sustainable Forest Management. Project component 2 contributes to SFM expected outcome 1.1 (Enhanced enabling environment within the forest sector and across sectors) and 2.1 (Enhanced institutional capacity to account for GHG emission reduction and increase in carbon stocks). Component 4 also contributes to outcome 1.1, while component 3 contributes to SFM outcome 1.2 (Good management practices applied in existing forests).

65. The objective and implementation strategy of the Ecoandes project contribute directly to the Ecosystem Management subprogramme of UNEP Programme of Work (PoW 2014-2015[26]). This PoW, which was implemented along with the project, has the objective, "promote a transition to integrating the conservation and management of land, water and living resources to maintain biodiversity and provide ecosystem services sustainably and equitably among countries". Its strategy includes a particular emphasis to conserving biodiversity and in parallel maintaining the ecosystem services important for human well-being. This is fully aligned with the project`s approach of generating multiple benefits. The project is particularly aligned to PoW Expected Accomplishment (EA) A (use of the ecosystem approach to maintain ecosystem services and sustainable productivity) and EA C (services and benefits derived from ecosystems are integrated with development planning and accounting). EA A's strategy includes ecosystem assessments identifying key drivers of change linked to the degradation of particular ecosystems services that will help establish a common knowledge base upon which to develop and implement support strategies for prevention of ecosystem degradation and loss of ecosystem services in terrestrial [...] ecosystems. EA B highlights strengthening the science-policy interface [...] to create the necessary [...] policy conditions to integrate goods and services into their development planning. The project is fully aligned with these strategies. The current PoW of UN Environment (2018-2019) has a similar objective as the previous PoW. Its

[20] GEF-5 Focal Area Strategies; https://assembly.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/GEF-5FOCALAREASTRATEGIES.pdf

[21] Mainstream Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use into Production Landscapes, Seascapes and sectors

[22] Promote conservation and enhancement of carbon stocks through sustainable management of land use, land-use change, and forestry

[23] Reduce pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in the wider landscape

[24] Reduce pressures on forest resources and generate sustainable flows of forest ecosystem services

[25] Strengthen the enabling environment to reduce GHG emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and enhance carbon sinks from LULUCF activities

[26] UNEP. Biennial programme of work and budget for 2014–201www.unep.org/about/funding/portals/50199/documents/PoW%202014-2015as%20approved%20by%20the%20GC%20Feb%202013.doc programme of work UNEP 2014-2015.

EA A (The health and productivity of marine, freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems are institutionalized in education, monitoring and cross-sector and transboundary collaboration frameworks at the national and international levels) can be interpreted as a combination of EA A and C of the PoW 2014-2015, implying a continuation of alignment. The alignment of the project with the Ecosystem Management PoW is highlighted because the project is institutionally inserted in this sub-programme. However, the project also contributes to other sub-programme PoW, particularly Climate Change and Environmental Governance.

66. The ProDoc includes a stakeholder identification and a description of the expectations of institutional stakeholder towards the project. The evaluation of quality of design (¶69-71) considered this stakeholder analysis as not very strong, particularly in terms of local communities and ground-level governments (parish in Ecuador and Districts in Peru). The Prodoc did present clearly the policies at the national and subnational governments (Provinces and Municipalities in Ecuador and Regions in Peru) and how the project is designed in this context. Also, it targets supporting national-level initiatives such as the Socio Bosque and Restoration strategy in Ecuador and the REDD+ plans in both countries. The evaluator considers that the alignment with general national and subnational environmental policies and plans was done well (¶39). However, in both countries and at different levels the evaluator did not identify concrete policies or plans that target the science-policy interface or the combination of multiple benefits. The Socio Bosque Program had identified a need for academically sustained technical approaches to ecosystem restoration, but has not implemented activities in that line. Because of this, the project was aligned with national and subnational policies but its strategy did not directly follow priorities and expectations.

67. During the evaluation, most national and local government partners that were interviewed expressed the need for a stronger academic basis behind environmental management and demanded better understanding of the interrelationship between different environmental benefits but admitted they had not shaped any policies or action lines around this theme, mostly because there is no existing capacity. At local level, the evaluator found that the stakeholders (local governments and communities) had more difficulty identifying the need for an approach such as the project is implementing, although once they did express their interest in the project activities and once available, found the results potentially valuable (like one local community leader expressed *"they seem to be very important data although I do not know yet how they can be used by us")*. This indicates that several aspects of the project, particularly the academic approach and the combination of multiple benefits, was agenda-setting rather than agenda-following.

68. The project built strongly on different existing initiatives of project partners. This included national-level initiatives such as Socio Bosque, the Restauration and Reforestation plans in Ecuador and the National Programme for Forest Conservation and Climate Change Mitigation *(Plan Bosques)* in Peru. Both countries have REDD+ strategies that are under implementation. It was foreseen that the Ecoandes project provided academic background and practical experimentation that could be implemented at scale through these initiatives. Also, the responsible ministries (MAE, MAGAP, MINAM) planned to provide important co-financing to achieve targets in component 3 and 4 (areas restored, conserved, forested and under sustainable management, and application of national level policies and monitoring systems). The main executing agency, CONDESAN executes several other projects in Andean ecosystems in parallel to the Ecoandes project. Their main related initiative is the Andean Forest Programe *(Programa Bosques Andinos* - PBA) funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) started after the GEF approved Ecoandes. This programme has a similar overall objective, is executed in both countries with an overlapping intervention site in Ecuador (Pichincha). The PBA was carefully designed to be complementary both strategically and administratively to Ecoandes while optimizing synergy. CONDESAN is the regional facilitator of several international academic networks (GLORIA, Andean Forests, iMHEA) and strengthening these is among the outcomes of component 4. The project design identified the local project partners (NCI in Piura, PRODERN in Huancavelica, Imaymana in Pichincha, and the Tungurahua Paramo Fund) recognizing that they have ongoing initiatives in those areas and during the inception phase of the project implementation, supporting these initiatives was a main target. At the local level, the project identified initiatives by local government to establish conservation areas, such as the Quito Municipality and the community of Parish governments, the Carchi and Piura governments. Support to their establishment and management was a key element project component 2. Finally, according to the Prodoc, the project planned to collaborate at international level with several initiatives of UN Environment such as the Carbon Benefits Project (GEF) and Microfinance for Ecosystem Based Adaptation (MEBA). UN Environment also identified

potential collaboration with other initiatives under execution in Ecuador and Peru such as the Green Economy Initiative (GEI), The Economics of Ecosystem and Biodiversity (TEEB) and the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).

The criterion "Strategic Relevance" is rated as "Highly Satisfactory".

1. Alignment to MTS and POW: "Highly Satisfactory"

2. Alignment to UN Environment/GEF Strategic priorities: "Highly Satisfactory"

3. Relevance to regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities: "Satisfactory"

4. Complementarity with existing interventions: "Highly Satisfactory"

B. QUALITY OF PROJECT DESIGN[27]

EQ: Was the project well designed? Specifically: Have all stakeholders who are affected by or who could affect (positively or negatively) the project been identified and explained in the stakeholder analysis? Did the main stakeholders participate in the design stages of the project and did their involvement influence the project design? Are the economic, social and environmental impacts to the key stakeholders identified, with particular reference to the most vulnerable groups? Have the specific roles and responsibilities of the key stakeholders been documented in relation to project delivery and effectiveness?

Finding 4. The strengths of project design were the strategic relevance, efficiency, the governance and implementation arrangements and partnerships, and the financial planning and budgeting. Weak points were stakeholder mapping and learning, communication and knowledge management.

69. The project was technically well designed, presented a clear logic from activities to outputs and outcomes to objectives and goals, and was accompanied by a clearly stated problem and situation analysis, a solid and feasible workplan and budget and clear implementation arrangements. Its stakeholder analysis, risk analysis, and M&E plan are relatively complete (see Project Document). This provided a solid basis for project implementation and the achievement of intended results. The design was realistic, efficient and provided enough opportunity for stakeholder involvement. The Results Framework (RF) is clear and detailed, included SMART indicators at the level of outputs that were cross-referenced to GEF indicators and Tracking Tools (TT). A weakness of the results framework is that there are no specific indicators at outcome and objective level - the output level indicators were used for the progress towards outcomes and the objective.

70. Outcomes were concrete and realistic, although not yet formulated according to the current definition by UN Environment (¶55). Most outcomes are formulated as changes in knowledge level (component 1) or governance/policy level (components 2 and 4) but outcome 3.2 includes field level impact indicators (areas protected, restored, well-managed etc.). All outcomes have precise indicators, accompanied by clear and feasible base lines, target values and means of verification. Project outputs are formulated as indicators (concretely described number of products, tools or instruments). These have no baseline or means of verification. The linkage of indicators with the indicators of different GEF Focal Areas (FA) is commended. The project objective (protect critical high-Andean ecosystems at selected intervention sites...) is clear but not specific. Also, the project impact (biodiversity and carbon stocks maintained or enhanced) is only specified at the level of the Theory of Change exercise and not accompanied by indicators.

71. According to the evaluator, the project design had several strengths and some minor weak points. Overall strengths of project design are the strategic relevance and alignment to national and local policies and plans, efficiency, the governance and implementation arrangements and partnerships, and the financial planning and budgeting; all these were rated as highly satisfactory. The project logic is a strong aspect of project design as well, especially at the outcome and output level, but lacks some specificity at objective and impact level. The analysis of assumptions, risks and eventual social/environmental impacts are good as well, although their presentation could be more complete. The project design has a few of weak aspects,

[27] The quality of project design was evaluated during the inception stage and a detailed assessment is presented in the inception report. Here, only a summary and overall rating is presented

particularly its stakeholder mapping and learning, communication and knowledge management, and lacking outcome and objective-level indicators. The Prodoc (section 2.5) presents a clear mapping of institutional (governmental) stakeholders, but omits lower level governments (Parish in Ecuador, municipality in Peru). Furthermore, there is no analysis of the social organization, minority groups or gendered information of local communities. The lack of a clear knowledge management system in project design is striking: although the project has a strong knowledge generation character and focuses on strengthening the knowledge base for decision making, there is no specific knowledge management approach or strategy included in the description of the project activities, communication or monitoring. The same holds for communication: the Prodoc included a specific section that explains the need for communication and public awareness (section 3.10), but this section does not present methods to do this.

The criterion "Quality of project Design" was rated as "Satisfactory"[28]

C. NATURE OF EXTERNAL CONTEXT

EQ. Did the (political, environmental, social, institutional) context change during project implementation and how did the project adapt to this?
EQ. Was adaptive management applied adequately? Were any cost- or time-saving measures put in place in attempting to bring the project as far as possible in achieving its results within its secured budget and time?[29]

Finding 5. The Ecuador's economic depression in 2015 and resulting low public-sector budget, was a major change in the external context that affected project implementation. However, the project adapted efficiently and transparently and this contributed to the effectiveness of the project.

Finding 6. Changes in administration of government agencies at all levels form another external factor that influenced project implementation and likelihood of generation of impact. The chance that these influenced the Ecoandes project are limited, because there was a good involvement of lower level agencies and collaboration with more stable organizations.

Finding 7. Other major environmental (climate change, El Niño/La Niña, etc) or social-political factors (social unrest, conflict, strikes) did not influence the project implementation significantly.

72. Economic and political features of the project's implementing context had changed and limited the project's performance. The main change in context was the economic recession that took place in 2015 in Ecuador, related to the lower global oil price. This generated a strong decrease in national fiscal budget and therefore, less budget for MAE[30]. MAE could not fulfil its obligations under the PNRF and the Socio Bosque Programme and decided not to include new areas in both programs. Also, because of budget cuts the plantation forestry plan of MAG had no funding to support its commercial reforestation programme. Until mid 2015, the project counted on these three incentive programmes that would ensure the achievement of the targets in 3.2 (areas conserved, restored and reforested) but without the incentive, this became uncertain. The project had to change its approach to directly support subnational governmental agencies (SNGA) for conservation and restoration activities but without the additional funding of the national government. For plantation forestry, it worked with private sector directly rather than with areas supported by the commercial reforestation programme (Table 3, outcome 3.2.5). These changes were consulted with national and local partners, discussed and agreed in governance meetings and reported to GEF in PIR (¶92).

[28] Weighted overall score of 4.52; see Annex C of Inception Report; detailed assessment of Quality of Project Design (available from the evaluation office, UN Environment)
[29] This evaluation question was included under the criterion "efficiency" in the evaluation matrix but according to the evaluator, given the nature of the changes in context it is better dealing with the question here.
[30] In the general State budget (www.finanzas.gob.ec), MAE was assigned USD 65M in 2014 and USD 80M in 2015, This plummeted to USD 28M in 2016, USD 26M in 2017 and 24M in 2019. In 2018 there was a one-time increase (USD 58M) to fulfil outstanding payments for the Socio Bosque Programme.

73. In both countries, political changes and staff changes within governmental institutions formed another factor in the project's context that influenced the project implementation. Due to presidential and local government elections, there have been governmental changes at all levels during project execution. This has resulted in the changes in name, mandate, hierarchical position or even complete disappearance of several institutes that were project partners. But even during one administrative period, line ministers change frequently and most director-level positions change as well. Both in Ecuador and Peru, the project interacted with at least three ministers (and hence, three teams) of Environment. In Ecuador, the current government decided to develop a new environmental framework law *(Código Orgánico del Ambiente,* CODA), implying restructuring the institutional landscape. While being approved in 2017, it entered into force with the acceptance of its regulations in May 2019. Also, at local levels there have been changes in governments. With each of these changes, the project needed to re-engage with new decision makers, try to ensure continuity of collaboration and many times start training new technical staff.

74. According to most interviewed persons, these institutional changes are common in Peru and Ecuador (and Latin-America in general) and many times seen as a major barrier to achieving sustainability of results (¶0). Even though it is present in the current project, the risk of discontinuity is less likely to have an impact than in other projects. This is because the risk was foreseen in the risk mitigation strategy of the ProDoc and every change was anticipated, with the project team making early contact with new staff. Also, the project adequately targeted more stable technical level staff for building capacity or more stable institutions within the local governments (such as the Tungurahua Páramo Fund, rather than the provincial government alone). Finally, the project was executed in close collaboration with SNGA and by coincidence, the administration period of these governments both in Peru and Ecuador coincided well with the project implementation. Subnational government administrations changed early in project implementation (January and May 2015) so the project could support their development plans and count on a more or less stable administration during the entire period.

75. There are few environmental or socio-political factors from the project's context that have affected project implementation. In spite of the economic crisis in Ecuador, there was no major social unrest. In Peru, especially in the North there is an ongoing social movement against mining in the project area. This unrest was actually a positive factor for the project because it created a social basis for conservation (¶91, 100). Environmental challenges are mostly weather related, specifically in Peru where field sites have difficult access especially in rainy period. And while definitely the project areas were inaccessible at times, this was foreseen by the project team and did not cause major delays for the project execution.

The rating for the criterion nature of 'external context' is 'Favourable'.

D. EFFECTIVENESS

a. Delivery of Outputs

EQ. How successful was the project in producing the programmed outputs, both in quantity and quality, as well as their usefulness and timeliness?
EQ. Were key stakeholders appropriately involved in producing the programmed outputs?
EQ. How and how well did the project stimulate country ownership of project outputs and outcomes?
EQ. What were the key factors that explain the satisfactory or unsatisfactory generation of outputs?

Finding 8. The project produced a higher than planned number of outputs in most components. In particular, the academic output met the highest international standards. Stakeholders (particularly local government staff and partner agencies) participated in the generation of outputs and results were adequately shared among these.

Finding 9. Several outputs were achieved differently than planned because the activities of the project were adapted to changes in the context. This adaptive management was the only reason for delays in the delivery of some outputs.

76. Most outputs, in all project component, were delivered as planned. A detailed overview of the achievement of outputs is presented in Table 3. For many outcomes, the project actually delivered more outputs than originally planned (particularly outputs 1.1.2, 2.1.1, 2.1.2., 2.1.3, 4.1.2, 4.2.1). Especially the science-based outputs (for outcome 1.1 and 4.1) are of high quality, not only evidenced because they have been included in several peer reviewed papers and documents but also because the interviewed stakeholders confirmed the quality and usefulness of the academic approach to the monitoring of restoration and dynamics of natural ecosystems. Representatives of NGA confirmed the satisfactory quality of policy instruments and tools produced by the project, many times upon direct demand of the NGA (outputs XX).

77. Some outputs were delivered differently than planned. The principal reason for the generation of different outputs than planned, was mostly because of the change of project strategy as a response to external changes. For instance, for output 3.2.5. it was expected that NGA would provide incentives for the establishment of 2,000 hectares of commercial tree plantations but due to the lack of public funding for this programme, these incentives were not provided. Therefore, the project team, in agreement with MAG, decided to target private reforestation companies to enhance environmental standards and apply monitoring to their plantations. This resulted in almost 10,000 hectares planted by a third party (ACOSA, private company) but applying environmental standards that the project provided. Another output that was developed differently than planned is 4.1.1. The activities for that output targeted the strengthening of ongoing incentive programs to increase their investment effectiveness. However, the reduction in public funding drastically decreased investments and operative capacity of the programs. Therefore, in coordination with the NGA responsible for those incentive programs, the project changed its focus to provide technical assistance to, among others, restructure the National Forest Restauration Plan (PNRF) and develop standards for commercial plantations. While this generated slightly different outputs than those planned, both the evaluator and the interviewed staff from NGA considered this positive adaptive management.

78. Another minor reason for the change in planned outputs was that in some cases the description of the output was expressed in different ways and therefore, products were reported under different outputs. For instance, in outcome 1.2.3 and 1.2.4 it is not clear what is understood by agroforestry and restoration, because the interpretation by the project team was that the proposed agroforestry approach represented restoration of ecological functioning. Also, in 2.1.1. and 2.1.2 many land use plans were developed and supported, but it was not always clear what was understood by 'integrated land management plans' and 'local development plans'. The evaluator considers this a reporting challenge and not a performance issue.

79. A few outputs were not achieved to the level of the planned target. Most examples pertained to outcome 3.1 (sustainable livelihoods). The evaluator considers that the base line studies (3.1.1) were less than expected and only marginally useful in guiding livelihood strengthening strategies, because they focused on single economic activities and did not include broader livelihood assessments. Also, the achievement of output 3.1.1 (families with diversified income) is marginal and could not be validated: only seven coffee farmers participated in the microcredits and the participating families in the tourism activities in Carchi were already entrepreneurs and the relation with land use management is not fully evident. Finally, there is nothing reported on the results of strengthening livelihoods in Tungurahua, Piura and Huancavelica, while activities in those sites (improved drinking water availability for people and cattle, alpaca management, Tara cultivation) are likely to have had some positive effects. Some outputs in outcome 3.2 were also achieved at a lower level than planned, particularly the area of rangeland under improved management (3.2.3.). The value of the outputs related to area of restoration (3.2.4. and 3.2.6) are based on implementation reports and could not be validated in the field because they are managed by third parties.

80. The participation of stakeholders in the generation of outputs was satisfactory and effective. Interviewed representatives of agencies that partnered in the implementation of project activities locally were from SNGA, NCI, Tungurahua Páramo Fund, PRODERN, Fundación Imaymana. These confirmed that they were all actively involved in all locally implemented project activities, ranging from selecting sites and installation of monitoring sites to the development of local policies and plans. Stakeholders reported that the more science-based activities in components were directed by the project team and did not leave much space for joint decision making with local partners. Most stakeholders considered this understandable and valued the learning opportunity through participation in implementation. Only in one case there seemed to

have been some tension between the directive approach by the project team and the wish to be more involved by local agencies. However, this was more about logistical arrangements rather than the actual activity.

81. Local stakeholders, NGO's as well as public agencies, valued the opportunity to be involved from start in the selection and planning of activities for components 2 and 3. There has been active involvement, including in decision making, of the development of land use and development plans, the support to value chains, the planning and the implementation of restoration and rangeland management initiatives. The regular meetings of the local coordination platforms (normally between SNGA and project partners) were considered effective not only to determine work plans jointly but also to share and analyse project results. The involvement of local stakeholders in determining project activities was evidenced by the different instruments that were developed in the various sites. For instance, where in Carchi and Pichincha the SNGA were supported to contribute to commitments under the PNRF programme, in Tungurahua this was not considered desirable by the local government and restoration was supported though the Tungurahua Paramo fund. Another example is the different approach to conservation areas in Carchi and Pichincha (Conservation and Sustainable Use Areas; *Áreas de Conservación y Usos Sustentable;* ACUS), Piura (individual conservation areas) and Tungurahua (community management plans including conservation). The participation of local beneficiaries (farmers) was evidenced in a limited amount of activities; only in the ones that directly targeted farm-based actions in 3.1 and 3.2 and the owners of the land where monitoring plots were installed. In the Pichincha site, some land-owners were hired by the project as consultants for specific activities and even as technical assistants for the project.

Table 3: *Overview of achievement of outputs and validation by evaluator*

Planned outputs	Reported outputs as per Project Final Report[31]	Comments by evaluator
Comp. 1, outcome 1.1		
1.1.1. Five protocols for monitoring biodiversity, carbon stocks and key ecosystem dynamics adapted, validated and applied at intervention sites.	2 protocols developed and 5 experimental designs adapted and applied, one for each intervention site. Final documents available. These are the basis of the monitoring systems installed at each intervention site.	Instead of different protocols for each site, the project made a just decision to produce two general protocols (one for forests and one for grasslands) which were adapted for each site. In conversations with the evaluators, these partners confirmed that these protocols are of good quality and applicable by field technicians, even though they have high academic detail
1.1.2. At least 8 science-based studies on ecosystem dynamics along environmental and degradation gradients and synergies between biodiversity, carbon and SLM/SFM practices.	The project has surpassed its end of project target with 12 finalized studies to assess the impacts of restoration practices on biodiversity and carbon stocks (10 in Ecuador, 2 in Peru). Reports are available and distributed among key stakeholders. These studies are:1 in Huancavelica -evaluation of exclusion and treatments promoted by PRODERN, 1 in Piura - Tara plantations, 6 in Pichincha - tests with different Andean forests restoration practices, 2 in Carchi - growth of plants for restoration purposes, and 2 in Tungurahua - protection of watersheds	The project produced a huge volume of science-based study outputs. Apart from the mentioned 12 studies on restoration practices on biodiversity and carbon stocks, the evaluator counted 8 other science-based reports that have been produced on general biodiversity and carbon stocks and land cover changes. Most studies are published in the format of technical reports, disseminated among main project partners, but they have been (and likely will be) the basis for several peer reviewed academic papers. Also, the evaluator noted that the project has presented its research results at national and international academic and technical-strategic events.
1.1.3. One monitoring system established at each project intervention site to	5 biodiversity and carbon monitoring systems installed, one in each intervention site.	The evaluator has observed monitoring sites in Pichincha and Tungurahua and has first-hand confirmation of the installation in the other sites. In Pichincha, monitoring plots

[31] As presented in the Project's final report, February 2019

Planned outputs	Reported outputs as per Project Final Report[31]	Comments by evaluator
account carbon, biodiversity and changes on environmental services.	Baseline and 1 census have been generated and final comparative reports, databases and maps are available with important insights about changes in ecosystem dynamics and its relations to the SLM practices promoted by the project.	were installed along a complete altitudinal transect (500 to 4500 m. alt); in the other sites, various plots were set up in grassland and/or forest). All plots were installed by the project team in collaboration with local partners. Data of the baseline and census are being processed.
Comp. 1, outcome 1.2		
1.2.1. At least 6 assessments or INRM tools to support on-going efforts on conservation and climate change strategies at different scales.	6 INRM tools have been developed at intervention sites (5 in Ecuador and 1 in Peru) and are integrated into decision making processes. These are: analysis of hydrological behavior of the COCAP paramos in Tungurahua, watershed prioritization map for ecosystem conservation and restoration in the FSO Tungurahua, carbon compensation mechanism for the Quito Municipality (Pichincha), prioritization of restoration areas in Mashpi (Pichincha), geographic model for the provincial conservation area in Carchi, Paramos and Andean forests map in Piura.	The evaluator has confirmed the generation of these outputs and delivery to local stakeholders (principally SNGA)
1.2.2. At least 2 policy decision support systems/tools based upon new knowledge, environmental scenarios & economic valuations developed and adopted by stakeholders at intervention sites.	An Information system of the Andean Chocó commonwealth of Parishes (Pichincha) is finished and ready to be published. A Geoportal of the 5 monitoring systems established is being developed and will be ready in March 2019.	The products have been generated at time of the evaluation. Both are for one intervention area (Pichincha).
1.2.3. At least 1 innovative agroforestry system proposed and scientifically validated per each intervention site.	4 innovative agroforestry systems have been validated on their carbon and biodiversity impacts (all in Ecuador). Reports are available and distributed among key stakeholders. These are 3 in Pichincha – evaluation of cacao and coffee farming, and restoration with useful species and 1 in Carchi – silvopastures. An experimental design was developed for Tara agroforestry systems in Piura and some data has been collected. There is not enough data to evaluate its impact	The evaluator confirms the generation and availability of the mentioned outputs. An innovative vision of the project towards restoration includes agroforestry as a tool for the restoration of ecological functioning. However, there is an overlap in approaches between these two outputs (agroforestry and restoration) and the output on INRM tools: there is less focus on the agronomic features of the agroforestry system and more on the restoration aspects. It focuses more on additional species than on the crop species or on economic/social cost benefit. The mentioned Tara study in Piura is the same for both outputs. The evaluator has minor comments on these particular studies (a) the use -and subsequent promotion- of an exotic tree species in restoration practices associated to agroforestry practices or as an agent for restoration has not been considered as such (risk of wilding, hybridization, etc.) (b) the Tara is based on existing experience and less innovative than others; (c) the natural regeneration implemented in Tungurahua is not promoted
1.2.4. At least 1 land restoration system proposed and scientifically validated per each intervention site.	3 restoration practices have been validated on their carbon and biodiversity impacts (3 in Ecuador and 1 in Peru). Reports are available and have been distributed among decision makers and practitioners. These are: Alder *(Alnus nepalensis)* assisted restoration in Pichincha, Paramo natural regeneration pilot in Tungurahua, Restoration seedlings study in Carchi. An experimental design for Tara as a restoration agent in Piura was developed and baseline data has been collected. Yet,	

Planned outputs	Reported outputs as per Project Final Report[31]	Comments by evaluator
	there is not enough data to evaluate its impact.	by the project but are areas conserved by the community and monitored by the project.
Comp. 2, outcome 2.1		
2.1.1. 5 Integrated Land Use Plans developed and strengthened at each intervention site.	The project has had the opportunity to strengthen and collaborate in more land planning processes, surpassing the end of project target with 11 integrated land use plans strengthened at intervention sites to foster BD, CC, LD and SLM/SFM benefits (10 in Ecuador and 2 in Peru): 3 municipality land use and development plans in Tungurahua strengthened and a climate change plan for the Commonwealth of municipalities *(Frente Sur Occidental)* formulated; 5 parish (Pichincha) and 1 provincial (Carchi) land use and development plans strengthened; 1 Territorial plan for the Chocó Andino Commonwealth of parishes (Pichincha) formulated; 1 in Huancavelica – plan to foster regional competitiveness	The evaluator confirms the generation of these two outputs, surpassing the target value for this output. This is a result of direct cooperation of the project with individual (or a group) of SNGA, so various plans were generated or strengthened for parts (e.g. different municipalities) at the same intervention site. Interviewed stakeholders have confirmed the availability and usefulness of the generated products. There is a certain overlap between what are considered land use plans and local development plans and to the evaluator, it is not clear what is reported where. Strictly speaking, "local development plans" would be the formal local planning documents and here, the 3 municipal plans in Tungurahua and the 5 Parish development plans and the Territorial plan in Pichincha would be included. Also, the plan included for Huancavelica focuses on competitiveness (development) but not on land use. The products generated and reported as "local development plans" can be considered as conservation plans or area management plans, such as the plans for the conservation areas in Piura, the Model Forest dossier and Mashpi management plan in Pichincha.
2.1.2. 10 local development plans formulated or strengthened, 2 for each intervention site .	The project has surpassed the final target with 11 local management plans that have been strengthened at intervention sites (6 in Ecuador and 4 in Peru). These are: 3 in Pichincha – Andean Choco Model Forest Dossier, Strategic Plan of the Quito Municipal Protected Areas System, updated Mashpi management plan. 1 in Tungurahua – FSO paramo management plan, 1 in Carchi – Cordillera Oriental conservation area management plan, and 4 in Piura – management plans of 4 local protected areas	
2.1.3. At least two policy instruments formulated or strengthened by the project to be formally adopted by local Governments to enhance sustainable biodiversity, forest and land management practices.	The project had the opportunity to strengthen more policy frameworks, surpassing the final target with 8 local policy instruments (4 in Ecuador and 4 in Peru) in place with the support of the project. These are: 1 Carchi – ordinance and technical dossier for the declaration of Cordillera Oriental provincial protected area. 2 in Pichincha – Strategic Plan of the Municipal Protected Areas System of Quito and Quito patrimonial trees declaration. 1 Tungurahua - ordinance for Páramo management in FSO. 4 Piura – Local protected areas declarations.	Rather than policy instruments, the project supported the formulation of policy decisions, such as the declaration of the Carchi ACUS and the Pichincha Patrimonial Trees declaration (not originally planned). The declaration of the four Piura local conservation areas cannot be fully attributed to the project: according to local stakeholders the establishment of the conservation areas has been an ongoing process but Ecoandes has been crucial to speed up the approval process. The Strategic Plan for the Quito municipal protected area system is the same as reported above.
Comp. 2, outcome 2.2		
2.2.1. At least 60 technicians attend continued and specific training programme in management and restoration practices	More than 80 national and local technicians from local and national governmental and nongovernmental organizations have attended training workshops on sustainable forest management practices (Agroforestry, Andean forests restoration, Land	The project has organized technical workshops for both technicians and decision makers. According to the evaluator, these were principally a series of workshops rather than a specific training programme (a programmatic approach that includes specific target groups, capacity demand and

Planned outputs	Reported outputs as per Project Final Report[31]	Comments by evaluator
focus on SLM/SFM and rangeland management on high Andean ecosystems, 45 in Ecuador and 15 in Peru.	degradation assessment tools – LADA), land planning tools (Project M&E, GIS, Model Forests), biodiversity and carbon monitoring (forests ecosystem dynamics), sustainable cattle management.	a planned response by a series of training events). The numbers were validated by the evaluator and considered correct: participants were only recorded as "attending a programme" when they attended more than one event. Interviewed stakeholders that attended training evaluated these as positive, highlighting the new concepts (carbon stocks, research techniques) and high quality of trainers. The only aspect that was mentioned as critical, was the direct applicability of obtained knowledge. While all stakeholders that were asked this question confirmed that they increased their knowledge and capacity considerably, there was no way to corroborate this objectively.
2.2.3. At least 30 local decision makers attend specific training programme on the conservation and sustainable management of high Andean Ecosystems and its link to land use planning, 20 in Ecuador and 10 in Peru	30 national decision makers trained on sustainable forest management practices. In Ecuador these are: coordinators of the National Incentives Program (PNRF), the Forestry Production Secretariat of the Ministry of Agriculture, Authorities of Local Governments of Carchi, Pichincha and Tungurahua. In Peru these are: directors of SERFOR and MINAM, and authorities of Regional Government of Piura.	
2.2.2. At least 2 sustainable financing plans designed and implemented to support INRM/SFM and diversify the financial resource base at intervention sites	The end of project target is surpassed with 3 financing plans developed and adopted by local governments These are: 1) Sustainable financing plan developed in Pichincha for the Quito Municipal Protected Areas System,2) financing plan for the ACUS Cordillera Oriental in Carchi, 3) financing plan for the elaboration of regional conservation area system in Piura.	The evaluator confirmed that the reported financing plans are being developed. Its implementation is under consideration, given that all SNGA changed administration.
2.2.4. At least 2 extension programs operated by local governments or counterpart organizations strengthened	This output was eliminated in 2015 as documented in the PIR PY2015 and approved in the steering committee of 2015	According to PIR 2015, this output was eliminated because it was considered to be contained in other project indicators; almost all project activities, work with and will strengthen national and local extension programs
Comp. 3, outcome 3.1		
3.1.1. One baseline assessment addressing critical barrier developed and proper actions implemented at each intervention site	2 assessment studies finished and available: Cost-benefit land use alternatives in Pichincha site, and assessment of tourism opportunities at Carchi site	While in effect the reported assessment studies have been developed and presented, the evaluator does not consider this a complete baseline assessment (incl gender considerations, see Prodoc) that would guide actions to be implemented. Also, the reports are only developed for two out of five sites
3.1.2. At least 3 start-up programs in key production chains implemented and incorporating SFM/SLM practices at intervention sites	2 startup programs: 1) Microcredit mechanism to promote sustainable production and commercialization of coffee in Pichincha; 2) Nature based tourism entrepreneurships strengthened. Additionally, in Huancavelica, a Public Investment Project (PIP) to strengthen the alpaca productive value chain was conceptualized with the support of the project	The project effectively developed the three programs, on coffee, tourism and alpaca. The evaluator assessed these programs. The Alpaca initiative (that received strong support from PRODERN and the local government and was developed during a couple of years) was promising and its public investment plan (PIP) has been financed yet. The coffee microcredit and tourism promotion, while valuable for its own sake, focused on two single activities (promotion of nature-based tourism enterprises and credit for coffee growers) and while promoting sustainable commercial activities, did not provide
3.1.3. At least 10% of participating families' income diversified by activities promoted by the project	38 families participated in the Nature Based tourism entrepreneurship programme, implemented by the project in Carchi. 25% of the participating families have diversified incomes through tourism,	

Planned outputs	Reported outputs as per Project Final Report[31]	Comments by evaluator
	while 60% depends solely on tourism as their source of income. 60% of families increased their incomes thanks to support of the entrepreneurship programme implemented by the project in Carchi. 7 more families joined the microcredit mechanism to promote sustainable production and commercialization of coffee in Pichincha. 43% of the participating families have diversified incomes (including tourism as an income source), while another 43% of them depend solely on coffee production as their source of income.	specific guidance on SFM/SLM or other environmental benefits. The promoted tourism enterprises in Carchi already were focusing on tourism before the project so cannot be considered as "diversifying income". The reported number of coffee growing families in Pichincha (7) and the number families that diversified income (3) are low numbers for the scope and reach of the project. According to interviewed stakeholders associated with the Hunacavelica site, the livelihood impact of the project in that area, through improvement of water availability to alpaca grazing and strengthening of the value chain, seemed more significant than the two Ecuador sites.
Comp. 3, outcome 3.2		
3.2.1. 5,000 ha of Upper Montane Forest under conservation or sustainable forest management	The end of project target is already exceeded: 31,900 ha are under conservation and sustainable management agreements (9.486 ha in Ecuador and 22,413 ha in Peru). In Ecuador, these are forest areas inside the Cordillera Oriental Provincial Protected Area established with support of the project. In Peru, these forest areas are located inside 3 regional protected areas of Piura created with support of the project	Thanks to the support to the establishment of conservation areas (ACUS in Carchi and the regional conservation area system in Piura; in component 2) more than 50,000 hectares of Andean forests and natural Andean grasslands are now conserved in different (sub-nationally managed) conservation regimes. In June 2019, the Carchi ACUS was, as first of its kind, formally included in the National Protected Areas System (SNAP). With these achievements, the project surpassed the originally planned target.
3.2.2.10,000 ha of Páramo, Punas and Wetlands under conservation or sustainable land management	The end of project target is already exceeded with 19,531 ha of Páramos and wetlands under conservation and SLM agreements (6,201 ha in Ecuador and 13,330 ha in Peru). In Ecuador, these are Páramo areas inside the Cordillera Oriental Provincial Protected Area established with support of the project, In Peru, these are Páramos and wetlands inside 3 regional protected areas of Piura created with support of the project.	
3.2.3. 3,000 ha of improved rangeland under good management practices	A total of 2,096 hectares of native rangelands under sustainable management in Perú and Ecuador. In Peru, these are: 1) areas where PRODERN has established its restoration practices with the support of the project in monitoring its impacts (670 ha), 2) and areas of burned paramos that are being evaluated on the impact of fire (196 ha). In Ecuador these are 1,212 ha of paramos being regenerated as result of community conservation agreements.	The reported achievement for this output is less than planned. The 670 hectares in Huancavelica are the only ones that can be attributed fully to the project. The 196 hectares in Piura are part of the 13,300 hectares in local conservation area (as reported in the previous output). The 1,212 hectares in Tungurahua were already included in the Páramo Fund programme and already had community conservation agreements; their management plans have been improved thanks to the project
3.2.4. 4,000 ha of community plantations and agroforestry systems using native tree	4,165 ha of tree plantations and agroforestry systems in Carchi and Pichincha (Ecuador) have been integrated into the National Forest Restoration Program (MAE) and have received technical and financial assistance from the	After the decision of the MAE to not provide incentives for restoration through PNRF in Ecuador, the project worked with 4 SNGA in Pichincha and 7 SNGA in Carchi to support their commitments on restoration. The Project provided restoration models,

Planned outputs	Reported outputs as per Project Final Report[31]	Comments by evaluator
species (85% survival rate)	project for their implementation. Local governments have taken responsibility on maintaining the areas beyond the PNRF. These areas will be part of the new restoration programme that MAE is designing with the support of the project.	training, and logistic support (transport, plants) for the implementation. While the target was surpassed, it was only in two sites and not in Tungurahua because there was no agreement reached with the SNGA. The reported value (4165) is the amount of hectares included in restoration commitments of the SNGA (with tree plantation; an additional 1,443 in other restoration models is reported below) but could not be verified because they do not have the technical capacities (number of people) to monitor and report the actual establishment of this area
3.2.5. 2,000 ha of commercial plantations (85% survival rate)	Support to the Commercial Plantations Incentives Program was delivered through activities in Component 4 related to strengthening its MRV system (carbon monitoring protocol). The pilot study developed in the tree plantations (4 species) of the company Aglomerados Cotopaxi has generated recommendations that are being implemented by the company in 9,934 ha.	This output has been generated differently as planned. After the government of Ecuador decided to not provide further incentives for the national commercial reforestation plan, the Project changed its strategy and instead of supporting the MAG programme, it worked with commercial forestry companies to guide sustainability criteria and monitoring protocols (developed for component 4). These standards were applied by one company (ACOSA) who established almost 10,000 hectares of commercial plantations (with exotic species). Therefore, instead of the project partners (Government of Ecuador) establishing 2,000 hectares as part of the project, the project supported good practice in 10,000 hectares of private sector plantation.
3.2.6. 3,000 ha of degraded land under sustainable land management practices other than tree plantations	The end of project target is already exceeded: 7,634 ha of degraded areas are under restoration practices in Ecuador. These are: 4,021 ha in the Pichincha site (Ecuador) regularized to facilitate the implementation of sustainable management practices; 2,180 ha associated to the adoption of SLM practices on 30 farms of the Pichincha site; 90 ha associated to the adoption of SLM practices on 8 farms of the Carchi site. Additionally, 1,443 ha in Carchi and Pichincha have been integrated to the National Forest Restoration Program (MAE) and have received technical and financial assistance from the project for their implementation; local governments have taken responsibility on maintaining the areas beyond the PNRF; these areas will be part of the new restoration programme that MAE is designing with the support of the project.	The target for this output has been surpassed by the project but the evaluator has some remarks on the actual values. The reported 4,021 hectares are private lands whose land tenure has been regularized. While this is an important precondition for SLM or restoration, and while there are minimum management commitments included under the regularization process, there is no guarantee or indication that these 4,000 hectares are actually under SLM. Also, it is not likely that all these areas are degraded. The 2,180 hectares in Pichincha and 90 in Carchi reported as SLM are included in 38 cattle farms where the project supported the development and implementation of farm planning tools. While these were successfully developed and beneficiary farmers collaborated during their development, there is no monitoring that shows if the SLM is actually implemented. Also, the Project Team could not guarantee that there is no double reporting between the 2,180 hectares cattle farms and the 4,021 hectares regularized.

Planned outputs	Reported outputs as per Project Final Report[31]	Comments by evaluator
		The reported 1,443 hectares under restoration practice are added to and have the same status as the output above (4,000 hectares of restored)
3.2.7. 3-5 % increase of population of ecosystem health indicator species at intervention sites. (.	Through its monitoring systems, the project has estimated an increase of 5% of population of selected species in the project sites	The evaluator has reviewed the report of ecosystem health and carbon stocks and the calculation to explore this at all intervention sites. While the estimation of the monitored sites is of great detail and seems of good quality, the extrapolation to the entire project intervention sites is tentative, because most gains in species and carbon is to be achieved in restored (planted) area and that area could not be confirmed or monitored
3.2.8. 3-5% increase of tons of carbon over baseline in work areas	Through its monitoring systems, the project has estimated an 8% increase in carbon stocks at intervention sites.	
Comp. 4, outcome 4.1		
4.1.1. At least four financial incentive programs strengthened (3 in Ecuador and 1 in Peru) to increase investments effectiveness.	In Ecuador, the National Incentives Program – Restoration (MAE) was strengthened with key instruments, capacity building, and support for its local implementation in the project sites. Also, the Commercial Plantation Incentive Program has been strengthened through the development and adoption of a protocol to estimate carbon and biodiversity impacts of tree plantations. In Perú, the Nation Program for the Recovery of Degraded Lands developed the guidelines for restoration of forest ecosystems, with the support of the project.	The indicator does not include a target for the mentioned increase of investments-effectiveness. The incentive programs that were active in Ecuador during the inception of the Ecoandes project and planned to be supported were SocioBoque, the PNRF and the Commercial Plantation programme. All suffered drastic changes due to the economic recession in 2015. Therefore, these programmes stopped providing funds for incentives. The project adapted its management and instead of focusing on strengthening the programs to increase investment effectiveness (which was impossible with no new investments) it focused on providing technical tools to the PNRF and Commercial Plantation programme. According to interviewed persons associated with these programs, thanks to this technical support, these maintained some functionality and could develop a repositioning (in case of the restoration programme). The protocol for carbon monitoring in commercial plantations could not be formalized due to new administration in MAG. In Peru, it was planned to work with the PNCB but that programme did not include Andean forests. Therefore, support was provided to the National Program for the Recovery of Degraded Lands through the developed of guidelines for restoration of forest ecosystems, with the support of the project.
4.1.2. National MRV systems of Ecuador and Peru strengthened for monitoring climate change and land use impacts	8 monitoring and report processes and instruments developed with project assistance. In Ecuador: 1) national biodiversity indicators to measure the implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategy (2015-2020); 2) assessment of the state of the art and state of the action on climate change ecosystem adaptation as part of the Third	This outcome was overachieved, although it did not target the originally planned monitoring system (MRV). The evaluator confirmed the contribution of the project to the mentioned monitoring and reporting systems. Many of these contributions responded to developing needs from MAE and MINAM and its result was highly valued by both NGA. Originally, it was planned to

Planned outputs	Reported outputs as per Project Final Report[31]	Comments by evaluator
	National Climate Change Communication; 3) publication of National GAP Analysis and its implications to land planning processes; 4) development of the National Forestry Strategy (in progress); and 5) regulations to apply the Environmental Organic Code (COA) in the forestry sector. In Peru: 6) national biodiversity indicators to monitor National Biodiversity Strategy impacts; 7) ecosystems legend for the first national ecosystems map, 8) wetlands inventory of the Pisco river.	provide specific support to the REDD+ MRV system but this approach was changed because there was less compatibility than expected.
4.1.3. At least 4 thematic working groups (including the participation of national authorities) formed and/or strengthened to replicate project actions in areas beyond intervention sites	2 pre-existing working groups supported: Andean Forests Network and Gloria – Andes Network, through consolidation of regional databases, establishment of new monitoring sites, capacity building and exchange meetings. The International Congress of Restoration was implemented in Ecuador. A specific side event ("Opportunities and Challenges for restoration sustainability") was carried out by the project with the participation of project partners of Ecuador and Peru (SERFOR, MAE, MINAM, local governments and NGOs).	This output was underachieved. The project provided crucial support to two academic networks (the Andean node of GLORIA and Andean Forest Network). These networks would likely not have continued without project support. While important, these networks are fully academic, do not include decision makers and while focusing at replicating research actions, they are not actively contributing to replication or upscaling of project results
Comp. 4, outcome 4.2		
4.2.1. At least one publication of lessons learned on SLM/SFM practices disseminated among key stakeholders, including local communities	A set of publications for diverse audiences was produced to disseminate project findings and lessons learned. These include scientific articles, books, policy briefs, notebooks, videos, 3 web pages and a geoportal, among others. In total, 33 publications have been released and distributed	The evaluator is aware of the high volume of publications for diverse audiences and recognizes its academic and practical value. However, among these there is no specific publication on lessons learned and this is scattered among many others. Dissemination among key stakeholders (beyond direct project partners) have been mostly through delivery of publications but no follow up, explanation or training. This has been partly compensated by the course promoted by the Universidad Andina Simon Bolívar (UASB, see following outputs)
4.2.2. Tool kit produced of project findings (lessons learned and SLM/SFM practices) produced for use by participating regional governments for promoting conservation and sustainable management of Andean ecosystems.	Information and tools generated by the project have been presented and distributed among key stakeholders including local governments of the areas surrounding intervention sites (at least five). Additionally, project findings were presented in national and international events (25th International Bear Conference, 7th Conference on Ecological Restoration SER 2017, IPCC Oceans and Cryosphere Conference) 12 articles about project activities and findings have been published in local and national newspapers. Finally, an advanced virtual course on sustainable land management in the Andes is being developed in association with the Simón Bolivar Andean University (UASB). The course is aimed at	The evaluator confirms the reported communication tools and notes that during project execution, this was not following a targeted communication strategy but more ad-hoc dissemination of products and a strong focus on academic audiences. At the end of the project, this was compensated for by the production of toolkits and modules for the virtual course in the UASB, targeting project stakeholders initially.

Planned outputs	Reported outputs as per Project Final Report[31]	Comments by evaluator
	technicians and local government officials throughout the region and will be launched in February 2019.	
4.2.3. At least 3 local governments outside project intervention sites (2 in Ecuador and 1 in Peru) are aware of validated actions to promote conservation and sustainable management Andean ecosystems management.		In the final report, the information presented for the achievement of this output was the same as the previous. The evaluator considers this an editing mistake. Hence, there is no reporting on the advancement of this output. On the other hand, the description of the target is relatively vague ("local governments are aware") However, the evaluator did identify clear examples that evidence this output. For instance, the Mindo Parish (adjacent to the Pichincha site) has asked to be part of the Commonwealth of parishes for conservation. In Carchi, the main government project partner has promoted extension and is applying conservation measures (particularly ACUS) in three other areas, involving several local government agencies. In Piura, thanks to the coordination work of the Project Partner Agency NCI; lessons from the Project intervention site have been disseminated and are extended to the other areas in the Quiroz watershed.

The subcriterion "Delivery of outputs" is rated as "Satisfactory".

b. Achievement of Outcomes

Outcomes along the impact pathway on knowledge generation and dissemination (Component 1).

EQ. How successful was the project in achieving the outcomes along the impact pathway on knowledge generation and dissemination? (as included in the ToC).
EQ. Did the assumptions hold/were drivers positively influenced along the impact pathway on knowledge generation and dissemination? (as included in the ToC).

Finding 10. The project contributed significantly to expanding the knowledge base on high Andean ecosystem dynamics and the effects that global environmental changes (GEC) have on biodiversity and carbon stocks; and on the multiple environmental benefits they provide (outcome 1.1).

Finding 11. Decision makers at different levels have increased access to science-based knowledge and SLM/SFM strategies through decision support tools and have accepted this (outcome 1.2).

Finding 12. The knowledge and tools are being applied to enable conservation and sustainable management of high-Andean Ecosystems at project intervention sites, mostly with direct support of the project but also thanks to continued interest of local governments (Intermediary State -IS- 1)

82. The evaluator considers that the two outcomes of component 1 of the project were achieved according to planning. The project's results framework does not use specific indicators at outcome level but repeats the output indicators (¶69). The outputs for these two outcomes have been achieved (Table 3) . Also, the assumption to progress from the output (research products) to the outcomes (expanded knowledge

base, accessible for decision makers) did hold and the produced outputs were of good quality to be used by decision makers. The amount of good-quality research results on diverse subjects related to biodiversity and carbon stocks (outcome 1.1) is enough evidence to sustain that the project significantly contributed to expanding the knowledge base. Interviewed representatives from international academic institutions highlighted the academic quality of the project products with expressions like *"the best field data from any GEF project I ever worked with".* For outcome 1.2, the project generated science-based geographic information tools for management of natural resources (water in Tungurahua, Carbon and restoration areas in Pichincha, natural vegetation in Carchi and Piura) and two decision support systems (geoportal of monitoring systems and information system of Pichincha site). Also, a series of agroforestry and restoration practices were scientifically developed and disseminated.

83. According to the programme team, the information generated has been made available for the main stakeholders through delivery of technical reports and direct communication (bilateral and in local coordination committees). Interviewed representatives of stakeholder agencies confirmed the reception of reports and the direct explanation from the project team. Technical level staff of SNGA considered that the knowledge generated was of high academic level and sometimes difficult to understand or apply, but useful to guide practice. The evaluator reviewed the different technical reports that targeted local use (monitoring protocols, carbon and biodiversity assessments, agroforestry systems, restoration modalities). According to his professional opinion, these are complete and applicable to local field conditions. They do use academic-technical language (including academic citations, statistical analysis, laboratory instructions) that possibly makes them too complicated to by fully comprehended by all non-technical staff with lower or mid-level technical training. However, with direct support the knowledge is fully applicable in local settings. The more practical tools (agroforestry and restoration practices) are even more at the level of the target audience.

84. The intermediate state of this impact pathway (IS1) implied that the available knowledge would be accepted and applied by decision makers to enable conservation and sustainable management of high-Andean Ecosystems at project intervention sites. In fact, the knowledge represented by the outputs in this component is mostly applied by the project itself in monitoring sites of biodiversity and carbon stocks, and pilot level agroforestry and restauration. This application has been done in collaboration with the local agencies, but it is too early to state that the knowledge is accepted and applied by decision makers. Part of the INRM tools have been applied by the decision-making bodies. According to interviewed SNGA representatives, the ecosystem conservation and restoration maps in Tungurahua are being considered by the municipalities although their application depends on the incoming administration. The Municipality of Quito applied the Carbon Compensation mechanism with private companies and the geographic model for provincial conservation area in Carchi is the basis for the provincial conservation strategy. There is other knowledge, not necessarily produced for the outputs of component 1, that was accepted and applied by decision-makers, contributing to IS1. For instance, this includes the knowledge on general restoration models and environmental and carbon standards in commercial plantations generated for outputs in component four that are applied by decision makers in private and public sector. This confirms the link between component 4 and 1 included in the ToC for the impact pathway on knowledge generation. Also, the assumptions to proceed from outcomes to IS held: partner agencies have shared information and use the generated knowledge and tools and local governments has continued to take interest in including biodiversity and carbon benefits in development plans.

Outcomes along the impact pathway on intervention sites (Components 2 and 3)

EQ. How successful was the project in achieving the outcomes along the impact pathway on intervention sites? (as included in the ToC).
EQ. Did the assumptions hold/were drivers positively influenced along the impact pathway on intervention sites? (as included in the ToC).

Finding 13. By working directly with subnational governmental agencies in the development of land use and development plans, the project effectively supported an enabling environment for integrating multiple benefits in cross-sectoral planning tools (outcome 2.1).

Finding 14. The land use and development plans mostly dealt properly with the major threats to biodiversity and carbon stocks and they have been applied in practice by subnational governmental agencies (IS 2).

Finding 15. Several dozens of national and subnational public agency staff members are likely to have increased their capacities to apply knowledge and INRM tools to support policies, land use plans and conservation programs (outcome 2.2).

Finding 16. The project has generated a few examples of strengthening sustainable value chains and aspects of livelihood strategies in Carchi, Pichincha and Huancavelica (outcome 3.1)

Finding 17. The project enhanced environmental benefits and reduced land degradation at intervention sites through supporting the establishment and management of conservation areas and by actively supporting local governments, individual land-owners and private companies in their restoration, land management and forestation practice (outcome 3.2, IS 3).

85. From its design, the Ecoandes project targeted governmental agencies at all levels, with a logic of interrelated scales (¶44). Some key collaborative relations with NGA, particularly with the financial incentive programs for conservation, restoration and afforestation, turned out differently than expected due to lower public spending (Ecuador) or because the strategy of the programme was not compatible with the project (Peru). Possibly therefore, the collaboration agreement with SNGA was relatively stronger (¶72, 73). While the working relationships with NGA continued, project team members explained to the evaluator that they put more effort on collaboration with SNGA to ensure impact in the field. According to the evaluator, and confirmed by both SNGA and NGA representatives, this was a good strategy that ensured the continued interest and constructive cooperation of the SNGA with the project.

86. The project supported the development or updating of two dozen of land planning and local development plans and instruments (Table 3), many of which were actually implemented by SNGA. The diversity of plans (for local development, climate change, regional competitiveness, model forest, conservation) reflects that the choice of the plan to be developed and the priorities included was not pre-set but defined by the different participating SNGA. The plans targeted the threats and barriers to Andean ecosystems as identified in the Prodoc (¶37, 38), specifically deforestation, habitat fragmentation and soil erosion, agriculture encroachment, pastures expansion and the lack of feasible management practices and the improper use of tree species in afforestation, land restoration and agroforestry programs. Water erosion, use of agrochemicals, infrastructure development and mining have been dealt with indirectly. These outputs evidently supported an enabling environment for the inclusion of biodiversity and carbon stocks in local plans. For instance, the series of plans in Pichincha (climate change plan, territorial plans, land use and development plan, model forest, strategic plan for Protected Area system, updated Mashpi management plan) all contributed to the consolidation of the Choco-Andino conservation area and its governance mechanism (ACUS and commonwealth of parishes). Also, having all these plans in place and articulated, supported the declaration of the Chocó Andino Biosphere Reserve (July

2018). According to local stakeholders and the project team, the preparation of the Biosphere Reserve declaration was not directly done with Ecoandes efforts, but clearly built on the existing plans.

87. While evidently most plans were developed in Pichincha, also in the other sites the enabling environment was strengthened. For instance, the direct and continued support to the municipalities and Parishes in Carchi, through the provincial government, lead to the development of the provincial land use plan, the declaration of the Cordillera Oriental ACUS and its management plan. Following the experience obtained in Ecoandes, Carchi has already declared one other ACUS (Río Chinambí) and a third one (Western Cordillera) is in the process of being declared. Other policy instruments or decisions supported by the project and leading to direct impact on conservation, are the declaration of protected areas in Piura (not fully attributable to Ecoandes support, but this certainly constituted a key support) and the ordinance for páramo management in Tungurahua.

88. The training organized by the project specifically targeted staff from NGA, SNGA and partner agencies. During the project, the training activities did not follow a fully-fledged programme with a needs assessment per target group and monitoring of the capacities created. Therefore, it is not possible to validate if the training actually led to enhanced capacities to apply the knowledge on biodiversity, carbon and INRM. However, this enhanced capacity is likely to be linked to the positive assessment by participants, interviewed during this evaluation, of relevant knowledge gained. All highlighted their increased understanding of carbon dynamics in soil and vegetation and insight in scientific procedures. Approx. 70% mentioned they gained more knowledge of alternative land use/conservation/restoration practice and management. A minority also expressed the view that they learned about processes, procedures and legal issues. In addition, the evaluator identified other training that was not reported by the project, particularly the capacity created through direct participation of technicians and (some decision makers) in project activities. For instance, interviewed staff from partner agencies highlighted how much they learned about biodiversity and carbon stock assessments by joining the Project Team during installation and monitoring and also, what they learned about processes and procedures while helping with the land use plans or local policy development. Finally, the planned courses through the Universidad Andina (reported under component 4 but directly targeting project beneficiaries) will be important training opportunities ex-post, also for project partners.

89. There were a few examples of strengthened productive value chains at interventions sites to address barriers and support SLF/SFM practices. This was particularly targeted in Carchi with tourism entrepreneurs and in Pichincha with coffee growers. However, the activities and outputs only targeted part of the value chain (promotion and organization in Carchi and microcredits in Pichincha). This did not lead to diversified income or significantly improved livelihoods. While these are producers that apply SLM practices, these aspects were not notably strengthened by supporting aspects of the value chain. In theory, the work done on 38 cattle farms in Pichincha and Carchi to better plan their animal husbandry through smart land use, would also be economically profitable but there is no monitoring on that aspect done during the project. Possibly the best example of strengthening livelihoods was in Huancavelica, where the activities to manage water and the native grassland improved fodder for Alpaca grazing that on its turn, improved Alpaca productivity, enhancing local livelihood. This has resulted in a public investment project to sustain these actions. In other areas, this direct relationship between improved ecosystem services and livelihoods might be present (for instance, the water regulation in the eastern part of Tungurahua improved drinking water availability for people and cattle and therefore, could have supported well-fare and wellbeing) but there are no data on this. The lack of social performance data at output and outcome level also implies that there is no information on gender equity.

90. The outcome 3.2 on land conservation, restoration and sustainable management was achieved, although the contributing outputs were different than planned, indicating that adaptive management was effective. Through the series of activities in component 2 (land use plans and SNGA decrees) the project supported the inclusion of more than 50,000 hectares in new local conservation schedules in Carchi and Piura. The ACUS in Carchi has recently been accepted as part of the National Protected Areas System and the pre-existing ACUS in Pichincha has been included in the Biosphere Reserve. The support to the development of páramo management plans in Tungurahua, supported by the Tungurahua Páramo Fund, ensured the continuation of sustainable management of 1,200 hectares. In Component 3, the project supported improved rangeland management in Huancavelica positively affecting 670 hectares. Although the actual area restored or afforested by SNGA or private sector cannot be validated, the data provided to the project team by these partners evidence that approx. 16,500 hectares have been included in active and passive restoration and more sustainable afforestation programs. Finally, in Pichincha the tenure of 4,000 hectares has been legally resolved which is a first and crucial step to improved land use management and 2,000 hectares of cattle farms are implementing improved animal husbandry plans. All this adds up to between 70,000 and 80,000 hectares of land included in SLM/SFM practices, ensuring biodiversity and carbon benefits in intervention sites in both countries. Because the project has targeted the social and livelihood aspects less than the environmental aspects (¶89), the social benefits of these SLM/SFM practices cannot be ensured.

91. The assumption that there is a positive collaboration with local partners and many local beneficiaries held and therefore, it is likely that the local beneficiaries and decision makers actually are implementing the conservation and SLM/SFM practices applied on the 70,000 hectares. The evaluator has visited and made direct observations on the commitments of local communities and SNGA to continuation, particularly of the conservation and restoration areas. Examples are:

- The community surrounding one of the conservation areas in Piura massively supported the full conservation of their páramo, not only because it ensures water provision for cultivation downslope, but also because it provides them with a tool in the debate around mining. As was expressed by the community *"the declaration of conservation area is the most powerful weapon in our struggle against the mining plans".*
- The communities in eastern Tungurahua had already had part of their páramo delimited and conserved but nevertheless, is was threatened by some who did not agree with that delimitation. Simple practices were applied (a fence to enforce delimitation, water drinking points for cattle and mist nets and a better drinking water system for human consumption) that showed the community the direct benefits of páramo conservation. As one community member mentioned: *"Before, we had to walk 2 - 3 hours to get water in and bring it home in barrels. Now it comes right from the tube to our house"* and *"cattle used to walk two hours per day to get to the pond in páramo; now they can drink almost next to their paddock*. Now, the communities have a voluntary proposal to enhance the area of conservation and (passive) restoration.
- In Pichincha, a community of new farmers (young urban educated people who bought land and forest plots to farm sustainably and conserve the natural vegetation) were already aware of the benefits of sustainable farming, land restoration, conservation and agroforestry. Through the project, they strengthened their organization, earned from the external experts and by doing, but they also contributed significantly with their own expertise to the land use practices studies and promoted by the project. They are actively involved in local planning with SNGA and committed to enhancing and continuing SLM/SFM practice in their own land, with other farmers and through their jointly established local NGO, in public land. Also, they established an environmental education

system (forest schools) to enhance awareness and capacities of young and adult, both rural and urban population.

Outcomes along the impact pathway on outreach and upscaling (Component 4)

EQ. How successful was the project in achieving the outcomes along the impact pathway on outreach and upscaling? (as included in the ToC).
EQ. Did the assumptions hold/were drivers positively influenced along the impact pathway on outreach and upscaling? (as included in the ToC).

Finding 18. National environmental authorities in Ecuador and Peru have incorporated several science-based knowledge and tools developed by the project into various environmental policies and programs (outcome 4.1).

Finding 19. There are examples of participating local governments that have applied lessons from the project on conservation and best land and forestry practices to other areas and scales (IS4)

Finding 20. The project was well communicated at international academic level and the support to international networks was crucial for their functioning. During the project, knowledge, results and lessons were passively disseminated among other interested local governments and key stakeholders beyond the project intervention sites. After the project, a distance learning course is initiated to provide more direct training targeting replication and upscaling (outcome 4.2)

92. Considering the changing reality of the financial incentive programs in Ecuador and the impossibility to collaborate with the *Plan Bosques* in Peru (¶111), the Ecoandes project adapted the delivery of the outputs leading to outcome 4. Rather than targeting only the strengthening of the effectiveness of investments of these programs, it decided to develop specific knowledge tools to support the general technical approach of these programs. Also, the planned support of the project to national monitoring systems was changed, because there was less compatibility with the national MRV system for REDD, and the project decided to develop a series of tools and policies. In the end, the project collaborated less than planned with the financial incentive programs but more than planned with other national policies and initiatives. These decisions were taken in conjunction with MAE and MINAM decision makers and endorsed by the project steering committee. This resulted in a series of products that was commended by the interviewed staff of these ministries. Examples of these products and it use, are:

- Proposal for a new delivery model of the PNRF, which forms the basis for the soon to be re-launched restoration programme
- The development and adoption of a protocol to estimate carbon and biodiversity impacts of tree plantations for the Commercial Plantation Incentive, which was applied in practice by private sector (output 3.2.5) and was proposed to be formally adopted by the MAP.
- National biodiversity indicators were developed and accepted by MAE to monitor the implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategy (2015-2020);
- Guidelines for restoration of forest ecosystems Nation Program for the Recovery of Degraded Lands national biodiversity indicators to measure the implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategy (2015-2020);

- Ecoandes developed of annotated legend of ecosystems for the first ecosystems map of Peru, now under development by MINAM
- The wetlands inventory of the Pisco river, delivered by Ecoandes, forms the basis of interregional cooperation (Ica-Huancavelica) on IWRM.

93. The project's work to strengthen thematic networks focused mainly on two academic networks (GLORIA and Andean Forest Network). While this is less than planned, their support was crucial to the functioning of these networks. For instance, according to interviewed active members, the work of the Andean node of GLORIA relied fully on Ecoandes support and thanks to this, several meetings, field studies and publications have been produced. In addition, the project communicated its knowledge and lessons to academic audiences through at least five academic papers (and probably more to come) and a series of technical reports and congress contributions. While there was an active exchange of experiences, insights and activities with these academic networks, there was no such collaboration with other technical networks that could benefit from the project lessons and support replication or upscaling results.

94. The direct work with SNGA helped these to gain capacity and learn from project implementation, that already resulted in direct application of lessons in other areas or at other scales. Having clear examples of replication-upscaling activities before the project ended (and beyond direct project support) is a strong indication of success, and shows that there are other SNGA that have interest in mainstreaming biodiversity in development plans. According to interviewed SNGA and project team members, raising interest from other SNGA was easiest with neighbouring jurisdictions that share similar challenges. Their experience is that the biodiversity or water benefits are easier to explain and faster to be picked up than carbon benefits. Concrete examples of replication by third parties:

- Based on the positive experience with the development and declaration of the ACUS in the Eastern Cordillera of Carchi, the provincial government declared two other ACUS in Carchi: Chinambí, and Western Cordillera. In coordination with other organizations that had experience creating ACUS in other areas, municipalities in another province (Imbabura) were supported to create the ACUS Intag-Toisán.
- The Provincial government of Carchi managed to get additional funding for establishment of additional monitoring plots and continue monitoring
- The SNGA that collaborated with the project in Pichincha, have invited the Provincial Government of Pichincha (a SNGA that was not directly involved in the project) for the development and declaration of the Biosphere Reserve in Northwestern Pichincha. The conservation work developed under Ecoandes raised interest of other Parishes (Mindo) who expressed their wish to be included in the commonwealth

95. At design, the project did not include a solid knowledge management system (¶71) and although during execution the Ecoandes project did apply many elements of knowledge sharing, some aspects of data management, systematization and communication on results and lessons learned could have been improved. This was recognized at the end of the project and in part compensated with additional actions. The project managed the data from the research and monitoring directly through the researchers, the local partner agencies and collaborating universities involved in taking the data. While the processed data and results were explained to local stakeholders, there was no system to deliver and store all research data to national or local stakeholders; no agreement with the national data systems *(Sistema Unica de Información*

Ambiental -SUIA- in Ecuador or *Sistema Nacional de Información Ambiental* - SINIA- in Peru)[32] or relevant institutes (National Biodiversity Institute in Ecuador or the National Institute for Investigation of Glaciers and Mountain Ecosystems, INAIGEM [33]) for data delivery and management was made. Therefore, while many agencies have access to parts of the generated information and have received communication about the results, the only agency that has all the basic data gathered is CONDESAN. This can be a risk for the use of this information once the project ends, institutional arrangements expire and technical staff leaves the organization (¶131).

96. CONDESAN did make all knowledge available, both for the project partners and for other stakeholders through more popular and technical publications, webpage and other media. While complete, it was a passive way of disseminatiing results and lessons learned to other stakeholders. Also, many publications have quite a high technical level and need specialized expertise to be applied in practice (e.g. monitoring and restauration manuals, identification of plant species, carbon measurement protocols). Also, lessons learned from the planning processes in components 2 and 4 were not specifically systematized, communicated or included in capacity building. Therefore, there was no directed effort to promote use and application in other areas and scales. In the second half of the project implementation, the project recognized this and developed an active strategy to disseminate knowledge to a diverse group of stakeholders through a distance learning course, developed with the Universidad Andina Simon Bolivar Andean (UASB). This course, that focuses on the different elements of sustainable management of landscapes, was designed by all project team members and overseen by one of the main consultants to the project. The off-line and on-line course materials have been finished during project execution and the course will start in the second half of 2019. Its application is ensured by the fully financed contract with UASB. The course will train at least 150 people in three cycles. Members of partner agencies of the project (SNGA and NGO) are financially supported to participate in the first batch of students. However, the course is directed and open to other SNGA and Andean NGO in order to wider disseminate project results and lessons. The UASB provided educative academic quality and experience with distance learning and will be in charge to execute the course for at least three cycles.

The subcriterion "Achievement of direct outcomes" is rated as "Satisfactory".

c. Likelihood of Impact

EQ. To what degree the project is likely to create long-term impact on biodiversity and carbon stocks in the intervention sites?
EQ. To what degree the project is likely to create long-term impact on globally important biodiversity and carbon benefits of critical high-Andean ecosystems of Ecuador and Peru
EQ. To what degree the project is likely to create long-term impact on the livelihoods of inhabitants of intervention sites?
EQ. Did the assumptions hold/were drivers positively influenced in the transition from outcomes to impact? (as included in the ToC)
EQ. Have desired outcomes and impacts occurred amongst all stakeholder groups?

Finding 21. During implementation, the project already managed to increase biodiversity and carbon stocks in the intervention sites (project ToC impact statement).

Finding 22. Increased biodiversity and carbon stocks in Andean ecosystems beyond the intervention sites cannot be confirmed yet, but this is likely to be generated because of adopted tools and

[32] suia.ambiente.gob.ec; sinia.minam.gob.pe
[33] www.biodiversidad.gob.ec; www.inaigem.gob.pe

instruments and some replication activities (project goal). Direct contribution of the project to long term impact on the livelihoods of inhabitants of intervention sites is not likely (new impact statement in ToC, implied in formulation of outcome 3.1).

Finding 23. Development policies from other sectors and continued weak governance at local level continue to challenge the probability of positive long-term impact beyond the intervention sites.

Finding 24. Because of the project budget distribution, the project activities and therefore the positive results of the project, have been unequally distributed among intervention sites with considerably more results in Ecuador (particularly Pichincha) than in Peru.

97. The positive outputs for outcome 3.2. imply direct positive impact on biodiversity at carbon stocks in intervention sites (Table 3). Even though the project's results framework does not include specific indicators at impact level, outputs 3.2.7 and 3.2.8 are clear impact targeting indicators. These have also been used by the project for the tracking tools for the different GEF focal areas. There were also no concrete target values defined for the impact statement hence 'biodiversity and carbon stocks maintained or enhanced' needs to be assessed qualitatively. Its achievement can be confirmed: the establishment of experimental plots (restoration and monitoring), the support to the establishment and management of conservation areas and native rangelands under sustainable management in Perú are confirmed and validated project products that both have net biodiversity and carbon benefits. The other achievement of other targets (area restored by SNGA, area of better land management, area of commercial plantations with better environmental standards) cannot be fully confirmed or validated, but they are likely. All have an evident positive contribution to biodiversity and carbon stocks. Because there is no report or evidence of other development in the intervention sites that may have cause land degradation or deforestation, it can be ensured that biodiversity and carbon stock in intervention sites are maintained and likely increased.

98. Several positive outcomes of the project have increased the likelihood of positive environmental management of Andean ecosystems in Ecuador and Peru, beyond the intervention sites. The most concrete results that are likely to have a positive impact on biodiversity and carbon stocks are the replication actions such as the additional conservation areas in Carchi and the larger area included in the Biosphere Reserve in Pichincha (¶94). In addition, tools developed in component 4 such as the restoration standards in Ecuador and the ecosystems map in Peru (¶92) and training for NGA staff through component 2 (¶88,92) certainly increased the institutional capacity to improve environmental management. Both ministries of environment and the national forest service (SERFOR) in Peru highlighted the usefulness of Ecoandes support, training and tools and their willingness to apply this in practice. Evidence for this are the recognition of the Eastern Cordillera ACUS by MAE for acceptance in the national protected areas system, the adoption of biodiversity indicators in Ecuador and the ecosystems map in Peru to guide and monitor impact of environmental policies. Also, the PNRF in Ecuador is about to be relaunched, including the standards developed by the project. These developments make long-term impact at larger scale likely.

99. According to the ToC developed during the inception stage of this evaluation, a potential social impact was identified: considering that the project targeted sustainable livelihoods, using income diversification as an (output-level) indicator, implicitly the project aimed at social impact. However, because there was little work done on integrally strengthening livelihoods, the associated outcome (3.1) was achieved to a limited degree (¶89,92). Therefore, with the exception of the Alpaca activity in Huancavelica, it is not likely that the project contributed directly (through its strategies and associated activities) to improved livelihoods. There might be an indirect benefit, for instance if the farm plans for cattle husbandry result in economically more profitable cattle grazing, or when the restoration and conservation outcomes in Tungurahua result in significantly better water provision for agriculture.

100. A key assumption between the transition to impact at different scales (from intervention sites to the wider Andean landscapes) is that there is no significant impact of economic development projects disrupting social, political or environmental systems. The main social-economic conflict currently affecting high Andean ecosystems is around mining, including in intervention sites (Piura, Carchi and, to a lesser

degree, Pichincha[34]). These conflicts could imply a lower willingness of local governments and communities to support conservation strategies because they prefer the revenues from mining (considering that conservation areas and restoration activities in Ecuador and Peru are not compatible with mining development). This however, is not the case in all three sites: there is strong local resistance against mining both at the level of the population and the Parish/District governments, who feel that the mining initiatives are steered by national governments and international private sector. Hence, while in fact different sectors of national governments (mining/energy vs environment/agriculture) actively promote large-scale development projects there is a striking consensus against large scale development projects among civil society. In all three areas the evaluator found indications that the (active or latent) mining threats actually increased the interest of local population for conservation areas. The community members visited in Piura expressed: *"we needed a conservation area - whatever its status would be- because only with a formally recognized conservation declaration, we have a weapon to win the battle against the mine".* In Pichincha, local farmers told *"the biggest reason why people are willing to ensure land titles* [and therefore, sustainable land management commitments - evaluator] *is their worry about mining concessions".* In Carchi, the project team and the local government told the evaluator that the ACUS in the Eastern cordillera kept mining explorations from neighbouring *Monte Olivo* (Imbabura) away from Carchi.

101. Other potential external factors that might negatively offset positive achievements of the project in conservation and restoration of biodiversity and carbon stocks are the impact of climate change and deforestation/degradation caused by infrastructure or encroaching agriculture. The impact of climate change has been studied and is being monitoring by the project partners and has actually been a motivation for both planners and community to apply more diverse land use and conservation practice. Agricultural encroachment, related or not to expanding road infrastructure, is a continued stressor to the integrity of Andean ecosystems in all intervention sites and at national level. While it cannot be excluded that ongoing deforestation will negatively offset all biodiversity and carbon gains through the project, there are indications (recent national deforestation maps) that deforestation in Andean landscapes due to encroaching agricultural limit is decreasing, among other factors due to rural-urban or international migration or to stronger conservation policies. The evaluator observed continued pressure of encroaching agriculture directly to the intervention sites in Tungurahua (neighbouring farmers wanting to encroach in community conserved paramo) but the community agreements seem to hold and no new degradation has taken place. According to interviewed local stakeholders, the same happened in Huancavelica and Carchi: while there is still a considerable share of the farmer community that wishes to deforest and occupy more forested areas, there is a collective commitment that mostly (not in all cases) can maintain the sustainable management of communal areas.

102. The project was not equally implemented among the different intervention sites. A third of the budget and efforts (33%) were dedicated to Peru and the rest to Ecuador (Table 4). This was because of the STAR contribution of Ecuador vs Peru: the project budget was financed with a three times as high share from Ecuador STAR than from Peru STAR. Also, the co-financing from sources from Ecuador (89% of total[35]) was much higher than from Peru (11%, Table 5). Within Ecuador, the Pichincha site received considerably more effort (28% of total) and dedicated budget than the other two sites (15%). Also, in Pichincha, the sister project Andean Forests Program took place and therefore, there was possibly a double total amount and intensity of activities in Pichincha than in Carchi and Tungurahua. As a result, in Pichincha more outputs were produced in all components: there were more monitoring sites, more studies executed, more people trained, higher diversity of field activities (restoration, conservation, farm planning) and a closer collaboration with different SNGA. The larger investment in Pichincha was also because there was more budget available (through the synergy of two projects) but also for strategic reasons: Pichincha provides a more diverse landscape (altitudinal range, ecological zones) close to Quito where most of the project team was situated. In general, it was evident that having most of the project team in Ecuador, there was more direct collaboration with the Ecuadorian sites and more results generated. While this skewed impact was recognized by Peruvian stakeholders at national level (not at site level) and the reasons understood, it was frequently mentioned as a critical footnote of project execution. However, most stakeholders also

[34] https://mapa.conflictosmineros.net/ocmal_db-v2/conflicto/view/5; https://www.ocmal.org/anuncian-marcha-y-planton-en-tulcan-contra-la-mineria/

[35] For this calculation, the co-financing from CONDESAN and UNEP was not considered

recognized that the project team, even though most members were situated in Ecuador, maintained a good relationship with the Peruvian NGA and that significant positive results were achieved, even though there was considerably less budget dedicated to Peru.

***Table 4**. Expenditure of GEF funds per site/country*

Site/country	Expenses	% of total
Carchi	$ 726,819	15
Tungurahua	$ 699,507	15
Pichincha	$ 1'349,417	28
Ecuador General	$ 413,060	9
Total Ecuador	*$ 3'188,802*	*67*
Piura	$ 770,420	16
Huancavelica	$ 516,026	11
Peru general	$ 276,116	6
Total Peru	*$ 1'562,562*	*33*
Total Project	**$ 4'751,364**	**100**

The subcriterion "Likelihood of impact" is rated as "Likely".

The criterion "Effectiveness" is rated as "Satisfactory".

E. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

EQ. Was financial information and communication between financial and project management staff complete and transparent?
EQ. How well are standards (clarity, transparency, audit etc.) of financial and operational (staff recruitment, evaluation, secondary conditions) planning, management and reporting applied, to ensure that sufficient and timely financial resources were available to the project and its partners?
EQ. To what extent co-financing has materialized as expected at project approval?

Finding 25. The financial management was according to planning and followed financial and operational standards of UN Environment. Financial reporting was correct and timely. The project team and partner agencies considered that the financial management was transparent and efficient.

Finding 26. The project agencies reported a larger mobilization of co-financing than originally committed although some agencies that had committed funding initially, have not reported any mobilized funds. Some major sources of co-financing are reported inconsistently and their contribution to the project objective or activities is unclear.

103. The original budget (Prodoc) was detailed in terms of expenditures per project component, per calendar year and per UN Environment expenditure category. Administration and reporting was further done following UN Environment expenditure categories but the EA kept track of expenditure per component (not per outcome/output). The financial management of the project was done by an office manager in the CONDESAN office in Quito, who dedicated 80% of her time to the project. She was supported by UN Environment administration in the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean in Panama. According to the project team and CONDESAN staff, financial administration was relatively simple and transparent. The annual budgets are made by the project team, based on the work plan and approved by the steering committee and managed by office manager. The main responsible persons for budget control (project coordinator, CONDESAN director, UN Environment project managers) confirmed they were continuously fully aware of the financial status of the project. All subcontracts with participating agencies and consultants were managed from Quito. All interviewed recipients confirmed correct and timely payments of instalments and easy reporting. Initially, expenditures were reported each three months and funds for the following period estimated based on which a new disbursement is requested. This was later

changed to six-month periods to reduce the risk of cash-flow challenges due to approval challenges (UN Environment normally needs two months for approval of reports which makes a three-month reporting period short). The evaluator noted that reporting was timely and correct. Although there were no major changes in project budget during implementation, the exact financial annual planning according to the work plan was considerexd a challenge by the project team because of the difference between project activities and budget categories. Finally, the project expenditure was very much in line with time management and there was less than 20% difference between planned categories planning and final spending (see Table 1).

104. The project followed international standards, set by UN Environment. The project was specifically audited every calendar year by an external company[36] and the audit opinion in each of the reports was positive, without remarks. The evaluator noted that the selection and contracting of staff and consultants did not follow fully open processes but responded generally to closed calls among pre-identified candidates, supervised by the office manager and CONDESAN director. While this process might be less transparent and includes a risk of personal preferences over professional capacity, the evaluator has not found any case where a selected candidate did not fit the requirements and none of the project team members mentioned any deficiencies in the quality of staff or consultant selection. In this project, the more informal procedures of staff and consultant selection contributed to efficient processes and a good quality project team.

105. According to the final financial report, the project spent approx. 2 M$ of the total budget on staff and consultants (43 %; Figure 3). On top of this, there was 1.6 M$ (34 %) to collaboration agreements with private companies, among which the partner agencies and part of this is also dedicated to personal costs. These figures make up a relatively large share of the budget being dedicated to staffing. This can be explained and justified by the strong research character of the project and surely contributed to the success of this approach. On the other hand, it can also be associated with the lower effectiveness of community-based activities (outcome 3.1).

106. The mobilized co-financing was larger than planned (18.3 M$ vs 16,2 M$; Table 5). This is especially remarkable considering the lower public budget in Ecuador and the lack of investments in the financial incentive programs, that were considered the main sources of co-financing originally. The total co-financing from MAE was a similar amount as planned in cash and double the planned amount of in kind contributions. The MINAM co-financing was half than the amount planned, but finally it is reported in cash while the planned amount was in kind. Also CONDESAN contributed much more than planned, principally thanks to the collaboration with the PBA project, so therefore, the actual source of funding from most of CONDESAN co-financing was the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. More than 2M$ was contributed by the Ecuador Ministry of Agriculture, for the incentives given to areas of commercial plantations that were assessed by the project. MAG did not commit anything at project start but conversations had taken place. Several other agencies had not committed originally but did contribute with considerable funding. Most of these are SNGA in de intervention sites, such as the SNGA form Piura, Carchi, Mindo, and Quito and local Partner Agencies such as NCI and Imaymana.

[36] Willi Bamberger & Asociados Cía. Lta.

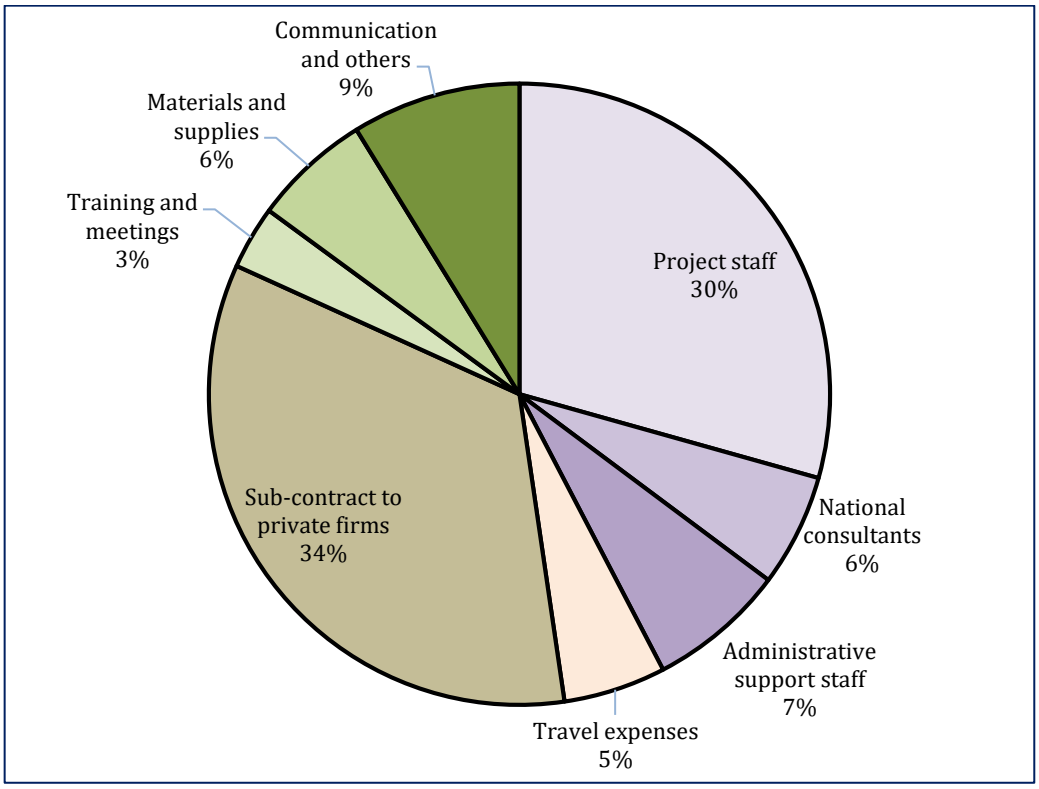


Figure 3. *Distribution of project expenditures per UN Environment categories (data taken from Project final financial statement, February 2019)*

107. A few agencies that originally had committed co-financing mobilized much less. This was the case with PRODERN (152 k$ vs. 810 k$) and particularly UN Environment (3.4 M$ committed but nothing mobilized). In both cases, this might have been a matter of reporting; co-financing was mobilized but not reported to the project. Overall, the collaboration with PRODERN was effective and a no-cost collaboration agreement was executed efficiently implying that PRODERN must have invested what they planned, in collaborative activities. In the case of UN Environment, originally a close collaboration was planned with the MEBA project (Microfinance for Ecosystem Based Adaptation) and other (minor) initiatives, but according to interviewed partner agencies, during project implementation a clear match was not identified and this collaboration was minimal. On the other hand, UN Environment did provide support, additional to the strict implementation activities that are covered by the agency fee (¶136,92) and could have reported this as in-kind co-financing but this was never done.

108. The administration of co-financing was done at a general level of detail. In the original budget (prodoc) co-financing was budgeted at the same level of detail as the GEF contribution. Financial reporting limited this level of detail to the GEF budget while confinancing was only reported at totals (total co-financing expenditures per UN Environment category) and not per component or outcome. All mobilized co-financing was confirmed through signed letters from the source with the exception of two cases (CONDESAN managed their co-financing internally and co-financing with two local governments was included in ongoing collaboration agreements).

109. The evaluator questions the eligibility of the reported co-financing activities that are reported by MAE and MAG. For instance, in September 2018, MAE confirmed a total co-funding of 4.8 M$, but several large amounts reported are difficult to associate with the project. Examples are 1.6 M$ for the support of the national protected areas system, while the Ecoandes project does not interact with any protected area. Another 880 k$ were reported as “national forest control system” without detail how this supported the project, that did not work on forest control. In May 2017, another letter confirmed 1.5 M$ for the same co-financing budget items, but in that case, it was reported as cash contribution while in 2018 they were reported as “in kind” by Ecoandes. None of these items coincided with the UN Environment budget categories to which they were reported in periodic reports. They also did not coincide with the items

mentioned in the original commitment letter of MAE. Similarly, in June 2015 the Socio Bosque programme sent a confirmation letter for a 3.2 M$ support during the first year of the project, but there is no specification what was funded by this financing. MAG emitted a letter for the total amount of 2.1 M$. 19 k$ of this is for activity costs and the rest for incentives for commercial plantations. The letter itself states that 1.6 M$ of this amount is "indirect costs" that apparently sums all subsidies given to commercial plantations, even though most of this had no relation with the project. But also the "direct costs" (incentives to the areas assessed during the project) is not clearly contributing to the project results: output 3.2.5 claims that the result are 'recommendations that are being implemented by the company' and not the plantation itself[37]. Therefore, the evaluator observes that while there was a considerable amount of co-financing mobilized, the reported amounts are likely higher than the actual contribution to the project activities or objectives.

Table 5. *Planned co-financing (according to Prodoc) and realized confinancing[38]. All in US$*

Source of co-financing	Planned (Prodoc)	Realized
Cash		
Ministerio del Ambiente Ecuador	4,500,000	4,687,232
PRODERN – Belgium Cooperation	690,000	152,379
CONDESAN	1,750,000	3,386,298
Tungurahua Páramo Fund	100,000	268,123
Regional Government of Huancavelica	127,000	117,952
Regional Government of Piura		63,789
Ministerio de Ambiente Perú		805,985
Naturaleza y Cultura Internacional		291,590
Fundacion Imaymana		23,661
Municipio de Quito - Ecuador		327,241
Ministerio de Agricultura de Ecuador		2,105,945
Gobierno Provincial de Carchi - Ecuador		389,040
GAD Mindo - Nanegalito		248,601
Sub-total	*7,167,000*	*12,867,836*
In-kind		
Ministerio del Ambiente Ecuador	2,500,000	4,796,009
Ministerio de Ambiente Perú	1,622,826	
PRODERN – Belgium Cooperation $	120,000	
CONDESAN	820,000	233,633
UNEP	3,450,000	
Fondos de Páramos del Tungurahua	100,000	3,158
Gobierno Regional de Huancavelica	380,000	
Fundación Imaymana		205,961
Naturaleza y Cultura Internacional		192,515
Sub-total	*8,992,826*	*5,431,276*
Total Co-financing	**16,159,826**	**18,299,112**

[37] Here, it should be mentioned that the establishment of commercial plantation with exotic tree species is not eligible for GEF funding (START guidance). Improving these plantations can be included in eligible SFM practices but the co-financing from MAG targeted the establishment of these plantations while the improvement was done through GEF funding.

[38] Information provided by the project, confirmation letters available for all sources with exception from GAD Mindo-Nanagalito and Carchi provincial government (cofinanging included in ong collaboration agreement)

The criterion "Financial Management" is rated as "Highly Satisfactory"[39]

1. ***Completeness of financial information: Satisfactory***
2. ***Communication between finance and project management staff: Highly Satisfactory***

F. EFFICIENCY

EQ. Did the project build adequately (create complementariness) on existing institutions, lessons of other initiatives, data sources, partnerships with third parties and ongoing projects?
EQ. How was the operational execution vs. original planning (time wise)?
EQ. How was the operational execution vs. original planning (budget wise)? Was the project implemented cost-effective? (were the results achieved at the lowest possible cost)
EQ. Was the project ready for implementation reasonably soon after project approval? Were appropriate measures taken to either address weaknesses in the project design or respond to changes that took place between project approval, the securing of funds and project mobilisation?
EQ. If present, what have been the main reasons for delay/changes in implementation? Have these affected project execution, costs and effectiveness?
EQ. Did the project implement measures to decrease the environmental footprint of project management?

Finding 27. The project had many collaborative agreements with existing institutions and third parties. While not working with all potential partners, the selected collaborations were strategic and complementary. Lessons were exchanged and applied mutually.

Finding 28. The project was executed according to the original time and financial planning. Thanks to a good preparation and disposition from EA and IA, the project could start soon after project approval even though the first instalment was late.

Finding 29. In comparison to other, similar projects, Ecoandes achieved many outputs in relation to its financial investment. No specific cost- or time-saving measures were necessary to attain achievements.

Finding 30. Project activities suffered from minor delays due to changes in the context and turnover of staff in government agencies. These delays were well absorbed by project management and did not negatively affect the delivery or cost of outputs.

Finding 31. No specific measures were implemented to decrease environmental footprint of project management.

110. Though by no means a direct continuation project, EcoAndes was conceptualized based on a previous regional GEF project (Andean Páramo Project; GEF ID 1918; implemented by UN Environment and executed by CONDESAN) and included many of its lessons. It's basic thematic and response (multiple benefits of Andean ecosystems, combining biodiversity and carbon stock conservation through integrated ecosystem management and landscape restoration) was identified and further developed by some of the páramo project's partners (CONDESAN, University of Amsterdam, University of the Andes, Andean Community). The project was designed to be complementary to ongoing initiatives of partnering NGA and SNGA as well as non-governmental

[39] See Annex 7: financial management evaluation rating table

partner agencies (¶68). Also, new initiatives from the EA were designed as complementary to Ecoandes.

111. In practice, the collaboration and complementariness with ongoing initiatives from project partner agencies and others was different as planned, but nevertheless efficient. The changes in the funding for Ecuador's national incentives (Socio Bosque, commercial plantations, PNRF) affected its complementariness with the project and the way the project could collaborate. While deemed promising initially, the collaboration with the Peruvian *Plan Bosques* did not work out because that programme did not invest in Andean ecosystems. However, through efficient adaptive management, the project could realign with two of these incentive programs, and found alternatives for the others (¶72, 92). During implementation, the active collaboration with initiatives from project partners (CONDESAN, NCI, Tungurahua Páramo Fund) worked out as planned and highly contributed to the project's achievements and sustainability. The collaboration with PBA was so close that during the present evaluation, the interviewed staff of local project partners and beneficiaries in Pichincha could not distinguish between the Ecoandes and PBA activities or results. The evaluator noted that the synergy between the two projects added strongly to the impact of both: it was practically managed by CONDESAN as one large fund which contributed to the benefit of both projects. The continuation of PBA is specifically important to provide some continuation to Ecoandes results (¶68, 128). In Tungurahua, Huancavelica and Piura, the project built on the ongoing work of the local partner agencies, in terms of defining intervention sites, locations, priority actions and governmental partners to work with. This gave the project a head start but also guaranteed more local appropriation. Finally, in the case of Piura and Tungurahua, it also contributed to continuation of (part of) the project activities and consolidation of results. The latter was also evident in collaboration with the SNGA in all intervention sites, because of the complementarity of Ecoandes with local governmental initiatives.

112. In the Prodoc, a relatively complete institutional stakeholder analysis was presented, including potential collaboration with all relevant stakeholders with ongoing work. The project collaborated with most stakeholders in this list, though not all; particularly some originally identified NGO initiatives at local level were not included in practice, because their intervention area was deemed different. However, during the evaluation several examples were encountered where the local beneficiaries mentioned these organizations as important stakeholders (e.g. FONAG, Altropico, Randi Randi and the Mountain Institute).

113. The evaluator did not find active collaboration with other GEF projects in Ecuador and Peru mentioned in the Prodoc. However, there was an active and effective collaboration with a project that was not mentioned (Landscapes and wildlife, GEF ID 4731), with mutual application of lessons on conservation area establishment and cattle management (¶94). Collaboration of the project with international academic networks managed by CONDESAN was effective in two cases (GLORIA, Andean Forests) but did not proceed as planned with a third (iMHEA) because in practice, there was less attention to hydrological challenges in Ecoandes.

114. At global level, the project did collaborate with other initiatives of UN Environment such as the Carbon Benefits Project (GEF) but not with Microfinance for Ecosystem Based Adaptation. Collaboration with other initiatives under execution in Ecuador and Peru such as the Green Economy Initiative, the Economics of Ecosystem and Biodiversity and the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services was minimal.

115. Overall, the project was executed according to time and budget planning. The Mid-Term Review concluded that the project was on track at mid-term and the project final report specifies the delivery of all planned products and full spending of the budget at project end. The evaluator confirmed the correct reporting of outputs vs. time (see Table 3). The project document was complete in terms of terms of reference for the project team, consultants and management

committees and therefore, could start (1 April 2014) soon after approval (19 March 2014). There was a further initial delay of project activities, because the first instalment was only done in August 2014. This was related to the change in administrative management system in the UN[40] that took place during project start. However, CONDESAN and UN Environment did all preparatory work (establishment of Steering Committee incl. first meeting, selection of PT, elaboration of M&E plan) so the activities could start almost immediately after this first instalment. Following the Mid Term Review, there was a six-month project extension (from April to December 2018) because of the delay caused by the late first instalment.

116. During implementation, some minor delays of activities took place following changes in NGA financial incentives that required adaptive management (¶72). This mostly affected activities leading to outcomes 3.2 and 4.1 and although the outputs were achieved differently, they were not significantly delayed. Also, after the change of authorities in collaborating governmental agencies, the project needed to re-engage with incoming staff and renew collaboration commitments (¶73). This particularly affected the delivery of activities for component 2, that specifically targeted SNGA collaboration. However, it hardly affected its outputs that were all achieved in time. The Ecoandes project did make some changes to the distribution of funds between different activities. Mostly because of working more with SNGA than originally planned, component 2 received 20% higher budget and component 4 less than planned. This is justified given aspects of adaptive management and the fact that outputs were well achieved.

117. The evaluator did not identify particular measures to increase cost-effectiveness beyond general good practice such as sharing ground transport and coordinating international visits. However, in comparison to other similar projects funded during GEF 5 in Ecuador and Peru that combined (pilot) field activities with policy development[41]) the project can be considered efficient: its GEF budget was in the lower range (3.8 - 8.9 M$), while it covered two countries and various GEF focal areas. With an effectiveness rated as “satisfactory” and impact rated “likely”, the evaluator considers this as a clear indication for cost-effectiveness.

118. Similarly, the evaluator did not identify a strategy or measures specifically targeting the reduction of the environmental footprint of project activities. Given the broad geographical range of the project activities, in two countries and the distance between sites implied a high amount of air and ground travel for site visits and exchange of experiences. Therefore, there must have been many opportunities to imply measured beyond general good practice. It must be considered that at the time of project development, UN Environment did not ask to design or report on this kind of specific measures.

The criterion “Efficiency” is rated as “Satisfactory”.

G. MONITORING AND REPORTING

EQ. Monitoring Design and Budgeting: (a) Were the arrangements for monitoring adequate? (b) How well was the project logical framework (original and possible updates) designed as a planning

[40] The new major UN-wide system change (UMOJA) was understandably accompanied with several challenges causing delay https://www.un.org/press/en/2014/gaab4127.doc.htm; https://foreignpolicy.com/2016/05/06/at-the-united-nations-umoja-translates-as-bureaucratic-chaos/

[41] eg Ecuador:

4731 (Advancing Landscape Approaches in Ecuador's National Protected Area System to Improve Conservation of Globally Endangered Wildlife); 4770 (Integrated Management of Marine and Coastal Areas of High Value for Biodiversity in Continental Ecuador); 4775 (Promotion of Climate-smart Livestock Management Integrating Reversion of Land Degradation and Reduction of Desertification Risks in Vulnerable Provinces): Peru: 4773 (Conservation and Sustainable Use of High-Andean Ecosystems through Compensation of Environmental Services for Rural Poverty Alleviation and Social Inclusion); 5080 (Transforming Management of Protected Area/Landscape Complexes to Strengthen Ecosystem Resilience)

and monitoring instrument? (c) Are there specific indicators in the logframe for each of the project objectives? (d) To what extent has baseline information on performance indicators been collected and presented in a clear manner? (e) To what extent did the project engage key stakeholders in the design and implementation of monitoring? (f) Did the project appropriately plan to monitor risks associated with Environmental Economic and Social Safeguards? (g) Have specific targets been specified for project outputs? (i) Determine whether support for M&E was budgeted adequately and was funded in a timely fashion during implementation

EQ. Monitoring of Project Implementation: was the M&E system operational and facilitated timely tracking of results and progress towards projects objectives throughout the project implementation period? Did this include monitoring the representation and participation of disaggregated groups? Were the results used to improve project performance and to adapt to changing needs?

EQ. Project reporting: were PIR reports, half-yearly Progress & Financial Reports complete and accurate?

Finding 32. Although there were some weaknesses in project design related to indicators and stakeholder participation, the monitoring and evaluation plan of the project (including risk monitoring) was well arranged, had dedicated budget and staff.

Finding 33. The project´s M&E system was operational and informed project management and technical reporting adequately. Thanks to the wealth of biological and geographical information from the field, tracking tools were reported in detail. However, the participation of disaggregated groups was not monitored.

119. The project design document included a detailed presentation of the project´s monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan. This included its budget, responsibilities, approach and activities to be implemented during project execution. This initial plan was further detailed during the inception stage of the project. The plan covered monitoring visits, stakeholder involvement, indicator and tracking tool monitoring, technical reporting, mid-term and final evaluations. The total budget of all monitoring activities was 428 k$ (10% of GEF budget) that included dedicated personnel (28% of budget) and preparation of all reports and costs of monitoring visits. The indicators used for monitoring are output level indicators in the results framework. These are detailed, comply with SMART standards and generally had excellent baseline and monitoring information. At this level, the results framework was a good tool for monitoring and planning. Minor weaknesses in project design and the results framework (¶71) were carried over into the M&E plan: the indicators used were only at output level and the joint achievement of outputs was reported as progress to the outcomes, without considering the ToC principles of progress towards outcomes and impact. Also, while the project partners were fully involved in the development and implementation of the Project M&E plan, the participation of other stakeholders (project beneficiaries, other SNGA) was not foreseen.

120. The project M&E plan was well implemented. A full-time project staff member was appointed to implement this plan, which was updated monthly. The Quito based M&E officer, supported by a staff member with a similar task in Peru, was in charge of the oversight, gathering of information and production of reports, in coordination with the project manager and administrator. Maybe as a consequence of the good performance of the M&E officer, the details of the system were not known and managed by all key project staff: most staff limited their M&E knowledge to the components in which they participated. The evaluator reviewed all periodic progress reports (PPR)

and project implementation reviews (PIR) and found them complete, informative and timely. In addition, the project made complete progress presentations to the Steering Committee (SC) meetings. The PIR reported well how project monitoring informed adaptive management and changes were well reported to the IA and GEF. Thanks to the strong academic focus and wealth of field data, the Tracking Tools were reported with high levels of detail, contributing significantly to the overall impact data of GEF focal area strategies.

121. The Mid-Term Review was complete and its recommendations were directly followed up and reported upon. The present terminal evaluation was done 6 months after closure of most of the project activities and while this came with some challenges to contact past project staff and partners, it did allow to assess the consolidation of outputs after project closure.

122. The project had a fairly complete risk management analysis and monitoring plan. However, this included little reference to social and environmental safeguards, (only gender and land tenure reports were included). While the project did contribute to land tenure issues, the gender management plan was poorly implemented and no data on data or minority groups were collected for monitoring (¶89). On the other hand, the risks in the monitoring plan have been strongly expanded and well monitored in each PIR. This expansion included mostly project management risks (on capacity, fund management, political influence on project decisions) but also new context risks (environment, political) that are relevant for the implementation.

The criterion "Monitoring and Reporting" is rated as "Satisfactory".

1. Monitoring design and budgeting: Satisfactory

2. Monitoring of project implementation: Satisfactory

3. Project reporting: Satisfactory

H. SUSTAINABILITY

Socio-political sustainability

EQ. Are there any social or political factors that may influence positively or negatively the sustenance of project results and progress towards impacts? (socio-political sustainability)

Finding 34. For different reasons, ranging from interest for water conservation to the struggle against mining, the social basis for conservation and ecosystem management is generally increasing in the intervention areas. This also explained ownership of the project by local stakeholders.

123. In Ecuador and Peru there is an increasing social basis for ecosystem conservation and ecosystem services, especially at local levels among rural communities. In the project intervention sites there were several reasons why local communities have interest in the project activities, results and objectives. The reasons behind this interest is different per site: the local population in Piura expressed that they support conservation of their páramo area for protection of water sources. However, the main instrument supported here (the declaration of conservation areas) is seen as their single most important tool in their struggle against mining (¶75,100). In Huancavelica and Tungurahua, the rural population is heavily dependent on irrigation water and low intensity agriculture and animal husbandry. More sustainable high Andean grassland management is evidently positive for both livelihood interests. In Pichincha, many local farmers are well educated, sustainability consciousness people with an urban background. These show a high interest in

organic farming and forest conservation and restoration. They have seen how the project helps to diversify their farming practices and potential income sources and therefore, collaborate strongly. Because the lowest level SNGA (parishes in Ecuador and districts in Peru) best reflect the interest of rural populations, these agencies supported the communities and therefore, also prioritize the project objectives. The diverse interests in key ecosystem services that the project has included in its objectives, explains why the interviewed local stakeholders expressed high ownership in the sense that they committed to continue support conservation, restoration and good land management even if there would not be continued funding. Therefore, the evaluator identified a social basis for project activities and results that are likely to sustain many project results, particularly pertaining to component 2 (enabling environment) and some of component 3 (conservation areas, sustainable management).

124. Although there has been a change in administration of governmental agencies at all levels, general environmental policies and plans related to the project themes remained in place. At national level the general environmental vision of the governments did not change: even though there has been a strong reduction of the budget of the financial incentive programs in Ecuador, these programs remained in place and the NGA are redirecting their implementation. In Peru, the changes in national government administration did not affect negatively the collaboration with the project but rather increased it: NGA representatives explained to the evaluator that the project motivated them to reengage with Andean ecosystem conservation after much attention to Amazon ecosystems in multilateral initiatives.

125. The SNGA in both countries changed administration in early 2019 so most decision makers collaborating with the project are not in place anymore. This change implied a potential risk for sustainability of project results. The evaluator interviewed many representatives of incoming administrations as well as technical staff of SNGA that remained in position. These confirmed that while there were changes in approach, the general policies at this level also remained in place. For instance, the provincial governmental of Carchi immediately announced continuation of the strengthening of local conservation areas. The new chair of the commonwealth of parishes in Carchi confirmed their commitment to fully continue the plan of the previous chair. Another indication for sustained support is that the chair of the environment committee of the Quito municipality (covering most of the Pichincha site) started a lobby to declare the area as a world natural heritage site[42] and that the new environment secretariat kept several key staff in place. The staff of the Tungurahua Páramo Fund was renewed by the incoming provincial government, who asked for even more involvement of local indigenous people's participation in decision making. In Piura, the environmental secretariat of the regional government expressed its wish to continue to support watershed management and Tara restoration. Here, the conservation areas are mostly governed by local (municipal and district) governments who have all expressed their support to the general activities that Ecoandes has been promoting, in their struggle against large scale mining (¶62).

126. While in spite of changes in budget and approach, overall environmental policies at national and local level remain fairly constant, policies from other sectors continue to form a potential stress to the integrity of Andean ecosystems. Mining has been mentioned already as a main item in the national development vs. environment debate (¶100). But also, plans for infrastructure (e.g. hydropower plants in Pichincha) and agricultural production (e.g. potato farming in Carchi and cattle in all sites) form a potential source of conflicting decision-making about, for instance, water and land use. Cattle farmers in Pichincha told the evaluator that in most cases, the technical support provided by the Ministry of Agriculture focuses on production and not on sustainability and is contrary to the farming techniques promoted by the project. These different approaches to

[42] https://twitter.com/CarrionQuinde/status/1148705132856709121

development, mostly among NGA, can form a potential threat to sustainability of results, beyond the direct control of the project.

The subcriterion "Socio-political sustainability" is rated as "Moderately likely"

Financial sustainability

EQ. To what extent are the continuation of project results and the eventual impact of the project dependent on (continued) financial resources? What is the likelihood that adequate financial resources will be or will become available to continue implementation the programs, plans, agreements, monitoring systems etc. prepared and agreed upon under the project? (financial sustainability)

Finding 35. In order to be continued, most field activities need institutional commitment rather than continued funding. Upscaling and replication of project activities and results need follow-up initiatives and political commitment. These are sufficiently available or under design. Implementation of plans and policies need public funding. The latter is less likely.

127. Most field-based outputs were achieved at a satisfactory level: monitoring and restoration plots have been installed, conservation and improved land management areas developed and policies and instruments promoted. This implies that not much additional funding is required for their continuation and consolidation, but they do need commitment from, particularly, partner agencies, SNGA and local beneficiaries. The evaluator found that this commitment varies. The non-governmental partner agencies in Piura and Pichincha are well-trained and strongly committed to continue with the monitoring and restoration activities and they will pursue funding to improve the conservation work. The same is true for the activities in Tungurahua, where the Páramo Fund is committed and has funding to apply the páramo management plans and to continue monitoring of experimental plots. In Carchi and Huancavelica, the continuation of activities depends on the local governments. While in Carchi the provincial government declared its wish to continue the monitoring of plots, it is unclear if they will designate funds to this. They did achieve additional funding (from national sources) to replicate experiences in other parts of the province. In Huancavelica, part of the project experience will be continued by the local government thanks to the approved public investment project. This however, does not cover monitoring of plots. The commitment and capacity of the local beneficiaries (communities, individual farmers) is less clear. While some interviewed farmers in Pichincha and Tungurahua (especially the most directly involved with the project) confirmed their commitment, others noted that "a new project is needed". In Piura, commitment is collective because of the mining conflict but the capacity to continue does depend on the support from SNGA or the local Partner Agency. In Tungurahua there is a good commitment at collective levels (communities and second tier federations) to the activities promoted by the project as evidenced by the general support to the Páramo Fund (they form an important part of the Fund's directorate). However, the evaluator noted differences among individual farmers about conservation vs. productivity; for instance, in one area visited there is ongoing pressure of some farmers to encroach in the conservation area while others struggle to protect this.

128. Although the project did show some replication activities by direct SNGA support (¶94), larger scale replication to other areas and scaling of experiences to other levels need to be initiated

and supported by NGA or by NGO/technical development partners[43] with new initiatives, because these involve other SNGA. Given the current situation of the NGA with little implementation and financial capacity, even if these are committed to replicate or scale up experiences, new initiatives from NGO or development partners are required for additional funding. Fortunately, there are promising initiatives under implementation and design with good opportunities to apply lessons and replicate results from the project. Examples are the ongoing PBA that still has two years to continue, a USAID funded programme in Peru (natural infrastructure for water security) and the GEF/Latin American Development Bank project 'Andes adaptation to the impact of climate change on water resources' (GEF ID 5384) in both countries, all of them implemented by CONDESAN with partners. Also, Ecuador is developing a new GEF project in Ecuador (land degradation) with FAO and IA and CONDESAN as executing partner. The project partner agency in Piura, Nature and Culture International, is also a partner and received funds from USAID funded Natural Infrastructure project while in Ecuador, there are new initiatives announced by GIZ (German technical cooperation) to leverage funds for the central highlands' sustainable development and UNDP develops a GEF project for the integrated management of transborder watersheds covering the Carchi site (GEF ID 9566). According to CONDESAN management, all initiatives have been contacted to explore replication and scaling up of Ecoandes lessons.

129. For the consolidation of instruments and policies developed in component 4 (commercial forestry standards, restoration plan, National Biodiversity Strategy (2015-2020); National Forestry Strategy , Monitoring of National Biodiversity Strategy impacts) NGA commitments are required and national public funding has to be dedicated to effectively apply the tools and policies. Given the continued reduction of public funding for environment in Ecuador [44] there is little implementation capacity of these tools and policies in Ecuador apart from initiatives supported by international technical cooperation funding. In Peru, the public funding for environment is higher and more constant[45] but it cannot be judged if this will be dedicated to Andean ecosystems beyond local public investment projects.

The sub-criterion "Financial sustainability" was rated as "Moderately Likely"

Institutional sustainability

EQ. To what extent is the sustenance of the results and onward progress towards impact dependent on issues relating to institutional frameworks and governance? How robust are the institutional achievements such as governance structures and processes, policies, sub-regional agreements, legal and accountability frameworks, institutional ownership, etc. required to sustaining project results and to lead those to impact? (institutional sustainability)

Finding 36. The overall policies of partnering governmental agencies remain fairly constant but the ways of implementation vary. Other policies (mining, agriculture, planning) can negatively affect sustainability.

Finding 37. CONDESAN has lost most project expertise but ongoing and new initiatives still help to sustain project results. The monitoring of long-term research sites needs attention.

[43] Technical development partners are considered bilateral or multilateral agencies providing technical development cooperation
[44] The general goverment budget of Ecuador (www.finanzas.gob.ec), shows that MAE's budget decreased from 65 M$ in 2014 and 80 M$ in 2015 to 26 M$ in 2018 and y 24 M$ in 2019.
[45] Data from www.minam.gov.pe show that the general environment budget was 615 M soles in 2017, 605 M soles in 2018 and 667 M$ in 2019 (equivalent to 203 M$).

There is no agreed exit or sustainability plan agreed among project partners. Local project partners ensure the sustainability of results in Piura, Tungurahua and Pichincha

130. An important element of the institutional sustainability for the project results is the role of CONDESAN. As regional coordinator for networks such as GLORIA and the Andean Mountain Initiative, a regional group of the Mountain Partnership, the EA of the project is a convener of other NGO, NGA and Academic organizations for themes related to mountain issues both in the countries and at Andean regional level. During this project its role as EA gave CONDESAN a role as spider in the web of the institutional arrangements: it developed all methods and tools, installed experimental plots, trained staff of partner agencies and promoted policies and instruments. While the engagement of partner agencies was good and capacities were created, the technical expertise and specific experience of CONDESAN staff during project development was key to provide them with the leading role. Many stakeholders expressed the view that while they feel capable of continuing with activities and tools, they will miss the guidance of CONDESAN. Also, both the agencies that collaborated directly with the project and academic institutions collaborating with GLORIA expressed that without CONDESAN, collaboration agreements established during the project were not likely to continue. All these are indicators of the key role of CONDESAN in providing institutional sustainability. However, there was no exit strategy or any agreed plan between CONDESAN and partner agencies (NGA, SNGA and NGO) that could guide the sustainability of results.

131. CONDESAN is providing institutional sustainability through the new projects that are under development (¶128) which might strengthen their convening and central role in institutional networks. The evaluator noted a risk of loss of institutional expertise in CONDESAN: many of the project team members have left the organization. Only two technical staff (one as consultant) and the office manager are still working with CONDESAN while others work elsewhere. According to CONDESAN senior management this is a matter of normal funding cycles of an NGO: when a major project ends there is always a challenge for staff retention but when new funding surges, they can be hired back. According to interviewed former staff members, this is only partly true: some also mention the lack of an institutional structure with clearly defined technical positions beyond project responsibilities and lack of succession management. They note that key project team staff members now have permanent positions in other agencies and will not likely return to CONDESAN for new projects. While CONDESAN has now enough upcoming projects to provide sustainability, it will need to ensure that the personal expertise of project team will be available. This is particularly important for the more academic level information such as the monitoring sites: while the ones in Pichincha have attention from Quito based universities, including the ones where the Ecoandes project manager and other GLORIA members work, there is less academic support to the plots in other sites. Also, it is not clear how CONDESAN, without the persons who have set up and have the best knowledge, will manage and analyze the wealth of data from these plots, that are intended to be long-term monitoring sites. The new projects do not have a focus on academic research and in all likelihood, agreements have to be established with several academic institutions to provide sustainability to the research activities and support the SNGA that manage those plots.

The subcriterion "Institutional sustainability" is rated as "Moderately Likely".

The criterion "Sustainability" is rated as "Moderately Likely".

I. FACTORS AFFECTING PERFORMANCE

a. Preparation and Readiness[46]

The criterion "Preparation and Readiness" is rated as "Satisfactory".

b. Quality of Project Management and Supervision

EQ. Was the project management adequate, effective and efficient? (skills, leadership, coordination, adaptive capacity)?

EQ. How effective, transparent and democratic was decision making in the project? Did project management respond to direction and guidance provided by the Project Steering Committee?

EQ. What were the strengths in guidance and backstopping from UN Environment and what were the limiting factors?

Finding 38. The project was managed professionally with high quality, committed staff. Team work was commended. Some interpersonal and interinstitutional tensions were identified but this did not affect project delivery

Finding 39. The project governance provided effective and efficient oversight. Steering committee met regularly and fulfilled its role. Local stakeholder platforms also met regularly to approve plans and analyze results

Finding 40. UN Environment backstopping was effective and welcomed by project team and partner agencies. The support was provided almost completely by the task manager.

132. The project team consisted of a group of qualified professionals. Several members had a 10-15 years adequate experience in similar projects in the region and were widely considered experts in the different themes of the project. The project manager and senior advisor (initially coordinator of component 1) are renowned international experts in Andean ecosystem functioning with a long record of peer reviewed publications and an active role in international academic networks. Other staff brought both CONDESAN in-house as well as external expertise to the team. The project team members highlighted the good coordination within the team, with the Project Manager overseeing general activities and interinstitutional relationships while giving important autonomy and responsibility to component coordinators. By frequent joint visits to project intervention sites, a good team spirit was achieved and all were clear about their roles and collaboration. The good team work was evidenced by the fact that practically all staff continued working during the entire project and because different staff members had to fulfil different roles, for instance because of maternity leave replacement or changes in organizational structure. The Lima-based CONDESAN staff, while recognizing that there was less day-to-day coordination than Quito-based staff, felt fully informed and connected to project coordination thanks to frequent visits and videoconferencing.

133. The evaluator identified some conflicts between individuals of the project team with other partners. There have been conflicts about the performance and roles with and among local project coordinators and between project team members and local Partner Agencies staff. The persons who reported these to the evaluator, blamed this on the strict planning of the project management and need for flexibility (in time or activity planning) at site level. One partner agency representative

[46] Evaluation question dealt with under "efficiency"

illustrated this as *"Ecoandes wants to do everything according to their workplan, but they are not aware that here* [in the field] *things do not follow that workplan and change happens continuously".* Also, towards the end of the project implementation, some project staff felt less comfortable within CONDESAN for institutional reasons. While all these conflicts were minor and did not affect project activities or outcomes, it might compromise institutional sustainability and eventual future collaboration arrangements (¶131).

134. The project governance consisted of a small but effective Steering Committee consisting of the IA, EA and the two Ministries of Environment. According to interviewed members and meeting minutes, they met once per year in June, received an update on project achievement and management, discussed and approved major decisions related to project management and evaluated and approved work plans and reports. Because of changes in administration of NGA, the delegates of the Ministries to the Steering Committee changed frequently and on one occasion, there was no MAE representative. All interviewed SC members highlighted the efficient meetings and consensus in decision making. They reported that decisions were followed up swiftly by project management and reported in PPR and PIR. SC members judged that the efficient decision-making was facilitated by good preparation of the meetings (including decisions) by the project team and the well managed project overall. The evaluator noted that the SC meeting minutes are limited to agreements on follow up actions but do not reflect debate or formal decisions (approval of reports or plans).

135. The project established local coordination committees at every intervention site. In agreement with local partner agencies, these generally consisted of local institutions (different SNGA, partner NGO and Ecoandes staff; not local beneficiaries or communities). They met frequently (once or twice per year) in a formal or informal setting. These committees aimed at discussing and defining local implementation of the project, including intervention site management plans. Ecoandes also used these platforms to disseminate project activities and discuss results (¶83). Interviewed participants to these meetings highlighted the openness of the project to the suggestions of local partner agencies and welcomed the use of these meetings for knowing the project results: *"for us, these were great learning events".* Evidently, these committees greatly contributed to ownership of local partners.

136. UN Environment support was limited to support by the GEF task manager and administrative staff at the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean in Panama. The collaboration with the Panama team has been considered optimal from all sides. The project team and CONDESAN management considered the collaboration both at technical and administrative level as fluent and effective. Although the Task Manager on average visited the countries only once per year (coinciding with the steering committee), project team members highlighted their constant availability for calls or email communication. Administrative staff of CONDESAN considered UN Environment's administrative support as efficient and highly helpful; it was an effective bridge to both GEF and UN Environment in Nairobi and CONDESAN never had to interact with those (higher level) administrative bodies. SC members also considered UN Environment's Task Manager's contribution to SC as strategically constructive and innovative, contributing with ideas additional to the project partners' ideas. None of the project partner agencies considered they were controlled or overly supervised by UNEP. The evaluator did not observe any incentives for internal collaboration in UN Environment beyond set institutional tasks nor collaboration with other UNEP programs or activities. UN Environment did establish an effective collaboration with the global Carbon Benefits Project that used Ecoandes and one of the major projects in the application of their tools (¶112).

The criterion "Quality of Project Management and Supervision" is rated as "Satisfactory".

c. Stakeholders' Participation and Cooperation [47]

EQ. What was the achieved degree and effectiveness of collaboration and interactions between the various project partners and stakeholders during implementation of the project?

EQ. How did the relationship between the project and the collaborating partners (institutions and individual experts) and third parties develop?

Finding 41. The project fully included project partner agencies in decision making, implementation of activities and consolidation of results which contributed to stakeholder ownership and social and institutional sustainability. Collaboration with third parties (other governmental agencies, NGO or local communities) was underdeveloped.

137. The project had a strong collaboration with a set group of partner agencies that were strongly involved in project development (among others: ¶71, 80, 83, 85, 91). This contributed to stakeholder ownership and was a basis for sustainability (¶0, 127) even though political and institutional sustainability do not only depend on ownership but also on (public) funding and government decisions and continuity of policies (**¶Error! Reference source not found.**, 128). Consolidation of t he collaboration with local stakeholders in view of future sustainability was one of the mayor recommendations of the Mid-Term Review that the project adopted well, However, this was limited to the partner agencies and did not extend to local communities, farmers or other agencies. At the level of local beneficiaries, the Ecoandes project worked mostly with second tier organizations rather than with communities and with a limited number of individual farmers (¶89, 99, 135). Beyond this group, the Ecoandes project collaborated in a limited way with other NGO's and initiatives at the intervention sites (¶112) and did not reach out directly to other SNGA to promote replication or to other sectors beyond environment and agriculture (in Ecuador).

The criterion "Stakeholder' Participation and Cooperation" is rated as "Moderately Satisfactory".

d. Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender

EQ. Did the intervention activities aim to promote (and did they promote) positive sustainable changes in attitudes, behaviours and power relations between the different stakeholders?

EQ. How was the gender mainstreaming approach applied in the execution of the project and are there concrete examples gender transformative results? Was country ownership of outputs and outcomes different by gendered and marginalised groups?

Finding 42. The project did not have a clear gender strategy, expertise, objectives or monitoring.

138. Gender mainstreaming was a weak point of the project. Even the project logic (repeated in each PIR) clearly states that "gender has a profound influence on the use of these resources [biodiversity and carbon stocks]". Also, the project document, in dealing with social safeguards, mentioned that gender would be mainstreamed in project execution, in practice this was not done. The project did not have an aim or strategy to promote positive sustainable changes in attitudes,

[47] Main part of the answer to the EQ on Stakeholder participation during design and implementation have been presented in the evaluation of quality of project design, effectiveness and sustainability.

behaviours and power relations between the different stakeholders, disaggregated to gender, age or race. It did not have gender expertise and hardly collected gender disaggregated data (¶71, 92, 122). Country ownership was not promoted on the basis of differentiated needs and interests of among gender or marginalized groups. The lack of a gender vision and strategy was already mentioned in the Mid-Term Review and evaluation of the quality of project design. Specific human rights issues are not targeted either. Interviews with the project team confirmed that the project underperformed in its gender approach.

The criterion "Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender" is rated as "Highly Unsatisfactory.

e. Country ownership and driven-ness[48]

EQ. In how far have the national partners assumed responsibility for the project and provided adequate support to project execution, including the degree of cooperation received from the various public institutions involved in the project?

Finding 43. The project was in line with policies and plans of national and local partner agencies. Apart from the research elements, all activities and plans were adjusted to local demand. These provided adequate support to execution and are committed to providing sustainability to the results.

139. The project pursues country ownership and driven-ness by ensuring alignment with national and local policies and plans. Even though the project, in its relation with several SNGA, was more agenda setting than agenda-following, it did involve these in the project planning and stimulated ownership so these could continue activities (¶66, 67). The methodologies and implementation of research elements (monitoring sites, data interpretation, inventories) were directed by the project team but project partners were fully included in the development of project activities and generation of outputs (¶80) as well as in M&E (¶119). The collaboration of subcontracted partner agencies (NCI, Tungurahua Páramo Fund , Imaymana) was in part ensured by providing them with funding for the execution of activities. However, the project strengthened their capacities to stimulate their ownership and collaboration with the project. In two of the three cases, the relationship was evaluated as very positive; the third subcontracted agency reported some coordination difficulties and misunderstandings. However, this did not affect ownership and all three are willing to continue to support the activities and consolidate results. The SNGA involvement in project activities was not secured by funding commitments and appealed for support on the basis of alignment with policies and plans. The project however, did involve environmental agencies and staff from these partner SNGA similar as the NGO partner agencies, including them in installation of plots, monitoring, reporting etc. (¶127, 128). All partner agencies (NGO and SGNA) were involved in the local coordination committees which also stimulated ownership (¶135). The fact that there was more co-financing mobilized from more partner agencies than expected, is another indicator of local ownership (¶106).

140. The collaboration and support of NGA to the project was variable. The changing reality of the incentive programs in Ecuador implied a different collaboration of MAE and MAG with the project. This was evidently less than planned for the Socio Bosque project and the Plan Bosques in Peru. On the other hand, according to the interviewed MAE staff, the changing collaboration with the

[48] Main part of the EQ of "country ownerships and driven-ness" was analysed under the criteria "strategic relevance" and "effectiveness".

restoration programme and the commercial plantation project resulted in more intensive collaboration with the project in order to rethink and reshape the activities. In Peru, while there was less collaboration than planned from the national incentive programme, MINAM opened several other lines of work with the project (ecosystem map, wetlands inventory). While NGA ownership was evident, it is also recognized by interviewed NGA staff a GEF project executed by an NGO instead of the national government has less NGA staff involved, there is a lower political ownership (less appropriation of results by NGA, no communication about the project through NGA channels, no Ministry level delegated to SC meetings) and less coordination with other, NGA-led GEF projects. For instance, in Ecuador during 2017-2018 the Minister of Environment established a weekly coordination meeting between all major MAE coordinated conservation projects, including all GEF projects, but the Ecoandes project team was not invited to this group. While interviewed representatives from both MAE and MINAM recognize this lower ownership by NGA, they also mentioned immediately the higher efficiency of the Ecoandes project because it was not directly managed by an NGA but by CONDESAN. In the end, according to the evaluator it seems that in case of this project, there was a good balance in the potential trade-off between a higher efficiency vs. a slightly lower ownership.

The criterion "Country Ownership and Driven-ness" is rated as "Satisfactory.

f. Communication and Public Awareness[49]

The criterion "Communication and Public Awareness" is rated as "Moderately Satisfactory".

[49] EQ related to communication, knowledge management and awareness have been analysed in the evaluation of "effectiveness", while dealing with outcome 4.1.

V. Conclusions and Recommendations

A. CONCLUSIONS

141. The evaluator concludes that the overall project performance is rated as "Satisfactory". In spite of some weaknesses, the project was conceptually and strategically well designed. The project goal and strategies were highly relevant for the participating agencies at national and subnational level as well as for the donor agencies and the global debate on biodiversity, land degradation and carbon stocks. The academic research approach of the project was innovative and ensured high quality outputs. The EA and IA were well prepared to start the project soon after approval. Execution was efficient with hardly any delay in activities. The project was managed well by a highly professional project team, achieving more outputs than foreseen, even though some outputs were different than expected. The good quality and high number of outputs formed the basis for a satisfactory achievement of outcomes and initial impact on the conservation of biodiversity and carbon stocks in the intervention sites. Even though the political context changed and major financial incentive programs that formed an important part of the project intervention logic, lost their public funding, the project achieved its results through adequate adaptive management.

142. The sustainability of the project's results is rated as "Moderately Likely". In general, the project team achieved an adequate participation of directly relevant stakeholders (ministries of environment, subnational governments and NGO Partner agencies in execution) in project planning, decision making and implementation. It supported the development of tools and instruments and strengthened capacities of local institutions to improve an enabling environment for landscape restoration and monitoring and conservation of biodiversity and carbon stocks. To consolidate and sustain these results, continued political commitment and institutional support is required which is available to a variable level and degree.

143. The project underachieved in social aspects: while it did work on three value chains for sustainable livelihoods, its social assessments and integrated livelihood strategies to improve SLM/SFM was underdeveloped, especially considering the large areas where improved management was promoted. While institutional stakeholders and farmer representation agencies were targeted during project execution, grassroot communities were not and individual farmers only marginally. The project did not apply a gender, equity and human rights approach in its implementation.

144. Based on the findings of the project, the evaluator draws the following specific conclusions:

- **Conclusion 1:** The Ecoandes project was highly relevant to the priorities of the stakeholders at global, national and local level. It was consistent with plans and strategies of GEF, UN Environment and the national government agencies, and effectively built on ongoing activities of these partners (Finding 1, 3, 43)
- **Conclusion 2:** The strong academic approach of the project brought new knowledge and tools to subnational governments and local beneficiaries. Therefore, at subnational level the project was agenda setting rather than following (Finding 2).
- **Conclusion 3:** In spite of some minor weaknesses, the Ecoandes project was well designed and the implementing and executing agencies were well prepared to start implementation soon after its approval (Finding 4, 28)
- **Conclusion 4:** Changes in the economic-political context implied less public funding for the national incentive programs for reforestation, conservation and restoration. The project adapted opportunely to this by changing its collaboration strategies with these programs

by working more with local government agencies and generate additional outputs (Finding 5).

- **Conclusion 5:** Because of strategic (alignment with local plans) and practical (involvement of technical staff) collaboration with local government agencies, the impact of changes in local administration affected the success of this project less than other similar projects (finding 8)
- **Conclusion 6:** The project's academic approach resulted in research outputs of the highest international standards (Finding 8)
- **Conclusion 7:** Thanks to good management by a well-functioning professional project team and active collaboration with local stakeholders, most outputs were generated in a timely manner. The project overachieved in delivering the total number of outputs even though due to adequate adaptive management, several outputs were different than planned but contributed similarly to outcomes (finding 8, 9, 38)
- **Conclusion 8:** The project effectively achieved most of the expected outcomes satisfactory. This was done based on the timely delivery of outputs of good quality, adequate adaptive management and continued collaboration and interest of institutional stakeholders at the intervention sites. It managed to:
    - significantly expand the knowledge base that was accessed and applied by local decision makers (finding 10, 11, 12)
    - strengthen an enabling environment (capacities, tools and instruments) for the development and actual implementation of local policies and plans for integrated natural resource management and its replication (finding 13, 14, 15, 19)
    - establish thousands of hectares of better managed conservation areas and other natural landscapes as well as restauration plots and improved productive land area (finding 17)
    - contribute to the improvement of national-level policies and programs for restoration and reforestation (finding 18)
- **Conclusion 9:** The project has been contributing to positive impact on carbon stocks and biodiversity at the level at plot and site level. There is considerable likelihood that it will contribute to impact at subnational/national level (finding 21, 22).
- **Conclusion 10:** The project has generated little social impact because it did not achieve to strengthen or diversify local livelihood strategies at a scale that supported SLM/SFM at the intervention sites and social impact. (Finding 16, 23)
- **Conclusion 11:** While outcomes and impact were generated everywhere, there were large differences between intervention sites: there was much more budget, activity, outcomes and impact in Ecuador than in Peru and particularly in the Pichincha site (Finding 24)
- **Conclusion 12:** The financial resources of the project were managed timely, correctly and transparently (Finding 25).
- **Conclusion 13:** The different project partner agencies mobilized more co-financing than committed, although their contribution to project goals is not always clear (Finding 26).
- **Conclusion 14:** The project was managed efficiently with good use of time and financial resources. Minor delays in activities were absorbed by the project and did not affect overall

project delivery. It's achievement in relation to investment made it a cost-effective project (Finding 28, 29, 30)

- **Conclusion 15:** The project applied close monitoring of its activities and achievements, which was used to inform adaptive management and reporting. Weaknesses in the design of the monitoring and evaluation system were mostly corrected during implementation. (Finding 32, 33)
- **Conclusion 16:** Social and institutional sustainability of the project's results is likely thanks to a good social basis and the involvement of committed local agencies with ongoing activities in the intervention sites. (Finding 34, 37)
- **Conclusion 17:** Political sustainability of the project's results is moderately likely because of the lack of public funding for implementation of national and local policies and plans and conflicting interests from other sectors (Finding 35, 36)
- **Conclusion 18:** There are enough new initiatives underway to support continuation and replication of the activities implemented by the project. Because the project team is disassembled, Condesan lost part of its professional expertise to ensure sustainability of its academic research (Finding 37).
- **Conclusion 19:** The project was adequately supervised by a lean steering committee and efficient backstopping by UN Environment. (Finding 39, 40)
- **Conclusion 20:** The project managed to include both governmental and non-governmental project partner agencies as well as local beneficiary agencies effectively in project execution and decision making, which was key to creating ownership and provide institutional sustainability (Finding 41, 43)
- **Conclusion 21.** The project did not apply a proactive gender approach in its planning and execution: it did not target or monitor empowerment or impact (positive or negative) on women, youth, elder, ethnic and/or marginalized groups (Finding 42).

***Table 6**. Overall evaluation ratings*

Criterion	Summary Assessment[50]	Rating
A. Strategic Relevance		**Highly Satisfactory**
1. Alignment to MTS and POW	Full alignment with several objectives and expected accomplishments of subsequent POW	Highly Satisfactory
2. Alignment to UN Environment /Donor/GEF strategic priorities	Full and explicit alignment of various focal area strategies of GEF 5 and clear contribution to SO of GEF6	Highly Satisfactory
3. Relevance to regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities	Clear and explicit alignment with national policies and plans in both countries. Partial alignment with local plans and strategies; research aspects did not follow local demand but was agenda setting rather than agenda following	Satisfactory

[50] The summary assessment is based on the project findings, using criteria rating descriptions provided by UN Environment (https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/25544/1_Criterion_rating_descriptions_matrix_22.01.19.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y)

Criterion	Summary Assessment[50]	Rating
4. Complementarity with existing interventions	Collaboration with ongoing initiatives of national governments, especially financial incentive programs, was a fundamental element of project intervention logic	Highly Satisfactory
B. Quality of Project Design	Rating inserted from Assessment of Project Design Quality (Inception Report	Satisfactory
C. Nature of External Context	Climatic events, security situation and infrastructure weaknesses only occasionally affected project operations. Economic conditions generally stable. The political context did change but project adapted adequately	Favourable
D. Effectiveness		Satisfactory
1. Delivery of outputs	A large majority of planned outputs were delivered fully, were of good quality and generated in time to allow high levels of use and good levels of user ownership. Where generated outputs were different than planned, these exceeded expectations.	Satisfactory
2. Achievement of direct outcomes	All outcomes, with exception of 3.1 and 4.2, achieved fully at project end. Assumptions and drivers for progress from project outputs to direct outcome(s) hold.	Satisfactory
3. Likelihood of impact	Most intermediate states at least partially achieved and most assumptions for the change process from intermediate state(s) to impact do hold. Conservation impact at intervention sites in place and beyond sites likely. Social impact at intervention sites, if any, is indirect.	Likely
E. Financial Management		Highly Satisfactory
1.Completeness of project financial information	All financial information (items a-k in criteria rating matrix) were made available for evaluation. No administration of expenditure per project component/outcome. In-cash and in-kind co-financing is reported and sustained by confirmation letters but contribution to project activities and objectives unclear	Satisfactory
2.Communication between finance and project management staff	Project manager, M&E officer, EA director and IA staff continuously and fully aware of financial management.	Highly Satisfactory
F. Efficiency	The project has had one 'no cost extension' of six months and the application of cost-effective approaches supported the achievement of project targets and project activities/events were frequently sequenced efficiently.	Satisfactory
G. Monitoring and Reporting		Satisfactory
1. Monitoring design and budgeting	All items a-i in the criteria rating matrix hold, after inception period and elaboration of monitoring plan. Monitoring plan known by key project team staff (project manager and M&E officer). Clear methods, baseline and budget for	Satisfactory

Criterion	Summary Assessment[50]	Rating
	output indicators. No indicator for outcomes and objectives	
2. Monitoring of project implementation	All items of implementation included criteria rating matrix are achieved. Data collection was not disaggregated by vulnerable/marginalized groups.	Satisfactory
3.Project reporting	All items of reporting included criteria rating matrix are achieved. Reporting was not disaggregated by vulnerable/marginalized groups.	Satisfactory
H. Sustainability		Moderately Likely
1. Socio-political sustainability	The sustainability of project outcomes has a relatively high degree of dependency on social basis and political commitment but there is fairly strong ownership, interest and commitment among government and other stakeholders	Moderately Likely
2. Financial sustainability	Project outcomes have a moderate dependency on future funding / financial flows to persist and a considerable amount of the required future funding requirements have been secured. No exit strategy with a financial component has been developed	Moderately likely
3. Institutional sustainability	Sustainability of project outcomes have a high dependency on institutional support, a fair mechanism is in place to sustain/support the institutionalisation of direct outcomes and the capacity of relevant individuals has been enhanced, and likely to stay in their position. No written exit strategy with an insitutional component has been developed but partner agencies are committed and have initiatives in place to provide sustainability. EA lost expertise	Moderately Likely
I. Factors Affecting Performance		**Moderately satisfactory**
1. Preparation and readiness	Items a-l in criterion rating matrix achieved at project approval. Costed workplan, and staffing mobilization undertaken during project inception. The period between project approval and first disbursement was 5 months	Satisfactory
2. Quality of project management and supervision[51]	Steering Committee, established and functioning well, project team managed very well, working relationship between the project team and project partners fairy effective. No turnover in project staff, excellent professional quality. Staff concentrated in Quito, few in Peru. IA and EA provided strong leadership towards	Satisfactory

[51] In some cases 'project management and supervision' will refer to the supervision and guidance provided by UN Environment to implementing partners and national governments while in others, specifically for GEF funded projects, it will refer to the project management performance of the Executing Agency and the technical backstopping provided by UN Environment, as the Implementing Agency.

Criterion	Summary Assessment[50]	Rating
	achieving the planned outcomes and strong adaptive management	
3. Stakeholders participation and cooperation	Initial stakeholder analysis not complete. Strong participation in decision making and execution by directly involved stakeholders. Less so by relevant but not directly included stakeholders (other NGO, other sectors). Impact of project on stakeholders and linkages to poverty alleviation or impact on economic livelihoods have been moderately assessed	Moderately Satisfactory
4. Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity	Gender considerations are only demonstrated in context; not in log frame or budget and no gender considerations in project implementation	Highly Unsatisfactory
5. Country ownership and driven-ness	Public sector agencies at relevant levels (national, subnational) that are essential for the theory of change took a leadership role in provision of in-kind and / or cash co-financing contributions, strategic guidance of project delivery, accepting project results and advocating for change to achieve higher level results	Satisfactory
6. Communication and public awareness	Project's main messages, communication activities and channels were targeted well towards some audiences, frequent over the life of the project, hardly monitored but well financed. To use communication to achieve change, a capacity building and wider communication plan through a distance learning course was established	Moderately Satisfactory
Overall Project Rating		**Satisfactory**

B. LESSONS LEARNED[52]

145. Observing the project experiences, good practices and successes which could be replicated in similar contexts, the evaluator identified the following lessons:

i. *Different SMART indicators are needed along the project impact pathway (output, outcome and impact):* The present project was designed with a high level of detail for indicators at output level, with adequate quantitative, measurable information that had concrete baselines and protocols to measure. Also, they were directly linked to GEF indicators and tracking tools making the linkage of project monitoring to GEF reporting instruments easy and smart. On the other hand, the project used practically the same output indicators at an aggregate level to indicate achievement of outcomes. Therefore, the project design did not foresee the provision of additional information to measure outcomes and impact so that the achievement of these could not be assessed to the same level of objectiveness as the outputs (finding 4, conclusion 3)

ii. *A high dependency on public sector investments constituted a considerable risk to project success, even though these funds were confirmed.* When the project was designed, there were three large national level incentive programs active Ecuador and one in Peru, with long term governmental commitment and a secured position in the national budget. The

[52] The lessons should be considered additional to the lessons presented in the MTR report and the project's final report

project was designed opportunely around these incentive programs and much of the planned impact in terms of area conserved, restored or reforested was guaranteed by these programs. However, in spite of all existing national commitments, shortly after the decrease in global oil prices the Ecuador government stopped supporting the incentives. Also, the once thought likely investment of the Peruvian *Plan Bosques* to Andean ecosystems never took place. Therefore, within one year of implementation the project found itself without its core collaborative programs and in a high risk of losing relevance, a risk that was not foreseen and only could be mitigated by drastically adjusting the intervention logic and collaboration with governmental agencies (Finding 3, 5, 9, 18; Conclusion 4).

iii. *The project could generate academic-quality research to be directly applied to land management, thanks to optimal stakeholder involvement in research, good capacity building, clear protocols and adequate knowledge transfer.* The Ecoandes project had a strong academic approach to generating knowledge that would be applied to actual land management practice. Although there was a gap between the high level of academic research and the local capacity to process this information and to use it in practice, the project managed to ensure that innovative academic knowledge was immediately used by local beneficiaries. It did so by training and involving partner agency staff (NGO, NGA and SNGA) in research and monitoring activities, by presenting the results through various (academic, technical and popular) means to direct stakeholders, by validating the information in local coordination platforms and herewith directly translating research results into land use practice. The project did learn that the time needed for a complete cycle of research-capacity building-implementation in practice takes several years so that at the end of the project most application at scale has just been implemented and the project execution period does not allow for further monitoring (Finding 2, 8, 11, 17; Conclusions 2, 6).

iv. *A suite of different tools for stakeholder involvement, increased involvement and ownership:* During project design and inception, the project team identified relevant stakeholders and applied a combination of different approaches to include these in project execution. These approaches were not limited to the more common practices of informing stakeholders of project activities and using them as a target audience for communication and capacity building. In addition to this, the project applied other instruments to create ownership and therefore sustainability which was achieved by (a) alignment with ongoing initiatives of different local stakeholders so stakeholders felt the project adjusted to their work instead of the other way around and the stakeholders continued with project activities after closure (b) a flexible implementation at local level of project activities allowing for adjustment to the capacities and interest of stakeholders (c) active involvement in local governance committees in the intervention sites, where work plans were consulted, approved and project results validated. (Findings 3, 4, 12, 13, 15, 27, 41; Conclusions 7, 16, 20)

v. *Concrete collaboration with SNGA staff enhanced impact and sustainability:* Subnational Governmental Agencies are a specific stakeholder group for the project because they are decision makers at the adequate scale of desired impact (landscape). Particularly when the Ecoandes project was confronted with less than expected support to the national financial incentive programs for restoration, conservation and reforestation, it focused even more strongly on strengthening capacities and tools of SNGA. The project achieved this by applying a suite of stakeholder involvement tools mentioned in the previous lessons, but in addition, the project team ensure that (a) the project targeted direct

involvement of SNGA staff in activities such as monitoring and restoration experimentation (b) actively supported collaboration platforms of SNGA and (c) provided additional support to other policies and plans of the SNGA. This direct working relationship contributed to continuity of activities, to commitments even after changes in administration and to replication of activities beyond the intervention sites (Finding 2, 6, 12, 13, 19, 41, 43; Conclusions 5, 7, 20).

vi. *Without project strategies targeting social benefits, gender and equity, positive impact on livelihoods that support SFM/SLM practices was unlikely.* Beyond the involvement of local governments, NGOs or second tier organizations, the project team did not apply specific strategies to include individual farmers or grassroot communities in project activities or decision making. Socioeconomic assessments and farm planning was done to a handful of properties and integrated options for sustainable livelihoods were not developed. The project did not apply a gender, equity and human rights approach. As a result, the project showed little concrete social benefit for individual people in the intervention sites compared to the large and concrete benefits for the environment. Therefore, without the strategic and proactive application of social strategies, positive livelihood impact is not likely. On the other hand, the experience from the project also showed that even though the project does not provide these benefits, a social basis can nevertheless be created when it targets other local priorities such as water provision or conflict over land-use and mining (Findings 16, 20, 33, 34, 42; Conclusions 10, 21)

vii. *A project executed with different level of budget and activities in two countries, resulted in an unequal distribution of results but not necessarily in poor performance.* For opportunistic and administrative reasons, the project was executed in Ecuador and Peru even though the same ecosystems and similar challenges occur in other Andean countries. Therefore, the geographical scope cannot be explained based on technical considerations. Also, there was much less GEF and co-financing budget available for Peru and therefore less field activity. Hence, the intervention logic can also not be explained by strategic arguments. In the end, substantially more outputs and initial impact was generated in Ecuador than in Peru. Because this unequal distribution of investment and results as well as the reasons beyond it were managed transparently, stakeholders in Peru were aware. However, even though they wished the project could have invested more in Peru they valued the achieved results with minimal investment and did not consider project performance as negative for this (Findings 24, 26, 39; Conclusion 11).

viii. *An NGO acting as EA for this GEF project increased efficiency but might have implied less NGA ownership.* Upon demand of the ministries of environment, this project was executed by a regional NGO with strong expertise in applied academic research applicable for Andean ecosystem management. Apart from the high performance of activities and good quality of outputs, an NGO as EA ensured efficient management of the project because it was not slowed down by heavy administrative rules typical for the public sector. On the other hand, there is a trade off with NGA ownership because active participation of NGA in the governance, decision making, execution and communication about this project was lower than in other (NGA led) GEF projects which eventually might imply lower institutional sustainability (Finding 28, 29, 43; Conclusions 3, 12, 14).

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

146. Based on the project findings and conclusions, the evaluator developed a series of recommendations for the sustainability of the results. They provide roles and opportunities for

each of the project partners. Given the project has ended in early 2019, it is recommended that these sustainability plans are developed and reported upon before the end of 2020. The Evaluator recommends:

a) *To CONDESAN:* Recognizing the crucial role of the EA for providing institutional sustainability and considering there are many ideas and initiatives for the sustainability of results and concrete achievements but no agreed plan, CONDESAN should develop a sustainability plan through meetings with the main project partners (NGA, SNGA and NGO) to agree on tasks from each of the partners to sustain activities where needed, support the consolidation of results and activities to achieve impact. This includes the management of data, continuation of the monitoring of research and monitoring plots, support to the implementation of policies and plans of public agencies, the continuation of the implementation and monitoring of the effectivity of field activities (management of conservation areas, sustainable land use areas, restoration, reforestation areas), strengthening of sustainable value chains, replication and scaling strategies and the implementation and consolidation of instruments and tools to support national level policies and plans. Clear roles and commitments for the project partners are required and where these do not have the capacity, other partners can be invited. Project partners should particularly explain how their ongoing or new initiatives and projects (such as PBA, AICAA, Natural Infrastructure and GEF-FAO in case of CONDESAN) continue with specific activities, support the consolidation of specific results or target replication or scaling (Finding 36, 37; Conclusions 16, 17, 18).

b) *To CONDESAN and lead local project Partner agencies (NCI, Imaymana, Tungurahua Páramo Fund, Provincial Government of Carchi, Regional Government of Huancavelica).* Considering that compared to the environmental benefits, the Ecoandes project underperformed in the inclusion of social benefits (diversification of sustainable livelihoods and the empowerment of women and marginalized groups) and recognizing that social benefits, human rights and equity are well-known requisites for the consolidation and wider uptake of environmental benefits, the commitments and actions included in the above mentioned sustainability plan should highlight how social benefits will be achieved in the future, through the ongoing or new initiatives. This is particularly relevant where, in spite of not having applied gender mainstreaming or directed livelihood strategies, a social basis and expectation has been created anyhow (e.g. Piura, Huancavelica). (Findings 16, 22, 34, 42; Conclusions 10, 21).

c) *To National Governmental Agencies (MINAM, MAG, MAE, SERFOR):* Considering that the project provided important input to national policies, strategies and plans, these need commitment, designated staff and action from national level governmental partners to become effective. While many of these tools have been adopted by the NGA (e.g. restoration standards and management plan, ecosystem indicators) other have still not been adopted (e.g. environmental standards for commercial plantations, new forest restoration plan) and NGA should pursue adoption. The NGA should develop and communicate to the other project partners (including UN Environment) what has been done after the project ended and what will be done to consolidate project results. This includes, but is not restricted to, establishment and monitoring of restoration areas under the national restoration plan, support to forest plantations, ecosystem mapping, wetlands inventory, forest monitoring. MAE and MINAM should plan how intersectorial coordination can be stimulated so policies from other sectors (particularly mining, infrastructure and agriculture) will not affect the positive impact of the current project. In Ecuador, MAE should ensure new funding for the financial incentive programs,

targeting specifically the areas where the project achieved positive results (Findings 13, 15, 18, 23, 35, 36, 43; Conclusions 9, 20).

d) *To participating Subnational Governmental Agencies:* Similarly, as with the NGA, at subnational level (province, region, municipality, parish, district) governments have been provided with tools and instruments to improve environmental management in their jurisdictions. In addition to the NGA, the SNGA are directly in charge of managing field activities (e.g. conservation area management in Carchi, Pichincha and Piura; land management plans in Pichincha, Tungurahua and Huancavelica, research plots in Tungurahua and Carchi) that need direct commitment. Supported by CONDESAN and NGA, the SNGA should develop and communicate to the other project partners (including UN Environment) what has been done after the project ended and what will be done to consolidate project results and to continue activities. Also, the SNGA should ensure the consolidation of collaboration agreements by including the application of the policy and planning outputs from the project in work plans of the SNGA collaboration platforms. (Findings 12, 13, 14, 15, 41; Conclusions 16, 20).

e) *To CONDESAN:* Given the wealth of gathered field data, generated information and established research plots but recognizing there is not one single depository of this information beyond (not fully accessible) CONDESAN archives, CONDESAN should ensure that the established geoportal (launched in March 2019) is a fully transparent and accessible knowledge platform. Also, it should be shared with NGA divisions or Institutes that have a statuary role for knowledge management (for instance, the National Environmental Information Systems (SUIA -Ecuador- and SINIA -Peru) the Ecuador National Institute for Biodiversity (INABIO) and the Peruvian National Institute for the Investigation on Glaciers and Mountain Ecosystems (INAIGEM). Also, CONDESAN should ensure that its research expertise that left the organization can be mobilized for future research and monitoring activities, through re-engaging with former staff in new initiatives or establishing collaboration agreements with their new institutions (Findings 10, 11, 20, 37; Conclusions 6, 8).

f) *To UN Environment:* Some achievements and insights from the project are of regional and global importance and contribute to the expected accomplishments of UN Environment. This includes the knowledge and monitoring techniques on carbon stocks and restoration approaches, the management of multiple ecosystems services in subnational development plans, the support to global research networks. To consolidate these results at international level, UN Environment should identify these achievements and develop direct follow-up actions to insert them in existing (ongoing) projects and new (GEF or non GEF) initiatives underway. (Findings 10, 20, 40; Conclusions 6, 18).

g) *To UN Environment:* This project was a successful example of globally relevant research, effectively applied to national and subnational policy and practice that it constitutes a good example for other projects to follow. However, broad communication and collaboration with other GEF projects (including the ones managed by UN Environment) was limited. Therefore, UN Environment should develop communication strategies for such successful projects, over and above final 'lessons learned documents', to ensure the experience is used in other projects (Finding 20, 40; Conclusion 19).

h) *To UN Environment:* Although co-financing was reported, there are several uncertainties about the eligibility of reported amounts. This is a systemic issue within the organisation and, therefore, UN Environment should strengthen operational guidelines on estimating, reporting and verifying co-finance, bot in-kind and cash (Finding 26; Conclusion 13).

i) *All project partners* (UN Environment, CONDESAN, NGA, SNGA, NGO): The project generated an amount of well-established field experience, pilot plots, information and tools and protocols. All project partners share the responsibility to replicate these experiences (principally SNGA and NGO) and bring them to the adequate scale (NGA, supported by UN Environment and NGA). This can be done through the inclusion of project experiences and vision in new projects for GEF or other donors and therefore, it is recommended as part as immediate follow-up activities (Finding 22, Conclusions 9, 18).

ANNEX 1. Evaluation Framework

EVALUATION CRITERIA	EVALUATION INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
A. Strategic relevance		
Were the objectives and implementation strategies consistent with: i) the expectations and needs of key stakeholder groups (ii) Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities, (iii) UN Environment Medium Term Strategy[53] (MTS) and Programme of Work (POW), and (iv) GEF Strategic Priorities.	• Level of alignment with (contribution of results to) sub-regional environmental issues, UN Environment mandate and policies at the time of design and implementation; and the GEF FA objectives	• Comparison of project document and annual reports and policy and strategy papers of local-regional agencies, GEF and UN Environment • Interviews with UN Environment staff, project staff and governmental agencies • Recalling Quality of Project Design evaluation
Were the objectives and implementation strategies complementary with existing interventions from the project partners?	• Level of alignment with ongoing initiatives of national and local government agencies and executing agencies	• Comparison of project document and annual reports with progress reports of initiatives of project partners • Interviews with UN Environment staff, project staff and partner agencies
B. Quality of Project Design		
See section 3 and Annex C of this inception report		
C. Nature of external context		
Did the (political, environmental, social, institutional) context change during project implementation and how did the project adapt to this?	• Reported adaptive management measures in response to changes in context	• Project progress reports/PIR • Interviews with project staff and key stakeholders
D. Effectiveness		
i. Delivery of outputs		
How successful was the project in producing the programmed outputs, both in quantity and quality, as well as their usefulness and timeliness?	• Output level indicators of Results Framework (RF)	• Project progress reports/PIR • Tangible products (publications, studies, etc.) • Field observations • Interviews with program staff, partner organizations in implementation, project beneficiaries

[53] UN Environment's Medium Term Strategy (MTS) is a document that guides UN Environment's programme planning over a four-year period. It identifies UN Environment's thematic priorities, known as Sub-programmes (SP), and sets out the desired outcomes, known as Expected Accomplishments, of the Sub-programmes.

Were key stakeholders appropriately involved in producing the programmed outputs?	• Stated contribution of stakeholders in achievement of outputs	• Citation of stakeholders' roles in tangible products (publications, studies, etc.) • Interviews with partners in implementation and project beneficiaries
What were the key factors that explain the satisfactory or unsatisfactory generation of outputs?	• Number and characteristics of factors mentioned by stakeholders that explained generation of outputs	• Citation of stakeholders' roles in tangible products (publications, studies, etc.) • Interviews with partners in implementation and project beneficiaries
ii. Achievements of outcomes		
How successful was the project in achieving the outcomes along the impact pathway on knowledge generation and dissemination? (as included in the ToC). Particularly: • Expanding the knowledge base on high Andean ecosystem dynamics and the effects that global environmental changes (GEC) have on biodiversity and carbon stocks and on the multiple environmental and social benefits they provide (outcome 1.1) • Increasing access of decision makers at different levels to science-based knowledge and SLM strategies through decision support tools that enable conservation and sustainable management of high-Andean Ecosystems (outcome 1.2) • Expanded knowledge base on Andean ecosystem dynamics available, accessible for and endorsed by decision makers in decision making processes (IS 1)	• Indicators of outcomes 1.1 and 1.2 (see RF) • Degree of access to project products by key stakeholders (IS1)	• Means of verification outcomes 1.1 and 1.2 (see RF) • PPR/PIR • Interviews with UN Environment, project team, research partners, third party stakeholders (other research-level experts) • Field visits to intervention areas, interviews with local decision makers • Direct field observations • Figures on distribution and accessibility of project products. Incl. dissemination-event reports
Did the assumptions hold/were drivers positively influenced along the impact pathway on knowledge generation and dissemination? (as included in the ToC).	• Degree to which research community support knowledge generation, institutions share information, local stakeholders continue to take interest in mainstreaming biodiversity and carbon benefits into their development plans.	• Interviews with project team, research partners, third party stakeholders (other research-level experts), local government agencies
How successful was the project in achieving the outcomes along the impact pathway on intervention sites? (as included in the ToC). Particularly:	• Indicators of outcomes 2.1, 2.2, 3.1 and 3.2 (see RF) • Evidenced inclusion of threats/barriers in plans and development programs	• Means of verification outcomes 2.1, 2.2, 3.1 and 3.2 (see RF) • PPR/PIR • Interviews with UN Environment, project team, research partners,

• Presence of an enabling environment to integrate multiple benefits in cross-sectoral planning tools at the wider landscape (outcome 2.1) • Enhanced institutional capacities to apply knowledge and INRM tools that support policies, integrated land use plans and ongoing programs for the conservation and sustainable management of critical high-Andean ecosystems, including Andean forests (outcome 2.2). • Plans and development programs that properly deal with threats/barriers to Andean ecosystems, implemented by stakeholders (IS2) • Strengthened sustainable livelihood strategies and key productive value chains at interventions sites to address barriers and support SLF/SFM practices (outcome 3.1). • Enhanced biodiversity, carbon and social benefits enhanced through SLM/SFM investments and practices on forest and non-forest lands in the high Andes (outcome 3.2). • Reduced land degradation as a result of conservation schemes and best land and forestry practices implemented at intervention sites (IS3)	implemented by stakeholders (IS2) • Figures or field evidence on reduced land degradation (IS3)·	third party stakeholders (other initiatives/agencies in the intervention areas) • Field visits to intervention areas, interviews with local beneficiaries and local decision makers. • Direct field observations • Observations and evidenced reports on reduced land degradation in intervention sites.
Did the assumptions hold/were drivers positively influenced along the impact pathway on intervention sites? (as included in the ToC).	• Degree to local stakeholders continue to take interest in mainstreaming biodiversity and carbon benefits into their development plans, the effective implementation of these plans and how communities and local governments agree to work together in the establishment and implementation of integrated land management and sustainable forest management practices. • Continuity of representative decision makers and technicians who are actively	• Interviews with project team, implementation partners in intervention sites, third party stakeholders (other research-level experts), local government agencies • Figures on continuity of staff of key governmental agencies at local level

	involved in project execution at intervention site level	
How successful was the project in achieving the outcomes along the impact pathway on outreach and upscaling? (as included in the ToC). Particularly: • National environmental authorities in Ecuador and Peru incorporate science-based knowledge and tools developed by the project into their MRV systems and financial incentive programs (outcome 4.1) • Knowledge, tools and lessons learned disseminated among other local governments and key stakeholders outside the project intervention sites (outcome 4.2). • Participating local governments disseminating and upscaling conservation and best land and forestry practices (IS4)	• Indicators of outcomes 4.1 and 4.2 (see RF) • Evidenced inclusion of threats/barriers in plans and development programs implemented by stakeholders (IS2) • Number of evidences replication or upscaling initiatives (IS3)·	• Means of verification outcomes 4.1 and 4.2 (see RF) • PPR/PIR • Interviews with UN Environment, project team, research partners, national level decision makers, and third-party stakeholders (other initiatives/agencies at national, regional level) • Documented reports on replication and upscaling by other government agencies or non-governmental partners
Did the assumptions hold/were drivers positively influenced along the impact pathway on outreach and upscaling? (as included in the ToC).	• Degree to which tools, SLM/SFM practices and lessons learned in the project are integrated into national, regional and local land use management and development plans, governments at different level continue to take interest in mainstreaming biodiversity and carbon benefits into their development plans. • Effectivenes and continuity of financial incentive programs High Andean ecosystems conservation • Continuity of representative decision makers and technicians who are actively involved in project execution at national/regional level	• Interviews with project team, implementation partners in intervention sites, third party stakeholders (other research-level experts), local government agencies. • Performance figures and impact indicators of financial incentive programs • Figures on continuity of staff of key governmental agencies at national/regional level
iii. Likelihood of Impact		
To what degree the project is likely to create long-term impact on the livelihoods of inhabitants of intervention sites? (new impact statement in ToC)	• Indicators of outcome 3.1 (see RF) • Likelihood of sustainability of the livelihood impact	• PPR/PIR • Means of verification outcome 3.1. (see RF) • Local observations and interviews with key stakeholders (local inhabitants) • Interviews with project team

To what degree the project is likely to create long-term impact on biodiversty and carbon stocks in the intervention sites? (project ToC impact statement)	• Indicators of project objective. • Likelihood of sustainability of the environmental impact	• Means of verification for indicators of project objective (see RF) • Interviews with project team, implementation partners in intervention sites, UNEnvironment, local government agencies, third party stakeholders (similar initiatives)
To what degree the project is likely to create long-term impact on globally important biodiversity and carbon benefits of critical high-Andean ecosystems of Ecuador and Peru (project goal)	• Likelihood of positive impact and sustainability of replication and upscaling efforts	• Performance indicators of upscaling and replication efforts • Interviews with UN Environment, project team, research partners, national level decision makers, and third-party stakeholders (other initiatives/agencies at national, regional level)
Did the assumptions hold/were drivers positively influenced in the transition from outcomes to impact? (as included in the ToC)	• Level of compliance of assumptions, particularly the impact of external factors (climate change, infrastructure, continuity of general policies)	• Project progress reports/PIR • Interviews with project staff, key stakeholders
Have desired outcomes and impacts occurred amongst all stakeholder groups (and if not, why this might be).	• Equity of benefits among different stakeholder groups	• Project progress reports/PIR • Interviews with project staff, key stakeholders
Have there been any unanticipated outcomes or impacts (positive or negative) with particular reference to the most vulnerable groups of ecosystems?	• Occurrence of unintended negative outcomes or impacts on environment or society	• Project progress reports/PIR • Interviews with project staff, key stakeholders • Third party media (publications)
E. Financial Management		
Was financial information and communication between financial and project management staff complete and transparent?	• Completeness of financial information and communication	• Interviews with administrative staff • Interviews with project team • Financial reports and audit reports
How well are standards (clarity, transparency, audit etc.) of financial and operational (staff recruitment, evaluation, secondary conditions) planning, management and reporting applied, to ensure that sufficient and timely financial resources were available to the project and its partners?	• Quality of standards for financial and operative management	• Interviews with administrative staff and service providers • Financial reports and audit reports
To what extent co-financing has materialized as expected at project approval?	• Level of co-financing, related to original planning	• Financial reports of project • Interviews with project administrative staff and UN Environment task manager
F. Efficiency		
Did the project build adequately (create complementariness) on	• Level of inclusion of preexisting initiatives and	• Project document • Interviews with key stakeholders

existing institutions, lessons of other initiatives, data sources, partnerships with third parties and ongoing projects?	institutions	(preexisting initiatives and other institutions) • Evaluation of project design
How was the operational execution vs. original planning (time wise)?	• Level of compliance with project planning / annual plans	• Project progress reports/PIR • Interviews with project staff
How was the operational execution vs. original planning (budget wise)? Was the project implemented cost-effective? (were the results achieved at the lowest possible cost	• Level of compliance with project financial planning / annual plans	• Project financial reports • Interviews with project staff • Interviews with financial staff
If present, what have been the main reasons for delay/changes in implementation? Have these affected project execution, costs and effectiveness?	• List of reasons, validated by project staff	• Interviews with project staff • Interviews with project partners • Project reports (PPR, PIR)
Was adaptive management applied adequately? Were any cost- or time-saving measures put in place in attempting to bring the project as far as possible in achieving its results within its secured budget and time?	• Measures taken to improve project implementation based on project monitoring and evaluation.	• Project progress and implementation reports • MTR report and management response • Interview with project staff and UN Environment task manager
Did the project implement measures to decrease the environmental footprint of project management?	• Presence of environmental footprint calculation and examples measures to reduce this	• Interview with project team and administrative staff • PIR/PPR
G. Monitoring and Reporting		
i. Monitoring Design and Budgeting	• Done during inception; quality of project design (Section 3, Annex C)	
ii. Monitoring of Project Implementation: was the M&E system operational and facilitated timely tracking of results and progress towards projects objectives throughout the project implementation period? Did this include monitoring the representation and participation of disaggregated groups? Were the results used to improve project performance and to adapt to changing needs?	• Level of implementation of M&E system (execution of activities) • Changes in project implementation as result of MTE or other supervision visits	• Interviews with key stakeholders • Project implementation reports • Management response to MTE
iii. Project reporting: were PIR reports, half-yearly Progress & Financial Reports complete and accurate?	• Level of completeness of reports	• PPR/PIR
H. Sustainability and replication		
i. Socio-political sustainability: are there any social or political factors	• Key factors positively or negatively impacted project	• Interviews with project staff, key stakeholders

that may influence positively or negatively the sustenance of project results and progress towards impacts?	results (in relation to stated assumptions)	• Project progress reports/PIR • Revision of literature on context
ii. Financial sustainability: to what extent are the continuation of project results and the eventual impact of the project dependent on (continued) financial resources? What is the likelihood that adequate financial resources will be or will become available to continue implementation the programs, plans, agreements, monitoring systems etc. prepared and agreed upon under the project?	• Estimations on financial requirements • Estimations of future budget of key stakeholders	• Figures on financial sustainability of this and other (similar) initiatives • Projected budgets of project partners • Documented estimations of future budget • Interviews with project staff and key stakeholders
iii. Institutional sustainability: To what extent is the sustenance of the results and onward progress towards impact dependent on issues relating to institutional frameworks and governance? How robust are the institutional achievements such as governance structures and processes, policies, sub-regional agreements, legal and accountability frameworks, institutional ownership, etc. required to sustaining project results and to lead those to impact?	• Level of commitment, proved by formal agreements, included recommendations, declarations, of key stakeholders in governance structures that sustain project results	• Analysis of existing institutional framework • Interviews with project staff and key stakeholders • Interview with key stakeholders • Documentation (agreements, declarations, meeting minutes) of governance systems
H.Factors and processes affecting project performance		
i. Preparation and readiness:		
Was the project ready for implementation reasonably soon after project approval? Were appropriate measures taken to either address weaknesses in the project design or respond to changes that took place between project approval, the securing of funds and project mobilisation?	• Time between project approval, first disbursement and actual implementation (first technical activity) • Examples of measures taken to address weaknesses to respond to changes.	• First PIR/PPR • Project inception reporting • Interview with UN Environment, project team and executing partners
ii. *Quality of project management and supervision*		
Was the project management (project manager, component managers, local coordinators) adequate, effective and efficient? (skills, leadership, coordination, adaptive capacity)?	• Level of satisfaction (among partners and project staff) of overall management by project managers	• Interviews with project staff (managers and rest of team) and partner organizations
How effective, transparent and democratic was decision making in	• Perception of functioning of Steering Committee by its	• Meeting minutes • Interviews with PSC members

the project? Did project management respond to direction and guidance provided by the Project Steering Committee?	members and third parties • Level of response to SC guidance and decisions	and project team
What were the strengths in guidance and backstopping from UN Environment and what were the limiting factors?	• Perception of effectiveness • Documented backstopping activities by UN Environment to project staff	• Interviews with UN Environment staff and project manager/EA director • Documented support (audits, communication, reports on visits, etc.) • Meeting minutes • Interviews with project team and partners
iii. Stakeholder participation, cooperation and partnerships		
What was the achieved degree and effectiveness of collaboration and interactions between the various project partners and stakeholders during design and implementation of the project?	• Level of participation of project partners in project design and actual inclusion in project implementation arrangements	• PPR/PIR • Interviews with key stakeholders
How did the relationship between the project and the collaborating partners (institutions and individual experts) and third parties develop?	• Perceived satisfaction of main partners of collaboration in project, including institutional benefits	• Interviews with key stakeholders
iv. Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender		
Did the intervention activities aim to promote (and did they promote) positive sustainable changes in attitudes, behaviors and power relations between the different stakeholders?	• Examples of measures to promote positive changes or actual positive changes in power relations between stakeholders.	• Interviews with project team and beneficiaries • Meeting minutes and reports of local decision-making bodies
How was the gender mainstreaming approach applied in the execution of the project and are there concrete examples gender transformative results?	• Examples of gender transformative results in participation in management, control and benefit of natural resources.	• Interviews with project team and beneficiaries • PPR/PIR • Evidenced activity results
v. Country ownership and driven-ness.		
In how far have the national partners assumed responsibility for the project and provided adequate support to project execution, including the degree of cooperation received from the various public institutions involved in the project?	• Endorsement of project by governmental agencies • Provision of counterpart funding	• Interviews with national partners, UN Environment and project staff • Project progress reports/PIR • Documented endorsements and co- financing
How and how well did the project stimulate country ownership of project outputs and outcomes? Is this different by gendered and marginalised groups?	• Perception of ownership by national and local agencies	• PSC meeting minutes • Interviews with PSC members and other key stakeholders at national and local government level

ANNEX 2. Consulted documents

Project Design Documents

CEO Endorsement request, 25 February 2014; including 4 annexes
Project Document (PRODOC), 25 February 2014; including 19 appendices
Project Identification Form (PIF), 12 April 2012
GEF SECRETARIAT REVIEW, 20 April 2012
Response to GEF Secretariat Review, 31 December 2013
Scientific and Technical screening of the Project Identification Form (PIF), 24 April 2012
Project Cooperation Agreement between UNEP and CONDESAN (PCA/2014/012)

Project Progress documents

Mid Term Review Report, 14 December 2016
Periodic Progress Reports

- April- December 2014
- July-December 2015
- July-December 2016
- July-December 2017

Project Implementation Review

- Fiscal Year 2015
- Fiscal Year 2016
- Fiscal Year 2017
- Fiscal Year 2018

Audit Reports (2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018)
Workplans (2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, final)
Final financial report, 31 December 2018.
Final technical report; 8 February 2019
Steering Committee Meeting minutes1st meeting, April2014

- 2nd meeting, June2015
- 3rd meeting, June 2016
- 4th meeting, June 2017
- 5th meeting, June 2018

GEF Tracking Tools

- Biodiversity Ecuador, 4 April 2019
- Biodiversity Peru, 4 April 2019
- Climate change mitigation Ecuador, 4 April 2019
- Climate change mitigation Peru, 4 April 2019
- Land degradation Ecuador, 7 April 2019
- Land degradation Peru, 7 April 2019
- Sustainable Forest Management - REDD+ Ecuador, 4 April 2019
- Sustainable Forest Management - REDD+ Peru, 4 May 2019

Project Products

Component 1:

- Protocol for the monitoring of biodiversity, carbon stocks and productivity in tropical montane forests.
- Protocol for the monitoring of biodiversity and carbon stocks in grassland ecosystems.
- Carbon stocks and biodiversity assessment in Carchi – final report.
- Carbon stocks and biodiversity assessment in Pichincha – final report.

- Effect of land use on the dynamics of woody saplings in the upper forest line (UFL) in the western mountain range of Ecuador – final report.
- Carbon stocks and biodiversity assessment in Tungurahua – final report.
- Carbon stocks and biodiversity assessment in Piura – final report.
- Land-cover changes in the Eastern Andes of Carchi province – final report.
- Land-cover changes in the northwestern parishes of Pichincha– final report.
- Land-cover changes in the paramos of Tungurahua– final report.
- Land-cover changes in paramos and montane forest in Ayabaca, Piura – final report.
- Land-cover changes in Huancavelica – final report.
- Montane forests restoration on pasture lands using alder (Alnus nepalensis) – final report.
- Paramo restoration in Tungurahua – final report.
- Validation of agroforestry systems using key biodiversity and carbon indicators in Carchi – final report
- Validation of agroforestry systems using key biodiversity and carbon indicators in Pichincha
- Assessment of Tara agroforestry systems in Piura – final report.
- Indicators for assessing tropical alpine rehabilitation practices (Huancavelica) – final report.
- Pilot restoration studies in montane forest of northwestern Ecuador (Pichincha) – final report.
- The use of Tara to recover degraded lands in Piura – final report.
- Land use zoning of Carchi conservation Area (ACUS COC).
- Quito Carbon Footprint implementation tools (Pichincha).
- Identification and prioritization of forest restoration areas in northwestern Pichincha.
- Prioritization of paramos areas in Tungurahua for restoration and conservation.
- GAP analysis of the Quito Metropolitan District (Pichincha).
- CONDESAN monitoring system geoportal.

Component 2:

- Chocó-Andino Commonwealth of Parishes (MCA) land Management Plan
- Technical documents to strengthen the design of the land use plan of the province of Carchi.
- Guidelines for the updating of the Páramos management plans of Tungurahua.
- Quito Municipal Ordinance (0137) declaring the Pichincha intervention site an
- Area of ecological importance, cultural heritage and sustainable productive development.
- Patrimonial trees of the Metropolitan District of Quito (including the ordinance of its declaration).
- Municipal Ordinance for the creation of the Environmental Conservation Area (ACA) Cachiaco.
- Carchi Provincial Ordinance for the creation of the Cordillera Oriental Conservation and Sustainable Use Area (ACUS).
- Management plan of the Cordillera Oriental Conservation and Sustainable Use Area (ACUS).
- Pilpichaca community management plan, Huancavelica.
- Management plan of Mashpi, Guaycuyacu and Sahuangal Conservation and Sustainable Use Area (ACU).
- Management plan of the Pachijal river basin Conservation and Sustainable Use Area (ACU).
- Strategic Plan for the Quito Municipality Protected Area System (SMAP)
- Cachiaco (ACA) Management Plan.
- Climate Change Adaptation Plan of the Commonwealth of Municipalities “Frente Sur-Occidental de Tungurahua”.
- Land management plan of the Commonwealth of Municipalities “Frente Sur-Occidental de Tungurahua.
- Quito Municipality Protected Area System (SMAP) financial sustainability plan
- Piura Regional Protected Area System (SRCAN) financial sustainability plan
- ACUS Cordillera Oriental, Carchi financial sustainability plan.
- Stakeholder mapping and investment flow in the intervention sites

Component 3:

- Assessment of tourism development opportunities in the Eastern Mountain range of Carchi, adopting a value chain approach.

- Strengthening and promotion of tourism initiatives linked to the ACUS Eastern Mountain range of Carchi
- Report - Support to the implementation of the National Program of Forest Restoration of the Ministry of the Environment in the province of Carchi.
- Report – Implementation of SLM practices at the farm scale in the Eastern mountain range of Carchi.
- Public investment project focused on strengthening the alpaca value chain through the recovery and management of puna pastures
- Adaptation of natural qochas for sowing and water harvest in the district of Pilpichaca, Huancavelica
- Good practices for the recovery of high Andean grasslands
- Analysis of the implementation of Good Land Management Practices in the Northwestern parishes of the Quito Metropolitan District.
- Strengthening the value chain of coffee in the northwest of Pichincha
- Report – Results of the monitoring of the restoration areas established by the national restoration program (MAE).
- Report. Evaluation of the impact of agricultural burning in the páramos of Piura.
- Reports. Implementation of SLM practices in the páramos of Tungurahua
- Systematization of sustainable land management practices in northwestern Pichincha

Component 4:

- Ministerial agreement in which the new technical instruments for the management of the national restoration program (operational manual) are formally adopted.
- Guidelines for local governments for designing a restoration plan within the national restoration program
- Proposal of impact indicators to evaluate the National Restoration Program
- A New management model for the national restoration program (2018-2030)
- National protocol for estimating carbon content in commercial forest plantations.
- National Guidelines for the restoration of forest ecosystems and other ecosystems of wild vegetation, Peru
- National Biodiversity impact indicators linked to the National Biodiversity Strategy.
- State of the art (scientific knowledge) on Ecosystem-based adaptation to climate change in continental Ecuador as part of the 3th national report to the UNFCC.
- Priorities for biodiversity conservation and environmental change in mainland Ecuador
- National Environmental Code (Regulatory framework)
- Conceptual framework for the development of methodological guidelines for the formulation and evaluation of public investment projects in biological diversity and ecosystem services.
- National impact biodiversity indicators within the framework of the National Biodiversity Strategy of Peru.
- Ecosystems of Perú – a descriptive legend of Peru ecosystems.
- Cuesta, F., et al. (2017) Latitudinal and altitudinal patterns of plant community diversity on mountain summits across the tropical Andes. Ecography 40
- Mathez-Stiefel, S.-L., et al. (2017) Research Priorities for the Conservation and Sustainable Governance of Andean Forest Landscapes. Mountain Research and Development, 37, 323-339.
- Fadrique, B., et al. (2018) Widespread but heterogeneous responses of Andean forests to climate change. Nature, 564, 207-212
- Cuesta, F., et al. (2017) Priority areas for biodiversity conservation in mainland Ecuador. Neotropical Biodiversity, 3, 93-106.
- Cuesta, F. 2019. Global environmental changes in the high tropical Andes. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Amsterdam
- Toolkit: Good practices for cattle grazing in northwestern Pichincha
- Toolkit: Guidelines for ecological restoration in tropical mountain forests (5 modules)
- Toolkit: Guidelines for design of paramo management plans in Tungurahua.
- Toolkit: Field guide trees of mountain forest of NorthWestern Pichincha

ANNEX 3. List of Interviewed Persons

National Government Agencies Ecuador:

Angel Onofa	Subsecretario de Patrimonio Natural (desde 2019)
Alfredo López	Ex-Subsecretario de Patrimonio Natural (hasta 2018)
Francisco Prieto	Ex- Subsecretario de Patrimonio Natural – Ministerio de Ambiente (hasta 2107)
Jessica Coronel	Directora Forestal, Subsecretaria de Patrimonio Natural
Tania Villegas	Ex- Asesora Ministro de Agricultura, Acuacultura, Ganadería y Pesca (hasta 2017)
Maria Belen Durán	Punto focal GEF, Ministerio de Ambiente

National Government Agencies Peru:

Jose Alvarez	Director General de Diversidad Biológica (MINAM)
Edgardo Marthans	Especialista en Conservación de la Dirección General de Diversidad Biológica del Ministerio del Ambiente
Coral Calvo	Especialista en Gestión de Ecosistemas de Humedales Dirección de Conservación Sostenible de Ecosistemas y Especies
Roxana Solis	Coordinadora en Gestión de Instrumentos de la Diversidad Biológica de la Dirección General de Diversidad Biológica
Erasmo Otárola	Ex- Director PRODERN
Alberto Mamani	Especialista en restauración ecológica y manejo sustentable SERFOR

Local Government Agencies:

Gustavo Mosquera	Técnico -Secretaría de Ambiente Municipio de Quito
Diego Enríquez	Director Cambio Cliático, Secretaría de Ambiente Municipio de Quito
Oscar Armijos	PRESIDENTE DEL GAD Nanegalito - presidente mancomunidad Choco Andino
Gianina Moreno	PRESIDENTE DEL GAD Nono - vice-presidente mancomunidad Choco Andino
Jorge Sanchez	Ex Director de Planificación del Gobierno Provincial de Tungurahua- MIEMBRO DIRECTORIO FONDO DE PARAMOS
Jorge Zuñiga	Técnico Frente Suroccidental Tungurahua
Magally Mejia	Técnico Frente Suroccidental Tungurahua
Diego Aragon	Dirección de Ambiente del Gobierno descentralizado autónomo de la Provincia del Carchi
Vicente Merino	Ex- Subgerente de Recursos Naturales – GORE Piura
Pedro Carlos Cabrera	Ex- Gerente de Recursos Naturales GORE Huancavelica

Partner Agencies:

Oscar Rojas	Secretario Tecnico FONDO DE PARAMOS DEL TUNGURAHUA
Rodrigo Chontasi	Asistente por IEDECA a la COPAC en la implementación del plan de manejo
Olimpia Villares	Técnica de campo Fondo Páramos
Paul Viñas	Coordinador del Proyecto EcoAndes Naturaleza y Cultura Internacional (NCI)
Katy Carillo	Técnico, Naturaleza y Cultura Internacional (NCI)
Alexander More	Director NCI- Perú
Walter Zelada	Técnico, NCI-Perú
Abel Calle Cruz	Secretario técncio, Fondo de agua Quiroz (NCI-Perú)

Local beneficiaries:

Nina Duarte	Fundación Imaymana: Coordinadora del convenio CONDESAN-IMAYMANA en el sitio Pichincha
Oliver Torres	Coordinador Bosque Escuela y Reserva Pambiliño
Arturo Falchi	Reserva Chontaloma
Alejandro Solano	Reserva Mashpi Shungo
German Bastidas	Propietario - productor ganadero Nanegalito
Juan Carlos Cabezas	Propietario - productor ganadero Nanegalito
Luis Humberto Matia	Presidente COCAP
Narcisa Villacís	Presidente comunidad 10 de octubre
Luis Humberto Punina	Presidente comunidad La Esperanza
Rafael Mazabanda	Promotor Técnico, COCAP
Fredy Piajo	Presidente Yatzaputzan
Manuel Caiza	Junta administrativa los Llimpes
Gonzalo Gómez	Junta administrativa los Llimpes
José Nuñez	Junta administrativa los Llimpes
Juan Sanchez	Junta administrativa Shaushi
Juan Tirado	Junta administrativa Shaushi
Totora community (Pacaipampa)	42 people (28 man, 14 women)

Academy:

Priscilla Muriel	Herbario Universidad Católica del Ecuador
Luis Daniel LLambí	Investigador Instituto de Ciencias Ambientales -Universidad de los Andes
William D. Gosling	Institute for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Dynamics - Universidad Amsterdam
Eleanor Milne	Colorado State University
Malki Sáenz	Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar

Implementing agency:

Robert Erath	Program officer UN Environment

Executing agency:

Maria Arguello	Directora Ejecutiva Condesan
Francisco Cuesta	Ex-Coordinador General del Proyecto
Manuel Peralvo	Asesor Temático
Gabriela Maldonado	Ex- Responsable de monitoreo y evaluación
Cecilia Sandoval	Ex-Coordinación Proyecto en Perú
Esteban Pinto	Ex- Coordinador/a Componente 1
Andrea Teran	Ex-Asesora Componente 1
Macarena Bustamante:	Ex- Coordinadora Componente 2
Rosana Proaño	Ex-Coordinadora Componente 3
Mariana Heredia	Administradora Financiera
Andres Díaz	Técnico-conductor
Francisco Román	Consultor restauración
Inty Arcos	Asistente técnico Pichincha
Oscar Falconí	Ex- Coordinador Local de EcoAndes en el sitio CARCHI por CONDESAN
Hugo de la Cruz	Ex- Coordinador Sitio Huancavelica por CONDESAN

ANNEX 4. Interview Protocol

Nombre:	
Fecha:	

Explicación de la metodología:

- Objetivo evaluación
- Independencia de equipo de evaluación
- Anónimo y confidencial
- Transparente
- Semi-estructurado, libre participación, puede terminar cuando entrevistado quiere
- Consentimiento para grabar

Criterios, Preguntas	Respuestas	Actor[54]
Introducción		
• ¿Cúal es su posición? ¿Desde cuando tiene esta posición? • ¿Cómo está vinculada con el Proyecto? • ¿Cómo es la historia de su vinculación con el Proyecto? *(¿Qué pasó, quién le invitó, como inició?)*		Todos
Efectividad		
• ¿Qué tan exitoso ha sido el proyecto en la generación de sus productos, tanto en cantidad, calidad y oportunidad? • ¿Cuál le pareció el logro más positivo del proyecto hasta ahora? • ¿Cree que el proyecto está bien encaminado para lograr sus objetivos? ¿Si? ¿No? ¿En qué sentido? ¿Por qué? • ¿El proyecto está generando productos de calidad? Cuales? ¿De qué manera? ¿Por qué? • ¿Qué ha aprendido usted? *(i.e.: ¿la capacitación fue efectiva?)* • ¿Se están produciendo beneficios para los bosques/páramo/puna? ¿Las comunidades? ¿Cuáles?		EP, AI, OG, GAD, AL, RG
• ¿Cuales fueron los factores que originaron problemas para la implementación del proyecto? *(falta de información, recursos, transparencia, asistencia técnica, contexto social, orden público, etc)*		EP, AI, OG, GAD, AL, RG
Relevancia		
• ¿Como se diseñó el proyecto? ¿Quienes aportaron con ideas? *(involucramiento de actores en diseño)*		OG, AL, AE, RG

[54] EP = Equipo de Proyecto, IE - Instituto participando en Implementación (CONDESAN, NCI, MAE/MINAM - solo personas directmante involucradas con el proyectos), OG - Organizacion Gobernamental Nacional (Incl MAE pero solo personas que no están en implementaciónd el proyecto, GAD = Gobierno Autonomo Descenstralizado, AL = Actor Local, Ex = Actor Externo; RG = Reunión de Grupo.

Criterios, Preguntas	Respuestas	Actor[54]
• ¿El proyecto se enfoca en las cosas más importantes para la conservación y desarrollo sustentable de las áreas naturales de montaña? • ¿Lo que hace el proyecto es lo que quieren las comunidades locales? • ¿El proyecto está alineado con las políticas, planes y estrategias del estado/GAD/comunidad? ¿Con cuáles? ¿Cómo ha sido el proceso?		
• ¿Cómo se decidió la alineación/correspondencia a las líneas prioritarias de ONU Ambiente y GEF?		EP, IE
• ¿Qué ha cambiado en el contexto actual del proyecto? ¿Qué tuvo que hacer el proyecto en respuesta a ello? ¿Lo ha hecho?		EP, IE, OG, AE
Eficiencia		
• ¿Le parece que el proyecto está bien manejado o no? ¿Por qué? *(dirección, supervisión, agencias de ejecución, personal técnica, procesos locales, inclusión de actores etc)*		EP, AI, OG, GAD, AL, RG
• ¿El proyecto se está ejecutando según su cronograma propuesta? ¿Qué le falta? ¿Por qué?		EP, AI, OG
• ¿El proyecto está bien dirigido? • ¿El equipo de gestión funciona bien? • ¿Los comités de gobernanza se reúnen frecuentemente? ¿Se toman decisiones adecuadas? ¿Llegan a ser implementadas?		EP, AI, OG, GAD
Otros factores que afectan el logro de resultado		
• El proyecto ¿es realista? ¿factible? ¿Hay cosas que recomiendes cambiar? *(Diseño)*		EP, AI
• ¿Conoce de otros proyectos en el mismo ámbito (actual o pasado) con quien el proyecto está colaborando o debe colaborar? ¿De qué forma? (Colaboración con otros)		EP, AI, AL, AE. RG
• ¿Les parece que la forma de administrar/supervisar el proyecto de las otras agencias (ONU Ambiente, CONDESAN, MAE/MINAM) fue bueno? ¿Hay puntos de mejora? ¿Cuáles? • ¿Fue bueno delegar el proyecto a CONDESAN en comparación de ejecución directa de MAE/MINAM?		EP, AI, OG
• ¿Cómo funciona el sistema administrativo? ¿Qué problemas/desafíos identifica? ¿Cuáles son los factores de éxito?		EP, AI
• ¿Cual es el estado de co-finaciamiento? ¿Qué cambió?		EP

Criterios, Preguntas	Respuestas	Actor[54]
• Monitoreo y reporte ¿quién hace, como se hace, quién controla?		EP, AI (solo personas clave)
Otros factores - participación y género		
• ¿Participan las personas/grupos que deberían participar con el proyecto? • ¿Todos participan por igual? *(Locales vs. gente de afuera. 'ingenieros' vs. gente local, hombres vs mujeres, jóvenes, etc)* • ¿Cómo se toman las decisiones? ¿A Usted le escuchan? • ¿Usted ha participado directamente con las actividades, talleres, etc? ¿Cómo calificaría dichas actividades? ¿Fueron buenos o hacían cosas que no tenían sentido? • ¿Usted ha visto los resultados del proyecto? ¿reportes?		AL, GAD, OG, RG
• En general, ¿el proyecto es bien conocido? ¿Ud tiene acceso a todo lo que necesita saber del proyecto? ¿Sabe que hace el proyecto en otras áreas? ¿En otros temas? *(Comunicación)*		EP, OG, GAD, AL, AE, RG
• ¿Hay una mayor participación de mujeres en las actividades del proyecto que con otros proyectos? • ¿Se ha notado un cambio en percepción, participación o expresión de las mujeres en comparación al momento previo del u con otros proyectos? ¿Porqué se dio esto /no se dio esto? *(también ingreso, seguridad alimentaria, adopción de prácticas)*		EP, AL, GAD, RG
• ¿Existen ejemplos de como el proyecto ha mejorado la posición de mujeres en la toma de decisiones? ¿Acceso a fondos? ¿Inclusión en políticas locales?		EP, OG, GAD, AL
Sostenibilidad		
• ¿El proyecto está bien incluido en la práctica diaria de su institución? ¿Como piensa que esto seguiría sin ayuda externa? ¿Que se necesitaría para seguir después? ¿Habrá suficiente capacidad institucional para aplicar todas las cosas del proyecto después de cierre? *(sostenibilidad política, institucional y financiera)*		EP, OG, GAD
• ¿El proyecto está bien incluido en la práctica diaria de su comunidad? ¿Como piensa que esto seguiría sin ayuda externa? ¿Que se necesita para seguir después? ¿Habrá suficiente capacidad en la comunidad para aplicar todas las cosas del proyecto después de cierre? *(sostenibilidad social, local)*		EP, AL, RG

Criterios, Preguntas	Respuestas	Actor[54]
Lecciones aprendidas		
• Si podrías empezar de nuevo con el proyecto ¿Que cambiaría? ¿Qué haría exactamente igual?		EP, AI, GAD, AL, RG
• De este proyecto ¿Qué aprendió para poder utilizarlo en otros proyectos o iniciativas? • Cuando termine este proyecto, ¿Que falta hacer para una buena gestión de los ecosistemas de montaña en la región?		EP, AI, OG, GAD, AE

Preguntas de cierre:

- Preguntar si hay algo que quiere enfatizar o algo importante que no hemos incluido
- Explicar que siempre puede volver a conversar/contactarnos
- Agradecer por la participación

ANNEX 5. Overview of Evaluation Mission

The evaluation mission (interviews in Quito and Lima, field trips and interviews in Ecuador and Peru) took place between May 27 and June 14. The table below provides a detailed overview of this mission

Date, Place	Meetings-visits	Observations
27 May, Quito	CONDESAN Director, UNEP Program officer	The scope of the evaluation was validated, as well as the main points of the inception report. The background of the project was assessed and the collaboration UNEP-CONDESAN discussed.
28 May, Quito	Current project team members, Current and former staff of Ministry of Environment	With the project team, the history of the project implementation was reconstructed With individual (current) team members the activities were evaluated, the challenges and success and the factors that lead to these With Ministry of Environment staff, insight was obtained about the alignment with policies, strategies and other programs was discussed, the applicability of the project products, the likelihood of achieving impact. Changes in the context were identified how it might have affected project delivery. Specific attention was paid to the sustainability of results.
29 May, Quito	Former project team members, former Ministry of Environment staff, INABIO, Municipality of Quito,	With individual (former) team members the emerging challenges and success and the factors that lead to these were validated. The former Min Enviroment staff was also leading the forestry program at the Ministesry of agriculture and provided useful insight into the productive forest program collaboration INABIO's staff was a good source to assess the quality of the scientific aspects of the project and the potential future use of data was discussed. Staff of the Municipality of Quito explained the evaluator how key the project has been for the environmental management of the (previous) municipal administration.
30 May, NW Pichincha	Miraflores: Cattle ranching, water management, forest school , restoration, monitoring site, coffee business. Commonwealth of Parishes	During first day field visit to the North West Pichincha site , meetings were organized with the chair and vice chair of the Commonwealth of Parishes. These were new in office but have been actively involved with the joint environmental management of the NW Pichincha previously. Observations were made at two cattle farms and the Intillacta hostel, where the owner (and technical assistant to the Ecoandes project) implements several project activities, including monitoring sites
31 May, NW Pichincha	Mashpi: restoration, forest school, monitoring site, choclate business	In the Mashpi area of NW Pichincha, three farms were visited where the owners apply diverse productive activities and restoration through analogue forestry. A chocolate business was visited. The evaluator observed how effective the innovative land uses can be but also noted that most visited land owners are well educated

Date, Place	Meetings-visits	Observations
		farmers with a biological background who also collaborate as consultants to the project
3 June, Quito	Former project team members and consultants	With individual (former) team members the emerging challenges and success and the factors that lead to these were validated. Also, the team work and learning was assessed. With consultants, attention was specifically paid to their activity and the opportunities for sustainability in time
4 June, Quito	Current project team members, Academic partner	The last interview with a team member concentrated on the overall coordination and collaboration with PBA (sister project)
5 June, Quito	Academic partners (by phone)	(International) academic partner were approached to analyze their collaboration and discuss the quality, relevance and usefulness of the academic products
6 June, Tungurahua	Pilahuin: restoration, monitoring sites, conservation	In the high area of Tungurahua (Chimborazo slopes), dry páramo conservation and restauration was observed. This area has received many years support from sustainable development and agroforestry projects and it was interesting to discuss the added value of the EcoAndes project. With the local extensions (IEDECA, Fondo de Paramos) the use and challenges of the monitoring plots were discussed.
7 June, Tungurahua	Eastern Tungurahua: water management, Conservation. Meeting former Provincial Government director	In the Eastern part of Tungurahua, two farmer communities were visited to see how the Tungurahua Páramo Fund helps them to manage water and conserve native vegetation. EcoAndes provided support through the Fund. A former Provincial Government director level staff was interviewed to discuss this tripartite collaboration between the Fund, Ecoandes and the local government.
10 June, Lima	Peru-based team members	In addition to the standard interviews held with all (former and current) project team members, conversations with the Lima-based staff focused on their relation with national government and local partners and their collaboration with the Quito-based project coordination
11 June, Lima	Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Agriculture staff	Similarly as with government agencies in Ecuador, in Peru staff of both Ministries were asked about the alignment with policies, strategies and other programs, and the changes in the context, as well as sustainability. Also, the specific aspects of the project' collaboration with Peru was assessed.
12 June, Piura	NCI staff, Regional Government Director	NCI is the executing partner in Piura so the conversations with the team were similar as with the project team, but in addition the relationship with Condesan was discussed. The Regional Government Director joined these conversations to share his experience in collaboration with NCI in particular, and Condesan and other agencies in general.
13 June, Piura	Community meeting, Pacaipampa (Piura)	A large community meeting was held near the páramos of Pacaipampa. Their needs and expectations were discussed and the interaction with Ecoandes analyzed.

Date, Place	Meetings-visits	Observations
14 June, Piura	Field visit, Pacaipampa. Conservation, monitoring	During this field visit the (now formally conserved) páramo of Pacaipampa were observed and the struggle of the community against mining was discussed. Also, monitoring and conservation sites were visited and their management discussed.
19-25 June, Quito	Additional meetings with Condesan director, Huancavelica and Carchi partners	During the last week, an information and validation meeting was held with the Condesan director. Also, stakeholders from the two sites that were not visited (Huancavelica and Carchi) were interviewed to compare their experiences with the other sites that were visited

ANNEX 6. Project Results Framework (as in Prodoc)

NB: Notes in brackets are cross references to GEF Tracking Tools including indication of the focal area and project specific coding that has been included in the respective Tracking Tools found in Appendix 15.

OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS	INDICATORS	BASELINE CONDITIONS	TARGETS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
PROJECT GOAL: TO MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE GLOBALLY IMPORTANT BIODIVERSITY AND CARBON BENEFITS OF CRITICAL HIGH-ANDEAN ECOSYSTEMS OF ECUADOR AND PERU (US$ 4,796,364)					
Project Objective: To protect critical high-Andean ecosystems at selected intervention sites by mainstreaming scientifically-validated and integrated SLM tools and practices that preserve and enhance biodiversity and carbon stocks while contributing to the mitigation of climate change	**KNOWLEDGE AND TOOLS** Number of monitoring systems, scientific reports, SLM practices validated and decision- tools that enable national and local institutions to preserve and restore global environmental benefits in the high-Andes developed and adopted by key stakeholders	Counterpart organizations do not have information, monitoring systems, decision support tools and data on the links between conservation and sustainable management of high-Andean ecosystems and the preservation of biodiversity, carbon stocks and other key environmental services to support their land use plans and policies.	5 protocols for project environmental monitoring systems; 1 environmental monitoring system that manages geographic information installed at each intervention site; 8 studies or tools related to carbon and biodiversity dynamics along environmental and land use gradients; 4 studies and tools related to climate change mitigation and SLM/SFM in High Andean ecosystems; 1 Agroforestry system and 1 Pasture land restoration system scientifically validated for each intervention site	The Project Monitoring and Evaluation Systems will produce the following M&E documents: Steering Committee Meeting Reports Technical Committee meeting Reports Annual Assessment Reports The Midterm Evaluation Report The Terminal Evaluation Report Reports of national counterpart institutions	Decentralization and land planning policies in Ecuador and Peru continue as established during project lifetime and support the maintenance of key environmental benefits of High Andean ecosystems. Counterpart organizations abide by agreements and are willing to share information and use knowledge and tools generated.

OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS	INDICATORS	BASELINE CONDITIONS	TARGETS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
	MAINSTREAMING AND CAPACITY BUILDING Number of integrated land planning policy instruments, ongoing work plans and training programs of counterpart institutions that incorporate information and tools generated by the project	Local governments have development plans that include protection and sustainable management of natural resources. However these plans face important barriers and challenges related to the knowledge and information required to effectively implement actions oriented to promote SLM of high Andean ecosystems.	1 regional land use plan improved for each intervention site; 1 municipality community extension and training program strengthened at each invention site; 2 rural community development plans strengthened at each intervention site; 20 decision makers and 45 technicians in Ecuador and 10 decision makers and 15 technicians in Peru participating in a continuous training program.	Internal appraisal of work being carried out at intervention sites.	Large scale infrastructure projects (including mining) do not disrupt social, political and environmental systems at project intervention sites. Extreme weather and climate variations do not overly affect the conservation and sustainable management practices being promoted
	DEMONSTRATION- AND INTERVENTION SITES Ha increase of critical ecosystems area (Upper Montane Forests, Paramos, Punas, Wetlands, and agricultural/rangeland mosaics) under good management practices and conservation schemes	Estimated ha currently under formal public or community conservation or management schemes at the project intervention sites is summarized as follows: Huancavelica, Perú: 0 ha. Piura, Perú: 2,000 ha Carchi, Ecuador: 2,962 ha. Pichincha, Ecuador: 87,458 ha Tungurahua, Ecuador: 5,550 ha.	1 assessment study at each intervention site; 27000 additional ha of high Andean ecosystems under conservation or sustainable management; 3 production chains strengthened; 3-5 % over baseline of health indicator species at intervention sites; 3-5% increase of tons of carbon over baseline in intervention sites.		

OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS	INDICATORS	BASELINE CONDITIONS	TARGETS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
	<u>UP SCALING AND OUTREACH</u> Number of national, regional and local level instruments and tools that incorporate the knowledge and findings generated by the project to promote the preservation and enhancement of globally important biodiversity and carbon benefits of critical high-Andean ecosystems.	The national environmental authorities of both countries have initiated their MRV systems and designed important incentive programs to conserve their countries' biodiversity and their related environmental benefits. Yet, these instruments are primarily focused on tropical lowland ecosystems due to the important knowledge gaps and barriers the Andean ecosystems represent. There are national working groups related to MRV programs under the REDD+ strategies on both countries. Yet, these groups don't address all the thematic components of this project. Furthermore they include only government technicians at the national level. Also, there is no interaction between both national working groups.	2 National MRVs programs and at least 3 financial incentive programs of Ecuador and Peru strengthened; 4 Thematic working groups conformed by researchers and government technicians strengthened to support the implementation of project actions at intervention sites. Local governments outside project intervention sites are aware and compromised to incorporate project findings, to promote conservation and sustainable management of Andean ecosystems.		

OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS	INDICATORS	BASELINE CONDITIONS	TARGETS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
		Currently, there are 3 regional research and monitoring networks (GLORIA, Andean Forests, iMHEA) that include mostly academic researchers. These networks are meant to provide technical support to national monitoring programs. Yet, these networks were recently conformed and require further support to consolidate their work with national authorities. Local governments lack instruments and capacity to incorporate lessons learned and better practices implemented at other localities (outside intervention sites).			

COMPONENT 1: Knowledge and tools (US$ 1,201,506)

OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS	INDICATORS	BASELINE CONDITIONS	MID TERM TARGETS	EOP TARGETS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
Outcome 1.1: Knowledge base expanded on high Andean ecosystem dynamics and the effects that global environmental changes (GEC) have on biodiversity and carbon stocks and on the multiple environmental and social benefits they provide	Number of protocols adapted and validated at intervention sites (LD86-87)[55]	During PPG, the project executing partner has started the developed of 5 protocols—in coordination with MAE— to address global environmental changes on Andean ecosystems dynamics. Further field validation is needed to assessed land degradation, sustainable forest management and ecosystem restoration under different land use regimes.	At least 5 protocols developed and adapted to intervention sites.	At least 5 adapted protocols being applied at intervention sites.	Protocols tested and being used at intervention sites.	Stakeholders and decision-makers are receptive to incorporating project resulting tools and knowledge in integrated land use and development planning.
	Number of studies produced, published and disseminated focused on synergies between biodiversity, carbon and SLM/SFM practices (LD.EC.19.a – c & LD.PE.19.a – c; LD.EC.20.a – c & LD.PE.20.a – c)	Nonexistent, Baseline assessment in PY1	At least 5 studies or tools scientifically validated (6 in Ecuador and 2 in Peru)	At least 8 studies or tools scientifically validated (6 in Ecuador and 2 in Peru)	Studies or tools produced, presented and distributed	
	Number of environmental monitoring systems installed at project intervention sites,	In 3 out 5 intervention sites is nonexistent, Baseline assessment in PY1. During PPG, the project executing partner	5 monitoring systems installed at intervention sites. These	5 monitoring systems installed and generating consistent	Monitoring systems developed at intervention sites	

[55] Notes in brackets are cross references to TT with indication of the focal area and line number in the respective TT.

OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS	INDICATORS	BASELINE CONDITIONS	MID TERM TARGETS	EOP TARGETS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
	generating information to support SLM (LD86-87)	has started efforts to monitor GEC in two intervention sites.	include carbon stocks and fluxes, biodiversity status, land use changes, land degradation and forestry.	information to support integrated land management practices at intervention sites		.
Outcome 1.2: Decision makers at different levels have increased access to science-based knowledge and SLM strategies through decision support tools that enable conservation and sustainable management of high-Andean Ecosystems.	Number of assessments and INRM tools developed to support on-going national efforts on conservation and climate change strategies (LD.EC.17.a, LD.PE.17.a; LD.EC.18.a - c, LD.PE.18.a - c)	Existing tools lack focus on high Andean ecosystems. Further analysis should be done during baseline assessment in PY1.	At least 3 assessments or tools scientifically validated (2 in Ecuador, 1 in Peru)	At least 6 assessments or tools scientifically validated (4 in Ecuador, 2 in Peru)	Studies or tools produced, presented and distributed.	
	Number of policy decision support systems/tools developed and adopted at intervention sites (CCM.EC.1.e & CCM.EC.1.e) (LD.EC.18.a - c, LD.PE.18.a - c)	There are no policy decision support systems at the project intervention sites except for Tungurahua.	N/A	At least two policy decision systems developed and adopted by stakeholders at intervention sites.	Policy decision support systems developed, installed and operating	

OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS	INDICATORS	BASELINE CONDITIONS	MID TERM TARGETS	EOP TARGETS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
	Number of innovative agroforestry systems proposed and scientifically validated (LD.EC.15.a – b & LD.PE.15.d – e)	Nonexistent, Baseline assessment in PY1	3 agroforestry systems proposed and validated at intervention sites (2 in Ecuador and 1 in Peru).	At least 1 agroforestry system proposed and validated per each intervention site (3 in Ecuador and 2 in Peru)	Validated practice being applied and producing multiple benefits	
	Number of land restoration systems proposed and scientifically validated (LD 12-16)	Nonexistent, Baseline assessment in PY1.	3 land restoration systems proposed and validated at intervention sites. (2 in Ecuador and 1 in Peru)	At least 1 land restoration system proposed and validated per each intervention site. (3 in Ecuador and 2 in Peru)	Validated practice being applied and producing multiple benefits	

OUTPUTS:

Outcome 1.1 Knowledge base expanded on high Andean ecosystem dynamics and GEC

1. Five protocols for monitoring biodiversity, carbon stocks and key ecosystem dynamics adapted, validated and applied at intervention sites.
2. At least 8 science-based studies on ecosystem dynamics along environmental and degradation gradients and synergies between biodiversity, carbon and SLM/SFM practices (LD86-87).
3. One monitoring system established at each project intervention site to account carbon, biodiversity and changes on environmental services.

Outcome 1.2 DM access to knowledge base and practices for SLM strategies in the Andes increased

1. At least 6 assessments or INRM tools to support on-going efforts on conservation and climate change strategies at different scales (LD.EC.17.a, LD.PE.17.a; LD.EC.18.a -c, LD.PE.18.a - c).
2. At least 2 policy decision support systems/tools based upon new knowledge, environmental scenarios & economic valuations developed and adopted by stakeholders at intervention sites (CCM.EC.1.e & CCM.EC.1.e) (LD.EC.18.a -c, LD.PE.18.a - c).
3. At least 1 innovative agroforestry system proposed and scientifically validated per each intervention site (LD.EC.9.a – b & LD.PE.9.a - b).

4. At least 1 land restoration system proposed and scientifically validated per each intervention site (LD 12-16).

COMPONENT 2: Mainstreaming sustainable land management (US$1,099,943)

OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS	INDICATORS	BASELINE CONDITIONS	MID TERM TARGETS	EOP TARGETS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
Outcome 2.1: Enabling environment in place to integrate multiple benefits in cross-sectoral planning tools at the wider landscape	Number of regional integrated land use plans strengthened (BD.EC.11.a - e; BD.PE.11.a – e)	Regional governments selected for participation in this project have elaborated and are applying land use plans. The law obliges to reformulate them every 5 years. However, they lack adequate inputs and an integrated approach and have not developed monitoring efforts to assess impacts.	3 regional integrated land use plans developed or strengthened at intervention sites (2 in Ecuador and 1 in Peru)	5 regional integrated land use plans developed or strengthened. One for every intervention site (3 in Ecuador and 2 in Peru)	Existing regional integrated land use plans corresponding to intervention sites improved	Decentralization and land planning policies in Ecuador and Peru continue as established during project lifetime and support the maintenance of key environmental benefits of High Andean ecosystems. Local governments continue to take interest in mainstreaming biodiversity and carbon benefits into their development plans. Communities and local governments agree to work together in the
	Number of rural community development plans strengthened or established (LD.EC.21.a LD, PE.21.a)	Some communities selected to participate in this project have development plans; some do not.	6 community development plans strengthened or established at intervention sites (4 in Ecuador and 2 in Peru)	10 community development plans strengthened or established. Two for each intervention site (6 in Ecuador and 4 in Peru)	Rural community development plans, including integrated farm development programs, implemented and evaluated periodically	
	Number of policy instruments or regulatory frameworks (SFM.EC.6.a – e &	Existing regional regulatory frameworks lack an adequate integration of biodiversity and	N/A	At least 2 policy instruments or regulatory frameworks in	Regulatory proposals	

OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS	INDICATORS	BASELINE CONDITIONS	MID TERM TARGETS	EOP TARGETS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
	SFM.EC.7.a; SFM.PE.6.a – e &SFM.PE.7.a); BD.EC.11.a - e; BD.PE.11.a – e).	environmental services criteria.		place to conserve biodiversity and environmental services (1 in Ecuador and 1 in Peru)		establishment and implementation of integrated land management and sustainable forest management practices. A stable group of representative decision makers and technicians are actively involved in project execution at intervention sites during project lifetime.
Outcome 2.2: Institutional capacities enhanced to apply knowledge and INRM tools that support policies, integrated land use plans and ongoing programs for the conservation and sustainable management of critical high-Andean ecosystems, including Andean forests	Number of extension programs strengthened (LD.EC.21.a LD, PE.21.a)	Community extension and training programs operated by local governments or counterpart organizations at the project intervention sites lack training, didactical material, mobility and other resources.	At least 2 extension programs strengthened at intervention sites (1 in Ecuador and 1 in Peru)	At least 5 extension programs strengthened. One for each intervention site (3 in Ecuador and 2 in Peru)	Extension material and field technicians and community leaders skilled in participatory development with a gender dimension	
	Number of SLM/SFM financing plans being implemented in the wider landscape. (LD.EC.15.c; LD.PE.15.i).	There is an incipient number of financing strategies in the Andes to support SLM/SFM with important access barriers faced by regional and local actors.	N/A	At least 2 sustainable financing plans implemented and mobilizing investments into INRM and SFM (1 in Ecuador and 1 in Peru)	Financing strategies developed	
	Number of decision makers participating in continued and specific training programs for the	Existing programs lack a curricula focus on the conservation and sustainable management of high Andean	At least 12 national and local decision makers participate in	At least 30 national and local decision makers participate in	Specific training program designed. Periodic evaluation of participant's progress.	

OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS	INDICATORS	BASELINE CONDITIONS	MID TERM TARGETS	EOP TARGETS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
	application of knowledge and INRM tools (LD. EC.15.f; LD.PE.15.c)	Ecosystems and its link to land use planning.	specific training programs organized by the project (8 in Ecuador and 4 in Peru).	specific training programs organized by the project (20 in Ecuador and 10 in Peru).		
	Number of technicians participating in specific training programs for the application of knowledge and INRM tools (LD. EC.15.f; LD.PE.15.c)	Existing programs lack a curricula focus on management and restoration practices focus on SLM/SFM and rangeland management on high Andean ecosystems.	At least 24 national and local technicians attend long tern training program, (18 in Ecuador and 6 in Peru)	At least 60 national and local technicians attend long tern training program, (45 in Ecuador and 15 in Peru)	Specific training program designed. Periodically evaluation of progress being made by specific trainees.	

OUTPUTS:

Outcome 2.1: Enabling environment in place to integrate multiple benefits in cross-sectoral planning tools

1. 5 Integrated Land Use Plans developed and strengthened at each intervention site (BD.EC.11.a - e; BD.PE.11.a – e).
2. 10 local development plans formulated or strengthened, 2 for each intervention site (BD.EC.11.a - e; BD.PE.11.a – e).
3. At least two policy instruments formulated or strengthened by the project to be formally adopted by local Governments to enhance sustainable biodiversity, forest and land management practices (SFM.EC.6.a – e & SFM.EC.7.a; SFM.PE.6.a – e &SFM.PE.7.a); BD.EC.11.a - e; BD.PE.11.a – e).

Outcome 2.2: Institutional capacities enhanced to apply knowledge and INRM tools that support policies, integrated land use plans and ongoing programs for the conservation and sustainable management of critical high-Andean ecosystems

1. At least 60 technicians attend continued and specific training program in management and restoration practices focus on SLM/SFM and rangeland management on high Andean ecosystems, 45 in Ecuador and 15 in Peru. (LD. EC.15.f; LD.PE.15.c)
2. At least 2 sustainable financing plans designed and implemented to support INRM/SFM and diversify the financial resource base at intervention sites (LD.EC.15.c; LD.PE.15.i).

3. At least 30 local decision makers attend specific training program on the conservation and sustainable management of high Andean Ecosystems and its link to land use planning, 20 in Ecuador and 10 in Peru (LD. EC.15.f; LD.PE.15.c).
4. At least 2 extension programs operated by local governments or counterpart organizations strengthened (LD.EC.21.a LD, PE.21.a).

COMPONENT 3: Interventions sites (US$1,387,943)

OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS	INDICATORS	BASELINE CONDITIONS	MID TERM TARGETS	EOP TARGETS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
Outcome 3.1: Sustainable livelihood strategies and key productive value chains strengthened at interventions sites to address barriers and support SLF/SFM practices	Number of participating families	Nonexistent, Baseline assessment in PY1 in all pilot sites	At least 10 families in one intervention site participate in start-up program.	At least 10 families per site in three intervention sites participate in start-up programs.	Project M&E System mid-term and final reports	Counterpart organizations abide by agreements and are willing to share information and use knowledge and tools generated. Financial incentive programs are effective conservation strategies for High Andean ecosystems and operate throughout project lifetime. Extreme weather and climate variations do not overly affect the conservation and sustainable
	Number of assessments addressing critical barriers and possible livelihood development strategies at intervention sites	Nonexistent, Baseline assessment in PY1 in all pilot sites	At least 2 assessment study for intervention sites.	1 assessment study for each intervention site (3 in Ecuador and 2 in Peru)	Assessment studies report	
	Number of start-up programs developed or strengthened in key productive value chains (Tourism, Livestock, NTFP) incorporating SLM/SFM practices (BD.EC.5.a-f; BD.PE.5.a-c)	Nonexistent, Baseline assessment in PY1 in all pilot sites	At least 1 startup in Ecuador	At least 3 startups (2 in Ecuador and 1 in Peru)	Project M&E System mid-term and final reports	

OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS	INDICATORS	BASELINE CONDITIONS	MID TERM TARGETS	EOP TARGETS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
	Percentage of income diversification in participating families	Nonexistent, Baseline assessment in PY1 in all pilot sites.	N/A	At least 10% of participating families' income diversified by activities promoted by the project	Project M&E System mid-term and final reports	management practices being promoted
Outcome 3.2: Biodiversity, carbon and social benefits enhanced through SLM/SFM investments and practices on forest and non-forest lands in the high Andes	Number of hectares of native Andean forest being conserved or under sustainable management practices (SFM.EC.1.a & SFM.PE.1.a; SFM.EC.2.a & SFM.PE.2.a; SFM.EC.6.c SFM.PE.7.c) (BD.EC.3.a – i; BD.PE.3.a – i & BD.EC.4.a – i; BD.PE.4.a - i)(CCM.EC.1.a & CCM.PE.1.a)	Ecuador has initialed the conservation of native forest through its program Socio Bosque	2,000 ha protected or under management (1,600 in Ecuador 400 in Peru)	5,000 ha protected or under management (4,000 in Ecuador and 1,000 in Peru)	Formal agreements for the protection or management of native Andean forests	
	Number of hectares of Páramo, Punas and wetlands being conserved or under sustainable	Ecuador has initialed the conservation of critical area of Páramos through its Incentive Program Socio Páramo	4,000 ha under management (2,800 in Ecuador 1,200 in Peru)	10,000 ha under management (7,000 in Ecuador 3,000 in Peru)	Formal agreements for the protection or management critical Andean Ecosystems	

OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS	INDICATORS	BASELINE CONDITIONS	MID TERM TARGETS	EOP TARGETS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
	management practices BD.EC.3.a – i; BD.PE.3.a – i & BD.EC.4.a – i; BD.PE.4.a - i)((CCM.EC.1.b & CCM.PE.1.b) (CCM.EC.1.d & CCM.PE.1.d)					
	Number of hectares of commercial tree plantations established (SFM.EC.2.c)(CCM.EC.1.c & CCM.PE.1.c).	Ecuador has recently initialed a financial incentive program for the establishment of industrial tree plantations.	800 ha of commercial tree plantations established in Ecuador.	2,000 ha of commercial tree plantations established in Ecuador.	New areas of industrial tree plantations (85% survival rate)	
	Number of hectares of tree plantations established by participating rural communities using native tree species (SFM.EC.2.b & SFM.PE.2.b; SFM.EC.7.e & SFM.PE.6.b; SFM.PE.7.b SFM.EC.7.e)(CCM.EC.1.c & CCM.PE.1.c)	Both countries have a long history in implementation of community forestry programs	1,600 ha of community tree plantations and agroforestry systems established using native tree species (1,200 in Ecuador and 400 in Peru)	4,000 ha of community tree plantations and agroforestry systems established using native tree species (3,000 in Ecuador and 1,000 in Peru)	New areas of community tree plantations supporting agriculture, land restoration, wood production, etc. established (85% survival rate)	
	Number of hectares of native rangelands under sustainable	Both countries have long history in agricultural and	1,200 ha rangeland under	3,000 ha rangeland under sustainable	New areas under sustainable agriculture	

OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS	INDICATORS	BASELINE CONDITIONS	MID TERM TARGETS	EOP TARGETS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
	management (SFM.EC.2.d & SFM.PE.2.c)	range management development practices.	sustainable management practices (400 in Ecuador, 800 in Peru)	management practices (1,000 in Ecuador, 2,000 in Peru)	and rangeland management practices.	
	Number of hectares of degraded land under practice of restoration (SFM.EC.2.d & SFM.PE.2.c) (BD.EC.4.a – i; BD.PE.4.a - i) (CCM.EC.1.b & CCM.PE.1.b) (CCM.EC.1.d & CCM.PE.1.d)	Other than tree plantations, little has been done to recover degraded areas of the Andean Highlands	1,200 ha under restoration schemes other than tree planting (800 in Ecuador 400 in Peru)	3,000 ha under restoration schemes other than tree planting (2,000 in Ecuador 1,000 in Peru)	New areas of degraded land under restoration schemes	
	Populations of health indicator species increased (BD.EC.4.a – i; BD.PE.4.a - i)(CCM.EC.1.d & CCM.PE.1.d)	Nonexistent, Baseline assessment in PY1 in all pilot sites.	1.2-2% of population increase of selected species.	3-5 % of population increase of selected species.	Population density estimates, biodiversity indexes.	
	Total amount of carbon stocks maintained or enhanced in work areas within intervention sites. (SFM.EC.5.a SFM.PE.5.a;	Nonexistent, Baseline assessment in PY1 in all pilot sites.	1.2-2% increase of tons of carbon over baseline at intervention sites	3-5% increase of tons of carbon over baseline at intervention sites	Metric tons conserved in important Andean ecosystems	

OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS	INDICATORS	BASELINE CONDITIONS	MID TERM TARGETS	EOP TARGETS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
	SFM.EC.5.b & SFM.PE.5.b) (CCM.EC.1.a – b & CCM.PE.1.a - b; CCM.EC.1.f – g & CCM.PE.1.f – g)					

OUTPUTS:

Outcome 3.1: Sustainable livelihood strategies and key productive value chains strengthened through SLM/SFM practices at interventions

1. One baseline assessment addressing critical barrier developed and proper actions implemented at each intervention site (BD.EC.5.a-f; BD.PE.5.a-c)
2. At least 3 start-up programs in key production chains implemented and incorporating SFM/SLM practices at intervention sites (SFM.EC.5.a SFM.PE.5.a) (BD.EC.4.a – i; BD.PE.4.a - i) (CCM.EC.1.b & CCM.PE.1.b; CCM.EC.1.d & CCM.PE.1.d)
3. At least 10% of participating families' income diversified by activities promoted by the project (BD.EC.5.a – b; BD.PE.5.a).

Outcome 3.2: Biodiversity, carbon and social benefits enhanced through SLM/SFM investments and practices on forest and non-forest lands

1. 5,000 ha of Upper Montane Forest under conservation or sustainable forest management (SFM.EC.2.b & SFM.PE.2.b; SFM.EC.7.e & SFM.PE.6.b; SFM.PE.7.b SFM.EC.7.e) (BD.EC.3.a – i; BD.PE.3.a – i & BD.EC.4.a – i; BD.PE.4.a - i) (CCM.EC.1.a & CCM.PE.1.a)
2. 10,000 ha of Páramo, Punas and Wetlands under conservation or sustainable land management (BD.EC.3.a – i; BD.PE.3.a – i & BD.EC.4.a – i; BD.PE.4.a - i) (CCM.EC.1.b & CCM.PE.1.b) (CCM.EC.1.d & CCM.PE.1.d)
3. 3,000 ha of improved rangeland under good management practices (SFM.EC.2.d & SFM.PE.2.c).
4. 4,000 ha of community plantations and agroforestry systems using native tree species (85% survival rate) (SFM.EC.2.c)(CCM.EC.1.c & CCM.PE.1.c)
5. 2,000 ha of commercial plantations (85% survival rate) (SFM.EC.2.c)(CCM.EC.1.c & CCM.PE.1.c)
6. 3,000 ha of degraded land under sustainable land management practices other than tree plantations (SFM.EC.2.d & SFM.PE.2.c)
7. 3-5 % increase of population of ecosystem health indicator species at intervention sites. (BD.EC.4.a – i; BD.PE.4.a - i)(CCM.EC.1.d & CCM.PE.1.d).
8. 3-5% increase of tons of carbon over baseline in work areas (SFM.EC.5.a – b & SFM.PE.5.a – b) (CCM.EC.1.a – b & CCM.PE.1.a - b) (CCM.EC.1.f – g & CCM.PE.1.f - g).

COMPONENT 4: UPSCALING AND OUTREACH (US$878,596)

OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS	INDICATORS	BASELINE CONDITIONS	MID TERM TARGETS	EOP TARGETS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
Outcome 4.1: National environmental authorities in Ecuador and Peru incorporate science based knowledge and tools developed by the project into their MRV systems and financial incentive programs.	Number of financial incentive programs strengthened (CCM.EC.1.a – b & CCM.PE.1.a - b, CCM.EC.1.c & CCM.PE.1.c).	Ecuador's Incentive programs include Socio Bosque/Páramo/Restoration and Reforestation and Afforestation programs for commercial/conservation purposes implemented by MAE and MAGAP. MINAN also operates an incentive program, but only for Amazon forests	N/A	Socio Bosque/Páramo, Reforestation MAE, Reforestation MAGAP (Ecuador) strengthened; Programa de Conservación de Bosques (Peru) improved to support conservation of High Andean Ecosystems.	Guidelines and assessments reports.	Local governments continue to take interest in mainstreaming biodiversity and carbon benefits into their development plans. Stakeholders and decision-makers are receptive to incorporating project resulting tools and knowledge in integrated land use and development planning.
	Number of national MRV systems strengthened by integrating scientifically validated protocols to monitor carbon fluxes and biodiversity status in high Andean ecosystems (SFM.PE.7.d & SFM.EC.6.d;	Ecuador and Peru have initiated the development of their MRV systems and its protocols to assess biodiversity status and carbon pools within the UNFCC and CBD frameworks. Yet, the majority of these are focused on tropical lowland ecosystems. National MRV systems	N/A	National MRV systems in Ecuador Peru strengthened	National MRV system documentation and procedures	

OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS	INDICATORS	BASELINE CONDITIONS	MID TERM TARGETS	EOP TARGETS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
	SFM.EC.7.g & SFM.PE.7.d)(CCM.EC.1.e & CCM.PE.1.e)	lack tools and protocols to integrate high Andean ecosystems into their national programs.				
	Number of thematic working groups formed and/or functioning	At least 3 thematic working groups are currently operating in the Andean region (GLORIA, iMHEA, RedBosques). However, they still require financial support.	3 existing thematic working groups strengthened to support the implementation of project actions at intervention sites with the participation of national environmental authorities.	At least 4 thematic working groups formed and/or strengthened to support the implementation of project actions at intervention sites with the participation of national environmental authorities.	Thematic working groups workshops proceedings.	
Outcome 4.2: Knowledge, tools and lessons learned disseminated among other local governments and key stakeholders outside the project intervention sites	Number of publications (or other media resources) that systematized lessons learned on SLM/SFM practices of the project (LD.EC.17.a, LD.PE.17.a; LD.EC.18.a - c, LD.PE.18.a - c)	International development projects have produced technical reports on some SLM practices. No practices exist on management of Andean native forests	N/A	At least one publication of lessons learned on SLM/SFM practices disseminated	Publications (or other media resources)	Local governments continue to take interest in mainstreaming biodiversity and carbon benefits into their development plans.

OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS	INDICATORS	BASELINE CONDITIONS	MID TERM TARGETS	EOP TARGETS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
	Number of key stakeholders at different scales have been provided with information materials and tool kits on project results	Local governments and other key stakeholders lack assistance, information and tools to support the conservation and sustainable management of Andean ecosystems	N/A	At least 3 local governments outside project intervention sites (2 in Ecuador and 1 in Peru) are aware of validated actions to promote conservation and sustainable management Andean ecosystems management.	Workshops and tool kits	Stakeholders and decision-makers are receptive to incorporating project resulting tools and knowledge in integrated land use and development planning.

OUTPUTS:

Outcome 4.1: National environmental authorities and incentive programs in Ecuador and Peru incorporate science based knowledge and tools developed by the project

1. At least four financial incentive programs strengthened (3 in Ecuador and 1 in Peru) to increase investments effectiveness (CCM.EC.1.a – c & CCM.PE.1.a – c).
2. National MRV systems of Ecuador and Peru strengthened for monitoring climate change and land use impacts (SFM.PE.7.d & SFM.EC.6.d; SFM.EC.7.g & SFM.PE.7.d; CCM.EC.1.e & CCM.PE.1.e)
3. At least 4 thematic working groups (including the participation of national authorities) formed and/or strengthened to replicate project actions in areas beyond intervention sites.

Outcome 4.2: Knowledge, tools and lessons learned disseminated among other local governments and key stakeholders beyond intervention sites

4. At least one publication of lessons learned on SLM/SFM practices disseminated among key stakeholders, including local communities (LD.EC.17.a, LD.PE.17.a; LD.EC.18.a -c, LD.PE.18.a - c)

5. Tool kit produced of project findings (lessons learned and SLM/SFM practices) produced for use by participating regional governments for promoting conservation and sustainable management of Andean ecosystems.
6. At least 3 local governments outside project intervention sites (2 in Ecuador and 1 in Peru) are aware of validated actions to promote conservation and sustainable management Andean ecosystems management (BD.EC.11.a - e; BD.PE.11.a – e).

ANNEX 7. Financial Management Evaluation Rating

Financial management components:	Rating	Evidence/ Comments
1. Completeness of project financial information:	**S**	
Provision of key documents to the evaluator (based on the responses to A-G below)		
A. Co-financing and Project Cost's tables at design (by budget lines)	Yes	Prodoc included co-financing specified per source, per project component and per UNEP budget line
B. Revisions to the budget	n/a	Included in Anubis
C. All relevant project legal agreements (e.g. SSFA, PCA, ICA)	Yes	
D. Proof of fund transfers	Yes	
E. Proof of co-financing (cash and in-kind)	Yes	Commitment letters from sources. Cofinancing was reported at general level and not consistently associated with project results
F. A summary report on the project's expenditures during the life of the project (by budget lines, project components and/or annual level)	Yes	Financial progress and final reports. Project reported only per budget line, not per component
G. Copies of any completed audits and management responses *(where applicable)*	Yes	
H. Any other financial information that was required for this project (list):	Yes	Expenditure per project component (produced by administrator upon request by evaluator)
Any gaps in terms of financial information that could be indicative of shortcomings in the project's compliance with the UN Environment or donor rules	No	
Project Manager, Task Manager and Fund Management Officer responsiveness to financial requests during the evaluation process	HS	
2. Communication between finance and project management staff	**HS**	Project manager, M&E officer, EA director and IA staff continuously and fully aware of financial management.
Project Manager and/or Task Manager's level of awareness of the project's financial status.	HS	
Fund Management Officer's knowledge of project progress/status when disbursements are done.	HS	
Level of addressing and resolving financial management issues among Fund Management Officer and Project Manager/Task Manager.	HS	
Contact/communication between by Fund Management Officer, Project Manager/Task Manager during the preparation of financial and progress reports.	S	
Overall rating	**HS**	

ANNEX 8. Quality Assessment of the Evaluation Report

Evaluation Title:

Multiplying environmental and carbon benefits in high Andean ecosystems (ECOANDES)

All UN Environment evaluations are subject to a quality assessment by the Evaluation Office. This is an assessment of the quality of the evaluation product (i.e. evaluation report) and is dependent on more than just the consultant's efforts and skills. Nevertheless, the quality assessment is used as a tool for providing structured feedback to evaluation consultants, especially at draft report stage. This guidance is provided to support consistency in assessment across different Evaluation Managers and to make the assessment process as transparent as possible.

	UN Environment Evaluation Office Comments	Final Report Rating
Substantive Report Quality Criteria		
Quality of the Executive Summary: The Summary should be able to stand alone as an accurate summary of the main evaluation product. It should include a concise overview of the evaluation object; clear summary of the evaluation objectives and scope; overall evaluation rating of the project and key features of performance (strengths and weaknesses) against exceptional criteria (plus reference to where the evaluation ratings table can be found within the report); summary of the main findings of the exercise, including a synthesis of main conclusions (which include a summary response to key strategic evaluation questions), lessons learned and recommendations.	Final report: Covers all required elements in a concise way. Includes Exec Summary translated into Spanish.	5.5
I. Introduction A brief introduction should be given identifying, where possible and relevant, the following: institutional context of the project (sub-programme, Division, regions/countries where implemented) and coverage of the evaluation; date of PRC approval and project document signature); results frameworks to which it contributes (e.g. Expected Accomplishment in POW); project duration and start/end dates; number of project phases (where appropriate); implementing partners; total secured budget and whether the project has been evaluated in the past (e.g. mid-term, part of a synthesis evaluation, evaluated by another agency etc.) Consider the extent to which the introduction includes a concise statement of the purpose of the evaluation and the key intended audience for the findings?	Final report: Concise and complete section.	6
II. Evaluation Methods This section should include a description of how the *TOC at Evaluation*[56] was designed (who was involved etc.) and applied to the context of the project? A data collection section should include: a description of evaluation methods and information sources used, including the number and type of respondents; justification for methods used (e.g. qualitative/ quantitative; electronic/face-to-face); any selection criteria used to identify respondents, case studies or sites/countries visited; strategies used to increase stakeholder engagement and consultation; details of how data were verified (e.g. triangulation, review by stakeholders etc.).	Final report: Good description of methods used during the full evaluation process.	6

[56] During the Inception Phase of the evaluation process a *TOC at Design* is created based on the information contained in the approved project documents (these may include either logical framework or a TOC or narrative descriptions). During the evaluation process this TOC is revised based on changes made during project intervention and becomes the *TOC at Evaluation*.

	UN Environment Evaluation Office Comments	Final Report Rating
Methods to ensure that potentially excluded groups (excluded by gender, vulnerability or marginalisation) are reached and their experiences captured effectively, should be made explicit in this section. The methods used to analyse data (e.g. scoring; coding; thematic analysis etc.) should be described.		
III. The Project This section should include: • *Context:* Overview of the main issue that the project is trying to address, its root causes and consequences on the environment and human well-being (i.e. synopsis of the problem and situational analyses). • *Objectives and components*: Summary of the project's results hierarchy as stated in the ProDoc (or as officially revised) • *Stakeholders:* Description of groups of targeted stakeholders organised according to relevant common characteristics • *Project implementation structure and partners:* A description of the implementation structure with diagram and a list of key project partners • *Changes in design during implementation:* Any key events that affected the project's scope or parameters should be described in brief in chronological order • *Project financing:* Completed tables of: (a) budget at design and expenditure by components (b) planned and actual sources of funding/co-financing	Final report: All elements succinctly covered.	6
IV. Theory of Change The TOC at Evaluation should be presented clearly in both diagrammatic and narrative forms. Clear articulation of each major causal pathway is expected, (starting from outputs to long term impact), including explanations of all drivers and assumptions as well as the expected roles of key actors. Where the project results as stated in the project design documents (or formal revisions of the project design) are not an accurate reflection of the project's intentions or do not follow OECD/DAC definitions of different results levels, project results may need to be re-phrased or reformulated. In such cases, a summary of the project's results hierarchy should be presented for: a) the results as stated in the approved/revised Prodoc logframe/TOC and b) as formulated in the TOC at Evaluation. *The two results hierarchies should be presented as a two column table to show clearly that, although wording and placement may have changed, the results 'goal posts' have not been 'moved'.*	Final report: TOC is well presented diagrammatically and through the narrative with causal pathways identified and discussed.	6
V. Key Findings **A. Strategic relevance:** This section should include an assessment of the project's relevance in relation to UN Environment's mandate and its alignment with UN Environment's policies and strategies at the time of project approval. An assessment of the complementarity of the project with other interventions addressing the needs of the same target groups should be included. Consider the extent to which all four elements have been addressed:	Final report: Well-covered. The inclusion of numbered findings under each criterion is recognised and appreciated.	6

	UN Environment Evaluation Office Comments	Final Report Rating
i. Alignment to the UN Environment Medium Term Strategy (MTS) and Programme of Work (POW) ii. Alignment to UN Environment/ Donor/GEF Strategic Priorities iii. Relevance to Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities iv. Complementarity with Existing Interventions		
B. Quality of Project Design To what extent are the strength and weaknesses of the project design effectively summarized?	Final report: Project design strengths and weaknesses are well summarised.	6
C. Nature of the External Context For projects where this is appropriate, key external features of the project's implementing context that limited the project's performance (e.g. conflict, natural disaster, political upheaval), and how they affected performance, should be described.	Final report: Appropriately covered	6
D. Effectiveness **(i) Outputs and Direct Outcomes:** How well does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of the a) delivery of outputs, and b) achievement of direct outcomes? How convincing is the discussion of attribution and contribution, as well as the constraints to attributing effects to the intervention. The effects of the intervention on differentiated groups, including those with specific needs due to gender, vulnerability or marginalisation, should be discussed explicitly.	Final report: Well-covered – adequate output detail provided in accessible table format. Achievement of outcomes well analysed.	6
(ii) Likelihood of Impact: How well does the report present an integrated analysis, guided by the causal pathways represented by the TOC, of all evidence relating to likelihood of impact? How well are change processes explained and the roles of key actors, as well as drivers and assumptions, explicitly discussed? Any unintended negative effects of the project should be discussed under Effectiveness, especially negative effects on disadvantaged groups.	Final report: Good discussion of likelihood of impact, including discussion of assumptions.	6
E. Financial Management This section should contain an integrated analysis of all dimensions evaluated under financial management and include a completed 'financial management' table. Consider how well the report addresses the following: • *completeness* of financial information, including the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used • *communication* between financial and project management staff	Final report: Good discussion of financial management (Annex 7 provides details for the ratings)	6
F. Efficiency To what extent, and how well, does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of efficiency under the primary categories of cost-effectiveness and timeliness including: • Implications of delays and no cost extensions • Time-saving measures put in place to maximise results within the secured budget and agreed project timeframe	Final report: Good discussion of efficiency.	6

	UN Environment Evaluation Office Comments	Final Report Rating
• Discussion of making use of/building on pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. • The extent to which the management of the project minimised UN Environment's environmental footprint.		
G. Monitoring and Reporting How well does the report assess: • Monitoring design and budgeting *(including SMART indicators, resources for MTE/R etc.)* • Monitoring of project implementation *(including use of monitoring data for adaptive management)* • Project reporting *(e.g. PIMS and donor report)*	Final report: Substantial discussion provided but not under the three sub-categories. Sufficient material is provided to justify the three ratings.	5
H. Sustainability How well does the evaluation identify and assess the key conditions or factors that are likely to undermine or contribute to the persistence of achieved direct outcomes including: • Socio-political Sustainability • Financial Sustainability • Institutional Sustainability	Final report: Detailed discussion of the three aspects of sustainability.	6
I. Factors Affecting Performance These factors are <u>not</u> discussed in stand-alone sections but are **integrated in criteria A-H as appropriate**. Note that these are described in the Evaluation Criteria Ratings Matrix. To what extent, and how well, does the evaluation report cover the following cross-cutting themes: • Preparation and readiness • Quality of project management and supervision[57] • Stakeholder participation and co-operation • Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity • Country ownership and driven-ness • Communication and public awareness	Final report: Adequately discussed either in this section or throughout the report. The project does not allow for any in-depth insights into human rights/gender perspectives or effects.	5
VI. Conclusions and Recommendations **i. Quality of the conclusions:** The key strategic questions should be clearly and succinctly addressed within the conclusions section. It is expected that the conclusions will highlight the main strengths and weaknesses of the project, and connect them in a compelling story line. Human rights and gender dimensions of the intervention (e.g. how these dimensions were considered, addressed or impacted on) should be discussed explicitly. Conclusions, as well as lessons and recommendations, should be consistent with the evidence presented in the main body of the report.	Final report: Conclusions are relevant, justified clearly laid out.	6
ii) Quality and utility of the lessons: Both positive and negative lessons are expected and duplication with recommendations should be avoided. Based on explicit evaluation findings, lessons should be rooted in real project experiences or derived from problems encountered and mistakes made that should be avoided in the future. Lessons must have the potential for wider application and use and should briefly describe the context from which they are derived and those contexts in which they may be useful.	Final report: Good section	6

[57] In some cases 'project management and supervision' will refer to the supervision and guidance provided by UN Environment to implementing partners and national governments while in others, specifically for GEF funded projects, it will refer to the project management performance of the executing agency and the technical backstopping provided by UN Environment.

	UN Environment Evaluation Office Comments	Final Report Rating
iii) Quality and utility of the recommendations: To what extent are the recommendations proposals for specific action to be taken by identified people/position-holders to resolve concrete problems affecting the project or the sustainability of its results? They should be feasible to implement within the timeframe and resources available (including local capacities) and specific in terms of who would do what and when. At least one recommendation relating to strengthening the human rights and gender dimensions of UN Environment interventions, should be given. Recommendations should represent a measurable performance target in order that the Evaluation Office can monitor and assess compliance with the recommendations.	Final report: Recommendations for the Executing Agency and UNEP are provided.	6
VII. Report Structure and Presentation Quality		
i) Structure and completeness of the report: To what extent does the report follow the Evaluation Office guidelines? Are all requested Annexes included and complete?	Final report: All guidelines on structure have been followed.	6
ii) **Quality of writing and formatting:** Consider whether the report is well written (clear English language and grammar) with language that is adequate in quality and tone for an official document? Do visual aids, such as maps and graphs convey key information? Does the report follow Evaluation Office formatting guidelines?	Final report: Well-written, includes maps and tables.	6
OVERALL REPORT QUALITY RATING		**6 Highly Satisfactory**

A number rating 1-6 is used for each criterion: Highly Satisfactory = 6, Satisfactory = 5, Moderately Satisfactory = 4, Moderately Unsatisfactory = 3, Unsatisfactory = 2, Highly Unsatisfactory = 1. The overall quality of the evaluation report is calculated by taking the mean score of all rated quality criteria.

At the end of the evaluation, compliance of the evaluation process against the agreed standard procedures is assessed, based on the table below. *All questions with negative compliance must be explained further in the table below.*

Evaluation Process Quality Criteria	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Independence:		
1. Were the Terms of Reference drafted and finalised by the Evaluation Office?	**Y**	
2. Were possible conflicts of interest of proposed Evaluation Consultant(s) appraised and addressed in the final selection?	**Y**	
3. Was the final selection of the Evaluation Consultant(s) made by the Evaluation Office?	**Y**	
4. Was the evaluator contracted directly by the Evaluation Office?	**Y**	
5. Was the Evaluation Consultant given direct access to identified external stakeholders in order to adequately present and discuss the findings, as appropriate?	**Y**	
6. Did the Evaluation Consultant raise any concerns about being unable to work freely and without interference or undue pressure from project staff or the Evaluation Office?		**N**
7. If Yes to Q6: Were these concerns resolved to the mutual satisfaction of both the Evaluation Consultant and the Evaluation Manager?	**N/A**	
Financial Management:		
8. Was the evaluation budget approved at project design available for the evaluation?	**Y**	
9. Was the final evaluation budget agreed and approved by the Evaluation Office?	**Y**	
10. Were the agreed evaluation funds readily available to support the payment of the evaluation contract throughout the payment process?	**Y**	
Timeliness:		
11. If a Terminal Evaluation: Was the evaluation initiated within the period of six months before or after project operational completion? Or, if a Mid Term Evaluation: Was the evaluation initiated within a six-month period prior to the project's mid-point?	**Y**	
12. Were all deadlines set in the Terms of Reference respected, as far as unforeseen circumstances allowed?	**Y**	
13. Was the inception report delivered and reviewed/approved prior to commencing any travel?	**Y**	
Project's engagement and support:		
14. Did the project team, Sub-Programme Coordinator and identified project stakeholders provide comments on the evaluation Terms of Reference?	**Y**	
15. Did the project make available all required/requested documents?	**Y**	
16. Did the project make all financial information (and audit reports if applicable) available in a timely manner and to an acceptable level of completeness?	**Y**	
17. Was adequate support provided by the project to the evaluator(s) in planning and conducting evaluation missions?	**Y**	
18. Was close communication between the Evaluation Consultant, Evaluation Office and project team maintained throughout the evaluation?	**Y**	
19. Were evaluation findings, lessons and recommendations adequately discussed with the project team for ownership to be established?	Y	
20. Did the project team, Sub-Programme Coordinator and any identified project stakeholders provide comments on the draft evaluation report?	**Y**	
Quality assurance:		
21. Were the evaluation Terms of Reference, including the key evaluation questions, peer-reviewed?		**N**
22. Was the TOC in the inception report peer-reviewed?		**N**
23. Was the quality of the draft/cleared report checked by the Evaluation Manager and Peer Reviewer prior to dissemination to stakeholders for comments?		**N**
24. Did the Evaluation Office complete an assessment of the quality of both the draft and final reports?	**Y**	
Transparency:		
25. Was the draft evaluation report sent directly by the Evaluation Consultant to the Evaluation Office?	**Y**	
26. Did the Evaluation Manager disseminate (or authorize dissemination) of the cleared draft report to the project team, Sub-Programme Coordinator and other key internal	**Y**	

	personnel (including the Reference Group where appropriate) to solicit formal comments?		
27.	Did the Evaluation Manager disseminate (or authorize dissemination) appropriate drafts of the report to identified external stakeholders, including key partners and funders, to solicit formal comments?	**Y**	
28.	Were all stakeholder comments to the draft evaluation report sent directly to the Evaluation Office	**Y**	
29.	Did the Evaluation Consultant(s) respond adequately to all factual corrections and comments?	**Y**	
30.	Did the Evaluation Office share substantive comments and Evaluation Consultant responses with those who commented, as appropriate?	**Y**	

Provide comments / explanations / mitigating circumstances below for any non-compliant process issues.

Process Criterion Number	**Evaluation Office Comments**
21-23	Staffing levels in the UNEP Evaluation Office did not allow for a Peer Review during this evaluation process.