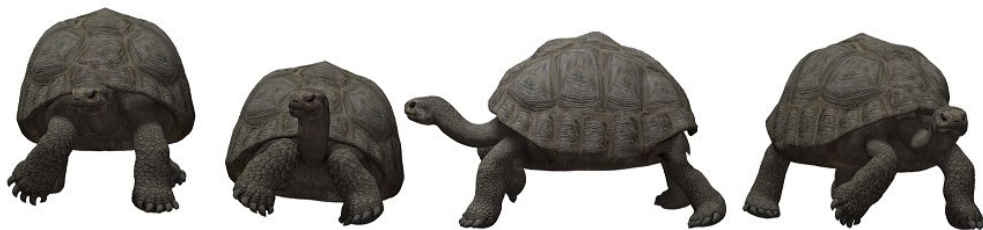


MID-TERM EVALUATION (MTR) CI-GEF PROJECT AGENCY

Safeguarding biodiversity in the Galapagos Islands by enhancing biosecurity and creating the enabling environment for the restoration of Galapagos Island ecosystems



Ecuador

FINAL REPORT

CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL

Asesoramiento Ambiental Estratégico (AAE)

June 17, 2021

MINISTERIO DEL
AMBIENTE Y AGUA



AGENCIA DE REGULACIÓN Y
CONTROL DE LA BIOSEGURIDAD Y
CUARENTENA PARA GALÁPAGOS



Asesoramiento
Ambiental
Estratégico

Table of Contents

Acronyms	5
I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	6
I.1 Project Description.....	7
I.2 Summary of Project Progress.....	8
I.3 Summary of Conclusions.....	15
II. Introduction: Purpose, Scope, and Methodology.....	19
II.1. Purpose of the MTR and Objectives	19
II.2. The Scope of the MTR	21
II.3 Methodology.....	23
II.4 Limitation of Methodology	29
III. PROJECT CONTEXT AND DESCRIPTION	29
III.1 The Development Context	29
<i>III.1.1. The Environmental Context.....</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>III.1.2. The Socio-economic Context</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>III.1.3. Global Environmental Problems and Root Causes</i>	<i>32</i>
<i>III.1.4. Baseline Actions</i>	<i>34</i>
<i>III.1.5. Barriers to Addressing Global Environmental Problems and Root Causes</i>	<i>35</i>
III.2 Project Strategy.....	36
<i>III.2.1 Theory of Change</i>	<i>36</i>
<i>III.2.2. Project Approach.....</i>	<i>37</i>
<i>III.2.3. Project Results Framework.....</i>	<i>39</i>
<i>III.2.4. Project Geography</i>	<i>44</i>
<i>III.2.5 Implementation Arrangements and Governance</i>	<i>45</i>
IV. FINDINGS	48
IV.1 Project Justification.....	48
IV.2 Project Design and Strategy.....	50
<i>IV.2.1. Theory of Change</i>	<i>50</i>
<i>IV.2.2. The Project Design Architecture.....</i>	<i>52</i>
IV.3 Progress Towards Results	55
IV.3.1. Overall Progress Towards Results.....	55
<i>IV.3.1.1. Efficiency in Progress Towards Results: Budget Execution</i>	<i>55</i>
<i>IV.3.1.2. Efficiency in Progress Towards Results: Cofinancing</i>	<i>59</i>

IV.3.1.2. Effectiveness in Progress Towards Results	61
IV.3.1.3. Effectiveness in Progress Towards Results: Component 1: Biosecurity	62
IV.3.1.4. Effectiveness in Progress Towards Results: Component 2: Social License	65
IV.3.1.5. Effectiveness in Progress Towards Results: Component 3: Reproduction of Tortoises.....	69
V. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT	74
V.1. Project Management.....	74
V.1.1. Recruitment and Staffing.....	74
V.1.2. Productive Work Environment.....	75
V.1.3. Proactive and Adaptive Management and Planning	75
V.1.4. Monitoring and Reporting	75
V.1.5. Planning and Budget	76
V.2. Assessing and Managing Risks.....	76
V.3. Institutional Relationships	77
V.4. Financial Management.....	77
VI. SAFEGUARDS.....	78
VI.1. Environmental Safeguards	80
VI.2 Gender Mainstreaming.....	81
VI.3 Accountability and Grievance Mechanism	82
VII.5 Stakeholder Engagement Plan.....	82
VII Sustainability.....	84
VIII CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION.....	87
V.1 Conclusions	87
V.2 Recommendations	91
Annexes.....	94
Annex I. Terms of Reference.....	94
Annex II. MTR Evaluation Matrix	106
Annex III. Interview Guide.....	115
Annex IV. MTR Ratings	121
Annex V. MTR Workplan.....	122
Annex VI. Implemented MTR Agenda.....	123
Annex VII. Checklist of Documents Reviewed	127
Annex VII. Summary Table of Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations.....	129
Annex IX. UNEG Code of Conduct for Midterm Review Consultants	144

Annex X. Audit Trail..... 145

Acronyms

ABG	Galapagos Biosecurity Agency
AZE	The Alliance for Zero Extinction
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CCREG	Consejo de Gobierno del Régimen Especial de Galápagos
CDF	Charles Darwin Foundation
CI-E	Conservation International- Ecuador
DERA	UK Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs'
DPNG	Galapagos National Park Directorate
EA	Executing Agency
EDRR	Early detection / Rapid Response
EMP	Environmental Management Plan
ESIA	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FEIG	Fund for Control of Invasive Species in the Galapagos
FPC	Floreana Parish Council
GEBs	Global Environmental Benefits
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GOE	Government of Ecuador
GTRI	Giant Tortoise Restoration Initiative
IA	Implementing Agency
IBAs	Important Bird Areas
IC	Island Conservation
INGALA	National Institute of the Galapagos
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
MAE	Ministry of Environment
MAG	Ministry of Agriculture
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PIR	Project Implementation Report
PSC	Project Steering Committee
SEP	Stakeholder Engagement Plan
SICGAL	Galapagos Inspection and Quarantine System
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Name: Safeguarding Biodiversity in the Galapagos Islands by Enhancing Biosecurity and Creating the Enabling Environment for the Restoration of Galapagos Island Ecosystems			
CI ID for the project:	NA	PIF Date of approval:	01 NOV 17
GEF ID for the project (PIMS #):	GEF ID 9282	CEO Authorization date:	13 DEC 18
business unit, File No.; Project ID (Award # Project ID)	NA	Project Document Date of signing (project start date):	15 FEB 19
Country	Ecuador	Project director hiring date:	
Region	Galapagos	Initiation workshop date:	29 APR 19
Action area		Date of completion of the mid-term exam:	17 JUN 21
Strategic Objective of the GEF's area of action:	Biodiversity (BD2) Program 4: Control of Invasive species	Expected completion date:	31 OCT 21
Trust Fund (indicate GEF TF; LDCF; SCCF; NPIF):	GEF TF	In case of revision, new expected completion date	31 APR 22
Executing Agency (EA) / Implementing Agency (IA):	Island Conservation (IC) / Conservation International (CI-GEF)		
Other executing partners:	Galapagos National Park Directorate, Galapagos Biosecurity Agency, Galapagos Conservancy		
Project Financing	<i>At the date of CEO Endorsement (US \$)</i>		<i>At the date of the Mid-Term Evaluation (US \$) ¹</i>
(1) GEF Project Funding:	3,301,472		2,267,559
(2) PPG Funding:	120,000		
Total GEF Grant:	3,421,472		
(3) Cofinancing 1; Cons. Intl. (IA)	70,000		0
(4) Cofinancing 2; GNPD (GOE):	10,500,000		5,700,000
(5) Cofinancing 3; GBA (GOE)	4,500,00		2,550,000
(6) Cofinancing 4; Island Cons. (EA):	1,400,000		1,800,000
(7) Cofinancing 5; Galapagos Cons.	1,925,000		1,541,000
Total Co-Financing:	18,395,000		11,591,000
TOTAL COST OF THE PROJECT:	21,626,472		13,858,559

¹ Conservation International Ecuador (CI-E) Quarterly Report Q3 del FY2021

I.1 Project Description

Invasive alien species are one of the most significant drivers of environmental degradation and species extinction worldwide and are generally considered the primary cause of biodiversity loss in island ecosystems. When invasive rodents, for example, feed on giant tortoise eggs and hatchlings they reduce the number of tortoises available to spread seeds and propagate the next generation of native trees and shrubs. As canopy cover declines, so do the populations of understory plants that require shading from the harsh tropical sun. The loss of understory vegetation makes landscapes more vulnerable to soil erosion and contributes to declines in soil fertility through mineral leaching. This impairs soil fertility and undermines the capacity of landscapes to be resilient to further perturbations (e.g., extreme weather events, climate change, etc.).

The objective of the project is “to safeguard biodiversity in the Galapagos Islands by enhancing biosecurity and creating the enabling environment for the restoration of Galapagos Island ecosystems.” This project strategy aims to safeguard biodiversity through long-term preventive and restorative strategies:

- (a) increasing the effectiveness of biosecurity controls so that new or additional invasive species do not enter the Galapagos, and through the eradication of existing invasive vertebrate species and
- (b) re-establishing the ecologic role of the Galapagos Giant Tortoise in the restoration of habitats through the selection and dispersion of native species across the landscape.

The Galapagos Biosecurity project contributes to these objectives through actions in 3 components:

Component 1: Furthering development of a state-of-the-art biosecurity system; Investments in systems, infrastructure, technical assistance, and training within the Galapagos Biosecurity Agency (ABG).

Component 2: Solidifying the social license and infrastructure for the protection and recovery of Floreana Island ecosystems: (i) Action Planning and Environment and Social Impact Assessments with the Galapagos National Park Directorate; (ii) the installation of secure infrastructure for animals; and (iii) consciousness raising, early notice, public comment, social license; approval of Risk Management Plans, and of the Floreana citizens to undertake eradication of invasive vertebrates in a future stage of development.

Component 3: Advancing the recovery of island ecosystems following invasive species eradication through the re-establishment of keystone species (*i.e.*, giant tortoises): Increase in breeding success through ex situ breeding in improved infrastructure, biological selection, and successful re-introduction to Santa Fe Island validated through biomonitoring and results published locally and in recognized, peer reviewed journals. This experience will inform the future introduction of tortoises to Floreana.

The project establishes the conditions for eventual restoration on Floreana Island. Because this would be the *first attempt at restoration involving both eradication and re-introduction of species on a populated island*, the GEF project subject of the Mid-term Review (MTR) seeks to develop the science and assumptions related to biosecurity and to ex situ production and re-introduction of giant tortoises and to create the environmental and social safeguards requisite

for future stages of development. The “enabling environment” is therefore realized through (a) increased efficiency, controls and procedures within GBA, (b) an informed and consensual and public declaration and government approval to launch eradication efforts, and (c) a proven and monitored experience in translocating and successfully reestablishing translocating a previously extirpated keystone species (giant tortoises) to Santa Fe Island as a proxy for eventual upscaling to Floreana post eradication of invasive vertebrates.

The project builds on the successful eradication of invasive vertebrates on Isabella and Santa Fe islands (both unpopulated) and the successful efforts to augment the tortoise population of various species through *ex situ* measures.

The project outcomes and outputs will lead to a restoration of the form and function of the Galapagos ecosystem that will increase biodiversity and improved ecotourism opportunities. Consequently, ecosystem services, agricultural production, and economic investments will be better secured.

I.2 Summary of Project Progress

The project entered the implementation phase in February 2019. Over the past two years, the project has achieved substantial progress towards a comprehensive strategy to safeguard the biodiversity of the Galapagos Islands through biosecurity and an enabling environment for ecosystem restoration. The project made significant progress in all of three components including the related safeguard plans and is poised to realize all outcomes. The project partners have made an effective effort in executing the project’s activities and realizing the project’s outputs. COVID-19 did cause delays that were effectively managed by the Project Management Unit (PMU). For that reason, the completion of Outcome 3 activities in modernizing tortoise breeding facilities should be permitted to run to the original expected completion date of the project with a no cost extension to facilitate any unforeseen delays, such as COVID resurgence and facilitate an effective administrative close once the results are realized.

Component 1 is on track to complete all outputs. Table 1 below presents a list of specific accomplishments per output achieved to the end of Q4 FY21. The outputs are being realized through a systematic assessment of the Biosecurity Inspection and Control System and its control points; the results of which informed the Galapagos Biosecurity Agency’s (ABG) Action Plan. The assessment included all potential stakeholders with a role in transport of Invasive Alien Species (IAS) in aerial and maritime transportation. The Action Plan addresses biosecurity challenges related to the two main transportation systems that connect Galapagos with the mainland across the major routes for the introduction of potential invasive alien species. The Biosecurity Action Plan focused-on increasing the efficiency of inspection and control of maritime freight and investigated additional means of interception as well as the feasibility of quarantine prior to departure measures in the maritime freight system. Improved detection equipment was procured and installed for inspection of baggage from air travel and maritime freight and x-rays and freezers for detection and quarantine at maritime sites. Kits to support identification of invasive species and training provided to inspectors. The system is approaching completion with the procurement of tracking and inventory scanners, barcoding, and stylized software for record keeping and data analysis with integrated training. The remaining system controls will be operational by the end-of-project (EOP). The project provided vehicles for ABG’s

Animal Control activities and infrastructure for the treatment of captured material. In addition, the project facilitated intensive quarantine of products destined to the National Park. COVID 19 had an impact on this outcome because decision-making processes related to the procurement of goods and services to support the outputs and activities was significantly protracted causing slower progress than initially planned.

In component 2, the project supported the construction of animal husbandry structures such as chicken coops and pig pens, etc. designed to control the risk of accidental poisoning as a safeguard to future eradication of rats and feral cats on Floreana Island. The structures support an integrated approach to promote sustainable agriculture and production of local goods. In addition, an updated Operational Plan and Risk Management plans for eradication of rodents were completed despite delays in interacting with stakeholders due to the COVID 19 epidemic. The development of both plans included a high degree of stakeholder engagement and discussion with all households and farm owners critical to a gender sensitive development of a social license for the Floreana. The social license was solidified through the signature of declarations by the Parish Council, local government, and central government agencies, and the Project Steering Committee.

In component 3, the Giant Tortoise Restoration Initiative (GTRI) in cooperation with the National Park translocated 155 juvenile giant tortoises from the Santa Cruz breeding center to Santa Fe Island. In addition, 31 sub-adult tortoises were translocated from Española to Santa Cruz for quarantine before being shipped to Santa Fe. The project also achieved significant progress towards increasing the capacity of the Giant Tortoise Breeding Program. A team of park rangers and scientists successfully located 31 adult giant tortoises with partial lineage of the Floreana Giant Tortoise on Wolf Volcano during a 10-day expedition and transferred them to Santa Cruz where they joined the breeding program. The activities related to this component required major logistics that involved a helicopter and the DPNG's ship Sierra Negra. The project is now in the process of modernizing and expanding the existing tortoise breeding facilities.

Overall, the restrictions related to the COVID 19 epidemic significantly affected the project's overall progress. In general, the restrictions put in place to contain the epidemic had a significant impact on all project components. In component 1 conducting the Action Plan in a participatory way was difficult due to travel restrictions, procurement of goods slowed down. In component 2, conducting the public consultations and research for the ESIA and the completion of the chicken coops had to wait until Floreana reopened. In component 3, tortoise corral expansion as well as field trips to collect tortoise eggs completely stopped during lockdown and restricted mobility phases of the pandemic.

The PMU team implemented an adaptive management response with continued planning during the downtime. All activities were in full implementation at the time of the MTR. The project managed to get back on track in FY21 by implementing adaptive measures such as:

- Continuous revision and adaptation of annual workplan and budget.
- Preparing of procurement packages in advance during contagious phase.
- Procurement of goods and services from local suppliers where possible and appropriate considering the project is on islands with strict travel restrictions.

As well as returning to the planned activities once the COVID 19 restrictions are relaxed or lifted. However, the pandemic continues to be a risk to project completion.

Table 1: Summary of MTR Valuations and Achievements:

Parameter	MTR valuation	Description of achievement
Project Justification	HS	The project is justified with empirical data that is disaggregated by gender
Project Design and Strategy	HS	The Theory-of-Change is on-track to be validated. project design, i.e., the combination of biosecurity with social license to support increased levels of biosecurity e.g., future eradication rats and feral cats from Floreana Island, and the expansion of tortoise breeding capacity and successful translocation of tortoises to Santa Fe Island provide the experience and lessons learned to enable tortoises to impress their impact on the distribution of native species of plants across the landscape.
Effectiveness: Progress in Achieving the Results	HS	The few outputs that are incomplete at MTR will likely be realized. Those are indicated as “S” and are trending upward. The composite of Ratings of HS from Components 1,2, and 3 allow us to assign a value of HS to the overall effectiveness rating.
Outcome 1.1: The number of invasive alien species entering the Galapagos archipelago is substantially reduced	HS	Biosecurity capacity has been increased to the limit of the Guayaquil and Galapagos maritime infrastructure. The system-level capacity has increased, equipment installed with training provided. The enabling process has clearly been achieved through a systematic process starting with a complete assessment to developing an action plan and finally proceeding to successful deployment of new infrastructure with commensurate planning and training.
Output 1.1.1.: Assessment of the biosecurity system	HS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A systematic assessment of the Biosecurity Inspection and Control System and its control points delivered in March 2020. Completed. • Biosecurity Action Plan. Delivered March 2021. Status: Completed.
Output 1.1.2.: Detection equipment deployed in appropriate infrastructure	HS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detection Equipment Deployed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ X – ray scanner for the passenger pier of Puerto Ayora operational. ▪ Biosecurity inspection kits deployed. ▪ ABG Lab equipped: centrifuge and humidity gauge deployed. • Detection equipment in procurement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ entomological & manual vacuum cleaners, ▪ insect dissection kit • (2) Vehicles deployed • Treatment of captured material <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Walk in freezers operational with improved infrastructure. Complete.

Parameter	MTR valuation	Description of achievement
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ESIA for municipal incinerator. Complete ▪ Adaptation of municipal pit for disposal of animal carcasses. In progress. • Intensified quarantine of products to National Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Walk in freezers operational with improved infrastructure in Santa Cruz and Floreana. • Strengthened Inspection at control points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Software development. In progress ▪ Procure and deploy automation equipment. Procurement in progress.
Output 1.1.3: Protocols updated, and capacities developed per Action Plan	HS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedural Manual updated per Action Plan. Completed. • Develop workflow analysis and programming. In progress. • Training on protocols, procedures and equipment use. Coordinated, pending implementation.
Outcome 2.1: Social acceptance for the protection and recovery of the of Floreana Island ecosystems is established	HS	Social License has been achieved for the future eradication of rats and feral cats on Floreana Island.
Output 2.1.1: Ecologically-sustainable farming practices instituted	HS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction of eight additional henhouses to support the transformation of livestock production practices. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 7 henhouses ▪ One storage shed. ▪ Total of 3 pig pens. Additional pig pens replace 8th hen house. <p>Completed</p>
Output 2.1.2: Approval of the declaration of the Parish Board of Floreana	HS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation and approval of a statement supporting biosecurity, the eradication of invasive rodents and wild cats, proper waste management, ecologically sustainable agriculture practices, and the reintroduction of species that are locally extinct in Floreana. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Declaration approved by Parish Board of Floreana, ▪ Approved by Autonomous Decentralized Municipal Government of San Cristobal. <p>Complete</p>
Output 2.1.3: Operational Plan for eradication of invasive rodents and wild cats approved	HS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop, in consultation with project partners, the Operational Plan for the eradication of invasive rodents and wild cats (including security, management of populated areas, rodent bait logistics, bait management and operational plans); Completed.

Parameter	MTR valuation	Description of achievement
by the Project Steering Committee		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval by the Project Steering Committee; Complete.
Output 2.1.4: Risk management plans developed in conjunction with the community and approved by the Project Steering Committee	HS	Risk Management Plans for application during eradication of rodents and feral cats from the island. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potable Water and Extension of Floreana's water system Protection plan for children, youth and handicapped Domestic dogs and cats Agriculture Production Animals Commercial rodents Fisheries Visitors Operational Plan, which includes the 8 Risk Management Plans, to the Parish Development Council. These are support documents are important to the EISA; Complete.
Output 2.1.5: Completed Environmental and Social Impact Study and corresponding approved environmental license	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A full EISA for the eradication of rats and feral cats compliant with MAAE standards and procedures and with the CI - GEF Implementation Agency norms for habitat management. Draft ESIA completed. Final draft ESIA in response to comments; draft in progress. Activity was highly impacted by COVID 19. Consultation was halted during the stay-at-home orders and during the months in which Floreana was closed to visitors. Finalization of EIAS planned for August 2021. Approval by PSC pending. An "S" is assigned because the activity is likely or on-track to be completed and is trending towards HS
Output 3.1.1: Giant tortoises (<i>Chelonoidis hoodensis</i> .) translocated to Santa Fe Island	HS	191 juvenile giant tortoises (<i>Chelonoidis hoodensis</i>) have been translocated to Santa Fe in Feb 2021. 155 juvenile giant tortoises (<i>Chelonoidis hoodensis</i>) have been translocated to Santa Fe in Dec 2019. 31 sub-adult giant tortoises (<i>Chelonoidis hoodensis</i>) have been translocated to Santa Fe. Complete.
Output 3.1.2: Tested and optimized monitoring and evaluation protocols accepted by the	HS	Monitoring and evaluation realized. Monitoring protocol developed and approved by PSC. Tortoises fitted with transponders. The last field trip to Santa Fe to follow up with the testing of monitoring variables in the field was accomplished on March 15, 2021. Complete.

Parameter	MTR valuation	Description of achievement
Project Steering Committee		
Outcome 3.2: Production in captivity of giant tortoises for future reintroductions throughout the archipelago is significantly increased	HS	<p>Production increase of tortoises in expanded facilities:</p> <p>In Santa Cruz, increase from an annual average of 200 to at least 400 tortoises annually from the populations of Española, Santiago, Floreana, Pinzón and Eastern Santa Cruz</p> <p>In Isabela, increase from an annual average of 200 to 300 tortoises annually from the populations of the Sierra Negra and Cerro Azul volcanoes</p> <p>Activity was severely affected by the pandemic. Increased “production” of tortoises has been significantly diminished because: 1) expanded facilities are still under construction, and 2) field trips to gather tortoise eggs in the wild and bring them to the head start program were cancelled due stay at home orders. Finally, the captive breeding programs of Española and Pinzon were closed as they reached their goals during project implementation.</p> <p>In progress.</p>
Output 3.2.1: Number of centers modernized and expanded	S	Contracting process was significantly protracted due to COVID 19. construction is underway. Will be completed by the end of the project. Trending towards HS.
Output 3.2.2: Giant tortoise breeding stock with partial ancestry of C. niger are selected, located and transferred to the Santa Cruz breeding center	HS	<p>31 giant tortoises were located and transferred to the Giant Tortoise Breeding Center on Santa Cruz.</p> <p>Completed</p>
Output 3.2.3: Scientific and technical findings reported in the professional and popular literature	HS	<p>1 Book Chapter published.</p> <p>1 presentation for an international event.</p> <p>1 peer reviewed Article accepted to a scientific journal.</p> <p>Completed.</p>
Efficiency	HS	Total Budget Execution to the end of the 4 th Quarter of Fiscal year 2021 is estimated at \$2,724,194 U.S. or 84% of the total project budget of \$3,301,472 U.S. This does not include obligations, which are estimated at an additional 20%. Roughly 90% of the budget was obligated by the end of Q3 2021. In spite of COVID-19,

Parameter	MTR valuation	Description of achievement
		<p>the PMU maintained a balanced budget execution across all outcomes:</p> <p>Component 1: 782,076 (82%)</p> <p>Component 2: 1,010,851 (89%)</p> <p>Component 3: 798,571 (83%)</p> <p>Project Management: 132,696 (31%)</p> <p>Co-financing: Of 18,395,000 pledged, \$11,591,000 U.S. (63%) has been mobilized.</p>
Project Implementation and adaptive management	HS	<p>Procurement 90% completed.</p> <p>Inception workshop completed April 2019.</p> <p>4 Safeguard Plans (Natural Heritage, Stakeholder engagement, Grievance Mechanism, and Gender) approved and in-force.</p> <p>Steering Committee Meeting as scheduled AWP for FY 2019, 2020, 2021 approved.</p> <p>M&E Plan operational, QRs for FY 2019, 2020, and 2021 completed and PIRs for FY2019, 2020 approved.</p> <p>Technical Management Committee meeting regularly.</p> <p>Mid-term Evaluation contracted and in-progress.</p>
Sustainability	L	<p>A sustainability ranking described in the report is “L” which is the highest possible ranking indicating that the project is likely to be sustainable and there is little or no risks to Sustainability. The MTR report presents that the socio-political considerations, institutional framework and governance, and environmental sustainability aspects are all positive and financial sustainability is likely. More information will be required to gauge financial sustainability at the Terminal Evaluation (TE) stage.</p> <p>The project contributed to institutional sustainability by developing a Biosecurity Action Plan and providing the tools, analysis and training for its successful implementation.</p> <p>Socio-political sustainability is assured through strong stakeholder awareness efforts and local and provincial government declarations supporting biosecurity and future eradication of exotic species of vertebrates enhances political sustainability.</p> <p>The social license obtained from the Floreana Parish council and the Autonomous Decentralized Municipal Government of San Cristobal enables the translocation</p>

Parameter	MTR valuation	Description of achievement
		<p>of Giant Tortoises to Floreana which will translate into improved biodiversity cover structure and function</p> <p>Baseline Public Service Announcements by several organizations and others inform the public about Galapagos' biosecurity, complementing the GEF alternative and enhancing social sustainability.</p> <p>Financial sustainability appears likely with strong long-term international partnerships provide expertise and financing streams. The GoE has revenue streams to support biosecurity through tourism fees. It also has the FEIG (resulted from GEF 3 funding round). These support the day-to-day operations, but they do not allow for one off "leap from" investments in infrastructure of major technology shifts.</p> <p>Technical feasibility is likely through the accumulated experience and expanded capture of germplasm and backbreeding <i>ex situ</i> will someday contribute to the recovery of several species of Galapagos Giant Tortoises.</p>

MTR Rating: Highly Satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Moderately Satisfactory (MS), Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), and Highly Unsatisfactory (H)

I.3 Summary of Conclusions

1. The project justification is complete and comprehensive in policy, social, environmental and the overall development context. The project documentation reviewed provides empirical evidence to justify the need for the project and established the project as a clear next step in a documented progression laid out by the GOE and involved stakeholders.
2. The long-term involvement of stakeholders and long-term, stable public-private relationships between project partners established over years of baseline activities makes the project resilient to political risks.
3. The overall impact of the project's biosecurity measures will be within the limits of current infrastructure. The Galapagos maritime port infrastructure is a persistent barrier to 100% control of invasive species entering into and travelling amongst the Galapagos Islands.
4. The TOC is sound and provides a documented and validated internal logic upon which the architecture of the project is built.
5. The outcome 1 indicator is not SMART. Is not specific or relevant to the expected outcome of more effective and efficient biosecurity.
6. The Survival of the translocated tortoises is a more specific indicator for outcome 3.1. The existing indicator of for outcome 3.1. "the coverage of land with seed dispersion" is a very good indicator at the Objective level.

7. The project design is sound. All outputs contribute to their corresponding outcomes and are internally consistent. The outcomes are independent yet related. A failure in one does not foment a failure in another, this exemplifies a “best practice” in strong project design.
8. IC did a good job at finding supplies and working with suppliers without succumbing to their excessive demands and hence avoided additional risk at to an already risky supply chain.
9. The project’s financial resources were effectively deployed despite COVID-19, the inherent difficulties in Galapagos’ supply chain, etc. The project is on-track to execute all project funds by the End-of-Project.
10. The project is generating benefits related to effectiveness: The reduced time for screening baggage leads to reduced time at ports, a better experience for tourists, and timely vessel departure.
11. The project is effectively addressing the technology and capacity barriers to the limits of the existing port infrastructure. Actions by AGB and parallel actions by INGOs in visitor education, and interdiction in Marine Environments, in combination with learning by the local population will effectively contribute to a positive outcome 1.1.
12. A no-cost extension that enables the project activities to extend to the project closure date followed by a period for administrative closure is necessary to assure the completion of all activities.
13. The strength of the relationships and long-term accompaniment of the executing agencies with the public has garnered trust and greatly facilitates the social license for a future eradication of invasive black rats and feral cats.
14. The project has effectively addressed the social barriers to eradication of vertebrate species on Floreana Island. The social license has been achieved.
15. The successful reintroduction and establishment of monitoring for ecosystem-level changes contributes to the project objective of increasing ecosystem restoration via a replacement specie. The monitoring protocol will demonstrate the attainment of the indicator for Outcome 3.1, the no. of hectares of territory with natural seed disbursement.
16. The project has established the foundation and processes for increasing the production capacity of giant tortoises for future reintroduction throughout the archipelago, fully achieving outcome 3.1.
17. The PMU received a Mid-term Rating of “HS” or Highly Satisfactory for total project management. In all the parameters, the PMU scores “HS” the highest ranking for excellence. The Implementing Agency has selected quality partners for project execution and provided quality tools and support to administrative and financial management of the project’s resources. The Executing Agency has recruited qualified staff and consultants; establishing a productive work environment; demonstrated adaptive management and proactive planning: quality monitoring and reporting; planning & budgeting: management of risks; and have maintained productive interinstitutional relationships and appropriate management of the project’s financial resources. This is a well-managed project.
18. The project is compliant with CI-GEFs ESS#2 and, although not triggered at project implementation, the safeguards, process, and the instruments being deployed by CI-GEF and the PMU are compliant with GEF Policy and Guidance on Environmental and Social Safeguards.
19. The project is compliant with GEF Gender Equality Policy (SD/PL/02) and Guidelines.

20. The Grievance mechanism and Stakeholder engagement strategy are compliant with CI's ESMF and is compliant with GEF Stakeholder Engagement Policy (SD/PL/01) and Guidelines.
21. The technical and human resource capacities developed are strengthening institutional ability to realize national strategies, such as ABG's strategic plan.
- ~~22.~~ The MTR was not able to evaluate the full suite of factors related to success at the outcome 1.1 level. Other important parallel factors may be having a positive contribution to achieving the outcome and could influence sustainability of the biosecurity measures.
- ~~23.~~ At this stage, the suite of stakeholders is adequate for the scope of the project. The TE might evaluate if that influence should be expanded to include new stakeholders going forward to address the 80% of cargo that enters through maritime pathways. See Recommendation #3 on a broader stakeholder forum for the next steps in biosecurity beyond this project.
24. The public-private partnerships are very effective in meeting long-term financial gains.
25. The MTR took place during a change in Political Administration. The effect of this change on political sustainability will not be known for several months.
26. Building the capacity of Floreana farmers to operate more productively and sustainably over the near and long-term will enhance sustainability as the returns on their installations and revenue from tourism reward them and lead them to a high level of stewardship.
27. This is a well-managed project. The Implementing Agency (IA) and Executing Agency (ES) have accommodated an effective PMU which received a Mid-term Rating of "HS" or Highly Satisfactory for total project management.

Table 2: Summary of Recommendations:

Rec #	Recommendation	Entity Responsible
A.	Project Design and Strategy	
A.1	Key Recommendation 1: Based on the new protocols and Action Plan, redefine the Outcome indicator 1 with a more specific metric, such as the number of bags, cargo containers, vessels etc. inspected and include these new metrics in ABG's monitoring protocol	CI-GEF, PMU, PSC
A.2	Key Recommendation 2: Consider a slight modification of the Outcome 3.1 indicator (amount of land with seed dispersion) as an indicator for the objective level. Consider simplifying the existing indicator to the survival rate of tortoises established and a total target population by the end of the project and perhaps 5 years into the future.	CI-GEF, PMU, PSC
A.3	Key Recommendation 3: Barriers: Infrastructure limitations. 80% of the cargo to the Galapagos is maritime. The port infrastructure is deficient in space and infrastructure proving insufficient to add the necessary equipment and quarantine space for the effective monitoring of maritime cargo. This will be the next steps in biosecurity. Analyze the Port infrastructure needs as part of the suite of barriers to be evaluated in future initiatives.	PSC, MAAE, ABG, Ministry of Public Works

B.1	COMPONENT/OUTCOME 1: Furthering development of a state-of-the-art biosecurity system	
B.2	Key Recommendation 4: Based on the new protocols and Action Plan, redefine the indicator with a more specific metric, such as the number of bags, cargo containers, vessels etc. inspected and include these new metrics in ABG's monitoring protocol.	CI-GEF; PMU
B	COMPONENT/OUTCOME 2: Solidifying the social infrastructure for the protection and recovery of Floreana Island ecosystems	
B.1	Key Recommendation 5: Once the project concludes with a final ESIA approved and installations in place, begin the next phase of development in the elimination of black rats and feral cats as soon as possible to take advantage of the momentum and social license generated by the project. Eradication is a prerequisite to the future tortoise introduction to Floreana Island.	
C	COMPONENT/OUTCOME 3: Advancing the recovery of island ecosystems following invasive species eradication through the re-establishment of keystone species (i.e., giant tortoises).	
C.1	Key Recommendation 6 Construction of improved breeding facilities within output 3.2.1. are now underway following delays due to COVID 19. The expansion of the facilities can be completed by the end of the project if the technical activities are allowed to continue up until the termination date of the project. Consider a no cost extension to enable an effective technical close by prolonging the administrative close of the project by 3 to 6 months following the official EOP date.	CI-GEF, IC, PSC
D.	PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT	
G.1	Key Recommendation 7: Conservation International, Island Conservation, the MAAE/DPNG, ABG and Galapagos Conservation and all other PSC members and project partners should be recognized by the GEF for a well-designed and well-managed project and a job well done to this point if the project continues to a successful close.	GEF Focal Point; CI-GEF
	RISK ASSESSMENT	
	Key recommendation 8: COVID was a new risk to the project not foreseen in the project's risk profile. The project partners have found a way to manage the project despite the effects of COVID. Monitor the effects of the post COVID economic recovery, such as special deals to increment tourism and agriculture for impacts that could set-back restoration work.	CI-GEF. PSC, IC
	Key Recommendation 9: Monitor the change in political administration for possible changes to the project governance structure	CI-GEF. PSC, IC
I	SUSTAINABILITY	
I.1	Key Recommendation 10: Consider public outreach as an ongoing as well as future area for development to enhance the sustainability of the investments in biosecurity aimed at avoidance of invasive species.	IC, ABG, DPNG

	Continue to target the resident population and mainland suppliers that ship to Galapagos.	
	Key Recommendation 11: Consider including the Ministry of Public Works, in charge of maritime pier infrastructure in the sharing of results and lessons learned from this project.	PSC, ABG
	Key Recommendation 12: Consider collecting all possible cost assessments for the recurring costs of infrastructure maintenance and long-term monitoring as well as the maintenance of ABGs infrastructure to enable the evaluation of financial sustainability during the Terminal Evaluation.	IC, DNP, GC
	Key Recommendation 12: At the TE, analyze the effects of change in political administration on the sustainability of the project	CI-GEF, PSC

II. Introduction: Purpose, Scope, and Methodology

II.1. Purpose of the MTR and Objectives

The purpose and objective of the evaluation was presented in the published Terms-of-Reference (TOR) for the consultancy and were confirmed with the principal GEF, CI and government partners during an Inception Workshop held on 19 April 2021.

The Subject of the MTR and Relevant Context:

As defined by GEF, “a Mid-Term Review (MTR) is an assessment of a project’s or program’s performance and results, carried out for adaptive management purposes at the midpoint of a project’s or program’s intended duration².” The evaluation is an independent technical and financial Mid-term Review (MTR) of the *GEF Safeguarding Biodiversity in the Galapagos Islands by Enhancing Biosecurity and Creating the Enabling Environment for the Restoration of Galapagos Island Ecosystems (GEF ID 9282)*. In adherence to GEF requirements, Conservation International (CI-GEF), the GEF Implementing Agency, contracted Asesoramiento Ambiental Estratégico -AAE- an independent consulting firm to execute the MTR. The project is an important initiative that facilitates an enabling environment for the re-introduction of genetically appropriate Galapagos Tortoises to Floreana Island by controlling invasive species; obtaining a social license for the eventual removal of invasive vertebrates; and testing the reintroduction of tortoise species from selective ex situ breeding and expanded breeding infrastructure.

The Purpose of the MTR:

GEF Agencies and project partners use the MTR as a monitoring tool to track progress towards the completion of the outputs based-on the indicators presented; identify challenges to project implementation and outline corrective actions; and, if warranted, to ensure that a project will achieve maximum results by its completion. For the GEF Secretariat the MTR is a portfolio monitoring tool and facilitates learning from good practice and stakeholder participation. For

² Global Environment Facility. June 2019. Policy on Monitoring, GEF/C.56/03/Rev.01 URL: https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting-documents/EN_GEF.C.56.03.Rev_01_Policy_on_Monitoring.pdf ; accessed 02 February 2021

the government of Ecuador, the evaluation will provide information to inform decision-making based on lessons learned. The MTR is a cornerstone of the project's monitoring and evaluation plan. This is of critical importance in lieu of the effect of the global pandemic-related shocks experienced in 2020 and extending into 2021. Due to delays related to COVID-19, the MTR was implemented approximately 10 months after the targeted date of March 2020.

The purpose and objectives of the MTR were confirmed in an inception workshop on 19 April 2021 between AAE and principal Conservation International GEF Project Agency (CI GEF), and key representatives of the executing agency, Island Conservation. Initial interviews with the CI-GEF, GEF Focal points, the Government of Ecuador's national project director further validated information needs to be considered during the MTR.

The core product is the following MTR report that analyzes:

- **Relevance** of the project design to the objectives of the GEF biodiversity focal area and to the priorities of the government of Ecuador and the National Protected Areas System, the Galapagos National Park and Parish Development Plans.
- **Effectiveness** of the project strategy in achieving the expected results based-on projections presented in the Project Document (PRODOC), in the Logical Framework and other related documents?
- **Efficiency:** Are the project's being implemented and executed efficiently in accordance with national, GEF and CI guidance and standards? How have the implementing and executing agencies adapted to changing conditions and challenges?
- **Sustainability:** The extent to which the financial, institutional, socio-economic and/or environmental risks can maintain project results in the long term in addition to social and environmental safeguards, gender management plans

The following report provides insights into the environmental and social safeguards; stakeholder and gender action plans; lessons learned to date; and conclusions and recommendations for adaptation if warranted, that will guide future project execution.

The above parameters were assessed during the following stages:

1. a Desk Review of the literature.
2. an MTR Inception Workshop.
3. an Inception Report incorporating comments.
4. implementation of the MTR interviews and surveys as needed.
5. presentation of findings for discussion.
6. draft Report with annexes for CI-GEF agency review.
7. a final report submitted with comments incorporated.

The focus of the MTR was primarily at the output level as these are framed in the Project's approved Results Framework (RF) in the approved project document. The MTR also provides a comprehensive look at the project design including the RF and indicators for integrity and SMART³ characteristics.

The MTR also provides the GEF, Implementing and Executing Agencies and stakeholders with a snapshot of project progress, an analysis of the integrity of the project design, and a prognosis for the eventual attainment of the project's contribution towards its stated outcomes. The MTR Report presented below seeks to provide conclusions and targeted recommendations to inform

³ Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound.

an adaptive management process for achieving maximum impact during the remaining project timeline.

II.2. The Scope of the MTR

The scope of the MTR extends to the temporal, geographic, and thematic dimensions of the project.

The Temporal dimension of the evaluation covers the mid-cycle of the project under study, from the start of the project on 15 February 2019 with an end date of 31 October 2021 or 32.5 months. The MTR was implemented effectively from April to Q4FY2021 (June 2021) twelve-months behind the scheduled date of 30 Junio 2020.

The geographical dimension of the evaluation covered 3 geographies: International, Galapagos and Mainland areas. The international realm including CI-GEF, GEF Agency as applicable, international partners and representatives of aligned or previous projects with influence on the target project's outputs and expert international consultation. The second realm is the Galapagos Islands. A mission by an Ecuadorian team member to Santa Cruz and Floreana Island was realized for direct stakeholder consultation. Finally, the biosecurity installations in Puerto Ayora, Guayaquil on the Ecuadorian mainland were inspected. Due to COVID-related safeguards, all contact between the international members of the evaluation team and stakeholders was virtual.

In terms of content or programmatic scope, the evaluation process will respond to the Terms of Reference for the MTR (Annex 5). The MTR evolves from three aspects: (a) the Project Justification to know if the evaluation is responding to an adequately understood baseline and context; (b) the likelihood of the Project Strategy to achieve the projected outcomes; and (c) the feasibility of the project strategy and mechanisms for assessing and mitigating risks. These areas will be examined across the following evaluation categories⁴:

1. Project justification: Review of the project context (policy, environmental, socio-economic, country priorities, etc.), including the definition of problems and the barriers that impede actions towards effective responses to the stated problems. The MTR reassessed the project context to validate that the relevance of the project design to Ecuador's evolving national and sector policies and to the GEF BD Focal Area have been maintained. The evaluators were interested in the possible strengthening or resurgence of the barriers or the development of new ones, especially given the economic effects of COVID.
2. Project Strategy: An analysis of the **Theory-of-Change** and the architecture of the project's outcomes, outputs, indicators, and targets, their SMART characteristics as presented in the project's logical framework, and underlying assumptions. Of interest was the **coherence** of the project's strategic formulation in relation to the original project context, problems, and barriers. Evaluators validated the degree to which the project's outputs remain internally coherent based on the experience garnered through project implementation through a changing political, social, and economic landscape. Coherence also refers to the integrity of the internal logic of the project as expressed in the architecture of the Results Framework. Specifically, the relationship between activities to outputs, outputs to outcomes, and outcomes to the project's objective. Evaluators also analyzed the underlying assumptions that must prove true for the project's outcomes and outputs to be realized. Finally, evaluators assessed the

⁴ See Annex 4 for the complete Terms of Reference.

potential for the project strategy to reach the desired outcomes by the end of the project as a benchmark for the Terminal Evaluation Process.

3. Progress Towards Results: The progress towards results is the logical evaluation theme that interests most stakeholders. Based on the Results Framework, AAE's evaluators reviewed the completion of the project's activities to gauge the progress towards meeting the outputs and reviewed the status of achievement of the output per corresponding indicator. This provides both a time-based assessment of progress and reveals if the suite of activities implemented are sufficient to produce the desired result. The progress towards the delivery of each output is ranked from Highly Unsatisfactory (UH) to Highly Satisfactory (HS) with each output also being coded using the traffic light system with Green for "Completion;" Yellow for "Likely to be completed during the project;" and Red for "Unlikely to be completed." in addition, progress towards GEF focal area indicators and a comparative review of tracking tools⁵ was undertaken. Where deficiencies occurred, a general forensic review of implementation-related factors, barriers or the occurrence of project risks provided an understanding of the reasons for the ranking of performance noted. Conclusions and recommendations were noted to adjust the monitoring plan and to strengthen performance and achievement of the outputs, and ultimately outcomes, through an updated workplan.
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4. Project Governance: The governance analysis reviewed the project's management modality, governance structure and decision-making framework for effectiveness and efficiency. Evaluators assessed the effectiveness of the relationships between Implementing agencies and executing agencies, changes in administration and related effects. Evaluators also sought to understand the strength of the partnerships, their dynamics, the characteristics of each and their roles going forward and how these evolve from the roles originally set out at project initiation.
 5. Project Implementation and Adaptive Management: Technical and Financial execution, Project planning, monitoring, and reporting. -Quality of the management experience and effects on achieving project outputs in a timely manner.
 6. Safeguards: Safeguard mechanisms were prepared during the project formulation stage. These include Stakeholder Engagement, Gender, among others. Most of the safeguards include action plans and GEF policies and guidance, as presented above. These are important to the project to maintain a consistent dedication to stakeholder participation based on stakeholder diversity and to provide safe project alternatives that do not harm to the environment, communities, or individuals. Evaluators assessed the quality of these documents and the implementation of the various mechanisms.
 7. Risks: a reevaluation of the risk profile and the identification of any new risks.
 8. Sustainability: Assess financial, socio-economic, governance, environmental and other external risks to sustainability.

⁵Cite GEF 6 BD Tracking Tool here.

II.3 Methodology

II.3.1. The MTR Approach

The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the Norms and Standards, ethical and conduct guidelines defined by the GEF guidance⁶ on Monitoring including the following policies:

- Environmental and Social Safeguards (SD/PL/03)⁷ and Guidelines⁸
- Protection of Natural Habitats Policy (CI, ESS #2)⁹
- Gender Equality Policy (SD/PL/02)¹⁰ and Guidelines¹¹
- Stakeholder Engagement (SD/PL/01)¹² and Guidelines¹³
- Principles and Guidelines for Engagement with Indigenous Peoples (GEF/C.42/Inf.03/Rev.1)¹⁴
- Minimum Fiduciary Standards (GA/PL/02)¹⁵.

These are in addition to CI's Policy stating that, *Mid-term reviews and evaluations will abide by professional and ethical guidelines and codes with respect to research on human subjects as*

⁶ Global Environment Facility. June 2019. Policy on Monitoring, GEF/C.56/03/Rev.01 URL: https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/gef_environmental_social_safeguards_policy.pdf; accessed 02 February 2021.

⁷ Global Environment Facility. GEF/C.54/11/Rev.02 URL: http://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting-documents/EN_GEF.C.54.11.Rev_02_Results.pdf; accessed 02 February 2021.

⁸ _____. December 2019. Guidelines on GEF's Policy on Environmental and Social Safeguards. GEF/SD/GN/03 URL: https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/guidelines_gef_policy_environmental_social_safeguards.pdf; accessed 02 February 2021.

⁹ Conservation International; November 2020. CI-GEF Project Agency, Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF).

¹⁰ Global Environment Facility. November 2017. Policy on Gender Equality URL: https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/Gender_Equality_Policy.pdf; accessed 22 January 2021.

¹¹ _____. June 2017. Guidelines on Gender Equality. URL: https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/Gender_Equality_Guidelines.pdf; accessed 22 January 2021.

¹² _____. November 2017. Policy on Stakeholder Engagement. GEF/SD/PL/01. URL: https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/Stakeholder_Engagement_Policy_0.pdf; accessed 26 January 2021.

¹³ _____. December 2018. Guidelines on the Implementation of the Policy on Stakeholder Engagement. URL: https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/Stakeholder_Engagement_Guidelines.pdf; accessed 26 January 2021.

¹⁴ _____. October 2012. Principles and Guidelines for Engagement with Indigenous Peoples. URL: https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/publications/Indigenous_Peoples_Principle_EN.pdf accessed 19 January 2021.

¹⁵ _____. December 2019. Minimum Fiduciary Standards for GEF Partner Agencies. GEF/GA/PL/02. URL: https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/gef_minimum_fiduciary_standards_partner_agencies_2019.pdf; accessed 05 February 2021.

described in CI's human research ethics policy was mindful of differences in culture, language, customs, religious beliefs, and practices of all stakeholders.

Safeguard screening during project formulation triggered The Natural Habitats (ESS#2) of CI's Environment and Social Safeguard Standards¹⁶. Although the GEF Environment and Social Guidelines were not specifically triggered, the evaluators did scope for environmental issues through a full ESIA and action planning for future vertebrate eradication was completed and because the ESS#2 is directly in response to the GEF Environment and Social Policy and Guidelines. In addition, the conformity to the GEF Biodiversity BD2 focal area, Program 4 for Control of Invasive Species was established through the number of hectares of restored habitat expected and through successful Tortoise breeding and re-introduction.

Compliance with the established norms was evaluated through the document review of the ESIA, the Operations Plan for eradication on Floreana, the 8 Risk Management Documents and the approval letters and minutes of approval meetings by local council and by the Project Technical Committee (PTC) and Steering Committee (PSC).

In addition to compliance with GEF and CI norms, the evaluation process sought a mixed methodological approach focused on accountability and learning and as a result, adaptive management. Naturally, the MTR was based on the analysis of the completion of activities that lead to the achievement of outputs and collectively creating progress towards achieving outcomes. Through that process, the evaluators were able to test conformity with the guidelines mentioned above and gauge management efficiency, effectiveness, and ultimately adaptive management. This was particularly important given the effects of COVID on project execution.

Finally, AAE sought a participatory approach combining the evaluator's external assessment with the experience of internal and external stakeholders. This enabled the evaluators to maintain a fluid communication with the Project team, as well as representatives of implementing partners and stakeholder groups. Perspectives and proposals were openly exchanged during the process to develop and test realistic, practical, and readily implementable recommendations appropriate for the remaining timeframe of the project. In that context, the evaluation experience provided an opportunity for learning and problem solving.

11.3.2. Evaluation Criteria and Key Questions

The information obtained throughout the MTR is logically processed in terms of Progress Towards Results indicating "what" was accomplished. Information was also processed through two different lenses: effectiveness and efficiency, which define "how" the results were obtained. In addition, the relevance/coherence of the results with relation to the project design and national priorities and the analysis of sustainability of the results obtained define the parameters upon which the project's execution was based. These are defined as follows:

Effectiveness: Progress Towards Achieving Results.

The evaluators analyzed the project's progress towards achieving the results as defined in the GEF-approved project document package. To do so, the evaluators utilized the Progress

16

Towards Results Matrix (Figure 1) which was completed with the available information. In addition, the evaluators compared and analyzed the completion as per indicators against the last one completed before the MTR. This allowed evaluators to identify persisting or new barriers to the achievement of the objectives and to identify successful aspects of the project. The Progress Matrix adheres to the GEF color coding or “traffic light system” and combines the recognized rankings of HS (Highly Satisfactory) through HU (Highly Unsatisfactory).

Figure 1: Progress Towards Results Matrix

Progress towards results – Progress Matrix

Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline	Level at 1st PIR	Mid-term Target	Level at MTR	Ranking of achievement potential	Justification of Ranking
Objective	Indicator						
Result 1	Indicator 1						
	Indicator 2						
Result 2	Indicator 3						
	Indicator 4						
	Etc.						
Etc.							

Ranking:

Completed	On track for completion	Completion unlikely
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Budget execution also provided for a comparative analysis of information in combination with the activities listed in the project document. During the desktop review, information products (technical and financial reports) through Q4 of Fiscal Year 2021 were made available and provided the best possible snapshot of the project’s budget execution and technical progress. The CI-GEF project document presented indicative activities per output that served as benchmarks for gauging the degree of achievement of the outputs as defined by the indicators. These provided proxies to determine to progress at the output level and a prognosis of the likelihood that the planned activities could achieve the outcome or if there were missing activities critical to success.

The desktop survey revealed that, despite COVID, the project team appears to have significant progress towards outputs in all three components. To validate these observations, semi-structured interviews with counterparts and their technical staff informed a mission to port facilities in Guayaquil and to Santa Cruz, Galapagos where the quality and use of biosecurity installations were validated. Component 2 was evaluated through meetings with stakeholders at the Parish-level during a side mission to Floreana where AAE’s evaluator queried informants on the attitudes related to the project outputs and inventoried the installed infrastructure in support of ecologically sustainable measures and to validate collective support for the measures to eradicate invasive species. The Component 3 tortoise re-introduction activities were validated through records, video evidence, and by visiting the tortoise reproduction facilities under improvement on Santa Cruz Island. The suite of evaluation methods proposed is presented in the [Evaluation Matrix, Annex 2](#).

The MTR also utilized triangulated interviews to assess the effectiveness of the implementing and executing agencies in coordinating with each other and with local project partners in the timely completion of the project activities and subsequent realization of the outputs. These in turn point to the achievement of the outcomes, and finally to suggest the contribution of the project towards the general objective.

Special attention was paid to the indicators proposed by the Project, mainly at the results-level and projected for objectives, as well as the monitoring and evaluation instruments developed for each. Evaluators tested for SMART characteristics. The desktop survey indicated that some remaining indicators, in particular the Outcome 1 level indicator, is not SMART and requires orientation to better indicate the success of the outputs.

Efficiency: Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

The efficiency analysis examines the agility of the administrative processes in executing activities within the times established in the planning and the fluidity of the financial processes; it will look especially at the analysis of the administrative/financial action and at the application of the work approach based on results (including the monitoring systems and instances of direction of the Project); all this to determine the capacity that the Project had to correct directions and strategies in the course of it, therefore, its capacity of adaptive management.

The analysis considered the budget revisions and changes that were made during implementation. To this end, programmatic and financial monitoring tools, monitoring reports from CI, operational plans and programmatic reports were reviewed. Interviews were held with key management and administrative personnel.

Evaluators sought to understand the management efficiency required to execute the remaining budget to the end of the project, an important recommendation of the MTR, as well as the effect of COVID within the context of GEF Guidance for support to post-COVID-19 economies. Evaluators also investigated efficiencies in compliance with guidelines, safeguards and how the project has adapted to different situations that might have occurred during implementation as well as how effectively the team mitigated for the effects of COVID.

Relevance/Coherence of the Project Strategy

The relevance analysis focused on the strategic formulation and design of the project, its coherence with the situational analysis and the problems raised; the degree of participation of the beneficiary population in the construction of the project, considering its link with the priority areas of the GEF. This was carried out through a document review and interviews with CI and government officials, including the GEF Focal Point, in addition to elements gathered from the interviews carried out with project stakeholders. Additional areas related to new barriers, new problems, or completeness of the baseline situation were also be queried in individual interviews and cross referenced with the project context sections of related projects. Evaluators circled back to the Theory of Change and analyzed the relevance of project activities in producing the desired outputs and outcomes within the context of the project logic. Any assumptions not identified during the formulation stage were reviewed.

As part of the Relevance aspect, evaluators examined for gaps in the proposed support from non-GEF sources critical to achieving the outputs and outcomes materialized and to what effect. Any gaps will be signaled in the MTR Report.

Evaluators will also seek other strategies not considered that could present opportunities for project partners.

Sustainability

Sustainability was analyzed from four perspectives: financial risks, socio-economic feasibility, institutional and governance risks and environmental risks. Given that the GEF STAP Review flagged the social sustainability aspects of the project, evaluators examined how the proposals presented in response to those issues at CEO endorsement have fared under implementation. The effects of COVID-19 will be analyzed as environmental threats to both project implementation and sustainability.

The tools provided to enhance Sustainability included the safeguards, in particular the Stakeholder Engagement Plan and the Gender Action Plan and the Grievance Mechanism of the project. Evaluators reviewed the safeguards presented at CEO endorsement and related documentation, including monitoring reports, assessments, PIRs etc. to determine whether the related management measures were being effectively implemented. The team probed the level at which stakeholder and Gender specific views and concerns were considered and integrated into the project management process.

Finally, the financial sustainability of the financial mechanisms presented were examined to determine if the mechanisms in-force by the close of the project could be sustained at an acceptable level of quality into the foreseeable future.

Evaluators were also observant of any changes to the sustainability outlook from CEO endorsement to the present. Evaluators probed for changes in safeguards related to the changes in the target regions of the project through direct stakeholder consultation during site visits to biosecurity checkpoints and to Santa Cruz and Floreana Islands as well as through virtual focus group meetings.

Conclusions and Recommendations

According to the reporting requirements expressed in the [Terms of Reference](#) for the evaluation (Annex 1), the evaluators drew conclusions and presented recommendations to improve project management, implementation, and to assure the delivery of the outputs as warranted. Recommendations include actions required to rectify the problems encountered. The consultants followed the recommendations set out in the Guide for Conducting the Mid-Term Review of GEF-Funded Projects and the Terms-of-Reference for the MTR. The initial findings and recommendations were presented to the project management team on 26 May 2021 for comment. All comments and corrections noted are included in this draft MTR Report that will again be vetted through a round of comments prior to final submission.

11.3.3. Methods for the Collection of Information.

Given the nature of the object of study, the methodology of data collection and analysis has been selected to combine qualitative (including participatory techniques) and quantitative methods (data collection, processing, analysis, and presentation of information), as well as deductive and inductive analytical methods, which will allow the evaluator to draw conclusions related to the outputs. The different techniques for collecting and analyzing information that will be used during the MTR are detailed as follows:

Desktop review: The main documents related to the Project were reviewed and analyzed from different perspectives such as the quality and relevance of the information provided, identification of gaps, coherence, and correlation between documents, etc. Most of the documents provided were reviewed beginning on 5 April 2021 until the time of the workshop. The process is ongoing through the month of April. See Annex 3 for the list of [Initial Information Consulted](#). The MTR Final Report will contain a complete list of all sources consulted throughout the evaluation process.

Interviews: Key people from each organization/institution, authorities, heads of partner organizations, heads of public institutions, local authorities, project managers; -were interviewed for a minimum duration of 40 minutes, depending on the relevance and amount of information the interviewee could offer. An [Semi-structured Interview Guide](#) (see annex 4) has been produced to facilitate the conduction of the interviews.

Focal Groups: Focus groups were not utilized. Given the small number of stakeholders, adequate communications, and the ability of AAE's national coordinator to visit the region and speak one-on-one to stakeholders, the evaluation team had adequate access to quality informants and were able to speak to them unfiltered.

Debriefing and validation workshops: Given the expedited timetable for the MTR, no comprehensive debriefing following the mission was undertaken in lieu of presenting the preliminary findings (see below) upon return.

Triangulation techniques were used for the interpretation of the findings and their subsequent assessment. To this end, the results of the analyses were verified through multiple sources. For example, the answers obtained in interviews with government personnel were validated with the opinions of the beneficiaries or with other sources of statistical information or opinions of outside experts. No inconsistencies were uncovered that warranted additional follow-on interviews or validation.

Processing and systematization of all the information collected and analyzed was organized per the Evaluation Matrix and based on the evaluation questions by criteria described above and per the TOR.

A Virtual Presentation of Initial Findings: At the end of the implementation period, a feedback loop initiated with a presentation of Preliminary Findings delivered on 26 May 2021 to CI-GEF and Island Conservation representatives. Based on issues discussed, the draft report presented below was delivered to CI on 26 May 2021 for circulation and comment prior to the submission of the final report in response to comments on 24 August 2021 [date].

11.3.4. Informants sample selection

A list of "Quality Informants" was identified and submitted to the evaluation team by the Island Conservation's Project Management Unit in Santa Cruz together with the advice of CI Headquarters. "Quality" refers to the quality of their participation as defined by an appropriate stake in relation to a given output or a specific contributing activity and they are considered as "representative" of a stakeholder group. This enabled the evaluators to extrapolate arguments and assessments and appreciate lessons learned. The evaluators were particularly interested in learning what was working and what was not in each of the target geographies and in relation to the different components, gender, safeguards, project management, etc. This [Implemented Agenda](#) presented in Annex VI of this report includes a comprehensive list of contacts and provides the sequence of interviews realized.

II.4 Limitation of Methodology

“Evaluability” is the extent to which a program can be reliably evaluated, *i.e.*, maintaining consistency between data, information, and evaluation judgements so that these judgements can be relied upon. In addition to considering the aspects associated with the evaluation process (favorable conditions for carrying out the fieldwork, which also means having a good programmatic and contextual documentation base), evaluability refers to the quality of the results framework and/or effects map (coherence and alignment between effect, outcome, output, indicator) and the monitoring system in place, to enable an effective evaluation. Based on the information provided, the project was deemed “evaluable” with sufficient conditions to support the evaluation process.

The only **limitation identified** was the prohibition of international travel to the regions due to COVID. The availability of travel for a national evaluator greatly mitigated this point. The use of digital media for interviews, although slightly problematic due to limited bandwidth in the Galapagos Islands, was effective for communicating with agency or institutional stakeholders in combination with the national evaluator’s in situ activities.

III. PROJECT CONTEXT AND DESCRIPTION

III.1 The Development Context

The Development context is divided into the environmental and socio-economic aspects framing the project as discussed respectively in the following sections:

III.1.1. The Environmental Context

The approved project documents¹⁷ present the environmental context, which is summarized¹⁸ as follows:

The Galapagos Islands are a volcanic archipelago comprised of 13 large and 100 small islands and islets covering 7,880 km² of land. Their geographic location situated 1,000 km off the Pacific coast of Ecuador at the confluence of three eastern Pacific currents supports a large diversity of marine life. The equatorial climate and varied and rugged landforms have contributed to the evolution of a rich array of terrestrial flora and fauna found nowhere else.

Scientists have documented more than 1,300 species unique to the archipelago¹⁹ where terrestrial and marine life are inseparably linked. Terrestrial

¹⁷ Conservation International, October 18, 2018; GEF 6 Request for Project Endorsement/Approval, for Safeguarding Biodiversity in the Galapagos Islands by Enhancing Biosecurity and Creating the Enabling Environment for the Restoration of Galapagos Island Ecosystems, Project ID 9282.

¹⁸ as paraphrased and edited by the evaluators.

¹⁹ Human settlements are currently restricted to c.3% of the land area of the Galapagos archipelago in specifically zoned rural

emblematic taxa include eleven species of giant tortoise, *e.g.*, the Galapagos tortoise (*Chelonoidis nigra*) from Floreana Island; three species of land iguanas, *e.g.*, the Galapagos land iguana (*Conolophus subcristatus*.); the Galapagos penguin (*Spheniscus mendiculus*.); flightless cormorants (*Phalacrocorax harrisi*); the Darwin's finches (*Geospizinae*) and the Galapagos mockingbirds (*Mimus spp.*) made famous in Darwin's publications, along with unique plants *e.g.* giant daisy trees (*Scalesia spp.*). Of the 2,909 marine species identified, 18% are endemic. High-profile marine species include sharks *e.g.*, whale sharks (*Rhincodon typus*.); rays *e.g.*, (*Manta birostris*.); and cetaceans *e.g.*, killer whales (*Orcinus orca*.). The interactions between the terrestrial and marine biotas are exceptional. Much of the island wildlife *e.g.*, marine iguanas (*Amblyrhynchus cristatus*.) and Galapagos sea lions (*Zalophus wollebaeki*.) is directly dependent on marine resources, while terrestrial ecosystems receive vital nutrients from marine inputs such as *guano* from seabirds.

All marine and coastal environs (13,300,000 ha) and nearly 97% of the land area (761,844 ha) in the Galapagos archipelago are protected. The Government of Ecuador (GoE) created the Galapagos National Park (GNP) in 1959 and the Galapagos Marine Reserve in 1996. Specific sites also have additional "protected area" status. There are ten distinct Important Bird Areas (IBA's) and several Alliance for Zero Extinction (AZA) sites.

The Galapagos Islands became the first World Heritage Site in 1978 and were designated as a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Man and Biosphere Reserve (MABR) in 1984. However, UNESCO listed the Galapagos Islands as a World Heritage Site in Danger in 2007 largely due to threats posed by invasive alien species. The IUCN Red List categorizes 80 of the Galapagos native species as "Critically Endangered" and 164 listed as "threatened" with extinction.

The islands' and associated marine ecosystems are adversely impacted by four inter-related threats: invasive alien species, climate change, population growth, and expanding tourism²⁰. The greatest threat to biodiversity in the Galapagos Islands is biological invasion²¹, one of the most significant drivers of environmental degradation and species extinction worldwide and considered the primary cause of biodiversity loss in island ecosystems.

Hundreds of invasive alien species are established within the Galapagos archipelago with ecosystem-wide ramifications. Some arrived with seafarers over 100 years ago and others were deliberately and inadvertently introduced in the last decade. So far, 1,476 alien terrestrial and marine species have become established, averaging 27 species per year over 40 years²² introduced by humans with almost half being intentional introductions of mostly plants.

Surveys of invasive alien species in the Galapagos Islands indicate that at least:

²⁰ The World Bank estimates that tourism contributed \$1,449,000,000 to the country's economy in 2016, the majority of which was generated in the Galapagos Islands; <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/ST.INT.RCPT.CD>

²¹ [Watkins and Cruz 2007](#); Helmsley Charitable Trust's Galapagos Strategic Plan 2012; <https://www.worldwildlife.org/ecoregions/nt1307>

²² [Toral-Granda et al. 2017](#)

- Nineteen species of non-native vertebrates are established (9 species of mammals, 4 species of birds, 3 species of reptiles, 1 species of fish, and 1 species of amphibian)²³;
- Five hundred and forty-three (543) terrestrial invertebrate species have been introduced, of which 55 are considered harmful or potentially harmful to native biodiversity²⁴;
- Six hundred and forty (640) plant species have been introduced, most with unknown potential impacts²⁵; and
- Seven (7) marine invasive alien species are now reported present (more are being identified as part of baseline studies).²⁶

Most unintentional introductions originate from: (a) arrival on plants and plant-associated material; (b) transport vehicles; and (c) on commodities (*e.g.*, fruit and vegetables). The number of alien species identified was positively and closely correlated with both the total number of residents and the number of tourists²⁷.

The four human-inhabited islands (Santa Cruz, San Cristobal, Isabela, and Floreana) are also subject to habitat destruction for township development and agricultural expansion²⁸. A fifth island (Baltra) that hosts one of three airports on the archipelago, tourism and military infrastructure may become the focus of further industrial development. These zones are outside of the administrative boundary of the Galapagos National Park Directorate (DPNG)²⁹.

III.1.2. The Socio-economic Context

One of the objectives of the project is to prepare the public on Floreana island for the eradication of rats and feral cats, marking the first time that eradication of invasive vertebrate species is attempted on a populated island. The socio-economic context and processes are therefore an integral part of the project processes as described in the next section. The approved project documents frame the socio-economic context as follows:

Approximately 26,000 residents live on the Galapagos islands³⁰. The population is young, with over 70% under age 44 for the province. About one-third of the population is made up of students. The residents are town dwellers, concentrated around the ports in each inhabited island. Fifty-two percent of the population is male and 48% is female³¹.

²³ [Phillips et al. 2012](#)

²⁴ ABG 'Consolidating the system of preventing, controlling and eradicating invasive species in the Galapagos Islands' approved by National Planning Authority (2013)

²⁵ [Tye 2007](#)

²⁶ [Keith et al. 2016](#)

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Human settlements are currently restricted to c.3% of the land area of the Galapagos archipelago in specifically zoned rural and urban areas.

²⁹ DPNG (Dirección de Parque Nacional Galápagos). Exclusive areas include areas used by public entities *e.g.* airport, military base, refueling station and alternative energy facilities.

³⁰ INEC 2015 Census Data

³¹ Kayamanta Consultores, 2017, Social, economic, productive baseline of Floreana.

The main economic activities in the Galapagos Islands are tourism, public service, commerce, fishing, and agriculture³². Tourism has increased rapidly from 40,000 visitors in 1990 to 241,800 in 2017³³ contributing \$1,449 M U.S. (7.4% of total exports) to Ecuador's economy in 2016—the majority generated in the Galapagos Islands³⁴.

Wages are set by law to be 80% higher than on mainland Ecuador. However, the Galapagos Consumer Price Index is also 80% higher than on the mainland. Given the high cost of living, on average, 1.5 household members must be employed to cover the family's basic expenses. Economic activities are diverse, and many people have two or even three jobs at once, while working more than 40 hours a week³⁵.

In the Galapagos Province's Floreana parish, the site of multiple project activities, is home to approximately 148 inhabitants (73% under 44 years of age; 54% Male, 46% Female) reside in the town Puerto Velasco Ibarra. In fact, only one household was found to be living in the highlands. Eighty-five percent of households are headed by men³⁶. There is one school, with four teachers who cater to all grade levels. Education levels average eight-years with most youth staying in school at least through high school. Families must invest heavily to educate their children on other islands or on the mainland.

Floreana's productive zone is located seven km from the population center to a spring that supplies water to support all activities. Access to water resources is the limiting factor for the inhabitants of Floreana, one which has helped people organize and maintain social cohesion. Untreated fresh water is distributed to 100% of households; however, the water is not potable and rationed depending on island weather conditions³⁷.

III.1.3. Global Environmental Problems and Root Causes

Invasive alien species are one of the most significant drivers of environmental degradation and species extinction worldwide and are generally considered the primary cause of biodiversity loss in island ecosystems³⁸. Globalization of trade, travel, and transport are the pathways by which invasive alien species are introduced into new ecosystems where they can cause harm and further spread themselves. These pathways facilitate the increasing number and type of invasive alien species being moved around the world, as well as the rate at which they are moving. Interacting factors that make the Galapagos Islands vulnerable to the introduction, spread, and impacts of invasive alien species include:

- Geographic isolation necessitates inter-continental trade and transport;
- Growth of the resident populations on inhabited islands increases imports;
- Rapid economic development, e.g. tourism, increases consumption; and
- Extreme weather events (associated with climate change) cause habitat disturbance and stress.

³² [Keith et al. 2016](#)

³³ <http://www.observatoriogalapagos.gob.ec/arribos-anuales>

³⁴ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/ST.INT.RCPT.CD>

³⁵ Kayamanta Consultores, 2017, Social, Economic, Productive Baseline of Floreana.

³⁶ *ibid.*

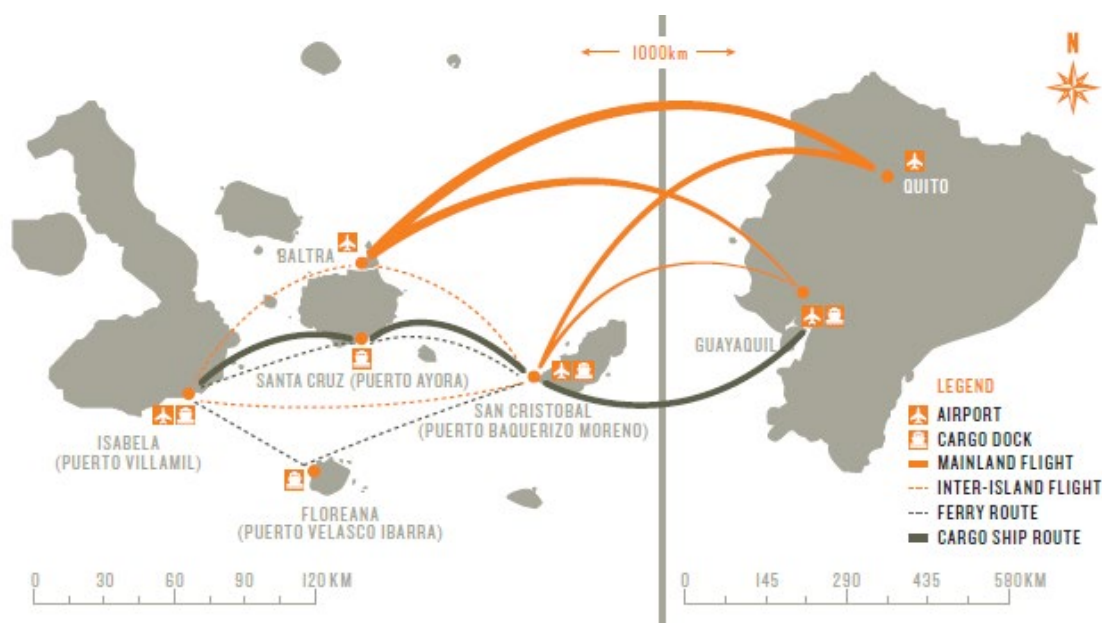
³⁷ *ibid.*

³⁸ [Sax and Gaines 2008](#); [Reaser et al. 2007](#); [Bellard et al. 2016](#)

Changes in climate and land use exacerbate the problem rendering some habitats, even the best protected and remote natural areas increasingly susceptible to biological invasion³⁹.

The historic biological isolation of the Galapagos archipelago has been significantly reduced by the growing number of vessels bringing cargo and people to the islands. The combination of an expanding resident population, a growing tourism industry with inadequate levels of biosecurity increases the vulnerability to biological invasion. Figure 2 illustrates the 11 air and seaport ‘doorways’ between the islands and the mainland.

Figure 1: Air and sea pathways between the Galapagos, the mainland and the islands



Source: Wildaid 2013 (Quarantine chain).

The ABG, responsible for preventing the entry and spread of invasive species, is limited by staff size and capacity to adequately inspect the many entry points for vessels and air traffic to enter the Galapagos archipelago. Without advanced technologies at all ports to facilitate the efficient, effective, and timely screening of cargo, and failure of the public and tourists to understand the importance of biosecurity and thus comply with rules and regulations.

Invasive rodents and feral cats have had particularly pervasive impacts on endemic birds, small mammals, and small reptiles. When invasive rodents feed on giant tortoise eggs and hatchlings they reduce the number of tortoises available to consume and spread native seeds, hence limiting the “planting” the next generation of native vegetation. A chain of negative impacts occurs as canopy cover declines, so do the populations of understory plants that require shading from the harsh tropical sun. The loss of understory vegetation makes landscapes more vulnerable to soil erosion and contributes to declines in soil fertility through mineral leaching. This impairs soil fertility and undermines the capacity of landscapes to be resilient to further perturbations (e.g., extreme weather events, climate change).

The persistence of invasive species like rodents and feral cats can block opportunities to rehabilitate ecosystems. In Floreana, for example, the establishment of a self-sustaining

³⁹ [McNeely et al. 2001](#); [Simberloff and Rejmanek 2011](#)

population of tortoises and other extirpated species cannot move forward until these predators are eradicated, a necessary enabling condition for species re-introduction and ecological rehabilitation.

III.1.4. Baseline Actions

The project document presents baseline investment in support to each component, such as an estimated \$ 45,830,000 U.S. in baseline for Component 1 since 2014 including:

- DPNG annual investment of \$6,420,000/year for invasive alien control and monitoring; identification of invasive alien species in the Marine Reserve, and restoration activities and the Enhancing Electronic Monitoring Capacity of Vessels in the Galapagos Marine Reserve initiative \$970,000⁴⁰ for intelligent marine vessel tracking and interdiction that reduces the need the cost of oceanic patrol. Detection of illegal landings that have not passed through or are attempting to evade biosecurity filters.
- ABG's annual investment of \$5,000,000/ year to prevent transport of invasive alien species to and within the Galapagos archipelago.
- Galapagos Marine Invasive Species: Prevention, Detection and Management by University of Southampton and Charles Darwin Foundation \$500,000 GoE (ABG, DPNG, Ecuadorian Navy, Oceanography Institute), Galapagos Conservancy, UK Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs' (DEFRA) Darwin Initiative for invasive marine species, risk assessment tools and rapid response protocols for invasive marine species control/eradication, conducted community outreach, established an invasive marine species detection program, and built capacity.

An estimated \$5,900,000 U.S. in baseline actions to support Outcome 2 in the development of the social license for eradication of rats and feral cats including:

- Fund for Control of Invasive Species in the Galapagos (FEIG) \$600,000/year GoE, UNDP (GEF), KfW, Galapagos Conservancy, and CI to implement invasive alien species projects in the archipelago.
- Island Conservation's investment of \$600,000 U.S. /year in technical assistance in operational planning for eradication of vertebrate species.
- Ministry of Agriculture's Bio-agriculture project for Galapagos (2014) and MAG's annual \$600,000/year operations to implement the Galapagos Bio-agriculture Plan to augment local agricultural production and promote consumption of fresh local produce and reduce importations.

Baseline activities that support Component 3's re-introduction of Giant Tortoises to Floreana island are described in the project document's Appendix V: Safeguard Screening Form and Analysis. These include:

⁴⁰ in 2010-12 by Sea Shepherd, and \$100,000/ year for operating expenses; Wide Fund for Nature, Sea Shepherd, WildAid, Conservation International

- In 1965, the Charles Darwin Research Station (CDRS) established the Tortoise Rearing Center on Santa Cruz Island to prevent the extinction of the Pinzón Island tortoises, later expanded to other threatened populations. A second Center was established in 1990 at Puerto Villamil, Isabela, for southern Isabela Island species (*C. vicina* and *C. guntheri*). The program, now managed by GNPS, had expanded substantially in the past decade with, until recently, three tortoise centers (Santa Cruz, San Cristóbal and Isabela), as well as a corral of captive adult tortoises on Floreana
- The Giant Tortoise Restoration Initiative (GTRI) was launched in 2014, a collaborative effort led by Galapagos Conservancy (GC) and the DPNG to restore tortoise populations to their historical distribution and numbers across Galapagos through research, conservation, breeding, repopulation where extinctions occurred, and management of tortoise-human interactions and conflicts. This ambitious initiative builds on a half century of tortoise research and conservation carried out by the Charles Darwin Research Station, the DPNG, and numerous visiting scientists and volunteers, with extensive support from the Galapagos Conservancy.
- The process of reintroduction has been tested with the restoration of the Espanola tortoise species on its home island of Espanola Island over the last 50 years is perhaps one of the most successful species recovery programs ever undertaken. The outcomes provide a guide to what can be expected to happen on Santa Fe and eventually on Floreana. About half of tortoises released on Espanola Island since 1975 were still alive in 2007 and reproducing in situ and considerably so. Population viability analyses built around vital estimates derived from 40 years of mark-recapture population monitoring indicate future extinction risk is low with or without continued repatriation.
- There is a significant monitoring infrastructure consisting of 20 experimental plots for measuring vegetation change (10 with fences to exclude tortoises and/or iguanas), a series of 25 permanently marked plots for measuring change in population structure, growth and survival of the cactus population along a gradient of tortoise density, a large cactus “macroplot” with almost 600 individuals permanently tagged and measured to enable monitoring cactus population dynamics, and an island-wide series of permanently marked transects (~60 km in length, total) and plots for measuring iguana and cactus populations.

III.1.5. Barriers to Addressing Global Environmental Problems and Root Causes

The approved project document indicates that, “many of the barriers...typical of efforts to prevent, control, and eradicate invasive alien species *e.g.*, lack of political support; insufficient collaboration and public participation; ineffective policy, legislation, or other frameworks were overcome in the Galapagos archipelago. The remaining barriers to the prevention, eradication, and control of invasive alien species are largely technical and financial in nature”.

Many barriers are challenging to overcome due to a) Ecuador’s socio-economic status as a developing country, b) wide dispersion of the islands, c) the islands’ rugged terrain which hinders accessibility, d) the logistical difficulties inherent in securing island borders, e) the rapid increase in trade and tourism upon which the region depends, and f) the urgency and large-scale of action required to secure species that are on the brink of extinction.”

The remaining barriers include the following:

Limited technical capacity. The capacity to design and implement effective prevention, eradication, or control programs remains a barrier for the DPNG and ABG due to limited education and training opportunities for Ecuadorians. The DPNG and ABG must increase collaborations with international partners to address this barrier.

Lack of equipment and personnel. Important entry points lack adequate inspection due to insufficient equipment and personnel to adequately inspect the vast amount of cargo and equipment in transit in a timely manner. This barrier remains due to a lack of financial capacity to afford equipment and employ personnel, the lack of qualified personnel in Ecuador in biosecurity and limited technologies for screening cargo.

Lack of awareness. The public/tourists do not understand the importance of biosecurity and thus do not adequately comply with rules and regulations³⁶.

Lack of definitive social license and infrastructure. There is no definitive social license (stakeholder acceptance) or infrastructure for eradication actions. This includes both a definitive sense of community acceptance of a final eradication plan and a lack of infrastructure to enable both the eradication process as well as the subsequent process of species reintroduction. Both are necessary to enable the government to move forward with eradicating invasive rodents and feral cats on Floreana Island and potentially on other inhabited islands.

Insufficient taxonomic capacity. A shortage of skilled qualified taxonomists makes it difficult to identify invasive alien species once intercepted. This represents a barrier to preventing, controlling, and eradicating invasive alien species—one that is particularly challenging for the ABG due to the limited access to computing equipment and internet access at the ports of entry.

Financial limitations, specifically the high cost of effective biosecurity programs, eradication programs, and control programs are also important barriers to preventing, controlling, and eradicating invasive alien species.

Finding: Infrastructure limitations. 80% of the cargo to the Galapagos is maritime. The port infrastructure is deficient in providing space and infrastructure for insufficient to correctly provide a platform for

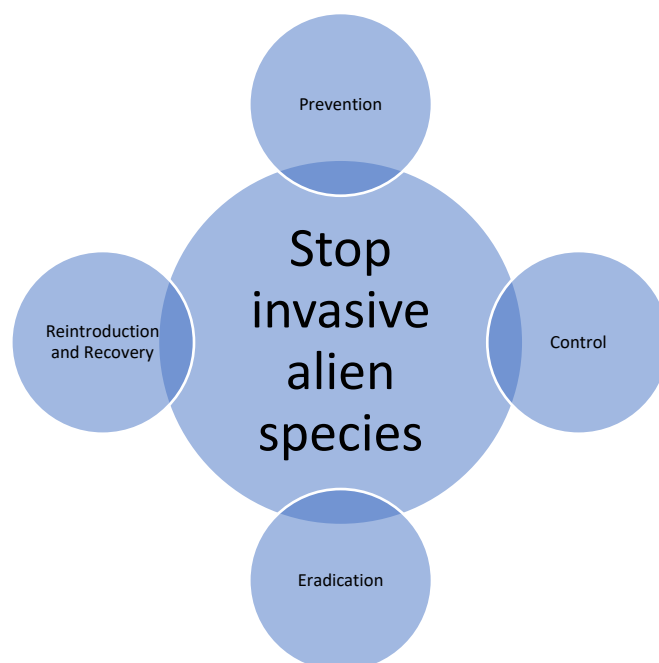
III.2 Project Strategy

III.2.1 Theory of Change

The Theory-of-Change (TOC) presented in the project document focuses on invasive alien species as the primary threat to biodiversity and the long-term threat to sustainable livelihoods in the Galapagos archipelago that rely on the natural environment for sustenance. It builds on the substantial baseline mentioned. The pathways illustrated include:

- Prevention: keeping invasive alien species out;
- Control: limiting the spread and impact of already established invasive alien species in cases where eradication is either physically or financially unfeasible;
- Eradication: eliminating already established invasive alien species, based on well-defined social license where populated areas are implicated;
- Reintroduction and recovery: recovery of species and ecosystems becomes possible once key invasive species have been significantly reduced (control) or eliminated (eradication).

Figure 3. Theory of Change



III.2.2. Project Approach

The objective of the project is “to safeguard biodiversity in the Galapagos Islands by enhancing biosecurity and creating the enabling environment for the restoration of Galapagos Island ecosystems.” The system boundary of the project is focused on the biosecurity aspects of the problem at the system level and on creating the enabling conditions for the eventual eradication of invasive vertebrates on Floreana island. The project aims to safeguard biodiversity through preventive and restorative strategies:

- (a) increase the effectiveness of biosecurity controls at the system-level across so that new or additional invasive species do not enter the Galapagos or translocate within them.
- (b) establish the enabling social conditions for the subsequent eradication of existing invasive vertebrate species on Floreana Island in a future stage of development.
- (b) enhancing the enabling technical prerequisites for re-establishing the ecologic role of the Galapagos Giant Tortoise in the restoration of habitats through the selection and dispersion of native species across the landscape.

In-line with that strategy, the Galapagos Biosecurity project contributes to the objective through actions in 3 project Components with (4) related Outcome as illustrated in the following table:

Table 3: Project Components and Outcomes

Component	Expected Outcome
(1) Furthering development of a state-of-the-art biosecurity system	(1.1) A substantial reduction in the number of invasive alien species entering the Galapagos archipelago.
(2) Solidifying the social infrastructure for the protection and recovery of Floreana Island ecosystems	(2.1) The social license is established for the protection and recovery of Floreana Island ecosystems.

(3) Advancing the recovery of island ecosystems following invasive species eradication through the re-establishment of keystone species (i.e. giant tortoises)	(3.1) Ecosystem processes, particularly seed dispersal, re-initiated across Santa Fe Island (2,413 ha) as the result of the translocation of giant tortoises.
	(3.2) Production in captivity of giant tortoises for future reintroductions throughout the archipelago is significantly increased.

Table 4: Project Results Framework, GEF Endorsed

Objective:	To safeguard the biodiversity of Galapagos islands by enhancing biosecurity and creating the enabling environment for the restoration of Galapagos Island Ecosystems		
Indicator(s):	Each stage of a comprehensive strategy of ecosystem restoration—including enhanced biosecurity, social license for eradication of alien species and the subsequent reintroduction of an endemic species—has been carefully demonstrated, monitored, and evaluated, thereby: (i) achieving a state of readiness for future eradication and restoration activities on Floreana Island, and (ii) creating a model process for replication on other key islands in the Galapagos Archipelago. <i>Target: Successful demonstration of all stages and documentation of lessons learned.</i>		
Project Outcomes and Indicators	Baseline	Target at the end of the project	Outputs and Indicators
Component 1: Furthering development of a state-of-the-art biosecurity system			
<p>Outcome 1.1.: The number of invasive alien species entering the Galapagos archipelago is substantially reduced.</p> <p><i>Indicator 1.1.:</i> Number of invasive alien species intercepted at control points</p>	<p>Baseline 1.1.: In 2014 7,034 confiscations were made across all categories of pest-risk goods at all ports⁹¹</p>	<p>Target 1.1.: <i>A >5% increase from baseline in the number of pest interceptions and subsequent confiscations of goods due to pest risk across all ports combined</i></p>	<p>Output 1.1.1.: Assessment of the biosecurity system at control points, and Action Plan <i>Indicator 1.1.1.:</i> Action Plan accepted by the Project Steering Committee (PSC) <i>Target 1.1.1.:</i> one document approved by the Project Steering Committee (PSC)</p> <p>Output 1.1.2.: Detection equipment and consumables, as identified in the Action Plan, purchased and installed in adequate infrastructure. <i>Indicator 1.1.2.:</i> % of detection equipment identified in the Action Plan purchased and installed in adequate infrastructure. <i>Target 1.1.2.:</i> 10% of equipment identified in the Action Plan purchased and installed.</p>

			<p>Output 1.1.3.: Protocols updated and capacities built as identified in the Action Plan.</p> <p><i>% of Action Plan recommendations regarding capacity building targets implemented</i></p> <p>Target 1.1.3.: 20% of the recommendations implemented.</p>
Component 2: Solidifying the social infrastructure for the protection and recovery of Floreana Island ecosystems.			
<p>Outcome 2.1.: The social license is established for the protection and recovery of Floreana Island ecosystems.</p> <p>Indicator 2.1.: The % of residents of Floreana Island who take action for the protection and recovery of Floreana Island ecosystems</p> <p>Indicator 2.2.: The level of participation and support from Floreana Island residents and strategic project partners for the plans to eradicate invasive rodents and feral cats, and for the concept of reintroduction of endemic species previously extirpated by invasive species.</p>	<p>Baseline 2.1.: To be defined in the Project Inception Phase</p>	<p>Target 2.1.: At least 80% of Floreana Island residents take new or improved ecologically sustainable action in areas such as: agriculture, waste management and other areas defined in the Floreana Parish Council Declaration to be defined.</p> <p>Target 2.2.: 100% of Floreana Island residents and strategic project partners participate and demonstrate support for the plans to eradicate rodents and feral cats, and for the concept of reintroduction of endemic species previously extirpated by invasive species</p>	<p>Output 2.1.1.: Ecologically-sustainable farming practices instituted.</p> <p>Indicator 2.1.1.: The % of male and female of farmers that implement ecologically sustainable farming practices.</p> <p>Target 2.1.1.: 100 % of farmers implement ecologically sustainable farming practices.</p> <p>Output 2.1.2.: Floreana Parish Council Declaration adopted</p> <p>Indicator 2.1.2.: Declaration approved by the Floreana Parish Council.</p> <p>Target 2.1.2 One declaration developed and adopted by the Floreana Parish Council.</p> <p>Output 2.1.3: Operational Plan for eradication of invasive rodents and feral cats approved by the Project Steering Committee.</p> <p>Indicator 2.1.3.: Approved Operational Plan</p>

			<p>Target 2.1.3.: <i>one operational plan approved by PSC.</i></p> <p>Output 2.1.4.: Risk management plans developed in conjunction with the community and approved by the Project Steering Committee.</p> <p>Indicator 2.1.4.a.: <i>Approved risk management plans.</i></p> <p>Target 2.1.4.a.: <i>6 risk management plans approved by PSC.</i></p> <p>Indicator 2.1.4.b.: <i>Percentage of the Floreana island male and female residents who participate in the consultations regarding the risk management plans developed for the Project.</i></p> <p>Target 2.1.4.b.: 100% of the male and female residents participate in the consultations.</p> <p>Output 2.1.5.: Environmental and Social Impact Assessment completed and environmental certificate awarded.</p> <p>Indicator 2.1.5.: Environmental and Social Impact Assessment completed and approved.</p> <p>Target 2.1.5.: <i>One ESIA completed and approved by PSC</i></p>
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Component 3: Advancing the recovery of island ecosystems following invasive species eradication through the re-establishment of keystone species (i.e. giant tortoises).			
<p>Outcome 3.1.: Ecosystem processes, particularly seed dispersal, re-initiated across Santa Fe island (2,413 ha) as the result of the translocation of giant tortoises.</p> <p>Indicator 3.1.: Percentage of Santa Fe Island land area where giant tortoises are dispersing seeds</p>	<p>Baseline 3.1.: As of December 2017, 396 giant tortoises of the species <i>Chelonoidis hoodensis</i> were dispersing seeds on approximately 10% (240 ha) of the area of Santa Fe Island</p>	<p>Target: 3.1.: At least 506 giant tortoises of the species <i>Chelonoidis hoodensis</i> are dispersing seeds on approximately 50% (1,206 ha) of the area of Santa Fe Island</p>	<p>Output 3.1.1.: Giant tortoises (<i>Chelonoidis hoodensis</i>) translocated to Santa Fe Island</p> <p>Indicator 3.1.1.: # of giant tortoises (<i>Chelonoidis hoodensis</i>) translocated to Santa Fe Island</p> <p>Target 3.1.1.a.: On average, at least 40 juvenile giant tortoises (<i>Chelonoidis hoodensis</i>) are translocated annually.</p> <p>Target 3.1.1.b.: At least 30 sub-adult giant tortoises (<i>Chelonoidis hoodensis</i>) are translocated.</p> <p>Output 3.1.2.: Monitoring and evaluation protocols for assessing the role of giant tortoises as ecosystem engineers, including seed dispersal are tested and optimized</p> <p>Indicator 3.1.2.: Tested and optimized monitoring and evaluation protocols accepted by the Project Steering Committee</p> <p>Target 3.1.2.: One monitoring and evaluation protocol</p>
<p>Outcome 3.2.: Production in captivity of giant tortoises for future reintroductions throughout the archipelago is significantly increased</p>	<p>Baseline 3.2.: In the breeding centers the following numbers of giant tortoises are reaching the age of one year:</p>	<p>Target 3.2.: In the breeding centers, an enhanced and expanded breeding stock contributes to the following numbers of giant tortoises reaching the age of one year:</p>	<p>Output 3.2.1.: Giant tortoise breeding centers on Santa Cruz and Isabela Islands are modernized and expanded.</p> <p>Indicator 3.2.1.: Number of centers modernized and expanded</p>

<p>Indicator 3.2.: Number of giant tortoises raised in captivity annually</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Santa Cruz, an average of 250 tortoises annually from the populations of Española, Santiago, Floreana, Pinzón and Eastern Santa Cruz • In Isabela, an average of 200 tortoises annually from the populations of the Sierra Negra and Cerro Azul volcanoes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Santa Cruz, at least 400 tortoises annually from the populations of Española, Santiago, Floreana, Pinzón and Eastern Santa Cruz • In Isabela, an average of 300 tortoises annually from the populations of the Sierra Negra and Cerro Azul volcanoes 	<p>Target 3.2.1.: Two centers modernized.</p> <p>Output 3.2.2.: Giant tortoise breeding stock with partial ancestry of <i>C. niger</i> are selected, located and transferred to the Santa Cruz breeding center.</p> <p>Indicator 3.2.2.: # of breeders selected, located, and transferred to breeding center</p> <p>Target 3.2.2.: At least five giant tortoises located and transferred (20% increase in captive population of Floreana breeders)</p> <p>Output 3.2.3.: Scientific and technical findings reported in the professional and popular literature.</p> <p>Indicator 3.2.3.: # of scientific, technical, and popular articles and reports.</p> <p>Target 3.2.3.: 1 peer reviewed article and 2 popular articles produced.</p>
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III.2.4. Project Geography

The project's sites for intervention were selected based-on scientific criteria and stakeholder consultation during the Project Preparation Grant (PPG) phase.

Figure 3: Location of Project Activities



The Component One of this project focuses on biosecurity measures across the archipelago and includes measures on mainland ports that provide service to Galapagos.

Floreana Island is the site of Component 2 activities because of the following attributes:

- Floreana has a higher rate of endemism than the younger islands to the west.
- The endemic species on Floreana Island are among the most heavily threatened in the world with a higher concentration of International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Critically Endangered species than any other major Galapagos island⁴¹.
- With the smallest human population and well-studied biodiversity, Floreana offered the best opportunity for the DPNG *et. al.* to establish effective protocols for the eradication of invasive rodents and feral cats from inhabited islands.

Santa Fe Island (2,413 ha) was selected as the site of Component 3 activities for translocation of Giant Tortoises.

- Santa Fe is one of the oldest islands in the archipelago, is uninhabited and is home to a suite of island endemics.
- It is located within the jurisdiction of Galapagos National Park.
- It has multiple visitor sites and its popular among tourists.

⁴¹ The 2015 IUCN Red List included 61 plant and animal species on Floreana Island considered threatened (i.e. Vulnerable, Endangered or Critically Endangered) one in every 17.2 km².

- Giant tortoises (*Chelonoidis* spp.) function as keystone species within Galapagos ecosystems. Thus, the recovery of giant tortoises and their associated ecosystem processes, e.g. seed dispersal, are of particular importance to the restoration of Galapagos Island ecosystems, especially those on arid islands

III.2.5 Implementation Arrangements and Governance

The GEF implementing agency is Conservation International through their GEF Project Agency (CI-GEF) who supports project implementation by maintaining oversight of all technical and financial management aspects of the project to ensure that the project execution is in accordance with GEF standards and requirements. CI-GEF monitors (i) the project's execution of activities; (ii) achievement of results; (iii) proper use of GEF funds; and (iv) reviews and approves procurement plans, budgets and workplans. CI-GEF also ensures adequate execution of the project's monitoring and evaluation plan by approving quarterly technical and financial reports and the annual Project Implementation Reports (PIRs) prior to GEF submission. Finally, CI-GEF recommends actions to optimize project performance, and is an arbitrator to resolve any conflicts between executing partners if warranted.

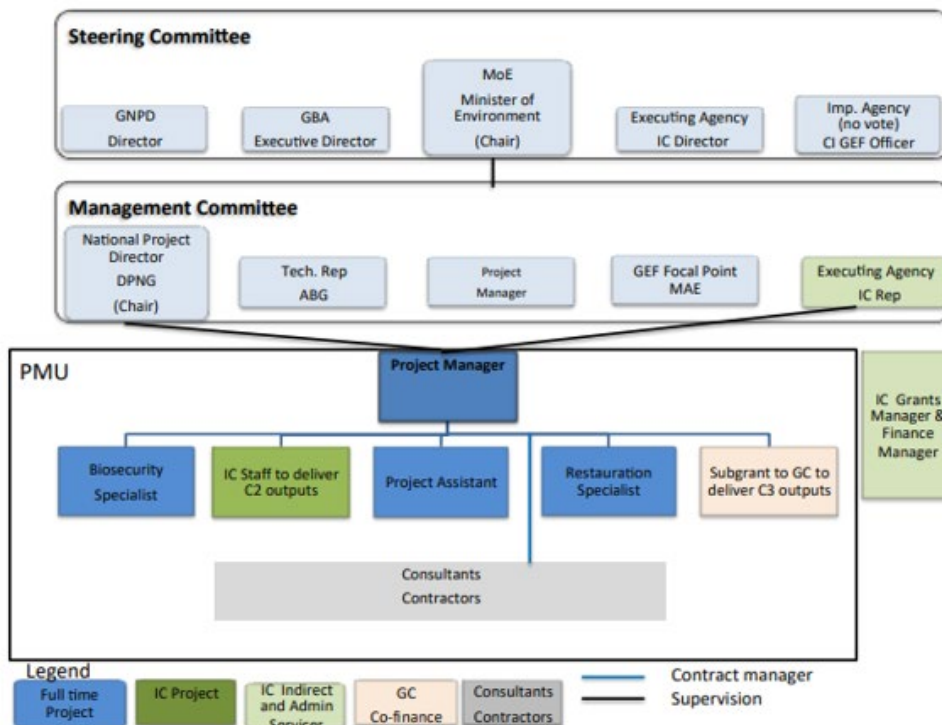
The project is executed by Island Conservation (IC) in coordination with the DPNG building upon a long collaborative relationship between them. IC maintains a dedicated Project Management Unit (PMU) to execute all activities, based within DPNG offices in Puerto Ayora, Galapagos.

As illustrated in figure 4, the Project is governed by a two-tiered structure:

The **Project Steering Committee (PSC)** is the upper-tier decision-making authority. The PSC is comprised of the Minister of Environment (or designee) as presiding officer, the GNP Director, the ABG Executive Director (or designee), the IC Galapagos Program Director and CI-GEF. Decisions are by consensus. In absence of a consensus, the final decision shall rest with the Minister of Environment. The PSC minimally twice per year or extraordinarily as warranted by members. The PSC (i) ensures that execution is aligned with the approved project; (ii) provides strategic guidance and approves changes; (iii) approves the annual Project Implementation Report (PIR), the Annual Operating Plan (AOP), budget and the financial audit reports; (iv) oversees the monitoring and evaluation plan and responses; and (v) any high-level decisions regarding project structure, coordination and implementation. The Project Manager acts as the PSC Secretary, preparing meeting minutes, and maintain the Committee's records.

The project is under the leadership of a **National Project Director (NPD)**, appointed by the Director of the Galapagos National Park. The Director presides over the **Project Management Committee (PMC)**, the second-tier governance body that facilitates the execution and coordination of the project. The committee also consists of an ABG senior technical representative, The Ministry of Environment (MAE) GEF Operational Focal Point, a senior technical staff member of IC, and IC's Project Manager who acts as secretary. The PMC is convened quarterly by the NPD. The NPD may invite others as required. The PMC (a) makes recommendations to the PSC to improve project performance; (b) provides technical clearance to the draft AOP, Budget and PIR before submission to CI-GEF for technical clearance and the PSC for approval. (c) approves the Annual Procurement Plan prior to CI-GEF approval; (d) provide technical clearance for requests for changes to the Annual Procurement Plan above \$25,000 prior to CI-GEF approval; (e) ensure effective coordination among project partners, among others.

Figure 4: Project Organizational Chart



A **Procurements Selection Committee** comprised of the NPD, IC Galapagos Director and the Project Manager. For procurements related to component 1, the ABG will be invited to participate in the Procurements Selection Committee.

III.2.6. Project Execution Deadlines and Milestones

The project has an expected duration of 30 months, from February 15, 2019, to October 31, 2021. The major milestones are presented graphically in the Project Workplan (Table 4) presented below.

Table 5: Project Workplan

Outcome / Output	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Outcome 1.1.: The number of invasive alien species entering the Galapagos archipelago is substantially reduced										
Output 1.1.1.: Assessment of the biosecurity system at control points, and Action Plan										
Output 1.1.2.: Detection equipment and consumables, as identified in the Action Plan, purchased and installed in adequate infrastructure										
Output 1.1.3.: Protocols updated and capacities built as identified in the Action Plan										
Outcome 2.1.: The social license is established for the protection and recovery of Floreana Island ecosystems										
Output 2.1.1.: Ecologically- sustainable farming practices instituted										
Output 2.1.2.: Floreana Parish Council Declaration adopted										
Output 2.1.3.: Operational Plan for eradication of invasive rodents and feral cats approved by the Project Steering Committee										
Output 2.1.4.: Risk management plans developed in conjunction with the community and approved by the Project Steering Committee										
Output 2.1.5.: Environmental and Social Impact Assessment completed and environmental certificate awarded										
Outcome 3.1.: Ecosystem processes, particularly seed dispersal, re- initiated across Santa Fe island (2,413 ha) as the result of the translocation of giant tortoises										
Output 3.1.1.: Giant tortoises (<i>Chelonoidis hoodensis</i>) translocated to Santa Fe Island										
Output 3.1.2.: Monitoring and evaluation protocols for assessing the role of giant tortoises as ecosystem engineers, including seed dispersal are tested and optimized										
Outcome 3.2.: Production in captivity of giant tortoises for future reintroductions throughout the archipelago is significantly increased										
Output 3.2.1.: Giant tortoise breeding centers on Santa Cruz and Isabela Islands are modernized and expanded										
Output 3.2.2.: Giant tortoise breeding stock with partial ancestry of <i>C. niger</i> are selected, located and transferred to the Santa Cruz breeding center										
Output 3.2.3.: Scientific and technical findings reported in the professional and popular literature										

IV. FINDINGS

In response to the [TOR](#), the findings of the MTR are presented according to the following categories:

- Project Justification
- Project Design and Strategy
- Progress Towards Results
- Project Management
- Safeguards
- Stakeholder Participation
- Sustainability
- Risks
- Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

Each category presents the results of the evaluation from the standpoint of effectiveness using the established indicators, efficiency based on deployment of project funding, relevance and coherence to national policies, and sustainability.

Conclusions and recommendations are presented in each of the following sections. These are later extracted from the text and summarized in Section V.

IV.1 Project Justification

The underpinnings of the project were analyzed through a review of the documents provided. The project justification was later confirmed in individual interviews with key stakeholders. The key questions of interest were the completeness of the argument, a clearly established and articulated problem, and conformity to the suite of national and local policies and consistency with agency agendas, in addition to conformity with the GEF focal area and programs mentioned in Section II.

Finding 1: The project justification is comprehensive and based on information presented during the PPG process and on empirical information from previous projects that were adequately cited in the project literature.

Finding 2: The baseline assessment in the project document was almost solely focused on biosecurity. The social baseline was eventually presented in the Appendix V: Screening Results and Safeguard Analysis, which presented a rigorous scientific basis for Outcomes 2 and 3. Together, the baseline is complete.

The project's approved documents adhere to an extensive list of national priorities and those specific to the Galapagos islands including:

- *National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans 2015 - 2030⁴² (NBSAP), objectives 2 and 3.*
- *NBSAP Result 11a: Ecuador has executed the plan to eradicate invasive alien species from the Galapagos and the monitoring system offers data that ensures a process of restoration of the affected ecological systems.*

⁴² Ministerio del Ambiente del Ecuador. "Estrategia Nacional de Biodiversidad 2015-2030, Primera edición." Noviembre de 2016, Quito-Ecuador.

- *NBSAP Result 11b: Ecuador has developed and put in place prevention, control, eradication, and monitoring mechanisms for invasive species in continental Ecuador and that have been prioritized by the MAE.*
- *Result 14: Ecuador implements comprehensive measures to prevent the extinction of wildlife and cultivated species considered a priority.*
- *Result 16: Ecuador restores degraded habitats to increase the resilience of ecosystems and their capacity to provide essential goods and services for the good living of the population and the change of productive matrix.*
- *Galapagos Biosecurity Agency (ABG) Strategic Plan 2015-2018*
- *Management Plan for the Protected Areas on Galapagos for a Good Standard of Living (2013)*
- *Galapagos Biosecurity Agency's 'Consolidating the system of preventing, controlling, and eradicating invasive species in the Galapagos Islands' approved by National Planning Authority (2013)*
- *Floreana Parish Council's Strategic Plan (2011)*
- *Plan for Total Control of Introduced Species (2007)*

The proposed project is aligned with the GEF Biodiversity goal of “*conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and the maintenance of ecosystem goods and services.*” The project contributes directly to Program 4 (Prevention, Control, and Management of Invasive Alien Species) of the biodiversity focal area (BD2) to “*...reduce threats to globally significant biodiversity...⁴³*” through Component 1 and Component 3 actions in biosecurity and successful breeding and translocation of Giant Tortoises to Santa Fe Island. The former responds to Outcome 4.1 of “*improved management frameworks to prevent, control, and manage invasive alien species (IAS) and the latter in combination with the social license generated in component 2 will contribute to Outcome 4.2. “Sustainable populations of critically threatened species” over time as these are established on Santa Fe Island.*

Successful implementation of the Program 4 activities will foreseeably make it feasible to conduct future work with other funding to support Biodiversity Program 3 (Preventing the Extinction of Known Threatened Species). Once social license is obtained through the project component 2 the eradication of invasive rodents and feral cats from Floreana Island will have direct benefits that support other GEF program areas. The project estimates that the eradication of invasive vertebrate will enable habitat recovery across the 17,258 ha of Floreana Island’s diverse landscape, thus creating an enabling environment for reduced land degradation and improved carbon storage and climate change resilience. The translocation of giant tortoises and recovery of their associated ecosystem processes on Santa Fe Island will have similar cascading benefits.

Finding 3: The review of the project justification indicates that the policy landscape is well defined with clear conformity to all pertinent national, local and GEF priorities.

Finding 4: The political conformation of the Galapagos, municipal governments, and of local government institutional partners make them resistant to wide swings in policy even through changes in political administration. The key stakeholders have consistently been involved with baseline activities over the long-term with the participating non-governmental partners.

The project justification also explores a full suite of barriers. The barriers indicated are justified by the literature but seemed to exclude an especially important area of development: Infrastructure. The project

⁴³ Global Environment Facility, September 2014, The GEF 6 Biodiversity Strategy, pp. 16-18. URL: <https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/publications/GEF-6-BD-strategy.pdf> , accessed 15 April 2021.

results for Component 1, indicated below, demonstrate the need for infrastructure improvements to enable the correct deployment of biosecurity assets.

Finding 5: Infrastructure is a limiting factor for the deployment of biosecurity assets in the maritime flow of container goods, which is about 80% of the cargo for the Galapagos. Infrastructure constitutes an important barrier to the overall effectiveness of biosecurity measures.

Conclusions:

- *The project justification is complete and comprehensive in policy, social, environmental and the overall development context. The project documentation reviewed provides empirical evidence to justify the need for the project and established the project as a clear next step in a documented progression laid out by the GOE and involved stakeholders.*
- *The long-term involvement of stakeholders and long-term, stable public-private relationships between project partners established over years of baseline activities makes the project resilient to political risks (sustainability).*
- *The overall impact of the project's biosecurity measures will be within the limits of current infrastructure. The Galapagos maritime port infrastructure is a persistent barrier to achieving 100% control of invasive species entering into and travelling amongst the Galapagos Islands.*
- *The project conforms to all pertinent national policies and Galapagos and sector strategies (Relevance/Conformity).*

IV.2 Project Design and Strategy

IV.2.1. Theory of Change

The Theory of Change (TOC) presented in the project document does not embrace all anthropogenic factors, such as, unlimited water capture, solid waste disposal, use of fire, or the breeding of other endemic species in need of recovery. that influence the overall objective of ecosystem-level recovery. It does however effectively present the central hypothesis that provides the underpinnings of the project. The replacement of Giant tortoises by other introduced species, such as feral goats, cats and other vertebrate invasive species that have caused changes to the composition, structure, and function of the terrestrial flora and subsequently the terrestrial environment. The terrestrial ecosystem is shaped by drought ecology. During historically long drought periods, the preferred species by tortoises, such as cacti, *Opuntia spp.* for example, thrived across the landscape thanks to the dispersion and propagation of seeds and vegetation. Following eradication of IAS, the restoration of the Galapagos flora therefore depends on the re-establishment of the Galapagos Giant Tortoises' role as "bio-engineers" in expanding and propagating key species.

Rather than parallel processes, the evaluators see the process as a multivariate hypothesis involving 3 conditions: (a) **if** persistent IAS, such as black rats, can be effectively eradicated in a socially licensed process and (b) **if** ex situ breeding of genetically appropriate tortoise species are successful and (c) **if** those species can be successfully re-introduced, the combined effect will lead to a beneficial chain of events that will lead to ecosystem recovery through (d) **then** reduced predation leading to (e) **then** greater

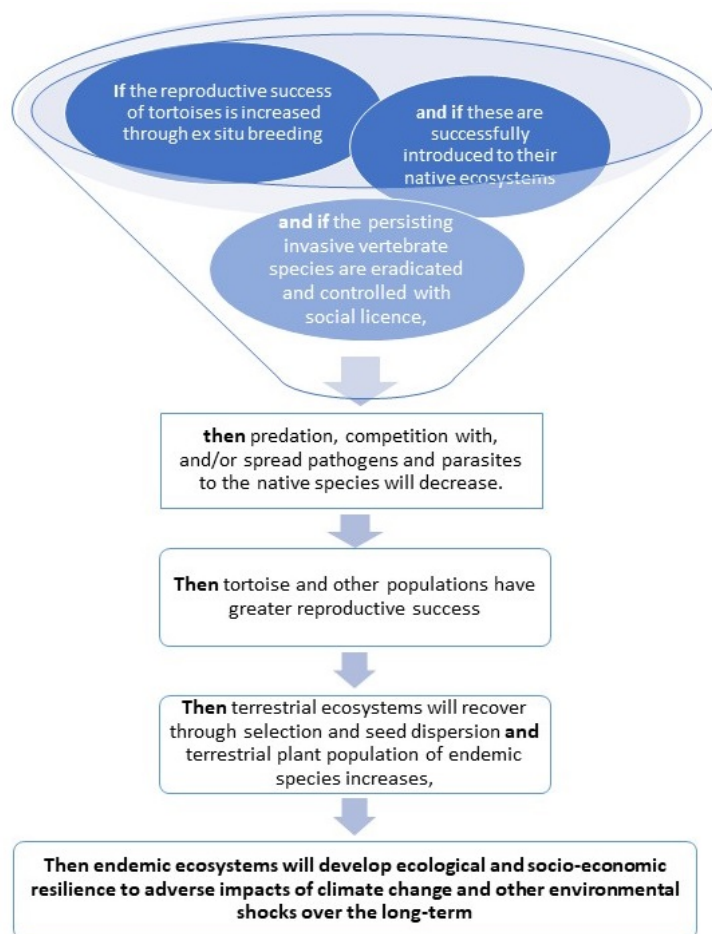
reproductive success of tortoises and vegetation (f) **then** expansion of the ecosystem in form and function **and then** ultimately (g) self-maintenance and resilience.

Finding 6: The TOC is based on monitoring of re-introduction on Española and on research from Española, San Cristobal, Santa Fe and Floreana islands. The project document in Appendix V: Safeguard Screening provides the rationale and justifies with references and empirical data and lessons learned from baseline projects in both the social and environmental settings.

Conclusions:

- The TOC is sound and provides a documented and validated internal logic upon which the architecture of the project is built.

Figure 5: Suggested Modification to Theory of Change



IV.2.2. The Project Design Architecture

The evaluators reviewed the project architecture to determine the alignment of the project components with the project objective and to gauge the relevance and cohesiveness of the outputs in achieving the expected outcomes as presented in the project's Results Framework.

The objective of the project is *"to safeguard biodiversity in the Galapagos Islands by enhancing biosecurity and creating the enabling environment for the restoration of Galapagos Island ecosystems."* The project strategy aims to safeguard biodiversity through both long-term preventive and restorative strategies:

- (a) increasing the effectiveness of biosecurity controls so that new or additional invasive species do not enter or travel through the Galapagos, and through the eradication of existing invasive vertebrate species; and
- (b) re-establishing the ecologic role of the Galapagos Giant Tortoise in the restoration of habitats through the selection and dispersion of native species across the landscape.

The project contributes to the project objectives through actions in 3 components and outputs described as follows:

Component 1: *Furthering development of a state-of-the-art biosecurity system*; this is accomplished through 3 specific outputs:

- Output 1.1.1.: *Assessment of the biosecurity system at control points, and Action Plan* is seeking an Action Plan approved by ABG and the PSC based on expert gap analysis in the biosecurity system. The action planning process is stakeholder driven from within ABG with the final sign-off at the multi-agency PSC. The output orients other outputs and future initiatives.
- Output 1.1.2.: *Detection equipment and consumables, as identified in the Action Plan, purchased, and installed in adequate infrastructure.* Procurement and deployment of equipment to facilitate and expedite physical exams of baggage and cargo for IAS. The equipment includes hardware and software for improving documentation and tracking of results.
- Output 1.1.3.: *Protocols updated, and capacities built as identified in the Action Plan.*

The expected Outcome (1.1.) is that *"the number of invasive alien species entering the Galapagos archipelago is substantially reduced."* The indicator is the *"number of invasive alien species intercepted at control points"* with a target of *"a greater than 5% increase in the number of pest interceptions and subsequent confiscations of goods due to pest risk across all ports combined from across all ports"* from the 2014 baseline of 7, 034 confiscations.

Finding 7: In combination with baseline efforts to improve interdiction and tracking of vessels in the maritime realm and in education of travelers and residents, the project outputs for component 1 will yield the expected outcome of reducing (or increasing capture) of IAS. The outputs systematically respond to gaps within the limits of Galapagos' infrastructure.

The evaluators were able to use the output indicators to measure progress (described below), so these are adequate at the activity-level. The indicator at the outcome-level is internally contradictory and does not indicate success. The expected outcome is to reduce or eliminate contact with IAS in territorial

Galapagos. The indicator however is “the number of species” and the target focuses on frequency of detection and confiscation, which is more plausible. The magnitude of the target, “greater than 5% increase in confiscations,” is also not an acceptable long-term target. If the initiative is successful, the number should eventually go to zero. In the short run, the evaluators understand that with more and more efficient inspection, the number might rise then dip as the overall effectiveness. IC’s management feels there might be a bell curve type frequency with the number of captures going lower over time. According to IC, there is also an unmeasured but recognizable learning effect. The majority of captures are from residents rather than tourists. The former begins to change their behavior and spread the word about their goods being confiscated. The tourists also seem to respond to information campaigns about biosafety. If the point is to assure thorough inspection, then the indicator would be the number of bags and containers inspected and the number of captures per 1000 bags or 1000 containers could indicate that the inspections are taking place and they are effective. Another auditable indicator might be the number of correctly documented inspections per the new protocols. Regardless, this indicator should be better defined by the stakeholders and form part of the new protocols.

Finding 8: The impact indicator for Outcome 1 is inconsistent with its own target and is not independent of other factors, such as learning or visitor education.

Conclusion:

- *The outcome 1.1 indicator is not SMART. As stated, it is not specific or relevant to the expected outcome of more effective and efficient biosecurity.*

Recommendation

- *Based on the new protocols and Action Plan, redefine the indicator with a more specific metric focused on effective and efficient biosecurity, such as the number of bags, cargo containers, vessels etc. inspected and include these new metrics in ABG’s monitoring protocol.*

Component 2: Solidifying the social license and infrastructure for the protection and recovery of Floreana Island ecosystems. The expected Outcome (2.1) is that “social license is established for the protection and recovery of Floreana Island ecosystems. The project seeks an engaged and informed public that, through a series of various instruments, agrees with and is prepared for eradication of black rats (*Rattus rattus*.) and feral cats from Floreana, a populated island at a future stage of development. The outcome is developed through 5 outputs:

- Output 2.1.1.: Ecologically- sustainable farming practices instituted. To enhance both the buy-in of the public and to protect privately held livestock, investments in chicken coops, pig pens, were realized with support of the Mag’s baseline efforts to promote sustainable agriculture.
- Output 2.1.2.: Floreana Parish Council Declaration adopted. Based on an extensive consultation process, a formal declaration by the Floreana Council will provide local government authorization to go forward with eradication efforts.
- Output 2.1.3: Operational Plan for eradication of invasive rodents and feral cats approved by the Project Steering Committee. The Operational plan for eradication will receive additional license through the PSC authorization. The PSC represents the pertinent central government authorities.
- Output 2.1.4.: Risk management plans developed in conjunction with the community and approved by the Project Steering Committee. A total of 8 risk management plans (i) Plan de

Gestión de Agua Potable y Las Extensiones de Agua Floreana; (ii) Plan para el Manejo de Niños y Personal con Impedimentos; (iii) Perros y Gatos Domésticos; (iv) Agricultura; (v) Animales de Producción; (vi) Roedores Comensales; (vii) Fisheries; (viii) Visitors. The purpose of the plans is to confirm for the local population the safeguards in place for eventual eradication.

- Output 2.1.5.: Environmental and Social Impact Assessment completed, and environmental certificate awarded.

Interviews with DPNG, IC and Galapagos Conservatory staff indicate that numerous checkpoints were warranted for extra caution. Because Floreana will be the first experience with eradication the combination of approvals from individuals to local governments to central government agencies together comprise the social license.

Finding 9: The suite of outputs is both comprehensive and internally consistent with the targeted outcome of a validated social license and adequate environmental and social safeguards for the eventual eradication of black rats and feral cats.

Component 3: Advancing the recovery of island ecosystems following invasive species eradication through the re-establishment of keystone species (*i.e.*, giant tortoises). This component goes to the restorative actions signaled in the TOC and seeks two outcomes:

- (3.1) Ecosystem processes, particularly seed dispersal, re-initiated across Santa Fe Island (2,413 ha) as the result of the translocation of giant tortoises; and
- (3.2) Production in captivity of giant tortoises for future reintroductions throughout the archipelago is significantly increased.

The outcomes are met through the following outputs:

- Output 3.1.1.: Giant tortoises (*Chelonoidis hoodensis*) translocated to Santa Fe Island. The project sought to successfully translocate 40 juvenile tortoises per year and 30 sub-adult Giant Tortoises to Santa Fe Island.
- Output 3.1.2.: Monitoring and evaluation protocols for assessing the role of giant tortoises as ecosystem engineers, including seed dispersal are tested and optimized. This output provides the monitoring equipment and protocols for monitoring future translocations. The project will fit the tortoises with microchips and utilize digital tracking of tortoises as part of a long-term monitoring program, including monitoring of seed and vegetative dispersion to inform the indicators at the project objective level.
- Output 3.2.1.: Giant tortoise breeding centers on Santa Cruz and Isabela Islands are modernized and expanded. The traditional breeding centers are aged and in need of modernization and expanded areas to meet the breeding targets for the future. The GEF project will leave the expanded capacity functioning for future stages of development.
- Output 3.2.2.: Giant tortoise breeding stock with partial ancestry of *C. niger* are selected, located and transferred to the Santa Cruz breeding center. Individuals are identified through bloodwork to maintain and enhance the *C. niger* characteristics within the gene pool. The identification of appropriate breed stock is critical to the program.
- Output 3.2.3.: Scientific and technical findings reported in the professional and popular literature. Reporting through targeted publications both scientific and local supports the exchange of information and communication of lessons learned.

The increase in breeding success of genetically appropriate tortoises through *ex situ* breeding in improved infrastructure, and the successful re-introduction process to Santa Fe Island validated through biomonitoring and results published locally and in recognized, peer-reviewed journals will validate the results of the restoration efforts and inform the process to take place on Floreana Island.

Finding 10: The suite of outputs presented for Component 3 is comprehensive and internally consistent with the two targeted outcomes of (a) ecosystem processes, particularly seed dispersal, re-initiated across Santa Fe Island as the result of the translocation of giant tortoises, and (b) production in captivity of giant tortoises for future reintroductions throughout the archipelago is significantly increased. Together, the outputs have a high likelihood of increasing the population of giant tortoises of targeted bloodlines and translate into a monitored population capable of consuming and dispersing local species of plants.

Finding 11: The indicator for Outcome 3.1. embraces two aspects: the number of tortoises and the amount of land where seeds are dispersed. For former concept is probably a better indicator if this is framed in terms of survival and amount of land occupied by tortoises as part of their habitat. The second concept, which could go a bit farther in terms of seed dispersal, or better yet, germination, would be a better indicator at the Impact level or even at the objective level of the project because it goes to the heart of the TOC and would demonstrate a “safeguard of biodiversity” as alluded to in the project objective.

Conclusion:

- *The project design is sound. All outputs contribute to their corresponding outcomes and are internally consistent. The outcomes are independent yet related. A failure in one does not foment a failure in another, this is a “best practice” in strong project design.*

IV.3 Progress Towards Results

The progress of the project to produce the desired results is the backbone of the project MTR. Progress is presented first for the global project with notes on efficiency and effectiveness using budget execution as the basis for the delivery rate of project activities. The Traffic Light system is used for components 1-3 to illustrate progress towards the End-of-Project (EOP).

IV.3.1. Overall Progress Towards Results

IV.3.1.1. Efficiency in Progress Towards Results: Budget Execution

Figure 6 demonstrates the overall deployment of project assets to the end of the 4th Quarter of Fiscal year 2021 is estimated at \$2,724,194 U.S. or 84% of the total project budget of \$3,301,472 U.S. This does not include obligations, which are estimated at an additional 20%. Roughly 90% of the budget was obligated by the end of Q3 2021.

Figure 6: Overall Progress

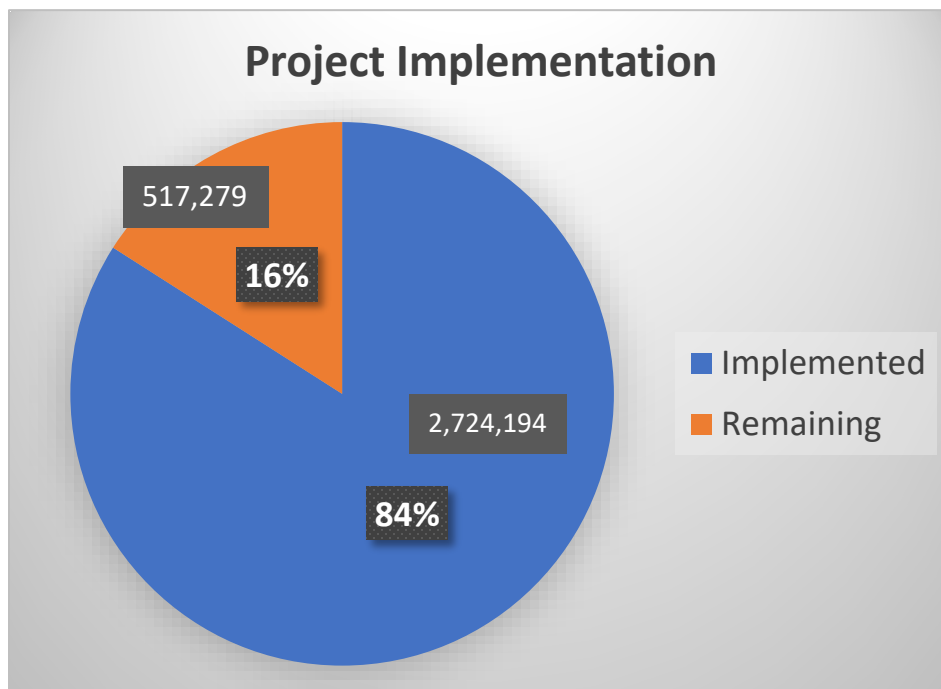


Figure 7 demonstrates that as a percentage of the total budget allocated for each component. Component 1 has the lowest execution level due to a delay in acquisition of equipment and software. Component 3 experienced a delay in launching the tortoise breeding infrastructure. Both are due to COVID-19 effects on the supply chain. Despite the COVID-related supply chain issues, at the time of the MTR, the procurement process for all remaining funds was completed and all project funds were obligated to the end of the project. Figure 8 presents the actual execution amounts by quarter and by fiscal year.

The quarterly expenditures were examined to define the flow and efficiency of the budget and procurement process. Figures 9 and 10 provide the actual expenditures per quarter and the graphic visualization of the deployment of project resources. We can also see the effects of COVID on project execution through the quarterly perspective. The following figures provide 2 perspectives. The first enables a visual presentation of the flow of work. The second uses a moving average of the cumulative totals per quarter to examine trends over time.

Figure 7: Budget Execution by Component as a Percentage of Total

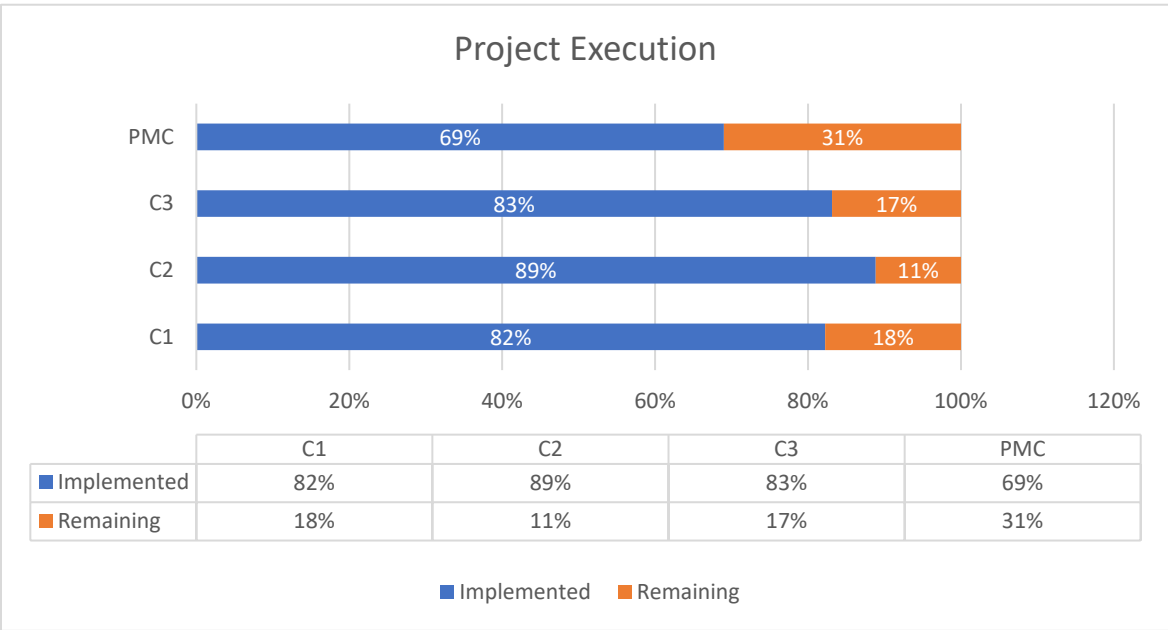


Figure 8: Quarterly Budget Execution by Component

Components	2019				2020				2021	
	Jan-Mar	Apr - Jun	Jul-Sept	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul - Sept	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar	Apr-Jun
	FY19 Q3	FY19 Q4	FY20 Q1	FY20 Q2	FY20 Q3	FY20 Q4	FY21 Q1	FY21 Q2	FY21 Q3	FY21 Q4
C1	6,745	18,130	37,732	126,512	41,357	64,686	70,013	131,899	125,432	158,884
C2	6,670	30,710	120,734	85,418	65,905	154,250	164,875	101,698	129,921	149,983
C3	5,991	85,640	203,418	22,689	129,994	27,689	24,189	23,489	138,466	136,318
PMC	5,467	12,935	6,517	11,915	7,396	24,487	17,790	22,389	14,410	11,450
TOTAL	24,873	147,416	368,401	246,534	244,653	271,112	276,867	279,476	408,229	456,635
	YR1				YR2				YR3	

Figure 9 illustrates graphically the quarterly expenditures including a cumulative moving average which demonstrates inconsistent levels of expenditure over time. The evaluators ascertained through interviews that this is because of the erratic supply chain due to COVID and due to natural economies related to the distance between Galapagos and the mainland; the cyclical nature of the regeneration work; and the time needed to identify assets for each output over time. The efficiency of each is discussed below by component. Figure 8 generally demonstrates a “ramp-up” period for each output within each component followed by budget execution, such as translocating tortoises following a long period of planning, and then closure of the output-related activities followed by another preparation phase, etc.

Figure 9: Quarterly Budget Execution.

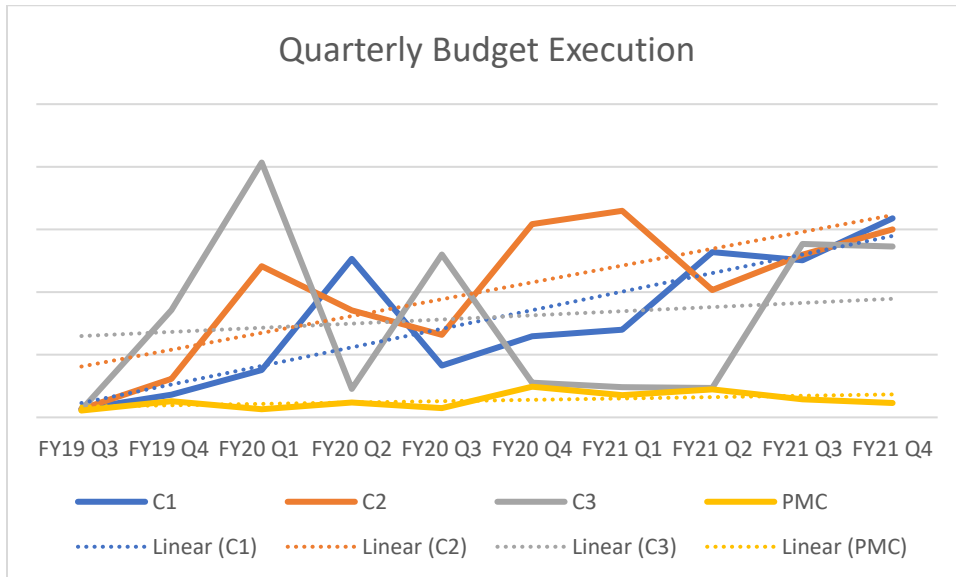


Figure 10: Accumulated Budget Execution Trend by Component

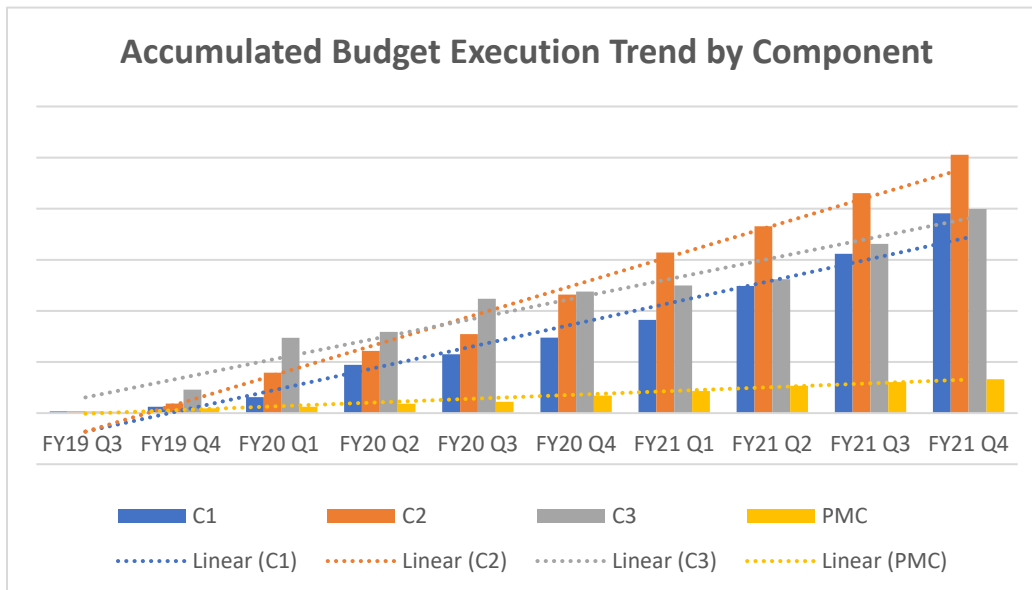


Figure 10, on the other hand, demonstrates accumulated budget execution by quarter and by component and presents a moving average for the total expenditures. A flat trend line such as Project Management and Coordination (PMC) in yellow demonstrates a consist and low level of budget execution. This is typical of a dedicated staff with consistent fixed costs. A trend line such as C2 in orange, indicates that the total budget deployment increased consistently quarter over quarter. This usually indicates a healthy and progressive budget execution scenario. When the slope of the line is very steep, such as above 100% or 45 degrees, it generally indicates a period of low performance with several quarters of accelerated

performance towards the end of the project, or a “catch-up” scenario or risky behavior, which is clearly not the case.

The trend lines for the Galapagos project demonstrate a healthy efficiency in the delivery of the outputs. In addition, a component-by-component comparison indicates that relatively even progress was made on all components simultaneously, which is another indicator of efficiency in management of the project’s delivery on outputs.

IV.3.1.2. Efficiency in Progress Towards Results: Cofinancing

Efficiency is also gauged by the delivery of cofinancing as illustrated in Figure 11.

Figure 11: Co-financing by Source

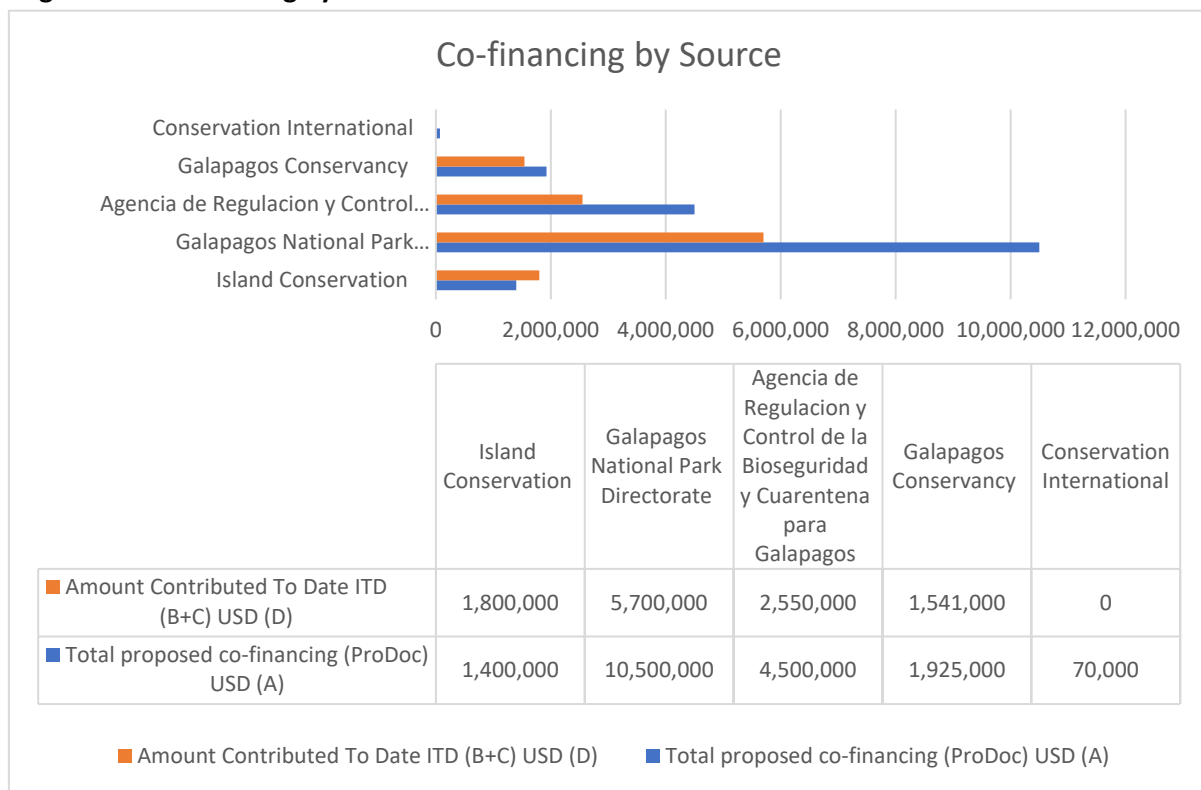


Figure 11 confirms that of a total of \$18,395,000 U.S. pledged, a total of \$11,591,000 U.S was realized or 63%.

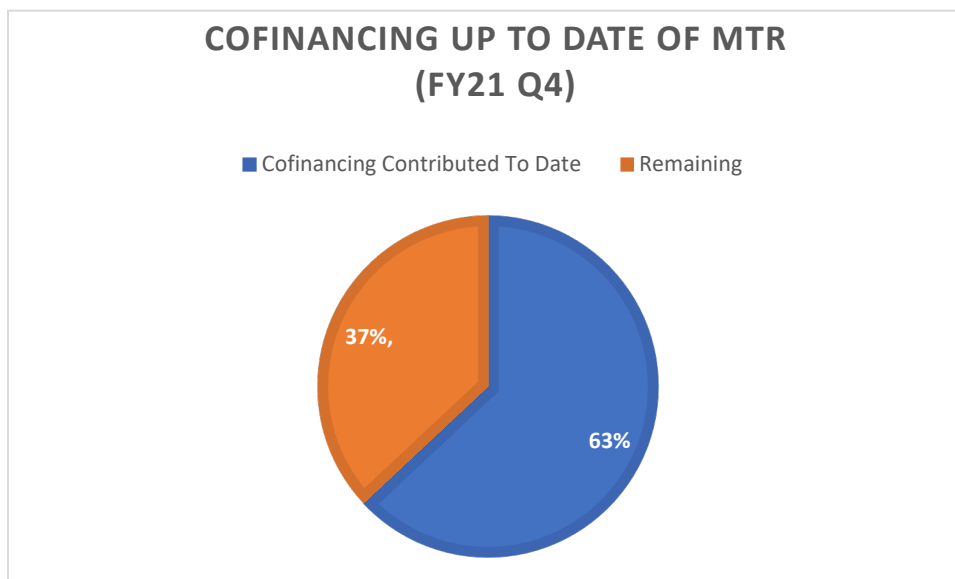


Figure 12. Total Co-financing by Co-financier

SOURCE*	TYPE**	NAME OF CO-FINANCIER***	TOTAL PROPOSED CO-FINANCING (PRODOC) USD (A)	AMOUNT CONTRIBUTED TO DATE ITD (B+C) USD (D)	BALANCE (A-D) USD	PERCENT MATERIALIZED (D/A)
GEF Agency	In-kind	Island Conservation	1,400,000	1,800,000	-400,000	-29%
Beneficiaries	In-kind	Galapagos National Park Directorate	10,500,000	5,700,000	4,800,000	46%
Beneficiaries	In-kind	Agencia de Regulacion y Control de la Bioseguridad y Cuarentena para Galapagos	4,500,000	2,550,000	1,950,000	43%
Beneficiaries	In-kind	Galapagos Conservancy	1,925,000	1,541,000	384,000	20%
GEF Agency	In-kind	Conservation International	70,000	0	70,000	100%
Cofinancing Totals:			18,395,000	11,591,000	6,804,000	n/a

Finding 12: IC's staff did a good job at navigating the difficulties in the supply chain by travelling to the mainland and securing materials and by proactive management in using the downtime to advance the procurement process so that the budget was ready to execute when the COVID situation began to ease.

Finding 13: The procurement protocols in-place to manage risks became obstacles during COVID. Many suppliers demanded payment up-front or abnormally large deposits, such as 50% to secure supplies, which was not possible.

Finding 14: At the time of the MTR and despite COVID-related supply chain issues, all project assets were effectively deployed within a reasonable timeframe of the target's for the respective components.

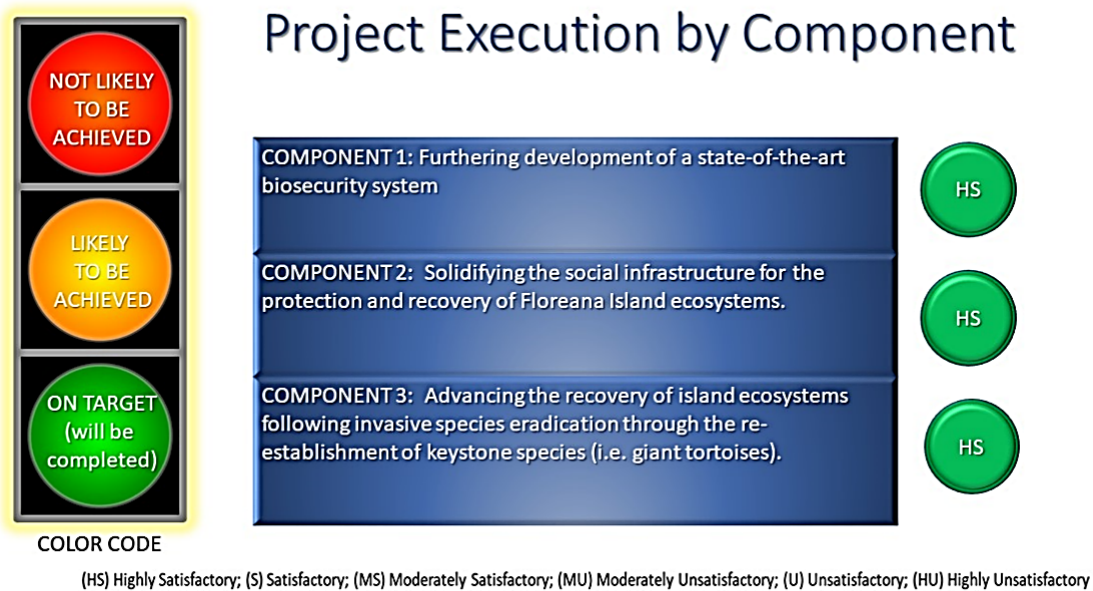
Conclusions:

- IC did a good job at finding supplies and working with suppliers without succumbing to their excessive demands and hence avoided additional risk at to an already risky supply chain.
- The project’s financial resources were effectively deployed despite COVID-19, the inherent difficulties in Galapagos’ supply chain, etc. The project is on-track to execute all project funds by the End-of-Project.

IV.3.1.2. Effectiveness in Progress Towards Results

Where the previous figures focus on efficiency, Figure 13 presents effectiveness by illustrating the overall ranking of performance on the delivery of the outputs that contribute to the outcomes.

Figure 13: Overall Rating of Effectiveness in Delivery by Component



An overall rating of “HS,” or “Highly Satisfactory” was given because the management team demonstrated their ability to keep moving forward despite 2 incredibly significant challenges: Delays in procurement due to COVID and for adeptly working with stakeholders and moving forward with Component 1 and for producing a clear and demonstrated social license for the eradication of invasive vertebrates for component 2. Finally, component 3 was almost completely executed.

IV.3.1.3. Effectiveness in Progress Towards Results: Component 1: Biosecurity

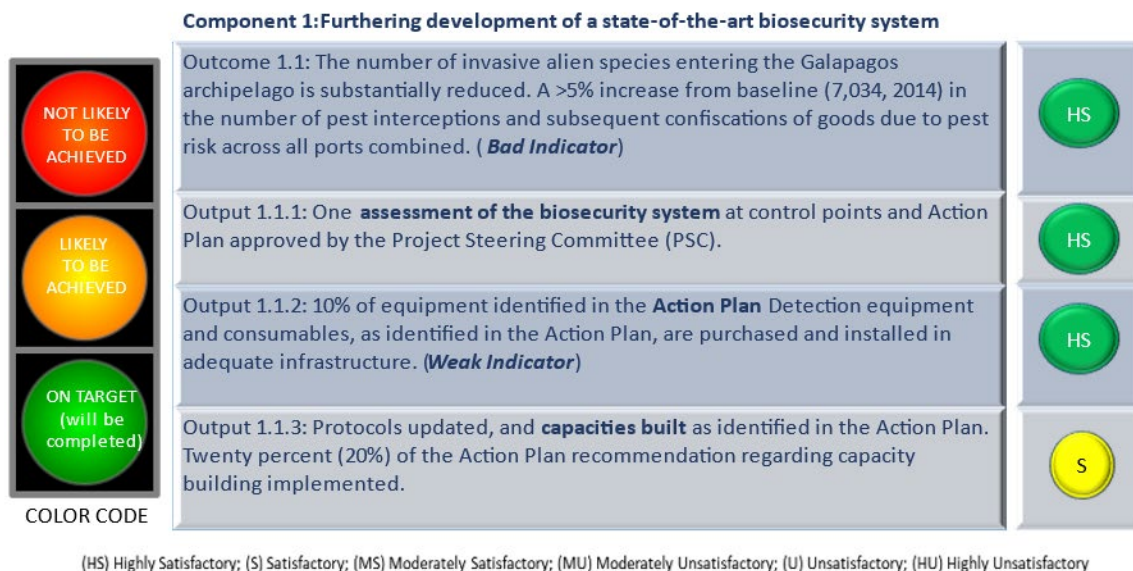
A rating of HS was awarded for Assessment of the Biosecurity System (output 1.1.1.) and for developing and receiving all necessary approvals for the Biosecurity Action Plan (output 1.1.2.) upon which capacity measures will depend and for procurement and installation of equipment to enhance the GBA’s technical capacity. At the time of the evaluation, protocols were completed and training on the improved inspection and quarantine process were held. A training on the use of the software with the use of tablet, portable, and label printers was expected for Q1FY2022. For that reason, a green “HS” was assigned with the understanding that the output 1.1.3. will be successfully executed and closed.

Conclusion:

- Component 1, receives an overall efficiency rating of “HS” or Highly Satisfactory and green rating, as presented in Figure12, indicates that the project execution has been effective and is yielding the intended results according to the indicators.

As stated earlier, Figure 15 indicates that the COVID had relatively little impact on the component. Budget execution trended steadily upward following the announcement of the Pandemic. The PMU had difficulties identifying qualified consultants to undertake the Action Plan. Once identified, the diagnostic exercise or systematic assessment of the Biosecurity Inspection and Control System and its control points was delivered in March 2020 and based-on that gap analysis, the Biosecurity Action Plan was developed and delivered March 2021. During the MTR, that activity was cleared by ABG and approved by the PSC.

Figure 14: Progress Towards Results: Component 1; Biosecurity



The graph in Figure 15 below, clearly shows the winding down of the output prior to the impacts of the Pandemic. From that point forward, outputs 1.1.2. and 1.1.3. depended heavily on the Action Plan as authorized by ABG and the PSC.

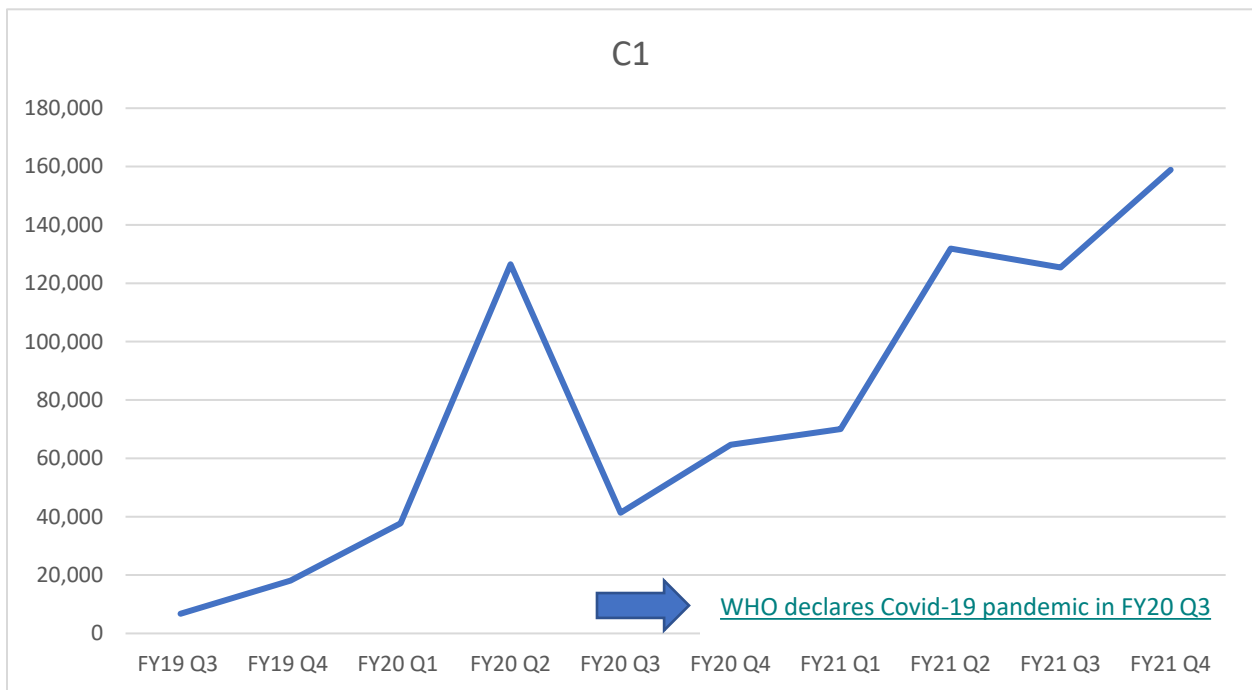
Conclusion:

- *In Q4FY2021 at MTR, 82% of the funds allocated to C1 were executed and the remaining committed.*

The procurement process for the detection equipment and the improvement of installations to facilitate the equipment was completed by the MTR. Detection Equipment Deployed include X – ray scanner for the passenger pier of Puerto Ayora, Biosecurity inspection kits for officers, laboratory equipment (centrifuge and humidity gauges, entomological & manual vacuum cleaners, and insect dissection kits.

For the treatment and quarantine of captured material, (2) new vehicles deployed to facilitate the capture and transport of feral animals and walk-in freezers were installed following improvements to infrastructure.

Figure 15: Budget Execution Component 1



A plan to install incineration equipment was modified. An ESIA was conducted to validate the use of the existing municipal incinerator and in the meantime, adaptations of a municipal pit for the disposal of animal carcasses were in progress.

To intensify the quarantine efforts related to entry of highly protected areas, walk-in freezers operational with improved infrastructure in Santa Cruz and Floreana are to freeze all content to prevent the introduction of seeds, viruses or other pathogens.

Finally, the project was in the process of developing software to automate the capture statistics by using barcodes, scanners, and software to compile and report capture results in real-time thus strengthening the inspection capability at control points. The automation software was expected to be completed by the end of July (Q1FY2022), with the testing phase and training. At the time of the MTR, the data capture process was complicated. IC's Biosecurity specialist had to navigate and systematize years of paper data which was applauded and welcomed by GBA who realized the benefits to establishing a baseline. On the mainland in Guayaquil the project has prioritized the automation of the inspection process and cargo control to move to the Galapagos, as well as equipping tablets, antennas and training inspectors. That will allow them to improve load control, allowing them to have real-time information, to better plan the inspection of the cargo in both Guayaquil and Santa Cruz.

Output 1.1.3. remained in-progress at the time of the MTR. A Procedural Manual has been updated per Action Plan and approved. The training workshops on the improved inspection and quarantine process were held during the months of May and June. They consisted of a training on the inspection and quarantine procedure manual at all ABG control points on the continent and Galapagos. The procedures manual was prepared in joint effort with the lead actors (ABG control point personnel). A training on the use of the software with the use of tablets, portable and label printers is expected in Q1 FY2022. For that reason, an "HS" and green signal was assigned indicating that the output was practically completed.

Finding 16: According to inspectors that visited during the evaluation, the project is already demonstrating efficiencies. Airport and port bio detection equipment and infrastructure have already reduced inspection times (Santa Cruz) from 3-5 minutes to seconds per passenger, resulting in reduced boarding times and departure times for boats.

Finding 17: Municipalities in San Cristobal and Isabela have shown interest in similar machines being installed demonstrating effectiveness on a qualitative level.

Finding 18: The new Action Plan recognizes that 80% of the risk is maritime and from residents, not tourists. There is no acceptable port facility in Guayaquil or on the islands. It will not be possible to guarantee full control of the entry of invasive species across the entire system.

Regardless, the equipment and training are a good first stage of intervention and the combination of activities will provide greatly improved inspection coverage beyond

Finding 19: ABG and project staff feel that there is a learning curve. A large portion of the seizures are from residents. When seizures occur, the word gets around that the government is serious about enforcement. The experience makes its way to the public and consciousness is raised, leading to better compliance and more captures.

Conclusion:

- *The project is effectively addressing the technology and capacity barriers to the limits of the existing port infrastructure. Actions by AGB and INGOs in visitor education, and interdiction in*

Marine Environments, in combination with learning by the local population will effectively contribute to a positive outcome 1.1.

IV.3.1.4. Effectiveness in Progress Towards Results: Component 2: Social License

Figure 16: Progress Towards Results: Component 2.

Component 1: Furthering development of a state-of-the-art biosecurity system		
<p>COLOR CODE</p>	<p>Outcome 1.1: The number of invasive alien species entering the Galapagos archipelago is substantially reduced. A >5% increase from baseline (7,034, 2014) in the number of pest interceptions and subsequent confiscations of goods due to pest risk across all ports combined. (<i>Bad Indicator</i>)</p>	HS
	<p>Output 1.1.1: One assessment of the biosecurity system at control points and Action Plan approved by the Project Steering Committee (PSC).</p>	HS
	<p>Output 1.1.2: 10% of equipment identified in the Action Plan Detection equipment and consumables, as identified in the Action Plan, are purchased and installed in adequate infrastructure. (<i>Weak Indicator</i>)</p>	HS
	<p>Output 1.1.3: Protocols updated, and capacities built as identified in the Action Plan. Twenty percent (20%) of the Action Plan recommendation regarding capacity building implemented.</p>	S

(HS) Highly Satisfactory; (S) Satisfactory; (MS) Moderately Satisfactory; (MU) Moderately Unsatisfactory; (U) Unsatisfactory; (HU) Highly Unsatisfactory

Component 2 creates the social license for the eventual eradication of vertebrate Invasive species on a populated island. The 6 outputs all point to different layers of social license. Several actions were identified that would contribute to the safety and effectiveness of the eradication process, while also laying the groundwork for long-term sustainable development and restoration of Floreana ecosystems, including species re-introductions. The project document refers to a “whole-farm approach” including improvements in animal management, pastures, cropping, drip irrigation, the composting of animal and crop wastes for organic fertilizer, use of troughs for watering livestock rather than directly from water sources and other practices to reduce reliance on chemical herbicides and pesticides. These actions to be fomented by the Ministry of Agriculture.

While co-financing will support work related to sustainable pig and cattle facilities, GEF funds are supporting through output 2.1.1 the transformation of chicken raising infrastructure, with benefits related to the planned eradication work and beyond. Chicken coops of appropriate design and materials are being constructed to:

- avoid chickens consuming toxic bait during the eradication campaign;
- avoid contamination of the human food chain;
- improve poultry production and manage disease (important for poultry production and locally extinct bird reintroductions);

- mitigate farmer-wildlife conflict with short-eared owls (*Asio flammeus galapagoensis*), which currently prey on farmers' chickens;
- avoid future farmer-wildlife conflict for the proposed reintroduction of Galapagos hawks, which historically preyed on farmers' chickens and for that reason were hunted to local extinction on Floreana, Baltra, Santa Cruz and San Cristobal Islands.

Chicken coops housing 50 to 100 chickens have been developed with farmers' and government partners' inputs. Two chicken coops were constructed by IC on Floreana during the PPG phase to act as pilots. During the full project, eight additional chicken coops will be constructed for a total of 10. At the time of the MTR, seven henhouses, one storage shed, and three pig pens were constructed. Output 2.1.1. is therefore on track for completion and was rated as HS.

Output 2.1.2. seeks a formal declaration by the Floreana Parish Council. In 2015, the FPC finalized its Integral plan for the sustainable development of Floreana Island, which includes invasive rodent and feral cat eradication as a priority. As a further demonstration of community support, the FPC will develop and adopt a declaration supporting biosecurity, invasive rodent and feral cat eradication, appropriate waste management, ecologically sustainable farming practices and reintroduction of locally extinct Floreana species.

Finding 20: The formal declaration in support of eradication was signed and is completed. The declaration is also endorsed by the Autonomous Decentralized Municipal Government of San Cristobal

A ranking of HS was assigned because the level of social license obtained is widely recognized as extremely difficult to obtain.

Output 2.1.3. develops an Operational Plan approved by the PSC for eradication of invasive rodents and feral cats. The invasive rodent and feral cat eradication operational plan includes safety, residential site management, rodent bait logistics, bulk bait loading and operations plans and was approved by the PSC. The project is awarded a ranking of HS for management of an inclusive process and delivery of the product on schedule.

The Operational Plan includes 8 Risk Management Plans that comprise Output 2.1.4. The Operational plans are:

- Potable Water Management Plan and Extensions for Floreana;
- Protection Plan for Children and Handicapped citizens;
- Domestic Dogs and Cats;
- Agriculture;
- Animal Production;
- Edible Rodents;
- Fisheries; and
- Visitors.

Output 2.1.4. has a part (b) that seeks to involve the entire population in the dialogue around eradication. Given the small number of families on the island of Floreana, it was feasible for IC to visit 100% of the resident families in a constant and long-term dialogue. In fact, an app was developed to record and exchange gender disaggregated information on the process.

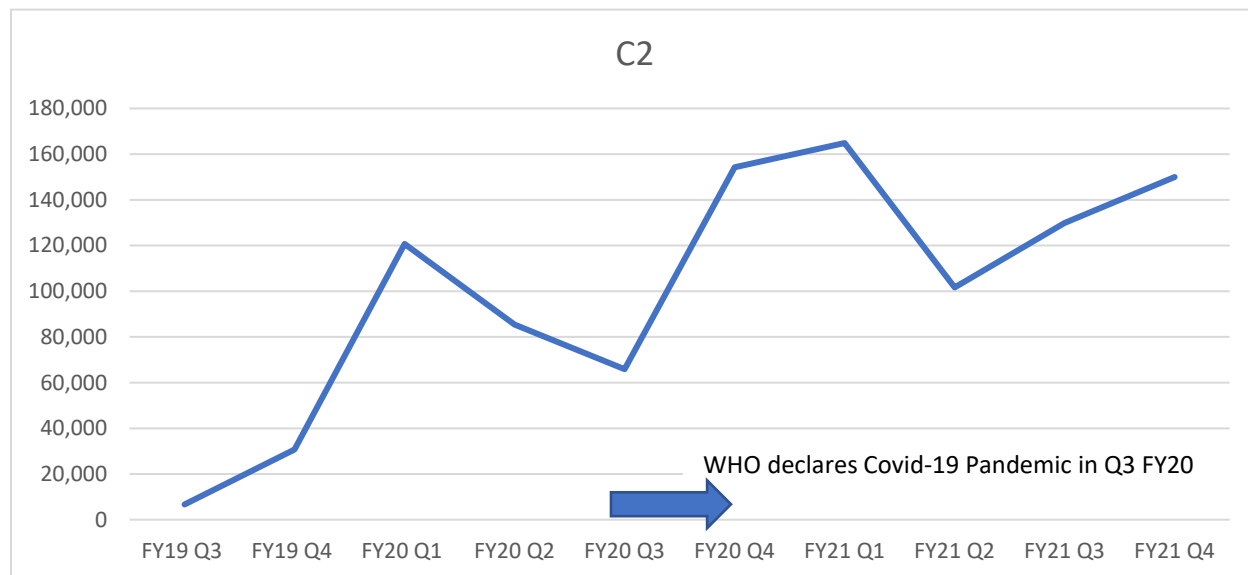
Finding 21: Originally 6 plans were programmed and 8 delivered and approved by stakeholders exceeding the projected number of Risk management plans approved. These documents are integral to the EISA developed in the next output.

Output 2.1.5: Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) completed and environmental certificate awarded.

The ESIA brings together the suite of operational, risk management and other plans developed for the project into a single document that: identifies and assesses the potential environmental and social impacts of the proposed invasive rodent and feral cat eradication; evaluates alternatives; and incorporates appropriate mitigation, management, and monitoring measures. A third-party consultancy company registered to undertake ESIA's with Ecuador's Ministry of Environment was contracted to develop an ESIA that meets both Ecuador's and the CI-GEF Implementing Agency's requirements. IC and DPNG staff are providing technical support and oversight to the consultancy team. The draft ESIA, was submitted to the PSC for approval. The Ministry of Environment determined that due to the characteristics of the project an environmental certificate, in the category of "scientific research and development services" is required, rather than a full environmental license with a full ESIA according to the regulations of Ecuador. In other words, an ESIA is not required by Ecuador for the invasive rodent and cat eradication project. However, the full ESIA was conducted in order to fulfil relevant safeguards in case GEF or other multilateral funds are secured for use in the implementation phase of the invasive rodent and feral cat eradication project.

The ESIA has been submitted to the PSC who emitted comments and requested improvements. That process will be concluded by late July 2021. The output has been awarded a Yellow "S" or Satisfactory ranking with a high likelihood of successful completion. This ranking is trending upwards.

Figure 17: Budget Execution by Quarter: Component 2



The effectiveness of implementation with relation to COVID is demonstrated in figure 17. From the declaration of the Pandemic to the present, there was no significant dip in budget execution until Q1 2021

when all that was left to do was the completion of the ESIA, which experienced a slight delay in implementing the field work.

Finding 22: Time is however a factor in assuring an adequate dialogue on the ESIA and a complete response to the issues presented. The ESIA process could run into the formal closing date of the project, as well as actions discussed below in Component 3.

Conclusion:

- *The project has executed 89% of the C2 Budget. With the ESIA contract still open, 100% funds are committed, and all outputs are expected to be completed by the End-of-Project.*
- *A no-cost extension that enables the project activities to extend to the project closure date followed by a period for administrative closure is necessary to assure the completion of all activities.*
- *An HS was awarded at the Outcome-level.*

Recommendation

- *Enable a no-cost extension for a maximum of 6 months to enable the execution of technical activities until the original project close date, followed by an extended period for technical and administrative closure of the project.*

Finding 23: Effectiveness: Island Conservation -IC- who is the executor of this component it has years of presence on Floreana and has gained the trust of the population (120 people).

Finding 24: Effectiveness: Social license achieved for eradication of vertebrate invasive species. Beneficiaries, ABG, IC and the Parish Board Declaration ensure that most farmers and the population support the project to eradicate invasive species.

Conclusion:

- *The project has effectively addressed the social barriers to eradication of vertebrate species on Floreana Island. The social license has been achieved.*

Recommendation:

- *Once the final installations are in place, begin the next phase of development in the elimination of black rats and feral cats as a prerequisite to tortoise introduction to Floreana Island.*

Finding 25: (Effectiveness) Farmers want to see rats eliminated because of their crop loss. They fear water contamination, this even though IC has made investments in reservoir protection and zoning of the area.

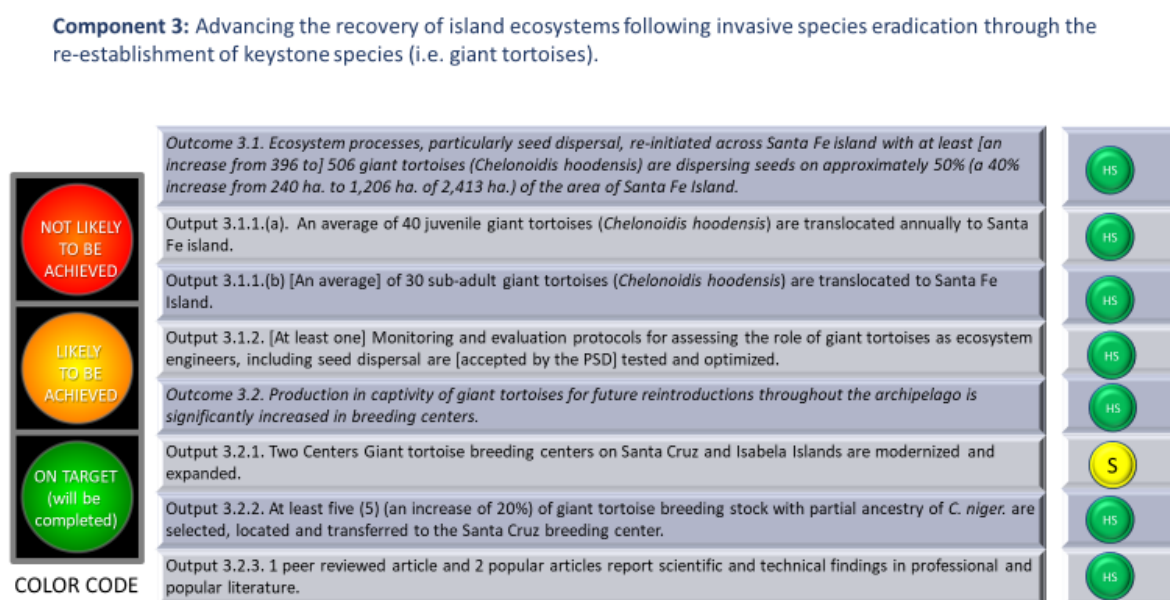
Finding 26: (Efficiency) IC developed an app. to map all the inhabitants of the island and their socio-economic information, as well as their opinions on the agreements and progress made with each of them.

Finding 27: (Effectiveness) The new practices of stabling of livestock, pigs and hens has added value for farmers. Farmers interviewed indicated they will maintain these practices even after eradication, regardless of added labor.

IV.3.1.5. Effectiveness in Progress Towards Results: Component 3: Reproduction of Tortoises

According to the project document, it is not feasible to resurrect extinct species extirpated from dry and arid island, but the saddleback tortoise species characteristic of the arid zones that comprise most of Galapagos are similar enough in ecological role to enable the recovery of ecological processes through the translocation of closely related species—so-called ‘ecological replacements.

Figure 18: Progress Towards Results: Component 3



(HS) Highly Satisfactory; (S) Satisfactory; (MS) Moderately Satisfactory; (MU) Moderately Unsatisfactory; (U) Unsatisfactory; (HU) Highly Unsatisfactory

The DPNG’s Tortoise Breeding Centers have been conducting giant tortoise breeding, head-starting, and translocation activities as part of island-specific recovery efforts for over five decades, resulting in remarkable conservation successes such as the Española Island tortoise. On Española, historical tortoise harvesting resulted in a population of just 15 individuals, only three of which were males. A five-decade-long population restoration program involving captive breeding, head-starting and the reintroduction of more than 1,500 individuals saved the species and effectively re-established an important variable in the maintenance of the island’s ecosystem⁴⁴.

As part of the Giant Tortoise Restoration Initiative⁴⁵, Española tortoises, the closest genetic relative and of the same saddleback morphology, are used as ecological analogs for the extinct Santa Fe tortoise to re-initiate ecosystem processes on Santa Fe Island. Since 2015, a total of 396 Española (*Chelonoidis hoodensis*) tortoises were released on Santa Fe. Additional efforts will be required in coming years to

⁴⁴ [Gibbs et al. 2014](#)

⁴⁵ A collaborative 15-year project (2014-2028) implemented by the DPNG and Galapagos Conservancy, with support from visiting scientists from around the world. <https://www.galapagos.org/conservation/our-work/tortoise-restoration/>

build capacity and restore the island with approximately 4,000 tortoises, the abundance predicted by habitat suitability models to have been present originally⁴⁶. The work is undertaken in accordance with guidelines developed by IUCN to direct conservation-oriented translocations in an ecologically sound manner.⁴⁷

This is the only component in the project with two outcomes addressing the biological and logistical processes of tortoise ex situ breeding and re-introduction combined with expanded and modernized breeding facilities to accommodate the number of genetically appropriate tortoises needed for the success of the Giant Tortoise Restoration Initiative.

Within Outcome 3.1., *“ecosystem processes, particularly seed dispersal, re-initiated across Santa Fe Island (2,413 ha) as the result of the translocation of giant tortoises, “the project has achieved its target of finding acceptable genetic breeders and in producing tortoises for relocation. To achieve Target 3.1.1.a., juvenile giant tortoises, approximately five years in age, were translocated from the Santa Cruz Island tortoise-breeding center, where they were hatched and raised, to Santa Fe Island. Prior to being translocated, they were quarantined and equipped with subdermal microchips (transponders) for re-identification where re-encountered juvenile giant tortoises were translocated as part of an annual activities during the project, i.e., at least 80 juvenile giant tortoises in total.*

To achieve Target 3.1.1.b., the project translocated sub-adult giant tortoises, expected to begin breeding (at 18 – 20 years of age), from Española Island to Santa Fe Island to accelerate the natural breeding process. The sub-adult tortoises targeted for translocation from Española were originally incubated in the breeding center on Santa Cruz Island and then released on Española at around age five. As they were maturing, Santa Fe Island eradicated feral goats rendering the island a suitable for these sub-adults to commence breeding shortly after being translocated. By transporting sub-adult tortoises to Santa Fe—as opposed to only juveniles—will advance the population restoration process by some 15 years.

The translocation process began by locating sub-adult tortoises suitable for translocation on Española following a quarantine process for people, equipment and provisions per protocols developed in component 1. Search groups were divided into 10 camps throughout Española Island. Once the search groups located suitable sub-adult Española tortoises, they were marked with telemetry equipment prior to transfer to the Sierra Negra vessel for a trip to the breeding center on Santa Cruz Island where they were quarantined for at least three months. The tortoises were later airlifted back to the DPNG vessel for transport to Santa Fe Island, where they were aerially off-loaded to previously selected release locations throughout the island.

Finding 28: To the time of the MTR, the project had released 155 juvenile Giant Tortoises (C. hoodensis.) and 31 Sub-adults exceeding the targets for Outputs 3.1.1 (a) and (b) respectively achieving an efficiency rating of a green “HS” for meeting targets.

Prior to release, tortoises were equipped with subdermal transponders to aid monitoring. Output 3.1.2. establishes the monitoring protocol and process for Tortoises released under Output 3.1.1. Because this is among the first experiences in the world of repopulating an island with “ecological analog” giant tortoises, the importance of carefully developed protocol based on ongoing experience gained and lessons learned is amplified. A standard protocol was developed and tested in the field to enable the evaluation of the evaluate the health and status of repatriated individuals, the overall population growth and dispersal, and interactions of tortoises with other species, particular the plant community.

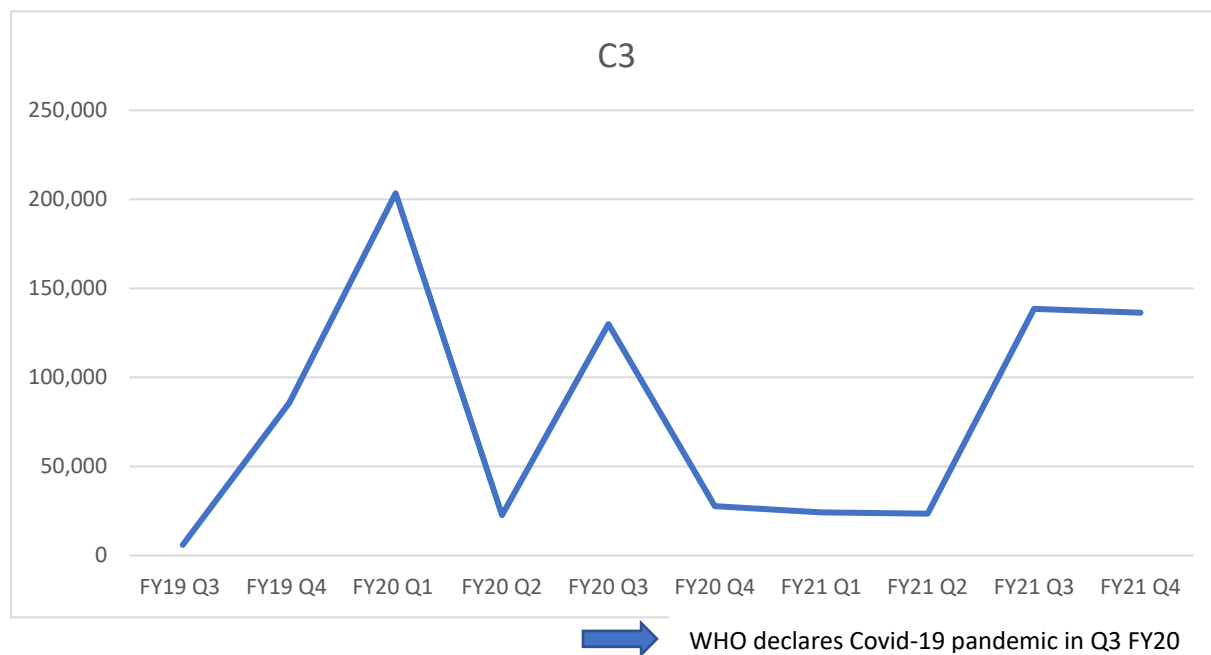
⁴⁶ Tapia et al. 2015. Plan para la Reintroducción de las Tortugas Gigantes a la isla Santa Fe como Estrategia para su Restauración Ecológica.

⁴⁷ <http://www.iucn-whsg.org/node/1471>

Specifically, the protocol includes biannual monitoring, survival rates, body condition, growth rates, habitat-use and dispersal will be measured through mark-recapture methods. Interactions with other species, including seed dispersal and habitat change attributable to tortoises, will be measured via studies of diet (inferred from fecal samples) and foraging ecology of tortoises (observational studies) as well as vegetation response and habitat use by other animals inside and outside of areas from which tortoises are excluded. *Opuntia* cactus represents a keystone species for the entire vertebrate community on Santa Fe Island, and a major focus of both tortoise and terrestrial iguana foraging: demographic studies of *Opuntia* across a gradient of tortoise density will enable tracking *Opuntia* response to tortoise re-establishment.

Finding 29: The protocol will facilitate the DPNG and its partners’ efforts to manage the repopulation of adult tortoises on other islands, such as Floreana and to be able to evaluate the overall impact of the program validate the Theory of Change. With the protocol approved by the Technical Management Committee in the third quarter of FY 2021, the project has successfully produced Output 3.1.2. and receives a green HS rating.

Figure 19: Budget Execution by Quarter Component 3



Conclusion 15: The successful reintroduction and establishment of monitoring for ecosystem-level changes contributes to the project objective of increasing ecosystem restoration via a replacement species. The monitoring protocol will demonstrate the attainment of the indicator for Outcome 3.1, the no. of hectares of territory with natural seed disbursement.

Outcome 3.2 provides the inputs for the previous outcome through improved infrastructure and capture of appropriate breed stock thereby assuring the *ex-situ* production of giant tortoises for future reintroductions throughout the archipelago.

Young tortoises that are kept in the Centers until they reach five years of age see an increase in survival rates (typically 90% of eggs reach juvenile stage) versus in the wild (estimated at just 5%), with major ramifications for tortoise population growth rates and in the efficiency and effectiveness of ecosystem restoration. To strengthen the role of captive breeding in restoration of wild populations, Output 3.2.1. is utilizing GEF funding to renovate and expand the giant tortoise breeding centers on Santa Cruz and Isabela Islands. Improvements include construction of at least two new breeding pens, a quarantine pen, a pre-adaptation pen, and ten pens for hatchling tortoises. These augment the recent installation of 8 state-of-the-art tortoise egg incubators.

Within the improved breeding centers, breeders will be kept in captivity and eggs incubated. Hatchlings will be cared for in secure pens until they are a year old, including daily feeding and watering, protection against predation by rats, and health monitoring. Beyond the life of this project, the tortoises will be transferred to pre-adaptation pens where they remain until they are five years old. In pre-adaptation, they are hardened-off to adapt to the terrain and temperature extremes that they will face in the wild. Finally, the tortoises will be quarantined to ensure their health and that they are purged of seeds in their digestive tracts before release in their targeted ranges.

A competitive bidding process was implemented hire a general contractor for improvement of two breeding centers. As presented in Figure 19, the review process of selecting contractors was delayed as well as the procurement of materials due to COVID-19 restrictions. This is witnessed by a drop-off in activity during Q3 of FY2020 with a protracted flat line through Q2 of FY 2021.

Finding 30: The PMU did a good job at keeping the output 3.2.1 alive during the Pandemic. The output is now underway and is on-track to be completed by the end of the project if the activities are allowed to continue up until the termination date of the project. This is an additional reason supporting Recommendation 3: a no cost extension to enable the administrative close of the project following the official EOP date. Evaluators awarded an "S" on a yellow sign indicating certainty that the activities will be completed by EOP.

In addition, the genetic quality of the juvenile population will be improved through the acquisition of enhanced breeding stock with partial ancestry of *C. niger* for the repopulation of Floreana Island (Output 3.2.2).

Between the late 1990s and 2014, scientific expeditions to Wolf Volcano, located at the northern end of Isabela Island, scientists tagged and identified through blood samples 89 individuals partly related to the extinct Floreana Giant Tortoise (*C. niger*). Another 17 were found to be related to Pinta Island tortoises. Their presence on Wolf, 100 miles from their place of origin, was explained by sailors leaving many saddle backed tortoises, collected throughout the Galapagos, at neighboring Banks Bay, a major stopping over place for whalers and other sailors to repair their ships. Some of these tortoises interbred enabling the *C. niger* genome to persist in the resulting hybrid offspring. To date, over 200 tortoises have been identified as having partial Floreana ancestry. During an expedition to Wolf Volcano in November 2015, 17 selected individuals from this group were transported to the Santa Cruz Breeding Center to begin the current *C. niger* breeding program. To further enhance the program by expanding the pool of breeders with additional, selected giant tortoises with Floreana ancestry, the project supported a ten-day expedition to Wolf Volcano to collect at least five tortoises with partial *C. niger* ancestry. The selected tortoises were added to the brood stock to increase in genetic diversity and Floreana tortoise genome capture. The GEF funding will support helicopter time, genetic analysis to support identification of the

best individuals, field equipment (tents, sleeping bags, GPS, etc.) and protection (clothing, boots, helmets, etc.) for park rangers and scientists, as well as planning of the field work.

The selected tortoises were transported to the breeding facility at Santa Cruz Island where they were quarantined and integrated into the existing breeding stock. The addition of five breeders represents a 20% increase in the size of what is at present a small core breeding population to restore tortoises to Floreana Island. In the wild, a female will produce only 2-3 individuals that reach breeding age. Ex situ rearing can increase her production to some 250-300 offspring reaching breeding age. The gains associated with increasing the core breeding stock by only 5 individuals represents a substantial contribution to population recovery on Floreana Island. Keeping the number of additional breeders to this modest level also respects the substantial financial burden that hosting these additional new breeders for the rest of their natural lifespan implies.

Finding 31: In completion of output 3.2.2., the brood stock was successfully diversified through the capture of 5 additional individuals from Wolf Island. For this undertaking, a green light and HS are awarded.

Finally, through Output 3.2.3., the project's scientific findings regarding tortoise relocation and habitat restoration are in the process of dissemination with global audiences and especially with the population of Galapagos. First, a Chapter titled, Santa Fe Island: Return of Tortoises via a Replacement Species⁴⁸. The project presented virtually, "From Near-extinction to recovery: Conservation Successes and Challenges for the Española Tortoise (*Chelonoidis hoodensis*.) in Galápagos, Ecuador for the LACA 2020 Conference by the Society for Conservation Biology. A similar article was accepted for publication in the Journal of the Society for Restoration Ecology titled SERNEWS Wildlife in Restoration, Volume 34, Issue 3.

A popular article for local dissemination was intended for publication in the Galapagos Report, a report published every year with articles about key policies, conservation programmes and summaries of key science reports. Due to the pandemic, the Report was not published in 2020.

The third product will be a poster to be presented at the Galapagos National Park Symposium, which is organized every year and is open to the public. Attendance at the Symposium includes other investigators (both visiting and resident scientists), guides, students and members of the public. Unfortunately, the Symposium was also cancelled due to COVID. For that reason, publication was coordinated in scholarly journals.

Finding 32: The project partners in Galapagos Conservancy successfully published peer-reviewed scientific articles to disseminate the lessons learned from ecological restoration using replacement species, including a dedicated book chapter. Output 3.2.3 is successfully completed qualifying for a green HS ranking.

Conclusion:

- *The project has established the foundation and processes for increasing the production capacity of giant tortoises for future reintroduction throughout the archipelago, fully achieving outcome 3.1.*


⁴⁸ Tapia, Washington, et.al., Santa Fe Island: Return of Tortoises via a Replacement Species, Chapter 24. in Gibbs, Cayot, and Tapia eds. Galapagos Giant Tortoises; biodiversity of the World: Conservation from Genes to Landscapes Series, Academic Press, pp. 483-499.

V. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

Project Implementation and management was evaluated through 8 parameters that span the managerial functions needed for successful project execution ranging from successfully recruiting quality staff and contractors to sound financial management. The parameters include 8 management criteria related to internal factors related to the PMU and external factors related to CI-GEF as an implementing agency, the PSC, and other partners:

Figure 20: Rating of Project and Adaptive Management

Progress towards achieving results: PMC

	PROJECT MANAGEMENT	HS		
	Recruitment/Staffing	HS		
	Productive Working Environment	HS		
	Adaptive Management Planning	HS		
	Monitoring & Reporting	HS		
	Planning & Budget	HS		
	Managing Risks	HS		
	Interinstitutional relationships	HS		
	Financial	HS		

(HS) Highly Satisfactory; (S) Satisfactory; (MS) Moderately Satisfactory; (MU) Moderately Unsatisfactory; (U) Unsatisfactory; (HU) Highly Unsatisfactory

Overall, the PMU received a Mid-term Rating of “HS” or Highly Satisfactory for total Project management. In all of the parameters, the PMU scores “HS” the highest ranking for excellence in recruiting qualified staff and consultants; establishing a productive work environment; Adaptive Management and Planning; Monitoring and Reporting; Planning & Budget; Managing Risks; Interinstitutional Relationships and Financial Management.

V.1. Project Management

V.1.1. Recruitment and Staffing

CI-GEF and Island Conservation recruited a qualified and dedicated staff to run the PMU. The PMU is backed up by CI—GEF staff specialists in technical oversight, financial management, safeguards, etc. All partner organizations interviewed and especially PSC members felt that the PMU staff were dedicated, approachable and effective at responding to their requests. All also expressed effectiveness despite the COVID situation. The PMU progressed with a dedicated and qualified staff, all of whom are qualified for their positions and functions.

Consultants selected were qualified, expert in their areas, produced quality work, and shared the mission of the project. Galapagos Conservancy is a prime example of an associate that is recognized internationally for their unique and dedicated expertise in managing the endemic species of Galapagos.

Finding 33: Based on a review of the CVs and from interviews, CI and IC recruited quality staff and consultants competent in their areas and with long-standing relationships in Galapagos. This enhanced the trust between the PMU, partners, and beneficiaries. This was especially important in developing the social license in Component 2.

V.1.2. Productive Work Environment

All staff interviewed felt that the PMU listened to them, took action on issues, and were not afraid to bring-up issues. The COVID restrictions put people first. There is clarity in what is expected of them, and the resources are available to do a good job.

Finding 34: CI-GEF and IC provided a productive and safe work environment.

V.1.3. Proactive and Adaptive Management and Planning

Proactive and Adaptive Management are at both ends of a continuum. All counterpart agencies interviewed felt that the PMU was doing a good job of responding to problems, especially to COVID. The PMU was proactive in getting as much done during the lockdown to position themselves for action as restrictions lessened. This ranged from seeking international experts and equipment for biosecurity to going to the mainland to seek suppliers and acceptable conditions for materials to improve the tortoise reproduction units.

Finding 35: The PMU both proactively and adaptively managed problems in particular delays due to COVID-19

V.1.4. Monitoring and Reporting

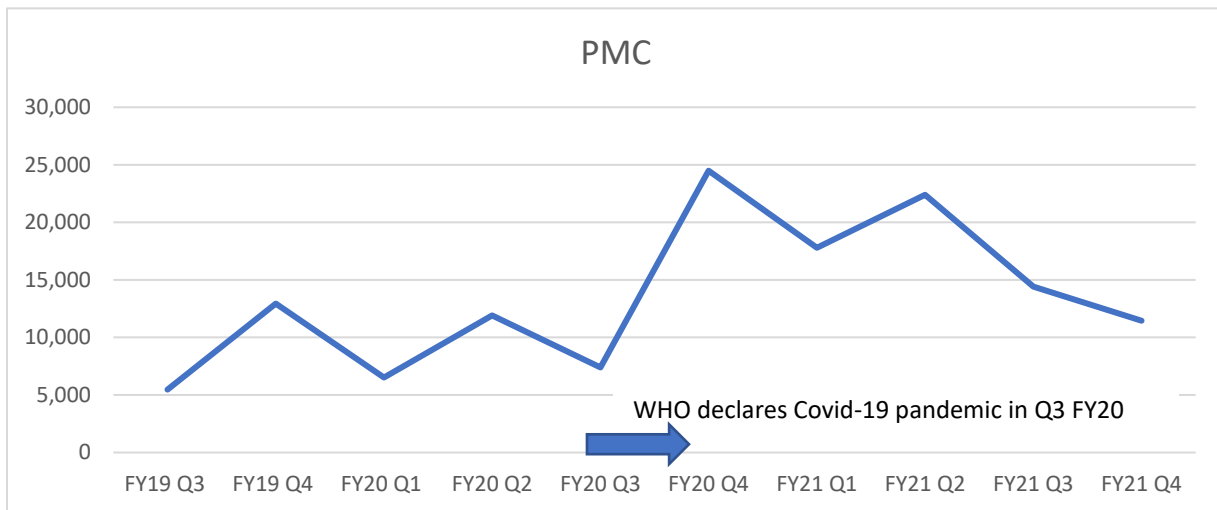
The reporting system is consistent between quarterly financial documents, quarterly technical reports, annual work plans and Project Information Reports. Evaluators were able to track most activities and lateral investments in Gender Mainstreaming plans, etc. The only criticism is that the text in documents such as the PIR for example often does not include the dates of completion of activities. Another best practice is to present all outputs even if there was no activity or is completed, For example: Output 3.1.X: No Activity.

Finding 36: The systems put in place by CI-GEF were beneficial to IC and GC who stated that they increased their technical capacity to manage projects by using the monitoring and reporting tools provided by CI-GEF became more technified by using the quarterly report formats. Overall a particularly good effort and results in this category.

V.1.5. Planning and Budget

The planning process is proactive even though many plans were dashed due to COVID, the PMU did follow the process. Evaluators were able to model budget expenditures and estimate unpaid obligations with the tools provided. Project management expenses remained relatively fixed until Q3 of FY2020 then increased slightly as project activities expanded to their current level of operations.

Figure 21: Budget Execution by Quarter: PMC



Finding 37: The AWP’s, Budgets and Procurement plans are complete, realistic, and consistent with one another. A score of “HS” was provided because the evaluators were impressed with the level of detail in the planning function.

V.2. Assessing and Managing Risks

Risk management is a logical and integrated part of the project, which is actually dedicated in part to managing risks caused by IAS. The risk assessment presented at the project formulation stage is sound and no additional risks surfaced during the MTR. The mitigating measures presented are realistic and correspond to the risks.

Finding 38: The PMU is proactive and adaptive in responding to risks. Evaluators feel that the process of managing risks is particularly strong in the area of biological risks, which have detailed risk assessments and strict protocols. An overall ranking of green, HS is assigned.

V.3. Institutional Relationships

CI-GEF, IC, and their main contractor GC are long-term players in the movement to restore the Galapagos ecosystems to an improved structure and function. Each institution is an expert in their area and brings particular skills into the group. CI-GEF as an implementing institution has provided guidance and administrative and financial systems that were signaled as highly beneficial to strengthening the administrative and project management capacity of IC and GC. IC is well known in the space and has long-term relationships with ABG and GC and the members of the Management and Project Steering Committees. GC brings a well-established reputation for implementing restoration activities and science on-the-ground. The Steering Committee members also maintain strong relationships with the beneficiaries and with each other within an activist and supportive board. Beneficiaries interviewed ratified their appreciation for the way the project is being implemented by the PMU.

Finding 39: Each institution is an expert in their area and brings particular skills into the group. Interviews with beneficiaries ratified their appreciation for the PMU and their handling of the project. For these reasons, a rating of “HS”/Green is applied because this aspect is trending upward now as the effects of COVID are diminishing.

V.4. Financial Management

The PMU submitted to the evaluators the quarterly and annual financial reports. These were complete and enabled the analysis presented above. The PSC members interviewed were satisfied with the financial management of the project’s resources.

Finding 40: The financial management of the PMU and the tools provided by CI-GEF are complete and provide an effective assessment of the management of the project’s financial resources. A score of green, HS is assigned.

Conclusion 17: the PMU received a Mid-term Rating of “HS” or Highly Satisfactory for total project management. In all the parameters, the PMU scores “HS” the highest ranking for excellence. The Implementing Agency has selected quality partners for project execution and provided quality tools and support to administrative and financial management of the project’s resources. The Executing Agency has recruited qualified staff and consultants; establishing a productive work environment; demonstrated adaptive management and proactive planning: quality monitoring and reporting; planning & budgeting; management of risks; and have maintained productive interinstitutional relationships and appropriate management of the project’s financial resources. This is a well-managed project.

VI. SAFEGUARDS

Evaluators reviewed the safeguard plans and related documentation, including monitoring reports, assessments, PIRs, PSC meetings and checked these actions against GEF Policies and Guidance as mentioned in this section. In effect, this section is a corollary to the section on Adaptive Management that describes the degree to which the management measures related to safeguards, including the grievance mechanism, are being effectively implemented. In addition, the evaluators were seeking to identify changes to the risks identified in the Safeguard Screening Form (Project Document, Annex X) and safeguard plans at the time of CEO endorsement. In addition, evaluators checked to see if any additional safeguards have been triggered.

The screening exercise did not trigger the necessity to execute safeguards on ESIA Policy, involuntary resettlement, Indigenous Peoples, Pest Management and Physical & Cultural resources policy.

The safeguards triggered are: Natural habitats, Stakeholder Engagement, Gender Mainstreaming, and Accountability and Grievance Mechanisms. Even though a GEF review or ESIA was not deemed necessary, the following section describes how CI and partners are constantly screening the environment effects of the project activities and future plans for the eradication of vertebrate IAS.

During the preparatory phase, CI-G and stakeholders developed four mechanisms with preliminary recommendations that were fully developed during the inception phase of project implementation. These provisional plans were:

- a. Environmental Management Plan for Translocation and Captive Rearing of Giant tortoises: provides essential physical, scientific and programmatic context which underpins the project efforts. It describes the project's proposed activities and targets. It clearly identifies issues and associated safeguards. It analyzes impacts, risks and mitigation mechanisms. Finally, it presents the project's monitoring system.
- b. Stakeholder Engagement Plan. This plan outlines the social location of the various stakeholders that are potentially affected by the project, identifying their key issues and priorities.
- c. Gender Mainstreaming. This plan sets out to achieve gender equality in all aspects of the project.
- d. Accountability and Grievance Compliance. The ProDoc indicates a full process for registering grievances.

According to the Project Document, "CI will provide the required oversight to the finalization and adaptive implementation of the plans". The plans for each of the above were in-force at CEO endorsement.

All safeguards have different contents but cover the national context in relation to the subject matter, work plans on how to work each subject and how to monitor and evaluate progress. The PSC also assures conformity to the national context. This is important since the project has the commitment to regularly monitor the proposed activities, milestones, and indicators. The PMU together with DPNG, GC, ABG and others monitor different aspects of safeguards regularly and report findings in the Quarterly Reports and PIR. The safeguards were cleared by stakeholders during the inception workshop of the project held on 29-30 April 2018 and published on CI's website. The safeguards are summarized as follows:

Table 6. Summary of safeguards monitoring

Safeguard	Year and quarter	Overall Progress Status /Quarter	Implementation
Stakeholder Engagement Plan In-force	Q4 FY 2019	IS	The IA has internal guidelines that were followed at project formulation. A Stakeholder Engagement Plan compliant with GEF policy and guidance was approved and in-force during the inception phase. Progress within a Stakeholder Engagement Workplan is monitored and reported in Quarterly Reports and in PIRs.
Gender Mainstreaming Plan in-force	Q4 FY 2019	IS	The IA also has Gender Mainstreaming protocols that were followed at project formulation. The IA protocols are compliant with GEF guidance and policy for Gender Mainstreaming. A Gender Action Plan is in-force and is monitored and reported on in Quarterly Reports and PIRs.
Accountability and Grievance Mechanisms in-force.	Q4 FY 2019	IS	An Accountability and Grievance Mechanism was approved within the Stakeholder Engagement Plan. The project approved the Plan and set forth the mechanism and tools necessary for beneficiaries and public to complaint if needed. <u>No complaints were received to date.</u> www.islandconservation.org/safeguards-plan-disclosure .
Natural Habitats	Q4 FY 2019	IS	The IA has strong Environment and Social management guidelines that were applied at project formulation. A full Environmental Management Plan was developed for the project. Given the nature of the project, strong monitoring processes and criteria are in-place. Progress and status of the Environmental Management Plan is tracked, reported in quarterly reports and the PIR to the PSC.

Note: O=overdue; D=Delayed; NS=Not started on schedule; IS=Under implementation on schedule and CA=Completed/Achieved

VI.1. Environmental Safeguards

The PRODOC defines GEF and CI's approach to developing the project's safeguard policy. CI, as GEF Project Agency, has adopted the GEF Minimum standards on Environmental and Social Safeguards and Gender Mainstreaming and therefore, all projects, must be screened during preparatory phase and CI is to track compliance with the safeguards all throughout project implementation. If potential adverse impacts are identified during screening, the project must take action to mitigate the impacts. CI's Environmental and Social Management Framework⁴⁹ states that the goal is to *"prevent, minimize and mitigate any harm to the environment and to people by incorporating environmental and social concerns as an intrinsic part throughout the project cycle"*. During the screening, the project is also classified according to three categories (A, B or C) depending on the potential environmental and social impact.

Following screening, the Galapagos Biosecurity project was classified as a "B" indicating that the project could have environmental impacts related to the translocation of tortoise species could have a significant and irreversible impact on the natural environment. This triggered a full Environmental Management Plan, which was developed during the project formulation stage. In addition to this, Component 2 of the project develops operational plans for future eradication efforts, 8 Risk Management Plans, and a full ESIA relating to eradication and ecosystem recovery was developed and was in the comment phase among the PSC at the time of the MTR. The process included within CI's ESS#2 also includes:

- A detailed analysis of all activities and potential impacts.
- Mitigative measures, such as quarantine times for purging tortoises of seeds of invasive species, disease risk, biological risks, and associated impacts.
- An exit strategy if irreversible negative impacts were to occur.
- Risk management and monitoring analysis.
- Full monitoring protocol with roles and responsibilities.

Finding 41: The Natural Habitats safeguard is mainstreamed throughout the project monitoring and evaluation process and is actively monitored and reported within the projects M&E plan and with engagement of the PSC. These are based on a rigorous analysis at the time of project formulation. Management of the ESS#2 is deemed Highly Satisfactory "HS."

Conclusion

- *The project is compliant with CI-GEFs ESS#2 and, although not triggered at project implementation, the safeguards, process and instruments being deployed by CI-GEF and the PMU, are compliant with GEF Policy⁵⁰ and Guidance⁵¹ on Environmental and Social Safeguards.*

⁴⁹ Conservation International, November 2020. Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), version 7. 148 pp.

⁵⁰ Global Environment Facility, June 19,2019. Policy on environmental and Social Safeguards, Policy SD/PL/03.

⁵¹ _____, June 19,2019. Guidelines on GEF's Policy on Environmental and Social Safeguards. Guidelines SD/GN/03.

VI.2 Gender Mainstreaming

From the review of the project document and the interviews with actors that participated in the formulation process, gender is successfully mainstreamed throughout the entire project. The Results Framework contains gender disaggregated indicators. All project and agency staff interviewed shared gender related perspectives and gender disaggregated information on the population of Floreana and within agencies. The aspect of Gender was included thoroughly in the project document's Gender Mainstreaming Plan (Appendix VIII, Project Document) with specific actions in the Annual Work Plan and definition of roles and responsibilities. The project's results framework also includes gender disaggregated targets, which are measured and reported in the Quarterly Reports and PIRs. Examples of gender mainstreaming are:

1. Within component 1 Biosecurity component, training considers the special needs of female agents. Training courses are gender sensitive in terms of participation, instructional design, and use of language. Training programmes ensure that detection devices can be effectively operated by both women and men.
2. Within the extensive social work associated with generating the social license for future eradications, Community consultative processes was designed to facilitate equal participation, mutual respect, and collective decision making by women and men. The potential project impacts (positive and negative) on both men and women have been taken into consideration during the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) which provides the guidance necessary to ensure that both men and women receive culturally compatible social and economic benefits and that they do not suffer adverse effects because of project implementation.

For component 3, issues related to gender mainstreaming are women's participation in field monitoring expeditions, and women's participation in captive rearing of tortoises, etc.

In addition, the process of dissemination of lessons learned is intended to reach both women and men in leadership positions and in the public at large with gender-sensitive language and equally accessible to men and women.

*Finding 42: Gender is effectively mainstreamed throughout the project and is deemed **Highly Satisfactory** "HS"*

Conclusion:

- *The project is compliant with GEF Gender Equality Policy (SD/PL/02)⁵² and Guidelines⁵³*

⁵²Global Environment Facility. November 2017. Policy on Gender Equality URL: https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/Gender_Equality_Policy.pdf ; accessed 22 January 2021.

⁵³_____. June 2017. Guidelines on Gender Equality. URL: https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/Gender_Equality_Guidelines.pdf; accessed 22 January 2021.

VI.3 Accountability and Grievance Mechanism

CI has published guidelines within the ESMF that defines the institutional dedication and approach to a comprehensive Accountability and Grievance Mechanism for the implementation of GEF initiatives, which is in-line with GEF policy. The approved project document defines the grievance mechanism in Appendix IV. The Grievance mechanism was discussed with stakeholders during the project design phase and confirmed in the Project Inception Workshop with subsequent publication on CI's website.

The stated objective of the Accountability and Complaints Mechanism is to ensure people potentially affected by the project can bring their grievances to Island Conservation, CI-GEF or the GEF about any issues covered in the ESMF for consideration and redress. The Accountability and Grievance Mechanisms are not intended to replace country level dispute resolution and redress mechanisms. This means that local communities can always seek nationally established mechanisms, including arbitration, administrative or legal avenues to raise concerns. Specifically, these mechanisms seek to:

- Address potential breaches of CI's and the GEF's policies and procedures;
- Be independent, transparent, and effective;
- Be accessible to project-affected people;
- Keep complainants abreast of progress with cases brought forward; and
- Maintain records on all cases and issues brought forward for review.

Operationally, the process for registering a complaint or issue is published by IC who has a dedicated email address and multiple contact possibilities, and information are available. Protocols are also established for the handling (chain of custody) and documentation of complaints. Any complaint triggers an inquiry by the Implementing Agency.

The mechanism is regularly reviewed based-on indicators for management. The number of grievances registered, and the number of cases resolved is reported in quarterly reports and in the PIR and are reported to the PSC. To date no grievances have been received nor activated the response mechanism.

VI.4 Stakeholder Engagement Plan

The project developed a full stakeholder engagement strategy as part of the PPG activities for the project. CI-G subsequently published a full Stakeholder Engagement Plan intended to fulfill the CI-GEF agency Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) Policy 9 on the processes of informing and engaging the partners and stakeholders in the project. The policy states:

The CI-GEF Project Agency will oversee the Executing Entity involving all stakeholders, including project-affected groups, Indigenous Peoples, and local CSOs, as early as possible in the design/preparation process and ensure that their views and concerns are made known and considered.

Executing Entities must ensure that the key principles of the GEF Gender Mainstreaming Policy — ensuring that both men and women are given equal access to information and decision-making processes — is incorporated throughout stakeholder engagement.

Executing Entities should identify the range of stakeholders that may be interested in their actions and consider how external communications might facilitate a dialog with all stakeholders.

Stakeholders should be informed and provided with information regarding project activities.

The Executing Entity is responsible for drafting and executing the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) that is scaled to the project risks and impacts and development stage and be tailored to the characteristics and interests of the Affected Communities, recognizing that some community members may not be able to effectively communicate outside of the local language. The SEP will include differentiated measures to allow the effective participation of those identified as disadvantaged or vulnerable.

When the stakeholder engagement process depends substantially on community representatives, the Executing Entity will make every reasonable effort to verify that such persons do in fact represent the views of Affected Communities and that they can be relied upon to faithfully communicate the rest of consultations to their constituents.

In keeping with that policy, the executing agency responsible for the execution of the plan, Island Conservation, developed a comprehensive stakeholder engagement plan during the project formulation stage. The Plan, presented in Appendix IX of provides an exhaustive presentation of the stakeholder participation in the formulation of the project and through the approval stage. The Plan was presented and accepted by stakeholders during the project's Inception Workshop and published.

The Plan ensures that a broad range of views and concerns are made known and taken into account in the design and implementation of the project. Continued and documented efforts indicate public participation during the design phase and a plan to include stakeholder groups of historically vulnerable or marginalized people (e.g. women, youth, elders, and religious/ethnic minorities) and ensure they are able to fully participate in this process. IC provided extensive documentation of the characterization of stakeholders and projected the level of effort and the roles and responsibilities for maintaining stakeholders in the decision-making loop of the project.

All components have stakeholder engagement actions per the thematic nature of the component. The results of the stakeholder engagement process are reported on and documented in quarterly reports and in the PIR. An example of extensive consultation is the process to reach 100% of families on Floreana and involve them in the risk assessment process, the investment in farm infrastructure, and dialogue to

support the Floreana Parish declaration signed recently. Additionally, the effort to reach both men and women in participating agencies ensuring equal access to information and decision-making processes is well documented and was confirmed during interviews. In fact, all persons interviewed stated that they were able to approach, share ideas, and give feedback to the PMU and that their observations were considered.

Finding 43: Stakeholder engagement is actively mainstreamed into the project's implementation framework. Highly Satisfactory, HS.

Conclusion

- *The Grievance mechanism and Stakeholder engagement strategy are compliant with CI's ESMF and is compliant with GEF Stakeholder Engagement Policy (SD/PL/01)⁵⁴ and Guidelines⁵⁵*

VII Sustainability

The sustainability analysis in the MTR establishes the framework for an analysis during the Terminal Evaluation of the project. At this point and because of political change within Ecuador and an uncertain economic outlook for a post COVID-19 economy and uncertainty surrounding COVID variants, it is difficult to adequately evaluate sustainability. There are however several positive safeguards in place that can minimally mitigate the risks that are presently and will remain persistent over the next several years. The following provides information on sustainability from the Institutional, economic, political, and technical perspectives.

Institutional:

- The Biosecurity activities under Component 1 reflect the priorities set forth in the ABG's 2015-2018 Strategic Plan. It is the ABG's intent to continue institutionalizing the capacities required to prevent the further introduction of invasive alien species, this includes securing the funding and training necessary to support infrastructure and staff development over the long-term. Interviews with ABG officials demonstrated that ABG officials have a long-term presence and seem to have the luxury of planning on a broader timescale. They were clearly cognizant of the historical perspective and voiced the benefits to the institution of recovering years of data, creating management systems, and installing improved tools for effectiveness in monitoring and for capture of feral dogs and cats.
- Evaluators were able to view online several biosecurity public service announcements aimed at tourists and visitors on prohibited items, etc. Galapagos Conservancy's website, www.galapagos.org, FAO, among others are explicit in biosecurity information. Although plenty of logistical information is available for tourists, it was more difficult to encounter Spanish language information targeted to residents or national visitors with regards to biosecurity. Since

⁵⁴ _____. November 2017. Policy on Stakeholder Engagement. GEF/SD/PL/01. URL: https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/Stakeholder_Engagement_Policy_0.pdf; accessed 26 January 2021.

⁵⁵ _____. December 2018. Guidelines on the Implementation of the Policy on Stakeholder Engagement. URL: https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/Stakeholder_Engagement_Guidelines.pdf; accessed 26 January 2021.

80% of the cargo is maritime and managed by residents, the sustainability of public information campaigns is an issue that could enhance the sustainability of ABG's efforts. The TE might want to explore the options or next steps to assure the constant flow of Spanish language public service information especially to residents and national language visitors.

- Sustainability is enhanced by strong international partnerships, such as WildAid, outside of this project that are actively engaged in supporting ABG, DPNG, and others in maritime biosecurity activities.
- The Ministry of Public works' Port Authority, responsible for the infrastructure issues that will need to be addressed in the future was not involved in the project. They are a natural ally and should be included in the sharing of results and lessons learned from this project.

Economic:

- The GoE has a proven track record of conservation investment in the Galapagos archipelago. Effective partnerships with international organizations, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, and local communities are well-established and contribute significantly to the achievements in biodiversity conservation on individual-islands and across the archipelago.
- The MTR did not delve into the OPEX of the facilities and the sustainable flow of resources needed to support the recurrent costs of long-term operations. It might be beneficial at the Terminal Evaluation to glance into the financial arrangements beyond the project. This would include the recurrent costs of the monitoring plan as well as the OPEX of the breeding facilities.
- Both national and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) have made substantial investments in biodiversity conservation in Ecuador. Partner institutions, IC, GC, etc. have through secured funding for all baseline actions and have exceeded their pledges for co-financing to this project through an array of INGOs and special interest groups. In fact, a significant portion of funding for the next phase of eradication of black rats and feral cats on Floreana is secured. There is no doubt that in the short-run, traditional financing partners will continue to support the Galapagos with resources driven by philanthropy. Several of the participants interviewed and two other INGOs who are not direct participants in this project but that support the Giant Tortoise Development indicated that they use the Galapagos as a fund-raising destination.
- According to conversations held during the evaluation mission, this is the first time that NGOs have co-executed a project with the State agencies and with the supervision of another private implementing agency. It is anticipated that NGOs will continue to provide technical and financial assistance to help the GoE meet its conservation goals in the Galapagos archipelago. The experience in managing a public-private partnership will enhance future funding possibilities on Galapagos.
- Sustainability of project outcomes is also supported through ongoing, larger-scale approaches to tourism at the national level. These efforts, which are not part of the present project, are nevertheless important to the sustainability of project outcomes. At the time of project formulation, the GoE was conducting an analysis to assess the impact of higher Galapagos tourist entry fees, which were set at \$120.00 U.S. per international visitor. It was reported that in 2017, all benchmarking and willingness-to-pay studies have been conducted. The TE could look into the result of this initiative to further determine the possibility of sustaining project actions beyond the scope of this project.
- The GoE also increased the revenue stream through increased inspection fees. In 2017, fees were updated to reflect the increased costs of inspection activities. The result was an increase in revenue from \$300,000 U.S. in 2013 to approximately \$500,000 U.S. The revised Galapagos Especial Regime Law pre-assigned 5% of the fee that tourists pay to enter the Galapagos Archipelago to be awarded to ABG to support biosecurity. Thus, the revenue earned from

inspections could increase or decrease depending on tourism. With 80% of cargo moving through the maritime regime, an expanded perspective might be required to cover the costs of inspection.

Political

- Because the MTR was implemented precisely during a change in national public administration, it was too early to tell if political change will affect the remainder of the project and future development.
- Given the semi-autonomous nature of Galapagos public administration and a demonstrated resiliency to political change, the risk of a derailment of future stages of development in Galapagos is small. Especially with local and provincial government declarations supporting biosecurity and future eradication of exotic species of vertebrates, the initiative appears to be politically sustainable. The TE should check on the effects of political change by the EOP.

Technical:

- The biosecurity activities being conducted under Component 1 will reduce the likelihood of further invasions throughout the Galapagos Islands and surrounding waters. These capacities will be further built upon and will be critical in protecting investments made in eradicating invasive species from Galapagos Islands.
- As mentioned in institutional aspects, 80% of cargo reaching Galapagos is maritime. Biosecurity measures installed by the project are only within the level of efficiency permitted by the existing port structure. A sustainable future requires future steps beyond this project to improving the port facilities such as docking structures and superstructure to accommodate container x-rays, adequate quarantine areas, etc. in Guayaquil, Santa Cruz and others. This aspect should be discussed at the next opportunity to inform government priorities for the region.
- Regardless, the state-of-the-art biosecurity system and installed technical and human resource capabilities is a huge leap forward towards blocking the entry of IAS into Galapagos.
- The Government of Ecuador is also making significant investments in developing an agricultural sector within the Galapagos that can meet the demands of the community and tourism industry. Improving local agricultural production to meet this demand will decrease the importation of fruits and vegetables, which carry some of the highest risks of invasive species introduction. This is part of a multi-pronged approach to decrease the likelihood of invasive species arriving to and establishing within the Galapagos archipelago.
- Building the capacity of Floreana farmers to operate more productively and sustainably over the near- and long-term will enhance sustainability as the returns on their installations and revenue from tourism reward them and lead them to a high level of stewardship.

Finding 44: Project actions making operational and creating technical and human resource capacities are addressing institutional barriers in biosecurity.

Finding 45: It was difficult to find easily accessible Spanish language publications aimed at the residents and national visitors responsible for 80% of cargo to Galapagos.

Finding 46 The Ministry of Public works' Port Authority, responsible for the infrastructure issues that will need to be addressed in the future was not involved in the project.

Finding 47: There is not a strategic financial plan to address the recurrent costs of maintaining the new infrastructure and the biodiversity monitoring costs over a reasonable period. There are measures in place to finance ABGs operational costs, these were not evaluated.

Finding 48: Public and private sources are producing a funding stream in advance of the eradication efforts.

Finding 49: The political sustainability was not evaluated from the point of view of the new government in Ecuador. The MTR research was executed prior to the change in political administration in 2021.

Finding 50: The installed technical capacity of the farmers is complemented by Ministry of Agriculture initiatives to provide opportunities for production while reducing the dependency on outside foodstuffs.

Conclusions:

- *The technical and human resource capacities developed are strengthening institutional ability to realize national strategies, such as ABG's strategic plan.*
- *The MTR was not able to evaluate the full suite of factors related to success at the outcome 1.1 level. Other important parallel factors may be having a positive contribution to achieving the outcome and could influence sustainability of the biosecurity measures.*
- *For the next steps in biosecurity, the participation of additional stakeholders may need to be included.*
- *There is currently not enough information to facilitate an analysis of financial sustainability at the TE stage.*
- *The public-private partnerships are effective in meeting long-term financial gains.*
- *There was not enough information during the MTR to evaluate the political sustainability.*
- *Building the capacity of Floreana farmers to operate more productively and sustainably over the near- and long-term will enhance sustainability as the returns on their installations and revenue from tourism reward them and lead them to a high level of stewardship.*

Recommendations:

- Consider public outreach is a possible future area for development to enhance the sustainability of the investments in biosecurity aimed at avoidance.
- Consider including the Ministry of Public Works in the sharing of results and lessons learned from this project.
- Consider collecting all possible cost assessments for the recurring costs of infrastructure maintenance and long-term monitoring to enable the evaluation of financial sustainability during the Terminal Evaluation.
- At the TE, analyze the effects of change in political administration on the sustainability of the project.

VIII CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

VIII.1 Conclusions

Project Management:

- Given the positive trend in the progress rankings presented and the partial re-opening in Galapagos, it is concluded that all the outputs will be achieved. Management will benefit from a

limited, no-cost extension to enable technical activities advance up to the original closing date. An extended period would facilitate an administrative close.

- The PMU received a Mid-term Rating of “HS” or Highly Satisfactory for total project management. In all the parameters, the PMU scores “HS” the highest ranking for excellence. The Implementing Agency has selected quality partners for project execution and provided quality tools and support to administrative and financial management of the project’s resources. The Executing Agency has recruited qualified staff and consultants; establishing a productive work environment; demonstrated adaptive management and proactive planning; quality monitoring and reporting; planning & budgeting; management of risks; and have maintained productive interinstitutional relationships and appropriate management of the project’s financial resources. This is a well-managed project.
- IC recruited quality staff and consultants competent in their areas and that enhanced the trust between the PMU, partners, and beneficiaries. These were important in responding to the trust barrier characteristic of environmental NGOs working in the mining sector.
- Each institution is expert in their area and brings particular skills into the group. Interviews with beneficiaries ratified their appreciation for the PMU and their handling of the project.
- This is an extremely professionally managed project.
- Systems in place by the Implementing Agency (CI-GEF) were important in raising the management capacity of the executing agency (Island Conservation) and principal contractor (Galapagos Conservancy).
- Within the project governance structure, the relationship between the Implementing Agency, the executing agency, the PSC and contractors is fluid and facilitates effective upstream and downstream communication and decision-making.
- The PMU successfully adapted to changing situations and the effects of COVID and delivered the project outputs in a relatively timely fashion.

Project Context:

- The Project conforms to all pertinent national, sectoral and GEF policies and directives. The project assists to making operational long-term plans to restore Galapagos ‘unique ecosystems.
- The project justification is complete and comprehensive in policy, social, environmental and the overall development context. The project documentation reviewed provides empirical evidence to justify the need for the project and established the project as a clear next step in a documented progression laid out by the GOE and involved stakeholders.
- The long-term involvement of stakeholders and long-term, stable public-private relationships between project partners established over years of baseline activities makes the project resilient to political risks.
- One additional barrier was uncovered by the project. The new Biosecurity Action Plan recognizes that 80% of the risk is maritime and from residents, not tourists. In Guayaquil, there is no acceptable port facility in Guayaquil or on the islands. It will not be possible to guarantee full

control of the entry of invasive species across the entire system. This is an area for future development.

Project Strategy:

- The TOC is sound and provides a documented and validated internal logic upon which the architecture of the project is built.
- The overall impact of the project’s biosecurity measures will be within the limits of current infrastructure. The Galapagos maritime port infrastructure is a persistent barrier to 100% control of invasive species entering into and travelling amongst the Galapagos Islands.

Project Design:

- The outputs systematically respond to gaps in the baseline scenario within the limits of Galapagos’ infrastructure.
- The project design is sound. All outputs contribute to their corresponding outcomes and are internally consistent. The outcomes are independent yet related. A failure in one does not foment a failure in another, this exemplifies a “best practice” in strong project design. A very well-designed project.

Overall Project Execution

- An overall rating of “HS,” or “Highly Satisfactory” was given because the management team demonstrated their ability to keep moving forward despite 2 incredibly significant challenges: Delays in procurement due to COVID and for adeptly working with stakeholders and moving forward with Component 1 and for producing a clear and demonstrated social license for the eradication of invasive vertebrates for component 2. Finally, component 3 was almost completely executed.
- 84 % of the project funds have been executed with the remaining funds fully obligated.

Component 1:

- Component 1 receives an overall efficiency rating of “HS” or Highly Satisfactory and green rating; the project execution has been effective and is yielding the intended results according to the indicators.
- 82% of the funds for outcome 1 have been deployed with the remainder obligated for biosecurity software development and training in protocols.
- The outcome 1.1 indicator is not SMART. As stated, it is not specific or relevant to the expected outcome of more effective and efficient biosecurity.
- The project is effectively addressing the technology and capacity barriers to the limits of the existing port infrastructure. Actions by AGB and parallel actions by INGOs in visitor education, and interdiction in Marine Environments, in combination with learning by the local population will effectively contribute to a positive outcome 1.1.
-

Component 2:

- An HS was awarded at the Outcome-level.
- The project has executed 89% of the C2 Budget. With the ESIA contract still open, 100% funds are committed, and all outputs are expected to be completed by the End-of-Project.
- A no-cost extension that enables the project activities to extend to the project closure date followed by a period for administrative closure is necessary to assure the completion of all activities.
- The strength of the relationships and long-term accompaniment of the executing agencies with the public has garnered trust and greatly facilitates the social license for a future eradication of invasive black rats and feral cats.
- The project has effectively addressed the social barriers to eradication of vertebrate species on Floreana Island. The social license has been achieved.

Component 3,

- The outcome 3.1. indicator of the coverage of land with seed dispersion might be better applied at the Objective level.
- 83% of project resources were executed in Output 3 with the remaining 17% obligated. Output 3.2.1. Modernization of breeding centers is likely to be completed by EOP.
- The project achieving an efficiency rating of a green “HS” for meeting targets of Component 3.

Risk Assessment

- The overall risk assessment remains unchanged at “High” or “substantial.”
- Risks have been monitored based on project risks and biological risks presented in the Environmental Management Framework.

Safeguards

- The project is compliant with CI-GEFs ESS#2 and, although not triggered at project implementation, the safeguards, process and instruments being deployed by CI-GEF and the PMU are compliant with GEF Policy and Guidance on Environmental and Social Safeguards.
- The project is compliant with GEF Gender Equality Policy (SD/PL/02) and Guidelines.
- The Grievance mechanism and Stakeholder engagement strategy are compliant with GEF Stakeholder Engagement Policy (SD/PL/01)⁵⁶ and Guidelines⁵⁷.

⁵⁶Global Environment Facility. November 2017. Policy on Stakeholder Engagement. GEF/SD/PL/01. URL: https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/Stakeholder_Engagement_Policy_0.pdf; accessed 26 January 2021.

⁵⁷_____. December 2018. Guidelines on the Implementation of the Policy on Stakeholder Engagement. URL: https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/Stakeholder_Engagement_Guidelines.pdf; accessed 26 January 2021.

- Management of safeguards is given an overall ranking of HS.
- Sustainability: It is still too early to make judgements about sustainability. There is not enough information about the economic, social, political, institutional sustainability with the majority of the outputs yet to be realized.

Sustainability

- The technical and human resource capacities developed are strengthening institutional ability to realize national strategies, such as ABG's strategic plan.
- The MTR was not able to evaluate the full suite of factors related to success at the outcome 1.1 level. Other important parallel factors may be having a positive contribution to achieving the outcome and could influence sustainability of the biosecurity measures.
- For the next steps in biosecurity, the participation of additional stakeholders may need to be included.
- There is currently not enough information to facilitate an analysis of financial sustainability at the TE stage.
- The public-private partnerships are very effective in meeting long-term financial gains.
- There was not enough information during the MTR to evaluate the political sustainability.
- Building the capacity of Floreana farmers to operate more productively and sustainably over the near- and long-term will enhance sustainability as the returns on their installations and revenue from tourism reward them and lead them to a high level of stewardship.

VIII.2 Recommendations

The recommendations are presented by category. All provide prescriptive measures for improving Monitoring and Evaluation and improving project performance in the delivery of outputs to make up for the time delays previously experienced.

Project Management:

- Enable a no-cost extension for a maximum of 6 months to enable the execution of technical activities until the original project close date, followed by an extended period for technical and administrative closure of the project.
- Conservation International, Island Conservation, the DPNG, ABG and Galapagos Conservation and all other PSC members and project partners should be recognized for a well-designed and well managed project. The TE process should define if this is a model project to be highlighted by the GEF for the elements of strong design, management arrangements, and execution, especially in difficult timesproject.

Project Design:

- Add limited infrastructure as an additional Barrier to biosecurity.

Project Strategy

- Consider a slight modification of the Outcome 3.1 indicator (amount of land with seed dispersion) as an indicator for the objective level. Consider simplifying the existing indicator to the survival rate of tortoises established and a total target population by the end of the project and perhaps 5 years into the future.

Component 1:

- Based on the new protocols and biodiversity Action Plan, redefine the indicator for Outcome 1.1 with a more specific metric, such as the number of bags, cargo containers, vessels etc. inspected and include these new metrics in ABG's monitoring protocol.

Component 2:

- Once the final installations are in place, begin the next phase of development in the elimination of black rats and feral cats as a prerequisite to tortoise introduction to Floreana Island. Implement the next phase as soon as possible to not lose the momentum gained with the public on Floreana.

Component 3:

- Construction of improved breeding facilities within output 3.2.1. is now underway and is on-track to be completed by the end of the project if the activities are allowed to continue up until the termination date of the project. This is an additional reason supporting Recommendation 3: a no cost extension to enable the administrative close of the project following the official EOP date.

Risk Assessment and Management of Risks:

- COVID was a new risk to the project not foreseen in the project's risk profile. The project partners have found a way to manage the project in spite of the effects of COVID. Monitor the effects of the post COVID recovery, such as special deals to increment tourism, for impacts that could set-back restoration work.
- Monitor the change in political administration for possible changes to the project governance structure or in incentives to activate the economy.

Sustainability:

- Consider public outreach is a possible future area for development to enhance the sustainability of the investments in biosecurity aimed at avoidance.
- Consider including the Ministry of Public Works in the sharing of results and lessons learned from this project.
- Consider collecting all possible cost assessments for the recurring costs of infrastructure maintenance and long-term monitoring as well as the maintenance of ABGs infrastructure to enable the evaluation of financial sustainability during the Terminal Evaluation.

- At the TE, analyze the effects of change in political administration on the sustainability of the project.

VIII.3 Lessons Learned:

1. Project Concept: The project was clearly framed in a long-term sequence of events with long-standing partners participating. Previous projects and efforts helped determine how to breed the giant tortoises and also the assessment of the genetic material available. Concurrently, the experience for the eradication of vertebrate invasive species comes from other uninhabited islands like Española. This experience was critical to informing the ESIA, developing the social license, and informing the ex situ breeding program in preparation for the same process on a populated island. Moreover, the actual eradication and subsequent translocation are part of future projects that are now enabled from the GEF project's actions. The lesson learned is that programs with clear objectives and sequenced activities lead to strong and well-targeted projects that are more manageable and that have well established alliances for technical, social and financial inputs.

2. Project Design: The project architecture is lean with 3 components have outcomes that are related directly to the project objective. The same components and their corresponding outputs are not inter-dependent on each other. This is a particularly good practice that assures that a failure in one component does not lead to a failure in another. Concurrently, each component is an important and integral set of actions without which the project objective could not be achieved.

3. Implementation and management arrangements: The management arrangements united diverse partners all with expert skills specific to their specific areas of the project and with a history of support to constituencies unique to their role in the project. Specifically, ABG are experts and were supported by international and national consultancies with actions directly supporting their area of interest. The second. Island Conservation demonstrated their established relationship with the residents of Floreana Island in securing the social license to enable eradication of vertebrate invasive species. Finally, the ex situ breeding program managed principally by Galapagos Conservancy and the Galapagos National Parks Department expertly managed breeding and translocation activities. All the mentioned benefitted from Conservation International's project management experience and use of management systems. All partners felt enabled and fortified in the areas of Planning, Budgeting, M&E and reporting. The lesson learned is that good things happen when critical areas of projects are delegated to experts who also have a vested interest in building their own capacities.

4. At the technical level, expeditions to collect fertilized tortoise eggs can be integrated into an effective as ex situ breeding program and reduce the time to seeing results.

Annexes

Annex I. Terms of Reference

SECTION 2 SCOPE OF WORK MIDTERM REVIEW

This section is broken down into

2.1 Midterm Review

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) requires Midterm Evaluations (MTRs) for full-sized projects and encourages MTRs for medium-sized projects. MTRs are conducted by independent consultants and are used as an adaptive management tool by GEF Agencies and as a portfolio monitoring tool by the GEF Secretariat. MTRs are primarily a monitoring tool to identify challenges and outline corrective actions to ensure that a project is on track to achieve maximum results by its completion. All reports that are submitted must be in English.

I. Scope of Work:

1. Based on an approved work plan, the consultant will conduct first a desk review of project documents (i.e. PIF, CI-GEF Project Document, plans related to the Environmental and Social Safeguards, Gender, Stakeholder Engagement policies, Project Inception Report, Quarterly Reports, Project Implementation Reports, Finalized GEF focal area Tracking Tools or Core Indicators, policies and guidelines used by the Executing Agency, CI-GEF Evaluation Policy, GEF Monitoring Policy, GEF Evaluation Policy, project operational guidelines, manuals and systems, etc.)
2. The consultant will host an MTR workshop (in person/virtual) with the Executing Agencies to clarify understanding of the objectives and methods of the MTR. The conclusion of the workshop will be summarized in an Inception Workshop Report with the following information:
 - a. Identification of the subject of the review, and relevant context
 - b. Purpose of the MTR: why is the MTR being conducted at this time, who needs the information and why?
 - c. Objectives of the MTR: What the MTR aims to achieve (e.g. assessment of the results of the project, etc.)
 - d. Scope: What aspects of the project will be covered, and not covered, by the MTR
 - e. Identification and description of the criteria (including relevance, effectiveness, results, efficiency, and sustainability)
 - f. Key questions
 - g. Methodology including approach for data collection and analysis, and stakeholder engagement
 - h. Rationale for selection of the methods, and selection of data sources (i.e. sites to be visited, stakeholders to be interviewed)
 - i. System for data management and maintenance of records

j. Intended products and reporting procedures

k. Potential limitations of the MTR

3. The consultant will then undertake the midterm review of the project, including any interviews and site visits. The consultant should work with the Executing Agency(ies) to identify the list of stakeholders to be consulted as part of the MTR; it is expected that the Operational Focal Point and government counterparts engaging on the project should be in the list of stakeholders included in the MTR.

4. The consultant will produce a draft and final Midterm review report. The draft and final reports should at the minimum contain the information below:

Executive summary including a table of recommendations

Project Strategy (Results Framework):

- Undertake a critical analysis of the project's results framework, indicators and targets, assess how 'SMART' the midterm and end-of-project targets are (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound), and suggest specific amendments/revisions to the targets and indicators as necessary;
- Examine if progress so far has led to, or could in the future catalyze beneficial development effects that should be included in the project results framework and monitored on an annual basis

Project Justification (design of the GEF project):

- Review the problem addressed by the project and the underlying assumptions.
- Review the effect of any incorrect assumptions or changes to the context to achieving the project results as outlined in the Project Document;
- Review the relevance of the project strategy and assess whether it provides the most effective route towards expected/intended results;
- Review how the project addresses country priorities;
- Review decision-making processes, project governance, implementing and executing arrangements.

Progress Towards Results:

- Review the logframe indicators against progress made towards the end-of-project targets; color code progress in a 'traffic light system' based on the level of progress achieved; assign a rating on progress for the project objective and each outcome; make recommendations from the areas marked as 'not on target to be achieved' (red);
- Compare and analyze the GEF Tracking Tool or Core Indicators at the Baseline with the one completed right before the Midterm Review;
- Identify remaining barriers and bottlenecks to achieving the project objective and project results;
- By reviewing the aspects of the project that have already been successful, identify ways in which the project can further expand these benefits.

Safeguards:

- Review safeguard plans and any safeguard related documentation, including monitoring reports, assessments, PIRs etc
- Analyze whether management measures related to safeguards, including the grievance mechanism, are being effectively implemented
- Analyze whether there is any change to the risks identified in the safeguard screening form and safeguard plans at the time of CEO endorsement
- Analyze whether additional safeguards have been triggered as a result of project implementation.
- Specifically for the implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan, determine the percentage of stakeholders who rate as satisfactory the level at which their views and concerns are taken into account by the project

Project Implementation and Adaptive Management: Assess the following categories of project progress:

- Quality of supervision by the CI-GEF Agency
- Execution Arrangements;
- Work Planning;
- Finance and Co-financing;
- Project-level monitoring systems;
- Stakeholder Engagement;
- Gender Mainstreaming
- Reporting;

Sustainability: Assess overall risks to sustainability factors of the project in terms of the following four categories:

Financial risks to sustainability;

- Socio-economic risks to sustainability;
- Institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability;
- Environmental risks to sustainability;
- Any additional external risks that could affect project outcomes.

Recommendations: Recommendations should be succinct suggestions for critical intervention that are specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant. Recommendations should be linked to the findings in the above categories. The recommendations should discuss the need for action, the recommended action along with its likely consequences vis-à-vis status quo and other courses of action, the specific actor/actors that need to take the action, and time frame for it.

II. Expected Outputs and Deliverables:

- MTR Desk Review
- MTR Inception Workshop and Inception Workshop Report
- Presentation of initial findings to the Executing Agency, CI's General Counsel's Office (GCO) and CI-GEF Agency at the end of MTR mission
- Draft Final Report: Full report with annexes to be shared with CI GCO, CI-GEF Agency, Executing Agencies
- Final Report: Revised report incorporating comments including annexed audit trail detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final MTR report

Annex 1: Outline for Draft and Midterm Evaluation Report

The draft and final evaluation reports should at the minimum contain the information below:

The MTR report will provide general information on the project and conduct of the Midterm Evaluation. This includes information such as:

- GEF Project ID
- Project name
- GEF financing
- Planned and materialized co-financing
- Key objectives
- GEF Agency
- Project countries
- Key dates
- Name of the Project Executing Agency(ies)

The Midterm Evaluation report will also provide information on when the evaluation took place, places visited, who was involved, the methodology, and the limitations of the evaluation. The report will also include, as annexes to the main report, the evaluation team's terms of reference, its composition and expertise.

Where feasible and appropriate, the Midterm Evaluation report should include georeferenced maps and/or coordinates that demarcate the planned and actual area covered by the project. To facilitate tracking and verification, where feasible, the Midterm Evaluation should include geo-referenced pictures of the sites where GEF supported interventions were undertaken.

Project Theory of Change

The Midterm Evaluation report will include a description of the project's theory of change including description of: the outputs, outcomes, intermediate states, and intended long-term environmental

impacts of the project; the causal pathways for the long-term impacts; and, implicit and explicit assumptions. The project's objective(s) should also be included within the theory of change.

Some of the projects may already have an explicit theory of change. Where appropriate, after consultations with the project stakeholders, the evaluators may refine this theory of change. Where an explicit theory of change is not provided in the project documents, the evaluators should develop it based on information provided in the project documents and through consultations with the project stakeholders.

Assessment of Project Results

The MTR must assess achievement of project outputs and outcomes, and report on these. While assessing a project's results, evaluators will determine and rate the extent to which the project objectives – as stated in the documents submitted at the CEO Endorsement stage – have been achieved. The evaluator(s) should also indicate if there were any changes in project design and/or expected results after start of implementation. If the project did not establish a baseline (initial conditions), where feasible, the evaluator should estimate the baseline conditions so that results can be determined. Where applicable, the Midterm Evaluation report will include an assessment of the level of achievement of the GEF corporate results targets/core indicators to which the project contributes and will also incorporate data from the focal area tracking tool and/or core indicator worksheet.

Outputs

The evaluator should rate the extent to which the expected outputs were actually delivered. An identification and assessment of the factors that affected delivery of outputs should also be included.

Outcomes

The evaluator should rate the extent to which the expected outcomes were achieved and the extent to which its achievement was dependent on delivery of project outputs. They should also assess the factors that affected outcome achievement, e.g. project design, project's linkages with other activities, extent and materialization of co-financing, stakeholder involvement, etc. Where the project was developed within the framework of a program, the assessment should also report on the extent the project contributed to the program outcomes.

Criteria for Outcome Ratings

Outcome ratings will take into account the outcome achievements of the projects against its expected targets.

Project outcomes will be rated on three dimensions: a. Relevance: Were the project outcomes congruent with the GEF focal areas/operational program strategies, country priorities, and mandates of the Agencies? Was the project design appropriate for delivering the expected outcomes? b. Effectiveness: Were the project's actual outcomes commensurate with the expected outcomes? c. Efficiency: Was the project cost-effective? How does the project cost/time versus output/outcomes equation compare to that of similar projects? Rating Scale for Outcomes: An overall outcome rating will be provided on a six-point scale (highly satisfactory to highly unsatisfactory) after taking into account outcome relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency (See Annex 2).

Sustainability

The assessment of sustainability will weigh risks to continuation of benefits from the project. The assessment should identify key risks and explain how these risks may affect continuation of benefits after the GEF project ends. The analysis should cover key risks, including financial, socio-political, institutional, and environmental risks. The overall sustainability of project outcomes will be rated on a four-point scale (Likely to Unlikely) based on an assessment of the likelihood and magnitude of the risks to sustainability. Higher levels of risks and magnitudes of effect imply lower likelihood of sustainability. Annex 2 describes the rating scale for sustainability.

Progress to Impact

It is often too early to assess the long-term impacts of the project at the point of project completion. This said, some evidence on progress towards long-term impacts, and the extent to which the key assumptions of the project's theory of change hold, may be available and it may be feasible to assess and report on the progress. The evaluators should also assess the extent to which the progress towards long-term impact may be attributed to the project.

The evaluators should report the available qualitative and quantitative evidence on environmental stress reduction (e.g. GHG emission reduction, reduction of waste discharge, etc.) and environmental status change (e.g. change in population of endangered species, forest stock, water retention in degraded lands, etc.). When reporting such evidence, the evaluator should note the

information source and clarify the scale/s at which the described environmental stress reduction is being achieved.

The evaluators should cover the project's contributions to changes in policy/ legal/regulatory frameworks. This would include observed changes in capacities (awareness, knowledge, skills, infrastructure, monitoring systems, etc.) and governance architecture, including access to and use of information (laws, administrative bodies, trust-building and conflict resolution processes, information-sharing systems, etc.). Contribution to change in socioeconomic status (income, health, well-being, etc.) should also be documented.

Where the environmental and social changes are being achieved at scales beyond the immediate area of intervention, the evaluators should provide an account of the processes such as sustaining, mainstreaming, replication, scaling up and market change, through which these changes have taken place. The evaluators should discuss whether there are arrangements in the project design to facilitate follow-up actions, and should document instances where the GEF promoted approaches, technologies, financing instruments, legal frameworks, information systems, etc., were adopted/implemented without direct support from, or involvement of, the project. Evidence on incidence of these processes should be discussed to assess progress towards impact.

When assessing contributions of GEF project to the observed change, the evaluators should also assess the contributions of other actors and factors. The evaluators should assess merits of rival explanations for the observed impact and give reasons for accepting or rejecting them. Where applicable, the evaluators are encouraged to identify and describe the barriers and other risks that may prevent further progress towards long-term impacts.

The evaluators should document the unintended impacts – both positive and negative impacts – of the project and assess the overall scope and implications of these impacts. Where these impacts are undesirable from environmental and socio-economic perspectives, the evaluation should suggest corrective actions.

Assessment of Monitoring & Evaluation System

The evaluators will include an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the project M&E plan and its implementation.

M&E Design. To assess the quality of the M&E plan, the evaluators will assess:

- a) Was the M&E plan at the point of CEO Endorsement practical and sufficient?
- b) Did it include baseline data?
- c) Did it: specify clear targets and appropriate (SMART) indicators to track environmental, gender, and socio-economic results; a proper methodological approach; specify practical organization and logistics of the M&E activities including schedule and responsibilities for data collection; and budget adequate funds for M&E activities?

M&E Implementation. The evaluators should assess:

- a) Whether the M&E system operated as per the M&E plan?
- b) Where necessary, whether the M&E plan was revised in a timely manner?
- c) Was information on specified indicators and relevant GEF focal area tracking tools gathered in a systematic manner?
- d) Whether appropriate methodological approaches have been used to analyze data?
- e) Were resources for M&E sufficient? How was the information from the M&E system used during the project implementation?

Project M&E systems will be rated on the quality of M&E design and quality of M&E implementation using a six-point scale (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory). Annex 2 provides more details on the scale.

Assessment of Implementation and Execution

The assessment of the implementation and execution of GEF projects will take into account the performance of the GEF Implementing Agencies and project Executing Agency(ies) (EAs) in discharging their expected roles and responsibilities. The performance of these agencies will be rated using a six-point scale (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory). See Annex 2 for more information on the scale.

Quality of Implementation: Within the GEF partnership, GEF Implementing Agencies are involved in activities related to a project's identification, concept preparation, appraisal, preparation of detailed proposal, approval and start-up, oversight, supervision, completion, and evaluation. To assess performance of the GEF Agencies, the evaluators will assess the extent to which the agency delivered

effectively on these counts, with focus on elements that were controllable from the given GEF Agency's perspective. The evaluator will assess how well risks were identified and managed by the GEF Agency.

Quality of Execution: Within the GEF partnership, the EAs are involved in the management and administration of the project's day-to-day activities under the overall oversight and supervision of the GEF Agencies. The EAs are responsible for the appropriate use of funds, and procurement and contracting of goods and services to the GEF Agency. To assess EA performance, the evaluators will assess the extent to which it effectively discharged its role and responsibilities.

Assessment of the Environmental and Social Safeguards

The evaluator will assess whether appropriate environmental and social safeguards were addressed in the project's design and implementation (See Annex 2 for more details on the rating scale). It is expected that a GEF project will not cause any harm to environment or to any stakeholder and, where applicable, it will take measures to prevent and/or mitigate adverse effects. The evaluator should assess the screening/ risk categorization of the project along with the implementation of the safeguard plans that were approved by the GEF Agency. There should be an analysis of the implementation of management measures, as outlined at CEO Endorsement/Approval, including findings on the effectiveness of management measures and lessons learned

Gender: The evaluator will determine the extent to which the gender considerations were taken into account in designing and implementing the project. The evaluator should report whether a gender analysis was conducted, the extent to which the project was implemented in a manner that ensures gender equitable participation and benefits, and whether gender disaggregated data was gathered and reported on beneficiaries. In case the given GEF project disadvantages or may disadvantage women or men, then this should be documented and reported. The evaluator should also determine the extent to which relevant gender related concerns were tracked through project

M&E, and if possible, addressing whether gender considerations contributed to the success of the project.

Stakeholder Engagement: The evaluator should, where applicable, review and assess the Stakeholder Engagement Plan and project specific aspects such as involvement of civil society, indigenous population, private sector, etc. The evaluator should also indicate the percentage of stakeholders who rate as satisfactory, the level at which their views and concerns are considered by the project.

Accountability and Grievance Mechanism: The evaluator should review and assess the project's Grievance Mechanism. The evaluator should analyze and assess whether project stakeholders were aware of the grievance mechanism and whether the mechanism was effective in addressing grievances. The evaluator should also review and assess any other safeguard plans that were triggered.

Other Assessment

The Midterm Evaluations should assess the following topics, for which ratings are not required:

a. **Need for follow-up:** Where applicable, the evaluators will indicate if there is any need to follow up on the evaluation findings, e.g. instances financial mismanagement, unintended negative impacts or risks, etc.

b. Materialization of co-financing: the evaluators will provide information on the extent to which expected co-financing materialized, whether co-financing is cash or in-kind, whether it is in form of grant or loan or equity, whether co-financing was administered by the project management or by some other organization, how shortfall in co-financing or materialization of greater than expected co-financing affected project results, etc.

c. Lessons and Recommendations: Evaluators should provide a few well-formulated lessons that are based on the project experience and applicable to the type of project at hand, to the GEF's overall portfolio, and/or to GEF systems and processes. Wherever possible, Midterm Evaluation report should include examples of good practices in project design and implementation that have led to effective stakeholder engagement, successful broader adoption of GEF initiatives by stakeholders, and large-scale environmental impacts. The evaluators should describe aspects of the project performance that worked well along with reasons for it. They should discuss where these good practices may or may not be replicated. Recommendations should be well formulated and targeted. The recommendations should discuss the need for action, the recommended action along with its likely consequences vis-à-vis status quo and other courses of action, the specific actor/actors that need to take the action, and time frame for it.

Annex 2: Rating Scale

The main dimensions of project performance on which ratings are first provided in Midterm Evaluation are: outcomes, sustainability, quality of monitoring and evaluation, quality of implementation, and quality of execution. The CI-GEF Agency also includes ratings for environmental and social safeguards.

THE EVALUATOR SHOULD ALSO REVIEW AND ASSESS ANY OTHER SAFEGUARD PLANS THAT WERE TRIGGERED.

Outcome Ratings:

The overall ratings on the outcomes of the project will be based on performance on the following criteria:

- a. Relevance
- b. Effectiveness
- c. Efficiency

Project outcomes are rated based on the extent to which project objectives were achieved. A six-point rating scale is used to assess overall outcomes:

- Highly satisfactory (HS): Level of outcomes achieved clearly exceeds expectations and/or there were no short comings.
- Satisfactory (S): Level of outcomes achieved was as expected and/or there were no or minor short comings.
- Moderately Satisfactory (MS): Level of outcomes achieved more or less as expected and/or there were moderate short comings.

- Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): Level of outcomes achieved somewhat lower than expected and/or there were significant shortcomings.
- Unsatisfactory (U): Level of outcomes achieved substantially lower than expected and/or there were major shortcomings.
- Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): Only a negligible level of outcomes achieved and/or there were severe shortcomings.
- Unable to Assess (UA): The available information does not allow an assessment of the level of outcome achievements.

The calculation of the overall outcomes rating of projects will consider all the three criteria, of which relevance and effectiveness are critical. The rating on relevance will determine whether the overall outcome rating will be in the unsatisfactory range (MU to HU = unsatisfactory range). If the relevance rating is in the unsatisfactory range, then the overall outcome will be in the unsatisfactory range as well. However, where the relevance rating is in the satisfactory range (HS to MS), the overall outcome rating could, depending on its effectiveness and efficiency rating, be either in the satisfactory range or in the unsatisfactory range.

The second constraint applied is that the overall outcome achievement rating may not be higher than the effectiveness rating. During project implementation, the results framework of some projects may have been modified. In cases where modifications in the project impact, outcomes and outputs have not scaled down their overall scope, the evaluator should assess outcome achievements based on the revised results framework. In instances where the scope of the project objectives and outcomes has been scaled down, the magnitude of and necessity for downscaling is taken into account and despite achievement of results as per the revised results framework, where appropriate, a lower outcome effectiveness rating may be given.

Sustainability Ratings:

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

- Likely (L): There is little or no risk to sustainability.
- Moderately Likely (ML): There are moderate risks to sustainability.
- Moderately Unlikely (MU): There are significant risks to sustainability.
- Unlikely (U): There are severe risks to sustainability.
- Unable to Assess (UA): Unable to assess the expected incidence and magnitude of risks to sustainability.

Project M&E Ratings:

Quality of project M&E will be assessed in terms of:

- Design
- Implementation

Quality of M&E on these two dimensions will be assessed on a six-point scale:

- Highly satisfactory (HS): There were no short comings and quality of M&E design / implementation exceeded expectations.
- Satisfactory (S): There were no or minor short comings and quality of M&E design / implementation meets expectations.
- Moderately Satisfactory (MS): There were some short comings and quality of M&E design/implementation more or less meets expectations.
- Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): There were significant shortcomings and quality of M&E design/implementation somewhat lower than expected.
- Unsatisfactory (U): There were major short comings and quality of M&E design/implementation substantially lower than expected.
- Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): There were severe short comings in M&E design/ implementation.
- Unable to Assess (UA): The available information does not allow an assessment of the quality of M&E design/implementation.

Implementation and Execution Rating:

Quality of implementation and of execution will be rated separately. Quality of implementation pertains to the role and responsibilities discharged by the GEF Agencies that have direct access to GEF resources. Quality of Execution pertains to the roles and responsibilities discharged by the country or regional counterparts that received GEF funds from the GEF Agencies and executed the funded activities on ground. The performance will be rated on a six-point scale.

- Highly satisfactory (HS): There were no short comings and quality of environmental and social safeguard plans design/implementation exceeded expectations.
- Satisfactory (S): There were no or minor short comings and quality of environmental and social safeguard plans design/execution met expectations.
- Moderately Satisfactory (MS): There were some short comings and quality of environmental and social safeguard plans design/implementation more or less met expectations.
- Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): There were significant shortcomings and quality of environmental and social safeguard plans design/implementation somewhat lower than expected.
- Unsatisfactory (U): There were major short comings and quality of environmental and social safeguard plans design/implementation substantially lower than expected.
- Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): There were severe short comings in quality of environmental and social safeguard plans design/implementation

- Unable to Assess (UA): The available information does not allow an assessment of the quality of environmental and social safeguard plans design/implementation

Environmental and Social Safeguards:

The approved environmental and social safeguard plans will be rated according to the following scale.

- Highly satisfactory (HS): There were no short comings and quality of implementation / execution exceeded expectations.
- Satisfactory (S): There were no or minor short comings and quality of implementation / execution meets expectations.
- Moderately Satisfactory (MS): There were some short comings and quality of implementation / execution more or less meets expectations.
- Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): There were significant shortcomings and quality of implementation / execution somewhat lower than expected.
- Unsatisfactory (U): There were major short comings and quality of implementation / execution substantially lower than expected.
- Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): There were severe short comings in quality of implementation / execution.
- Unable to Assess (UA): The available information does not allow an assessment of the quality of implementation / execution.

Annex II. MTR Evaluation Matrix

MTR Evaluation Matrix:

Questions Based on Evaluation Criteria	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
Relevance: How does the objective of the Project relate to the objectives of the GEF focal area and to the priorities of the government of Ecuador and the Protected Areas Sector and the management of the Galapagos?			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do the project results support the strategies and priorities of the GEF, the nation, and the sector? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total alignment No non-lined results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> APR, QPR, last PIR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compare results and planned activities (AWP y PIR) with GEF indicators, focal area, and strategies. Confirmation in interviews
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are components and results feasible, practical, and clear within the Project's time frame? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistency between activities and products (outputs). Consistency between products and results Quantity and type of AWB and revision and budget. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved project documents AWPs; PIRs, CDRs Key informants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document review Interviews with project management and partners on the project's steering committee.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is Project Change Theory realistic? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmation of experts and similar projects There are no new unseen factors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expert informants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews by experts in the sector not aligned with the project. Consult external sources outside the project. Review of project documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Were the capabilities of the institutions and counterparties carefully considered in the design of the project? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff ratings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CVs of the main players in the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document review Website review

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of project management participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate CV of partner institutions in the project Minutes of Steering Committee meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultations Interviews with key staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Were resources from baseline or offsetting actions (financing, personnel, facilities, regulations, etc.) available at the start of the Project? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everything proposed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Validation of support elements or the co-financing proposed in effect or that came into force from the beginning of the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of reports and structured virtual interviews.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the factors beyond the control of the Project that have influenced the development of the results? How effective were the Project's strategies against balancing these factors? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That the assumptions presented at the beginning of the project are maintained Mitigation strategies have been implemented as planned. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> APR; semi-structured interviews. PRODOC PIR, QPR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New assumptions that were not identified or that emerged without being previously foreseen. (especially with respect for translocation and re-establishment of species and in the biosecurity line) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presence or absence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PRODOC QPRs, PIRs Interviews with project staff and leadership of counterparty organizations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk analysis Interviews with technicians
Effectiveness: How effective has the project been in achieving the expected results based-on projections presented in the Project Document (PRODOC), in the Logical Framework and other related documents?			
<p>How much and why did the results of the Project and strategies contribute to the scope and achievement of expected results?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall level of progress for the project based on all the analysis presented below 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Surveys Site Visits Interviews 	<p>Formulate summary conclusions drawn based on the analysis of the individual components, assumptions, risks, and budget execution presented below.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the level of progress based-on the indicators in Component 1? What is the project's ability to achieve the goals by the end of the project? <p>A 5% increase over the baseline in the number of interceptions and seizures of pet-related property between all ports together. What are the results?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of progress by output 1.1.1 <p>What is the status of the Biosafety Action Plan?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspection advice biosecurity and quarantine centers • Mission Reports • Action Plan Draft 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Validate the quality of Biosafety and Quarantine Inspection Advice • Interviews to determine the level of progress of the Action Plan.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of progress of activities by output 1.1.2. • Are protocols being applied? • Are there established guidelines? • Are they online all the time 100%? If not, what % of time? • EIA Status for Incineration? • Installation of freezers status at SC Airport and ports? • Automated system? • Why a cemetery if there is a working incineration furnace? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puerto de Guayaquil • Puerto Ayora (Y/N) • Lab visit • crematory Santa Cruz • Freezer Santa Cruz • EIA Municipal Burning furnace • Contract for software development • Acquisition documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-site validation with ABG of the operation and measures for the adoption of protocols • visual inspection of kits and operation of inspections • Interviews with biosecurity agents. • Review of The Terms of Reference (TDR) for Software Development • Specifications for scanners • Interviews with authorities in the performance of their duties
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of progress of activities by output 1.1.3. • Is the Action Plan approved? • Is the inspectors' training complete? • How are interceptions documented? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocol • MP planning documents • Training reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocol review • Review of management tools • Review training results

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the level of advancement in component 2? What is the possibility of the project to achieve the goals by the end of the project? <p>Target 2.1. At least 80% of Floreana Island residents take new ecologically sustainable measures or improved in areas such as: agriculture, waste management, and other areas defined in the Declaration of the Parish Council Floreana</p> <p>Target 2.2.: 100% of Floreana Island residents and strategic project partners participate and demonstrate their support for plans to eradicate rodents and wild cats, and for the concept of reintroduction of endemic species previously removed by invasive species.</p> <p>How are indicators measured, surveys?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of progress of activities by output 2.1.1. Status of chicken hatcheries? How long and when? • Are they functional according to Floreana producers? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress reports • Photographs • beneficiaries and technicians 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • document review • interviews • Inspect chicken farms
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of progress of activities by result 2.1.2 What is the status of the Floreana Parish Council statement? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft of the Floreana Parish Declaration • Interviews: PMU and Parish Council Members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • document review • Interviews • Interviews to determine the status of the statement.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of progress of activities by result 2.1.3 Status of the Operational Plan for the Eradication of Invasive Rodents and Cats? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operation Eradication plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • document review • Interviews • Travel to Floreana Restricted.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of progress of activities by result 2.1.4 Status of Risk Plans? Water (Approved) Children (Approved) Coastal fishing? Tourism and visits? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Risk Management Plan • CPF consultations minutes • Minute Project Steering Committee • Interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review documents • validation of the process through interviews on the different risk plans

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of progress of activities by result 2.1.5 • ESIA hired? 1. ESIA in draft? 1. submitted to the Project Steering Committee? • ESIA certification? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract/TDR for ESIA • ESIA Preliminary documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess ESIA status • Review draft documents • Meeting minutes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the level of progress of component 3? What is the possibility of the project to achieve the goals by the end of the project? <p>At least 506 giant turtles of the species <i>Chelonoidis hoodensis</i> are dispersing seeds in approximately 50% (1,206 ha) of the Santa Fe Island area</p> <p>How will it be measured? stool sampling? Vegetation sampling coverage?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of progress of activities by result 3.1.1. <p>Status of modification of breeding centers</p> <p>Genetic testing status?</p> <p>Results of the expedition to Wolf Island?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports • Photo/video evidence • Interviews with biologists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review documents • Interviews with independent naturalists and PMU
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of progress of activities by result 3.1.2. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring data/reports • photos/videos • Interviews with park rangers to see knowledge of protocols 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Documents • interviews with experts • Search protocols for ease of access.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the indicators and end-of-project targets SMART? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of indicators that are considered SMART 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logical framework • GEF 6 Core Indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How much and why did the results of the Project and strategies contribute to the scope and achievement of the expected results? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment of the results obtained with the established indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PRODOC, AWP • QIRs • Interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compare product achievements with project indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the activities produce the expected results within the stipulated time frames? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of achievement of targets established in the logical framework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APRs; semi-structured interviews. • Project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APRs, QPRs Reviews; interviews • Budget execution by product.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Were the assumptions made by the Project validated? what new assumptions that should be made could be identified? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree of change in assumptions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> APRs; semi-structured interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of the data obtained in the s APRs plus interviews.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was the project's budget and its planned duration cost-effective? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % spent vs planned budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget of the Prodoc + CDRs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of project budget vs CDRs and interviews
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How much have implementing agencies contributed and national counterparts (public, private) helped the project? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of MOUs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> APRs; semi-structured interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of the data obtained in the APRs plus interviews.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the COVID 19 crisis affected the implementation of the Project's activities? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change in AWP's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> semi-structured interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of the data obtained in the interviews.
Efficiency: Are the project's being implemented and executed efficiently in accordance with national, GEF and CI guidance and standards?			
<p>Were the risks identified in the project document and PIRs the most important? risk ratings were applied appropriately?</p>	<p>Number of new identified risks and changes in risk ratings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PRODOC Risk Table QPRs, PIR Risk Table Semi-structured interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document Review Contact with sectoral experts
<p>How and to what extent has the project implementation process, coordination with stakeholders and important aspects affected the timely start, execution, and closure of the project?</p>	<p>Percentage of current execution rate vs expected at PRODOC level.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Semi-structured interviews PRODOC; QRs; PIRs; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact with sectoral experts and the PMU Document Review
<p>Do the results developed during the formulation of the project still represent the best strategy to achieve the objectives of the project?</p>	<p>Acceptance of the Project strategy by part of the main actors.</p>	<p>Semi-structured interviews and review of documents</p>	<p>Analyzing the degree of acceptance of the different stakeholders interviewed.</p>
<p>How have local stakeholders participated in project management and decision-making?</p> <p>What are the strengths and weaknesses of the approach taken by the project management? What could be improved?</p>	<p>Number of meetings of the Steering Committee and participation of local stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PRODOC; AWP, QRs; PIRs PSC minutes Semi-structured interviews 	<p>Review of relevant documents</p> <p>Contact with PMU and key players with</p>

			knowledge of project operations
Does the project consult and use the skills, experience and knowledge of appropriate government entities, non-profit organizations, community groups, the private sector, local administrations and academic institutions in the implementation and evaluation of project activities?	Number of local experts consulted during the project implementation eta p a.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff CVs 2. QRs from all partners 3. Agreements signed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews 	<p>triangulation to determine duplication of efforts</p> <p>Identify missing skills.</p>
Sustainability: To what extent there are financial, institutional, socio-economic and/or environmental risks to maintain project results in the long term?			
Are there new risks that have arisen and were not previously foreseen? (especially with respect for translocation and restoration of species and in the biosecurity line)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence or absence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PRODOC • QPRs, PIR • Interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk analysis, PRODOC • QPR • Interviews with technicians
<p>Are there financial risks that can impact the permanence of the results achieved by the project?</p> <p>What is the possibility that financial and economic resources may not be available after GEF assistance is completed (resources can be from multiple sources, such as the public and private sectors, revenue-generating activities, and trends that may indicate that adequate financial resources may exist in the future to sustain project achievements)?</p>	Estimated recurring expenses for critical biosecurity and monitoring services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PRODOC Sustaining plan <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. budget 2. Financial Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semi-structured interviews 	Review of recurring expenses of monitoring actions and compare with the budget of the agencies responsible.
<p>Is there any social or political risk that could jeopardize the permanence of the project results?</p> <p>What is the risk that the level of ownership of stakeholders will be insufficient to allow project results/benefits to be maintained?</p> <p>Do you see the various key stakeholders who want the benefits of the project to keep flowing?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new risks identified and assessment of existing risks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PRODOC Sustaining plan • Semi-structured interviews. • QPRs, PIRs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct contact with beneficiaries • Direct contact with representatives of the Parish Development Committees • Review of Support Plan.

Is there sufficient public/stakeholder awareness in support of the project's long-term objectives?			
Are sustainability elements cross-cutting in the implementation of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The PMU analyses and reports on sustainability issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PRODOC PIR AWP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine links between project planning tools, policies, and financing tools outside the project
Have persistent and short-term environmental risks been assessed?	A revised or validated list of environmental risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PRODOC QPR, PIR GEF 6 Tracking Tool 	<p>Ask institutional stakeholders about data collection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visits
Socio-economic risks (safeguards) have been monitored?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguard's criteria discussed Number of complaints expressed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguards PIRs Minutes of meetings and parties interested 	Review of the documentation on safeguards.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there new risks that have arisen and were not previously foreseen? (especially with respect for translocation and restoration of species and in the biosecurity line) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presence or absence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PRODOC QPRs, PIR Interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk analysis, PRODOC QPR Interviews with technicians
Impact: There are indications that the project has contributed to or allowed progress towards reducing environmental stress and/or improving ecological status?			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the status of the rodent eradication program? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> population of post-rattling rodents does not regrow. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring protocol Reports Sustainable monitoring financing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with monitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the effectiveness of monitoring the post-treatment eradication program with rodenticides.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the status of the turtle population after its reintroduction? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> turtle population in each situation remains within the expected level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate monitoring program results <ul style="list-style-type: none">

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mortality rate does not exceed predicted levels 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the status of the habitat after applying the controls and reintroduction? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The amount of ha. treated or with side effects after reintroductions. 2. Presence or absence of terrestrial effects monitoring program (gis, species composition changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence or absence of a financial monitoring plan 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitoring protocols 2. GIS information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring reports 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assess the presence and status of vegetative community protocols <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate geographic information for magnitude of effects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there other global environmental benefits that are occurring now or expected by the end of the project? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of other associated or secondary environmental benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PRODOC <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Publications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • request expert opinion on the potential for the development of other associated or secondary environmental benefits and review of documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the social benefits in agroforestry terms that can reduce pressure on the environment in the long run? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualify and whether it is possible to quantify the benefits generated for the resident society. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Direct contact with beneficiaries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct contact with members of parish development committees 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interviews with beneficiaries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with members of parish development committees

Mid-Term Evaluation

Safeguarding Biodiversity in the Galapagos Islands by Enhancing Biosecurity and Creating the Enabling Environment for the Restoration of the Galapagos Island Ecosystems (GEF ID 9282)

Semi-structured interview guide for project stakeholders (government partners, NGOs, civil society, private sector and communities)

Date	
Interviewees	
Name	
Position	
Address	
Phone.	
Mail	

Introduction:

- ✓ **Thank interviewees/participants for their availability for the interview.**
- ✓ **Brief presentation.**
- ✓ **Brief introduction of the evaluations main objective and how information is going to be obtained.**
- ✓ **Ask if the interviewee has any specific question or doubt before starting the interview.**
- ✓ **Clarify that the information gathered will be strictly confidential.**
- ✓ **Ask if the interviewee gives his/her consent to record the interview; indicate that the interview will be recorded to better capture the information. If the interviewee does not feel comfortable ensure that the interview will not be recorded.**

Part I: General Information

1. Please briefly explain the work of your organization and your relationship with the project “Safeguarding Biodiversity in the Galapagos Island”.
2. *Note: It is important to know exactly with whom we are speaking: Is it a representative of the Government directly involved in the implementation of the project? Is s/he a representative of another project collaborating with the project? A member of an NGO? Depending on the nature of the collaboration, the questions should be adapted to make them more specific.*

Important information:

- *Partner since when?*
- *What sort of relationship has with the project?*
- *Is there any sort of evidence of the relationship, an agreement perhaps?*

Part II: Project Strategy

3. Please briefly explain if you consider that the project with its three components (Furthering a biosecurity system; Protection and recovery of the Floreana Island Ecosystems; Re-establishment of Keystone Species Post Eradication of invasive species) is well designed and aligned with national priorities.

Validate if there is alignment with the Organic Code of Environment (2017), the National Biodiversity Strategy (2105-2030), Strategic Plan and Policies of the National System of Protected Areas of Ecuador (2007-2016) – or support for the new version –, Climate Change National Strategy (2012-2025), Financial Sustainability Strategy of the National System of Protected Areas of Ecuador, among others. Address questions according to the political framework of the respondent to validate what is declared in the PRODOC and to see if there are any new policies that may influence the development of the project.

4. Did you or someone from your unit/organization participate in the project formulation process? (yes/no). Please describe the process. Any concerns about the design process? (n/a with certain partners and actors)

5. Do you think that the Biosecurity project has considered potential externalities – environmental, economic, or political – in its design?

6. Do you think that the project has considered all possible risks? Are there new risks or others not detailed?

Note: Reference the identified risks (1. Transport of unwanted species; 2. Diseases or pests; 3. Invasion; 4. Biological; 5. Ecological engineering risks; 6. Risks for other species; 7. Financial risks).

7. At your discretion, does the results framework or budget include gender-relevant outputs and activities? Please specify.

8. Do you believe that the results and output indicators are well designed and can be measured?

9. Do you think the project has generated or can generate beneficial development effects for the country/territory or could catalyze them in the future (e.g., income generation, increase livestock protection, improve incomes from farming systems) so that they should be included in the results framework?

Part III: Progress towards results

10. To what extent is the Project on track to achieve the Objective through its main outcomes:

Indicator/Outcome: Successful demonstration of all stages and documentation of lessons learned from ... *Every stage of a comprehensive ecosystem restoration strategy— including enhanced biosecurity, social license for the eradication of exotic species and subsequent reintroduction of an endemic species — has been carefully demonstrated, monitored, and evaluated, thus: (i) achieving a state of preparation for future eradication and restoration activities on Floreana Island, and (ii) creating a model replication process on other key islands of the Galapagos Archipelago.*

- Outcome 1.1: >5% increase from baseline in the number of pest intercepts and subsequent goods seizures due to pest risk at all ports combined.
- Indicator/Goal Outcome 2.1(a): At least 80% of Floreana Island residents take new or improved ecologically sustainable measures in areas such as: agriculture, waste management and other areas defined in the Declaration of the Parish Council Floreana to be defined.
- Indicator/Goal Outcome 2.1(b): 100% of Floreana Island residents and strategic project partners participate and show support for plans to eradicate rodents and wild cats, and for the concept of reintroduction of endemic species previously removed by invasive species.
- Indicator/Goal Outcome 3.1: At least 506 giant turtles of the species *Chelonoidis hoodensis* are dispersing seeds in about 50% (1,206 ha) of the Santa Fe Island area.
- Indicator/Goal Outcome 3.2. In breeding centers, an improved and expanded breeding ground contributes to the next number of giant turtles reaching the age of one year: (a) In Santa Cruz, an increase of 250 to at least 400 turtles on average annually of the populations of Spanish, Santiago, Floreana, Pinzón and Santa Cruz Oriental and (b) In Isabela, an increase of 200 to 300 turtles on average annually of the populations of the Volcanoes Sierra Negra and Cerro Azul

11. To what extent outputs contribute to the scope of results (outcomes)? ¿Have the products been achieved in the sequence and in the expected time frame? ¿Are there missing products in the design of the project that puts the scope of the results at risk? ¿What do you think is working exceptionally well and why?

- Indicator/Goal Output 1.1.1. Action Plan accepted by the Project Steering Committee (PSC).
- Indicator/Goal Output 1.1.2. 10% of detection equipment identified in the Action Plan purchased and installed in adequate infrastructure.
- Indicator/Goal Output 1.1.3: 20% of the Recommendations of the Action Plan (Updated Protocols and Built Capabilities) implemented.
- Indicator/ Goal Output 2.1.1: 100% of men and women from farmers implementing ecologically sustainable agricultural practices.
- Indicator/Goal Output 2.1.2. A statement developed and adopted by the Floreana Parish Council
- Indicator/Goal Output 2.1.3. An Operational Plan for the Eradication of Invading Rodents and Wild Cats approved by the Project Steering Committee
- Indicator/Goal Output 2.1.4(a). 6 risk management plans developed in conjunction with the community and approved by the Project Steering Committee
- Indicator/Goal Output 2.1.4(b). Percentage of male residents and women of the island Floreana who participate in consultations on the risk management plans developed for the Project.

- Indicator/Goal Output 2.1.5. An environmental and social impact assessment was completed, and the environmental certificate was awarded.
- Indicator/Goal Output 3.1.1 (a) On average, at least 40 juvenile giant turtles (*Chelonoidis hoodensis*) are transferred annually.
- Indicator/Goal 3.1.1 (b). At least 30 giant sub-adult turtles (*Chelonoidis hoodensis*) are translocated.
- Indicator/Goal Output 3.1.2. One monitoring and evaluation protocol tested, optimized, and accepted by the Project Steering Committee

12. What do you think have been the main obstacles, as well as facilitating factors for the achievement of the results? Briefly explain.

13. Has the project achieved an appropriate partnership strategy? Should any other partners or key players be added to the process? Briefly explain.

- Data disaggregated by gender
- Diversity in decision-making
- Progress on the Mainstreaming Gender Plan
- Progress on the Stakeholder Engagement Plan
- Status and operation of the Complaints Mechanism

Part IV: Project implementation & adaptive management

14. How the relationship and communication between the Implementing Agency and the executing agency and the co-executors is characterized?

15. Do you think that the structure and organization of the project are adequate (central office, regional office)? Does the project have enough human and technical equipment and resources to achieve the results?

Note: If you do not know, ask if you have been informed of changes in the project and if you have been able to influence or transmit concerns to the different coordination bodies.

16. Have there been any substantive changes to the project? Has the project been able to adapt to these changes? Are they documented?

17. How has coordination been between actors? Have the different coordination committees worked? (board of directors, national coordination committee) Can it be improved?

18. Describe the recruitment process of key staff.

19. How is staff performance evaluated? Based on results?
(n/a for all actors)

FOR GOVERNMENT COUNTERPARTS

20. Do you think there has been duplication of effort with other projects?

21. Do local governments support the project's objectives? Do they have an active role in decision-making?
(Action Plans, Resolutions, see 2.1.4.3).

22. Have the different partners contributed to the co-financing? How is it being followed up?

23. Have you or the organization you represent been involved in monitoring the project? Do you think it has been effective? Can it be improved? Do you know if national data, statistics, nationally generated information are being used?

Part V: Sustainability

24. Once the project and the financial support of the GEF is concluded, will the government be able to continue promoting biosecurity activities and monitoring of the effects of species reintroduction and eradication?

25. The certification and training process for biosecurity is costly and complex. Do you think that the product generated by the project and the strengthened capacity of the responsible actors is enough to follow the biosecurity protocols?

26. Are there new risks to be considered for the sustainability of the project? (e.g. the government's willingness to facilitate agricultural activities, the possibility of damages caused by climate change.)
What measures could be taken to mitigate these risks?

Do you have anything else you'd like to add?

Thank you very much!

Annex IV. MTR Ratings

Ratings for Progress Towards Results: (one rating for each outcome and for the objective)		
6	Highly Satisfactory (HS)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve or exceed all its end-of-project targets, without major shortcomings. The progress towards the objective/outcome can be presented as “good practice”.
5	Satisfactory (S)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve most of its end-of-project targets, with only minor shortcomings.
4	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve most of its end-of-project targets but with significant shortcomings.
3	Moderately Unsatisfactory (HU)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve its end-of-project targets with major shortcomings.
2	Unsatisfactory (U)	The objective/outcome is expected not to achieve most of its end-of-project targets.
1	Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	The objective / outcome has failed to achieve its midterm targets, and is not expected to achieve any of its end-of-project targets.
Ratings for Project Implementation & Adaptive Management: (one overall rating)		
6	Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Implementation of all seven components – management arrangements, work planning, finance and cofinance, project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, stakeholder engagement, reporting, and communications – is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management. The project can be presented as “good practice”.
5	Satisfactory (S)	Implementation of most of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management except for only few that are subject to remedial action.
4	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Implementation of some of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management, with some components requiring remedial actions.
3	Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Implementation of some of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive, with most components requiring remedial action
2	Unsatisfactory (U)	Implementation of most of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management.
1	Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	Implementation of none of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management.

Ratings for Sustainability: (one overall rating)		
4	Likely (L)	Negligible risks to sustainability, with key outcomes on track to be achieved by the project’s closure and expected to continue into the foreseeable future
3	Moderately Likely (ML)	Moderate risks, but expectations that at least some outcomes will be sustained due to the progress towards results on outcomes at the Midterm Review
2	Moderately Unlikely (MU)	Significant risk that key outcomes will not carry on after project closure, although some outputs and activities should carry on
1	Unlikely (U)	Severe risks that project outcomes as well as key outputs will not be sustained

Annex V. MTR Workplan

Activity/Deliverable	April				May				June				
	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W5
MTE Galapagos Desk Review													
Key informant Questionnaire	9-Apr												
MTE Galapagos Inception workshop			19-Apr										
MTE Galapagos inception report			20-Apr										
MTE Galapagos Interview process + mission				*	*	*							
MTE Galapagos Initial Findings Presentation							17-May						
Draft Galapagos MTE Report									1-Jun				
Final Galapagos MTE Report											17-Jun		
*Due to the change of Government, all interviews must be carried out before May 20, 2021													

Agenda
Evaluación Medio Termino
AAE para Conservation International

Safeguarding biodiversity in the Galapagos Islands by enhancing biosecurity and creating the enabling environment for the restoration of Galapagos Island ecosystems						
GEF 9282						
	Fecha (Dia/Mes)	Hora	Actividad/Tema	Participantes	Duracion (en minutos)	Modalidad
Lunes	19/04	1000h Glpgs	Taller de Arranque con equipo	Equipo Consultor Equipo GEF (Patricia, Ulf, Gabriela, Luis y Angie) Equipo CI GEF (Daniela, Prapti)	60	Via Zoom
Martes	20/04	1000G	Revisión acceso docs	G.vivas	45	Zoom
Martes	20/04	1400G	Entrevista con Gerente del Proyecto	Equipo Consultor	60	Via Zoom
				Patricia León (Gerente del Proyecto GEF) Ulf Hardter (Gerente al inicio del proyecto GEF)		
		1500G	Entrevista con el Equipo GEF	Equipo Consultor	60	
				Luis Chandi (Especialista en Bioseguridad) Gabriela Vivas (Especialista en Restauración)		
Viernes	23/04	1630G	Reunión Island Conservation Regional América Latina	Karl Campbell, Director Regional	60	Zoom
Lunes	26/04	1630 G	Reunión seguimiento Island Conservation Regional América Latina	Karl Campbell	30	Zoom
				Max Lascano		

Sábado	01-mayo	A Definir	Visita a Puertogal	Nancy Poroza Puertogal		Presencial
	Fecha (Dia/Mes)	Hora	Actividad/Tema	Participantes	Duración (en minutos)	Modalidad
Lunes	03 mayo	AM	Viaje a Galápagos desde Guayaquil	Max Lascano		Presencial
			(En Guayaquil revisión del filtro de inspección acompañado de Nancy Durán)	Nancy Durán (Responsable de ABG en Guayaquil)		
		AM	Arribo a la Isla de Baltra. Breve explicación y observación del proceso de inspección en Baltra	Max Lascano		Presencial
				Dalton Solis (Inspector de ABG en Baltra)		
		PM	Entrevistas con ABG: Directora Ejecutiva, Director de Normativa y Prevención, Experta en Planificación	3pm Marilyn Cruz (Directora Ejecutiva)		Presencial
				10 am - 11:00 Danilo Jaya (Director Normativa)		
		4:00 5:00 PM Mariela Cedeño (Experta en Planificación)	Via Zoom			
		6:30 - 7:30	Visita de campo al muelle de pasajeros durante inspección de equipajes	Max Lascano		
Martes	04 mayo	7:30 - 8:30	Desayuno	Danilo Jaya (Director de Normativa-ABG)		
		9:00 - 9:30	Visita a cámara de refrigeración de ABG	Marcelo Montesdeoca (Responsable en Muelle-ABG)		
				Luis Chandi (Responsable Componente 1)		
		10:15	Entrevista Presencial DPNG	Danny Rueda (Director DPNG)		
		11:00 - 12:00	Visita Cámara de refrigeración DPNG	Christian Sevilla (Responsable CREI)		
		14:00 - 15:00	Entrevista con Gerente del Proyecto	Max Lascano Patricia León (Gerente de Proyecto)		
15:00 - 18:00	Entrevista con el equipo GEF	Ulf Hardter (Gerente de proyecto al				

	Fecha (Dia/Mes)	Hora	Actividad/Tema	Participantes	Duracion (en minutos)	Modalidad	
Miércoles	05 mayo	AM	Viaje a Floreana: embarcación charteada por Island Conservation	Max Lascano			
			Entrevistas sugeridas en Floreana: Yadira Chávez (Presidenta Junta Parroquial de Floreana)/Claudio Cruz (Agricultor)	Comunidad de Floreana (proponemos dos personas beneficiarias. Si están de acuerdo con el número, los llamamos y vemos quien de ellos quiere ayudarnos con entrevistas: Max Freire, Cecilia Salgado, Emperatriz Salgado)			
		PM	Visita a los gallineros construidos como parte del Componente 2 / Entrevista equipo IC durante la cena	Max Lascano	Víctor Carrión (Gerente del Proyecto Floreana)		
				Carolina Torres (Encargada del componente social)			
AM	Viaje de retorno desde Floreana a Santa Cruz	Max Lascano					
Jueves	6 mayo	10:30	Entrevista presencial con Galapagos Conservancy (Socio ejecutor del componente 3 y responsable de salvaguardas ambientales)	Max Lascano			
			Visita al centro de crianza de tortugas que se está modificando con financiamiento del proyecto.	Washington Tapia (Galapagos Conservancy)			
		PM	Reunión de cierre con Gerente del Proyecto y Director de IC	Gabriela Vivas			
				Max Lascano			
				Patricia León			
AM	Viaje de retorno a Quito	Karl Campbell					
Miércoles	12 Mayo	1300 PM Q	ci-gef	Daniela Carrion		TEAMS	
Jueves	13 mayo	1400PM Q	CI-GEF	Shannon Wieks		TEAMS	

	Fecha (Dia/Mes)	Hora	Actividad/Tema	Participantes	Duracion (en minutos)	Modalidad
Miércoles	26 mayo		Presentación de hallazgos preliminares	Equipo Consultor; Equipo GEF (Patricia, Ulf, Gabriela, Luis y Angie): Equipo CI GEF (Daniela, Shannon, Prapti)		Virtual
	1 junio		Borrador Reporte MTE	Equipo CI GEF (Daniela, Shannon, Prapti)		
	17 junio		Reporte Final MTE con comentarios incluidos	Equipo CI GEF (Daniela, Shannon, Prapti)		

Annex VII. Checklist of Documents Reviewed

Number	Document	Status
1	PIF	√
2	CI Initiation Plan	√
3	CI Project Document	√
4	CI Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP)	√
5	Project Inception Report	√
6	All Project Implementation Reports (PIR's)	√
7	AWPs and Quarterly Progress Reports	2019, 2020, 2021 √
8	Audit reports	√
9	Finalized GEF focal area Tracking Tools/Core Indicators at CEO endorsement and midterm	√
10	Oversight mission reports	√
11	Financial and Administration guidelines used by Project Team CI-GEF, Procurement Policy Island Conservation procurement policy	√
12	Project operational guidelines, manuals and systems Communication Protocol Use of Logos CI, GEF, etc.	√
13	Minutes of the Project Board Meetings and other meetings (i.e. Project Appraisal Committee meetings)	√
14	Cofinancing letters	√
15	Cofinancing documentation	√.

16	Project site location maps	√
17	GEF CEO Endorsement	√
18	Other relevant documents: Key technical and scientific reports, final reports from consultancies, PPG documents.	√

Annex VII. Summary Table of Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Recommendations

Finding	Conclusion	Recommendation	Response
Project Justification/Context			
<p>1: (Relevance/Conformity) The project justification is comprehensive and based on information presented during the PPG process and on empirical information from previous projects that were adequately cited in the project literature</p>	<p>The project conforms to all pertinent national policies and Galapagos and sector strategies</p>		
<p>2. (Relevance/conformity) The baseline assessment in the project document was almost solely focused on biosecurity. The social baseline was eventually presented in the Appendix V: Screening Results and Safeguard Analysis, which presented a rigorous scientific basis for Outcomes 2 and 3. Together, the baseline is complete</p>			
<p>3: The review of the project justification indicates that the policy landscape is well defined with clear conformity to all pertinent national, local and GEF priorities.</p>	<p>The project justification is complete and comprehensive in policy, social, environmental and the overall development context. The project documentation reviewed provides empirical justification to justify the need for the project and established the project as a clear next-step in a</p>		

Finding	Conclusion	Recommendation	Response
	documented progression laid out by the GOE and involved stakeholders.		
4: The political conformation of the Galapagos, municipal governments, and of local government institutional partners make them resistant to wide swings in policy even through changes in political administration. The key stakeholders have consistently been involved with baseline activities over the long-term with the participating non-governmental partners.	The long-term involvement of stakeholders and long-term, stable public-private relationships between project partners established over years of baseline activities makes the project resilient to political risks (Sustainability)		
5. Infrastructure is a limiting factor for the deployment of biosecurity assets in the maritime flow of container goods, which is about 80% of the cargo for the Galapagos. Infrastructure constitutes an important barrier to the overall effectiveness of biosecurity measures.	The overall impact of the project's biosecurity measures will be within the limits of current infrastructure. The Galapagos maritime port infrastructure is a persistent barrier to 100% control of invasive species entering into and travelling amongst the Galapagos Islands.		
Project Strategy and Design			
6: The TOC is based on monitoring of re-introduction on Española and on research from Española, San Cristobal, Santa Fe and Floreana islands. The project document in Appendix V: Safeguard Screening provides the rationale and justifies with references and empirical data and lessons learned from baseline projects.	The TOC is sound and provides a documented and validated internal logic upon which the architecture of the project is built		

Finding	Conclusion	Recommendation	Response
7: In combination with baseline efforts to improve interdiction and tracking of vessels in the maritime realm, the project outputs for component 1 will yield the expected outcome of reducing (or increasing capture) of IAS	The outputs systematically respond to gaps within the limits of Galapagos' infrastructure.		
8: The impact indicator for Outcome 1 is inconsistent with its own target and is not independent of other factors, such as learning or visitor education	The outcome 1 indicator is not SMART. As stated, it is not specific or relevant to the expected outcome of more effective and efficient biosecurity	(1) Based on the new protocols and Action Plan, redefine the indicator with a more specific metric, such as the number of bags, cargo containers, vessels etc. inspected and include these new metrics in ABG's monitoring protocol	We agree with the recommendation. However, given the time remaining in the implementation phase, we don't think changing the indicator makes a big difference. Instead of this, we will explain the reasons why the target was not met in the FY21 PIR and final report to the GEF.
9: The suite of outputs is both comprehensive and internally consistent with the targeted outcome for <u>Component 2</u> of a validated social license and adequate environmental and social safeguards for the eventual eradication of black rats and feral cats.			
Finding 10: The suite of outputs presented for Component 3 is comprehensive and internally consistent with the two targeted outcomes of (a) ecosystem processes, particularly seed dispersal, re-initiated across Santa Fe Island as the result of the translocation	The project design is sound. All outputs contribute to their corresponding outcomes and are internally consistent. The outcomes are independent yet related. A failure in one does not foment a failure in		

Finding	Conclusion	Recommendation	Response
<p>of giant tortoises, and, (b) production in captivity of giant tortoises for future reintroductions throughout the archipelago is significantly increased. Together, the outputs have a high likelihood of increasing the population of giant tortoises of targeted bloodlines and translate into a monitored population capable of consuming and dispersing local species of plants.</p>	<p>another, this exemplifies a “best practice” in strong project design.</p>		
<p>Finding 11: The indicator for Outcome 3.1. embraces two aspects: the number of tortoises and the amount of land where seeds are dispersed. For former concept is probably a better indicator if this is framed in terms of survival and amount of land occupied by tortoises as part of their habitat. The second concept, which could go a bit farther in terms of seed dispersal, or better yet, germination, would be a better indicator at the Impact level or even at the objective level of the project because it goes to the heart of the TOC and would demonstrate a “safeguard of biodiversity” as alluded to in the project objective.</p>	<p>The outcome 3.1. indicator of the coverage of land with seed dispersion might be better applied at the Objective level.</p>	<p>(2) Consider a slight modification of the Outcome 3.1 indicator (amount of land with seed dispersion) as an indicator for the objective level. Consider simplifying the existing indicator to the survival rate of tortoises established and a total target population by the end of the project and perhaps 5 years into the future.</p>	<p>Disagree. The outcome has been completed. At this point, it does not make sense to change the indicator.</p>
<p>Efficiency in Delivery of Project Assets</p>			
<p>Finding 12: IC’s staff did a good job at navigating the difficulties in the supply chain by travelling to the mainland and</p>			

Finding	Conclusion	Recommendation	Response
securing materials and also by proactive management in using the downtime to advance the procurement process so that the budget was ready to execute when the COVID situation began to ease.			
13: The procurement protocols in-place to manage risks became obstacles during COVID. Many suppliers demanded payment up-front or abnormally large deposits, such as 50% to secure supplies, which was not possible.	IC did a good job at finding supplies and working with suppliers without succumbing to their excessive demands and hence avoided additional risk at to an already risky supply chain.		
14: At the time of the MTR and in spite of COVID-related supply chain issues, all project assets were consistently deployed within a reasonable timeframe of the target's for the respective components.	The project's financial resources were <u>effectively deployed</u> despite COVID-19, the inherent difficulties in Galapagos' supply chain, etc. The project is on-track to execute all project funds by the End-of-Project.		
Effectiveness in Progress Towards Results			
	Component 1, receives an overall efficiency rating of "HS" or Highly Satisfactory and green rating		
15. All outputs were executed with the exception of 1.1.3. which is in the final phases of software development and training in protocols. These are likely to be completed by EOP. The component is	At the time of the MTR, 82% of the funds allocated to C1 were executed and the remaining committed		

Finding	Conclusion	Recommendation	Response
effective and yielding results according to indicators.			
16: According to inspectors that were visited during the evaluation, the project is already demonstrating efficiencies. Airport and port bio detection equipment and infrastructure have already reduced inspection times (Santa Cruz) from 3-5 minutes to seconds per passenger, resulting in reduced boarding times and departure times for boats	The project is generating benefits related to effectiveness: The reduced time for screening baggage leads to reduced time at ports, a better experience for tourists, and timely vessel departure.		
17: Municipalities in San Cristobal and Isabela have shown interest in similar machines being installed demonstrating effectiveness on a qualitative level.			
18: The new Action Plan recognizes that 80% of the risk is maritime and from residents, not tourists. In Guayaquil, there is no acceptable port facility in Guayaquil or on the islands. It will not be possible to guarantee full control of the entry of invasive species across the entire system.			
19: ABG and project staff feel that there is a learning curve. A large portion of the seizures are from residents. When seizures occur, the word gets around that the government is serious about enforcement. The experience makes its way to the public and consciousness is	The project is effectively addressing the technology and capacity barriers to the limits of the existing port infrastructure. Actions by AGB and parallel actions by INGOs in visitor education, and interdiction in Marine Environments, in combination with learning by the local population will		

Finding	Conclusion	Recommendation	Response
raised, leading to better compliance and more captures	effectively contribute to a positive outcome 1.1.		
20: (Effectiveness) The formal declaration of agreement with eradication operational plans was signed by the Floreana Parish Council and is completed. The declaration is also endorsed by the Autonomous Decentralized Municipal Government of San Cristobal	The project has executed 89% of the C2 Budget. With the ESIA contract still open, 100% funds are committed, and all outputs are expected to be completed by the End-of-Project.		
21: (Effectiveness) Originally 6 Risk Management Plans (output 2.1.4.) were programmed and 8 delivered and approved by stakeholders exceeding the targeted number plans approved. These documents are integral to the EISA developed in the next output	An HS was awarded at the Outcome-level.		
22: All but one activity has been completed. Time is however a factor in assuring an adequate dialogue on the ESIA and a complete response to all of the issues presented. The ESIA process could run into the formal closing date of the project, as well as actions discussed below in Component 3	A no-cost extension that enables the project activities to extend to the project closure date followed by a period for administrative closure is necessary to assure the completion of all activities.	Enable a no-cost extension for a maximum of 6 months to enable the execution of technical activities until the original project close date, followed by an extended period for technical and administrative closure of the project.	Agreed. The project will be extended for six months, until March 2022.
23: (Effectiveness) Island Conservation - IC- who is the executor of this component it has years of presence on Floreana and has gained the trust of the population (120 people).	The strength of the relationships and long-term accompaniment of the executing agencies with the public has garnered trust and greatly facilitates the social license for a		

Finding	Conclusion	Recommendation	Response
	future eradication of invasive black rats and feral cats.		
24: Effectiveness: Social license achieved for eradication of vertebrate invasive species. Beneficiaries, ABG, IC and the Parish Board Declaration ensure that most farmers and the residents support the project to eradicate invasive species.	The project has effectively addressed the social barriers to eradication of vertebrate species on Floreana Island. The social license has been achieved.	(4) Once the final installations are in place, begin the next phase of development in the elimination of black rats and feral cats as a prerequisite to tortoise introduction to Floreana Island as soon as possible to take advantage of the momentum generated.	Agreed. However, this does not depend directly on the project EA or IA. Both EA and IA are discussing a second phase of the project.
25: Effectiveness: Farmers want to see rats eliminated because of their crop loss. They fear water contamination, this even though IC has made investments in reservoir protection and zoning of the area.			
26: Efficiency: IC developed an app. to map all the inhabitants of the island and socio-economic information, as well as register their opinions on the agreements and progress made with each of them.			
27: Effectiveness: The new practices of stabling of livestock, pigs and hens has added value for farmers. Farmers interviewed indicated they are willing to maintain these practices even after eradication, regardless of added labor associated with stabling of livestock. <i>e.g.</i> more cows on one hectare.			

Finding	Conclusion	Recommendation	Response
<p>28: To the time of the MTR, the project had released 155 juvenile Giant Tortoises (<i>C. hoodensis</i>.) and 31 Sub-adults exceeding the targets for Outputs 3.1.1 (a) and (b) respectively.</p>	<p>The project achieving an efficiency rating of a green “HS” for meeting targets of Component 3.</p>		
<p>29: The protocol will facilitate the DPNG and its partners’ efforts to manage the repopulation of adult tortoises on other islands, such as Floreana and to be able to evaluate the overall impact of the program validate the Theory of Change. With the protocol approved by the Steering Committee through Act No. 004-2021 in the third quarter of FY 2021, the project has successfully produced Output 3.1.2. and receives a green HS rating.</p>	<p>83% of project resources were executed in Output 3 with the remaining 17% obligated. Output 3.2.1. Modernization of breeding centers is likely to be completed by EOP.</p>		
<p>30: The PMU did a good job at keeping the output 3.2.1 alive during the Pandemic. The output is now underway and is on-track to be completed to be completed by the end of the project if the activities are allowed to continue up until the termination date of the project. This is an additional reason supporting Recommendation 3: a no cost extension to enable the administrative close of the project following the official EOP date. Evaluators awarded an “S” on a yellow sign indicating certainty that the activities will be completed by EOP.</p>	<p>The successful reintroduction and establishment of monitoring for ecosystem-level changes contributes to the project objective of increasing ecosystem restoration via a replacement species. The monitoring protocol will demonstrate the attainment of the indicator for Outcome 3.1, the no. of hectares of territory with natural seed disbursement.</p>	<p>Recommendation (5) Construction of improved breeding facilities within output 3.2.1. is now underway and is on-track to be completed to be completed by the end of the project if the activities are allowed to continue up until the termination date of the project. This is an additional reason supporting Recommendation 3: a no cost extension to enable the administrative close of the project following the official EOP date</p>	<p>Agreed. Extension will be granted.</p>

Finding	Conclusion	Recommendation	Response
31: In completion of Output 3.2.2., the brood stock was successfully diversified through the capture of 5 additional individuals from Wolf Island. For this undertaking in completing output 3.2.2., a green light and HS are awarded.			
32: The project partners in Galapagos Conservancy successfully published peer-reviewed scientific articles to disseminate the lessons learned from ecological restoration using replacement species, including a dedicated book chapter. Output 3.2.3 is successfully completed qualifying for a green HS ranking.	The project has established the foundation and processes for increasing the production capacity of giant tortoises for future reintroduction throughout the archipelago, fully achieving outcome 3.1.		
Project and Adaptive Management			
33: Based on a review of the CVs and from interviews, CI and IC recruited quality staff and consultants competent in their areas and with long-standing relationships in Galapagos. This enhanced the trust between the PMU, partners, and beneficiaries. This was especially important in developing the social license in Component 2.			
34: CI-GEF and IC provided a productive and safe work environment			

Finding	Conclusion	Recommendation	Response
35: The PMU both proactively and adaptively managed problems in particular delays due to COVID-19			
36: Finding 36: The systems put in place by CI-GEF were beneficial to IC and GC who stated that they increased their technical capacity to manage projects by using the monitoring and reporting tools provided by CI-GEF. became more technified by using the quarterly report formats. Overall a particularly good effort and results in this category.			
Finding 37: The AWP's, Budgets and Procurement plans are complete, realistic, and consistent with one another. A score of "HS" was provided because the evaluators were impressed with the level of detail in the planning function.			
Finding 38: The PMU is proactive and adaptive in responding to risks. Evaluators feel that the process of managing risks is particularly strong in the area of biological risks, which have detailed risk assessments and strict protocols. An overall ranking of green, HS is assigned.			
Finding 39: Each institution is an expert in their area and brings particular skills into the group. Interviews with beneficiaries ratified their appreciation			

Finding	Conclusion	Recommendation	Response
for the PMU and their handling of the project. For these reasons, a rating of “HS”/Green is applied because this aspect is trending upward now as the effects of COVID are diminishing.			
Finding 40: The financial management of the PMU and the tools provided by CI-GEF are complete and provide an effective assessment of the management of the project’s financial resources. A score of green, HS is assigned.	The PMU received a Mid-term Rating of “HS” or Highly Satisfactory for total project management. In all of the parameters, the PMU scores “HS” the highest ranking for excellence. The Implementing Agency has selected quality partners for project execution and provided quality tools and support to administrative and financial management of the project’s resources. The Executing Agency has recruited qualified staff and consultants; establishing a productive work environment; demonstrated adaptive management and proactive planning: quality monitoring and reporting; planning & budgeting: management of risks; and have maintained productive interinstitutional relationships and appropriate management of the project’s financial resources. This is a well-managed project.	(6) Conservation International, Island Conservation, the DPNG, ABG and Galapagos Conservation and all other PSC members and project partners should be recognized for a well designed and well managed project. The TE process should define if this is a model project to be highlighted by the GEF for the elements of strong design, management arrangements, and execution, especially in difficult times.	<i>Agreed. CI will follow up with the GEF SEC.</i>
Safeguards			
41: The Natural Habitats safeguard is mainstreamed throughout the project	The project is compliant with CI-GEFs ESS#2 and, although not triggered at		

Finding	Conclusion	Recommendation	Response
monitoring and evaluation process and is actively monitored and reported within the projects M&E plan and with engagement of the PSC. These are based on a rigorous analysis at the time of project formulation. Management of the ESS ² is deemed Highly Satisfactory “HS.”	project implementation, the safeguards, process and instruments being deployed by CI-GEF and the PMU are compliant with GEF Policy and Guidance on Environmental and Social Safeguards		
42: Gender is effectively mainstreamed throughout the project and is deemed Highly Satisfactory “HS”	The project is compliant with GEF Gender Equality Policy (SD/PL/02) and Guidelines		
<i>43: Stakeholder engagement is actively mainstreamed into the project’s implementation framework. Highly Satisfactory, HS.</i>	The Grievance mechanism and Stakeholder engagement strategy are compliant with CI’s ESMF and is compliant with GEF Stakeholder Engagement Policy (SD/PL/01) and Guidelines		
	Management of safeguards is given an overall ranking of HS.		
Sustainability			
44. Project actions making operational and creating technical and human resource capacities are addressing institutional barriers in biosecurity.	The technical and human resource capacities developed are strengthening institutional ability to realize national strategies, such as ABG’s strategic plan.		
45. it was difficult to find easily accessible Spanish language publications aimed at the residents and national	The MTR was not able to evaluate the full suite of factors related to success at the outcome 1.1 level. Other important parallel factors may	(7) Consider public outreach is a possible future area for development to enhance the	Disagree. We agree that public outreach is important. However, for this project, Public

Finding	Conclusion	Recommendation	Response
visitors responsible for 80% of cargo to Galapagos.	be having a positive contribution to achieving the outcome and could influence sustainability of the biosecurity measures.	sustainability of the investments in biosecurity aimed at avoidance	outreach was done by ABG with a different but complementary project (FEIG).
46. The Ministry of Public works' Port Authority, responsible for the infrastructure issues that will need to be addressed in the future was not involved in the project.	For the next steps in biosecurity, the participation of additional stakeholders may need to be included.	(8) Consider including the Ministry of Public Works in the sharing of results and lessons learned from this project	Disagree. The project worked closely and in coordination with the relevant governmental institutions to achieve the outcomes and project objective. The project identified that ABG will work closely with the Ministry of Public works. But it is out of the scope of the project.
47. There does not appear to be a strategic financial plan to address the recurrent costs of maintaining the new infrastructure and the biodiversity monitoring costs over a reasonable period of time. There are measures in place to finance ABGs operational costs, these were not evaluated	There is currently not enough information to facilitate an analysis of financial sustainability at the TE stage.	(9) Consider collecting all possible cost assessments for the recurring costs of infrastructure maintenance and long-term monitoring as well as the maintenance of ABGs infrastructure to enable the evaluation of financial sustainability during the Terminal Evaluation.	Agreed. Financial Sustainability Assessment needs to happen at TE.
48. Public and private sources are producing a funding stream in advance of the eradication efforts.	The public-private partnerships are very effective in meeting long-term financial gains		

Finding	Conclusion	Recommendation	Response
49. The political sustainability was not evaluated from the point of view of the new government in Ecuador. The MTR research was executed prior to the change in political administration in 2021.	There was not enough information during the MTR to evaluate the political sustainability	(10) At the TE, analyze the effects of change in political administration on the sustainability of the project	Agreed. The results of the MTR will be presented to the new government team to start the process.
50: The installed technical capacity of the farmers is complemented by Ministry of Agriculture initiatives to provide opportunities for production while reducing the dependency on outside foodstuffs.	Building the capacity of Floreana farmers to operate more productively and sustainably over the near- and long-term will enhance sustainability as the returns on their installations and revenue from tourism reward them and lead them to a high level of stewardship		

Los evaluadores/consultores:

1. Deben presentar una información completa y justa en su evaluación de las fortalezas y debilidades, de tal manera que las decisiones o acciones llevadas a cabo se encuentren bien fundadas.
2. Deben revelar el conjunto completo de conclusiones junto con la información de sus limitaciones y tenerlo a disposición de todos aquellos afectados por la evaluación que posean el derecho expreso para recibir los resultados.
3. Deberán proteger el anonimato y la confidencialidad de los informantes individuales. Deberán ofrecer el máximo tiempo de notificación, limitar las demandas de tiempo y respetar el derecho de las personas a no involucrarse. Los evaluadores deberán respetar el derecho de las personas a otorgar información de manera confidencial, y deben asegurarse de que la información sensible no pueda ser rastreada hasta su origen. Los evaluadores no están obligados a evaluar a personas individuales pero están deben mantener el equilibrio entre la evaluación de las funciones de gestión y este principio general.
4. En ocasiones, al realizar las evaluaciones destaparán pruebas de delitos. Se debe informar de manera discreta sobre tales casos al órgano de investigación apropiado. Los evaluadores deberán consultar con otras entidades de supervisión relevantes cuando exista la mínima duda sobre si estos temas deberían ser comunicados y de cómo deberían comunicarse.
5. Deberán ser sensibles hacia las creencias, usos y costumbres y actuar con integridad y honestidad en sus relaciones con todas las parte interesadas. En la línea de la Declaración Universal de Derechos Humanos de las Naciones Unidas, los evaluadores deben ser sensibles hacia los temas de discriminación e igualdad de género. Deberán evitar ofender la dignidad y autoestima de aquellas personas con las que establezcan un contacto durante la evaluación. Sabiendo que existe la posibilidad de que la evaluación afecte negativamente a los intereses de algunas partes interesadas, los evaluadores deberán conducir la evaluación y comunicar el objetivo de ésta y sus resultados de una manera que respete claramente la dignidad y la autoestima de los implicados.
6. Son responsables de su actuación y (los) producto(s) que generen. Son responsables de una presentación escrita u oral clara, precisa y equilibrada, así como de las limitaciones, conclusiones y recomendaciones del estudio.
7. Deberán aplicar procedimientos contables sólidos y ser prudentes a la hora de utilizar los recursos de la evaluación.

Formulario de Acuerdo del Consultor del MTR

Acuerdo para acatar el Código de Conducta para Evaluadores del sistema de la ONU:

Nombre del Consultor: Guido Fernández de Velasco Sert _____

Nombre de la Organización Consultora (cuando sea necesario): _____

Afirmo que he recibido y entendido y que acataré el Código de Conducta para Evaluadores de las Naciones Unidas.

Firmado en Barcelona a 27 de agosto de 2018



Firma:

Annex X. Audit Trail

Project Title:	Project Name: Safeguarding Biodiversity in the Galapagos Islands by Enhancing Biosecurity and Creating the Enabling Environment for the Restoration of Galapagos Island Ecosystems
Executing Agency:	Island Conservation (IC) / Conservation International (CI-GEF)
Duration:	32 months
GEF Grant Amount:	3,421,472
Date of Mid Term Evaluation:	June 2021
CI-GEF Agency team members responding:	Prapti Bhandary, Conservation International Daniela Carrion, Conservation International Patricia Leon, Island Conservation

The CI-GEF team is providing an agency response to the mid-term evaluation report prepared by Asesoramiento Ambiental Estratégico (AAE). The following are responses from the consultant to Implementing Agency comments from the CI-GEF team in relation to the content of the draft Mid-term Review report.

Document section	CI-GEF Agency Comments/Recommendations	Response from consultant on if/how comments were addressed
Executive Summary	@CI-GEF Please verify the Expected completion date of 31 OCT 21	Date verified
Executive Summary	@CI-GEF Please verify the date of 31 APR 22 for a revision	The 6-month window was suggested by CI. The project can always close earlier. Six months allows time for any unforeseen delay.
Page 7, par.7 (last)	Of?	"Giant Tortoises." added.
Page 8, Par.1. (first)	What does this mean?	The text has been amended to clarify the point that modernizing the tortoise infrastructure was delayed by COVID and to respond to a request by IC to have more time following their technical closing date. The recommendation responds to those points and was confirmed by CI GEF.

Page 9, Par. 3 and 4.	What was the significant impact? Please include.	<p>The IC Project Manager amended the text to paragraphs 3 and 4. providing examples of the delays caused by COVID-19. The evaluators concur with the amendments.</p> <p>The new text reads, “Overall, the restrictions related to the COVID 19 epidemic significantly affected the project’s overall progress. In general, the restrictions put in place to contain the epidemic had a significant impact on all project components. In component 1 conducting the Action Plan in a participatory way was difficult due to travel restrictions, procurement of goods slowed down. In component 2, conducting the public consultations and research for the ESIA and the completion of the chicken coops had to wait until Floreana reopened. In component 3, tortoise corral expansion as well as field trips to collect tortoise eggs completely stopped during lockdown and restricted mobility phases of the pandemic.</p> <p>The PMU team implemented an adaptive management response with continued planning during the downtime. All activities were in full implementation at the time of the MTR.</p>
Page 10; last item on the list.	“Requesting a small admirative [administrative] extension.	The addition by P.Leon was edited to read, “Requesting a no-cost extension” to better reflect the intent of the evaluator.
Page 10; Table 1 Project Design and Strategy	Complete table ratings and description of achievement	A rating of “HS” was added as the overall ranking of Progress Towards Achievement row.
The Theory of Change (TOC) presented in the project document does not embrace all anthropogenic factors	Factors such as?	The following was added: <i>...such as, unlimited water capture, solid waste disposal, use of fire, or the breeding of other endemic species in need of recovery...</i>
Page 10; Table 1 Summary of MTR Valuations	Complete table ratings and description of achievement	<p>A rating of “HS” was added as the overall ranking of Progress Towards Achievement row. The following text was added:</p> <p><i>“The few outputs that are incomplete at MTR will likely be realized. Those are indicated as “S” and are trending upward.</i></p> <p><i>The composite of Ratings of HS from Components 1,2, and 3 allow us to assign a value of HS to the overall effectiveness rating.”</i></p>

Page 10; Tale 1, Outcome 1.1.	Incomplete sentence.	The following text was added where the sentence was cut-off: <i>“with... training provided. The enabling process has clearly been achieved through a systematic process starting with a complete assessment to developing an action plan and finally proceeding to successful deployment of new infrastructure with commensurate planning and training.”</i>
Page 10; Output 1.1.1.	Was approved in April 2021. What is the cutoff date for this status?	The report was based on the Quarterly report ending on March 31. The activity was clearly “in progress” at that time. For the final edit, evaluators have adjusted the status to “completed” as indicated.
Page 11: Output 2.1.1	Why is this an “S”?	An "S" is assigned because it is incomplete. Evaluators cannot tell how it will turn out. It is satisfactory so far and trending upward. "HS" means it is a model for GEF. There is nothing extraordinary or innovative about how these are being built. The table is amended with the following justification: <i>In progress, on track and trending upward. High likelihood that the remaining structures will be completed.</i>
Page 12: Output 2.1.5.	Why is this a “S”?	An “S” is assigned because the activity is likely or on-track to be completed and is trending towards HS
Page 13: Outputs 3.1.1., 3.1.2., 3.1.3., 3.2.2. 3.2.3.	Text added by Island Conservation.	Evaluators concur with the added text updating the status of the categories.
Page 13: Outcome 3.2; Output 3.2.2; 3.2.3.	Text Added by Island Conservation	Evaluators concur with the added text clarifying the status of the <i>ex situ</i> breeding program.

Page 14: Sustainability	Rating Missing	<p>A rating of “L” was added to the table. The following text was added:</p> <p><i>“A sustainability ranking described in the report is “L” which is the highest possible ranking indicating that the project is likely to be sustainable and that there are little or no risks to Sustainability. The MTR report presents that the socio-political considerations, institutional framework and governance, and environmental sustainability aspects are all positive and financial sustainability is likely. More information will be required to gauge financial sustainability at the Terminal Evaluation (TE) stage.” See Sustainability pg.57 and Annex IV for the definition of ratings.</i> The explanation of criteria has been edited for clarity.</p>
Page 15, Table 1, Last Row.	What does this mean?	The text, “Biosecurity activities contribute to ABFs Action Plan and supported tools and analysis for the development of a new.” has been edited for clarity. It now reads,
Page 15, Table 1, Last row	GC implements Comp3, not Comp 1 which deals with infrastructure. Is there a mistake here?	Yes, evaluators are aware that GC participates in Component 3 of the GEF project. They ABG and WildAid also have public service announcements. When we say they are part of the baseline, that means precisely that those actions are not part of the GEF funded project activities but are contributing factors to the GEF alternative and ultimately to the sustainability profile. We were scoping for bio-security public service type information, which is critical to the sustainability of any biosecurity program, and we found it. Several actors, including ABG as stated, are involved in this aspect and much more effort is needed as the Action Plan clearly points out. The text has been amended to simply indicate that an important area in the baseline needed for sustainability is in the mix, albeit outside of the GEF project.
Page 16, line 1.	Do you mean <i>empirical evidence</i> to justify the need?	Yes, text amended.

<p>Page 16. No.6. <i>"The outcome 3.1. indicator of the coverage of land with seed dispersion might be better applied at the Objective level."</i></p>	<p>explain why is not adequate for outcome indicator.</p>	<p>The conclusion does not say "<i>not adequate.</i>" It suggests that that indicator is better at the objective level "<i>...to safeguard biodiversity.</i>" We have modified the text to indicate that the survival count of giant tortoises after relocation is probable the best indicator for the outputs realized. This would show the effectiveness of the translocation and the effectiveness of the monitoring system. Seed dispersal would go to the heart of the project's objective and could focus on a long-term process. See also page</p>
<p>Page 17. Conclusion #22. <i>For the next steps in biosecurity, the participation of additional stakeholders may need to be included n 23.</i></p>	<p>Such as? Could you please elaborate.</p>	<p>The original text was actually a recommendation. The point has been elaborated and new text inserted. See Recommendation no. 3 for suggestions as to other possible allies going forward. The text has been amended to read:</p> <p><i>23. At this stage, the suite of stakeholders is adequate for the scope of the project. The TE might evaluate if that influence should be expanded to include new stakeholders going forward to address the 80% of Cargo that enters through maritime pathways. See Recommendation #3 on a broader stakeholder forum for the next steps in biosecurity beyond this project.</i></p>
<p>Page 17; Conclusion no. 24. Strikeout.</p>	<p>No comment attached.</p>	<p>Evaluators agree with the strikeout. The issue of financial sustainability and what is needed to gauge the level of financial sustainability at the Terminal Evaluation stage is incorporated in Page 15, Table 1. Last row and also in the sustainability section on page 85 as well as Recommendation no.</p>
<p>Page 17; Conclusions</p>	<p>We are missing a point on the IA analysis</p>	<p>The following text was extracted from the Annex VII. and a new conclusion added:</p> <p><i>28. This is a well-managed project. The Implementing Agency (IA) and Executing Agency (ES) have accommodated an effective PMU which received a Mid-term Rating of "HS" or Highly Satisfactory for total project management.</i></p>

<p>Page 18; Summary Recommendation A.3</p> <p>The port infrastructure is deficient in providing space and infrastructure for insufficient to correctly provide a platform for the next steps in biosecurity.</p>	<p>Language not clear</p>	<p>Text edited for clarity. Recommendation A.C now reads:</p> <p><i>Key Recommendation 3: Barriers: Infrastructure limitations. 80% of the cargo to the Galapagos is maritime. The port infrastructure is deficient in providing space and infrastructure proving for insufficient to correctly add the necessary equipment and quarantine space for provide a platform for the effective monitoring of maritime cargo. This will be the next steps in biosecurity. Analyze the Port infrastructure needs as part of the suite of barriers to be evaluated in future initiatives</i></p>
<p>Page 18; Recommendation B.1. : <i>Once the project concludes with a final ESIA approved and installations are in place, begin the next phase of development...</i></p>	<p>Agreed. But this is not part of the project. It should be a second phase of the project.</p>	<p>Correct, the text was amended confirm that point.</p> <p>Key Recommendation 5: Once the project concludes with a final ESIA approved and installations are in place, begin the next phase of development in the elimination of black rats and feral cats as soon as possible to take advantage of the momentum and social license generated by the project. Eradication is a prerequisite to the future tortoise introduction to Floreana Island.</p>
<p>Page 19; Recommendation G.1. Conservation International, Island Conservation, the MAAE/DPNG, ABG and Galapagos Conservation and all other PSC members and project partners should be recognized by for a well-designed and well-managed project</p>	<p>Recognized by whom?</p> <p>Yes, what is the recommendation here? what do we need to do?</p>	<p>Nothing, it was a complement.</p> <p>The text was amended to answer the first question as follows:</p> <p>Key Recommendation 7: Conservation International, Island Conservation, the MAAE/DPNG, ABG and Galapagos Conservation and all other PSC members and project partners should be recognized <i>by the GEF for a well-designed and well-managed project and a job well done to this point if the project continues to a successful close.</i></p>

<p>Page 20. Paragraph 3. The purpose and objectives of the MTR were confirmed in an inception workshop on 19 April 2021 between AAE and, Conservation International/Ecuador and key representatives of the executing agency, Island Conservation.</p>	<p>CI Ecuador has not been involved in this process. Only CIGEF</p>	<p>Evaluators agree with the amendment. The text now reads, “ The purpose and objectives of the MTR were confirmed in an inception workshop on 19 April 2021 between AAE and principal Conservation International/GEF Project Agency (CI GEF), and key representatives of the executing agency, Island Conservation. Initial interviews with the CI-GEF, GEF Focal points, the Government of Ecuador’s national project director further validated information needs to be considered during the MTR.</p>
<p>Page 21. II.2. Scope of MTR. Par 2.</p>	<p>please include the period of analysis - Feb 2019 to Q3 FY21 or q4 FY21?</p>	<p>Date of the MTR was corrected to <i>April to June 2021 (Q4FY21)</i></p>
<p>Page 24, Par.2. In addition, the conformity to the GEF Biodiversity BD2 focal area, Program 4 for Control of Invasive Species was....</p>	<p>¿? Incomplete sentence.</p>	<p>The sentence was amended to the following: <i>In addition, the conformity to the GEF Biodiversity BD2 focal area, Program 4 for Control of Invasive Species was established through the number of hectares of restored habitat expected and through successful Tortoise breeding and re-introduction.</i></p>
<p>Page 25, Final par. <i>During the desktop review, Fiscal Year Q3 information products...</i></p>	<p>CI: Did you look at Q4 too? IC: We have not submitted Q4 yet. They are due at the end of July. I think it should be made clear</p>	<p>The text was amended to read: <i>During the desktop review, information products (technical and financial reports) through Q3 of Fiscal Year 2021 were made available...</i></p>
<p>Page 29, final par. <i>This enabled the evaluators to extrapolate arguments and assessments and appreciate lessons learned</i></p>	<p>Where are the lessons learned extrapolated? Don’t see a section that identifies lessons learned clearly.</p>	<p>A section on lessons learned is not included in Section V.3 page 93.</p>
<p>Page 51, Conclusions, 3rd bullet. The Galapagos maritime port infrastructure is a persistent barrier to 100% control of invasive species entering into and travelling amongst the Galapagos Islands.</p>	<p>But this is out of project scope, right?</p>	<p>Yes. It says the <i>...impact of the project’s biosecurity measures is within the limits of current infrastructure.</i></p>

<p>Page 54. discussion of Outcome Indicator 1.1.</p>	<p>It could be a good one that shows that the protocols and training are being applied. Baseline at project launch would be zero as new protocols were developed during the project. Number of captures per 1000 bags is also good because it does not depend on the overall volume of cargo. We could focus the indicator only in the port of GYE because it's the place that needs the most improvement.</p>	<p>See Recommendation (1) Below. Regardless, the outcome indicator is internally inconsistent. See page 53.</p>
<p>Page 56. Finding 11: The indicator for Outcome 3.1. embraces two aspects: the number of tortoises and the amount of land where seeds are dispersed. For former concept is probably a better indicator if this is framed in terms of survival and amount of land occupied by tortoises as part of their habitat. The second concept, which could go a bit farther in terms of seed dispersal, or better yet, germination, would be a better indicator at the Impact level or even at the objective level of the project because it goes to the heart of the TOC and would demonstrate a "safeguard of biodiversity" as alluded to in the project objective</p>	<p>it is fine to keep it as outcome indicator given the time remaining for the project to end. We should leave it at the outcome level. No point a changing this so close to project closure</p>	<p>See discussion under Recommendation (2) below.</p>
<p>Page 86. Finding 50: The installed technical capacity of the farmers is complemented by Ministry of Agriculture initiatives to provide opportunities for production while reducing the dependency on outside foodstuffs</p>	<p>What about financial sustainability? would the achievements able to sustain after the project ends with the government capacities and resources? Do they need additional resources and for what?</p>	<p>Unfortunately, the MTR did not investigate the baseline efforts by the Ministry of Agriculture because the GEF installations still needed time to develop and operate to enable an analysis of the GEF Incremental Benefits. Although not far off into the future, it might be possible to have that type of analysis at TE.</p>

<p>Page 87. Conclusions, 3rd bullet:</p> <p>For the next steps in biosecurity, the participation of additional stakeholders may need to be included</p>	<p>Besides Ministry of Public Works who else could you recommend?</p>	<p>This is a strategic discussion for the PSC that would provide important insights at the TE.</p>
<p>Page 87. Conclusions, 4th bullet</p> <p>There is currently not enough information to facilitate an analysis of financial sustainability at the TE stage</p>	<p>What is missing?</p>	<p>Basically, the recurrent costs of operations in, for example, in biosecurity or pig production vs. the operational budget. In addition, we did not explore all of the sources of future co-financing for the eradication phase and later translocations. On the surface, the scenario indicates a likelihood of sustainability. The TE might need to apply a more rigorous analysis. IC could begin the process immediately of sharing numbers with project partners.</p>
<p>Recommendation (1)</p> <p>Based on the new protocols and Action Plan, redefine the indicator with a more specific metric, such as the number of bags, cargo containers, vessels etc. inspected and include these new metrics in ABG's monitoring protocol</p>	<p>We agree with the recommendation. However, given the time remaining in the implementation phase, we don't think changing the indicator makes a big difference. Instead of this, we will explain the reasons why the target was not met in the FY21 PIR and final report to the GEF.</p>	<p>Measure the existing indicator in preparation for the TE.</p>
<p>Recommendation (2)</p> <p>Consider a slight modification of the Outcome 3.1 indicator (amount of land with seed dispersion) as an indicator for the objective level. Consider simplifying the existing indicator to the survival rate of tortoises established and a total target population by the end of the project and perhaps 5 years into the future.</p>	<p>Disagree. The outcome has been completed. At this point, it does not make sense to change the indicator.</p>	<p>Regardless that the outcome is completed, you will be measuring the result at the TE. You will be measuring both parameters anyhow. You could make the alignment now and have it in place for follow-on initiatives. The objective level indicator is weak and could be strengthened using your existing indicators.</p>

<p>Recommendation (3)</p> <p>Enable a no-cost extension for a maximum of 6 months to enable the execution of technical activities until the original project close date, followed by an extended period for technical and administrative closure of the project.</p>	<p>Agreed. The project will be extended for six months, until March 2022.</p>	<p>No response necessary.</p>
<p>Recommendation (4)</p> <p>Once the final installations are in place, begin the next phase of development in the elimination of black rats and feral cats as a prerequisite to tortoise introduction to Floreana Island as soon as possible to take advantage of the momentum generated.</p>	<p>Agreed. However, this does not depend directly on the project EA or IA. Both EA and IA are discussing a second phase of the project.</p>	<p>Yes. Development of the follow-on phase should begin as soon as possible. Evaluators did confirm that this was in fact happening with co-financing already committed. This could be further defined in the TE.</p>
<p>Recommendation (5)</p> <p>Construction of improved breeding facilities within output 3.2.1. is now underway and is on-track to be completed by the end of the project if the activities are allowed to continue up until the termination date of the project. This is an additional reason supporting Recommendation 3: a no cost extension to enable the administrative close of the project following the official EOP date</p>	<p>Agreed. Extension will be granted.</p>	<p>No further explanation.</p>

<p>Recommendation (6)</p> <p>Conservation International, Island Conservation, the DPNG, ABG and Galapagos Conservation and all other PSC members and project partners should be recognized for a well-designed and well managed project.</p>	<p>Thanks! but, not sure what the response shall be here. Please clarify recommendation.</p>	<p>The recommendation is clarified as follows:</p> <p>Conservation International, Island Conservation, the DPNG, ABG and Galapagos Conservation and all other PSC members and project partners should be recognized for a well-designed and well managed project. <i>The TE process should define if this is a model project to be highlighted by the GEF for the elements of strong design, management arrangements, and execution, especially in difficult times</i></p>
<p>Recommendation (7)</p> <p>Consider public outreach is a possible future area for development to enhance the sustainability of the investments in biosecurity aimed at avoidance</p>	<p>Disagree. We agree that public outreach is important. However, for this project, Public outreach was done by ABG with a different but complementary project (FEIG).</p>	<p>The recommendation is built on the baseline efforts which implies that it is done outside of this project. The document cites websites where evaluators validated that this aspect of the baseline was occurring. The response says “disagree” when in reality is making the evaluators point. However, baselines to not exist in isolation. The suggestion is to continue urging partners to maintain and increase public information as possible.</p>
<p>Recommendation (8)</p> <p>Consider including the Ministry of Public Works in the sharing of results and lessons learned from this project</p>	<p>Disagree.</p> <p>The project worked closely and in coordination with the relevant governmental institutions to achieve the outcomes and project objective. The project identified that ABG will work closely with the Ministry of Public works. But it is out of the scope of the project.</p>	<p>The recommendation is apparently misinterpreted. The MTR recognizes that the PMU worked with all of the relevant stakeholders for this project.</p> <p>The recommendation is based on the conclusion: “For the next steps in biosecurity, the participation of additional stakeholders may need to be included” following the project and suggests that the relationship building process continue to include other actors, such as the Port Authority of the Public Works Ministry.</p> <p>According to the PIRs, IC had to adapt to situations where inadequate infrastructure was present, finding alternative sites for freezers, etc. The project did in fact experience problems with port infrastructure. Why not share results of the project with them now?</p>

<p>Recommendation (9)</p> <p>Consider collecting all possible cost assessments for the recurring costs of infrastructure maintenance and long-term monitoring as well as the maintenance of ABGs infrastructure to enable the evaluation of financial sustainability during the Terminal Evaluation.</p>	<p>Agreed. Financial Sustainability Assessment needs to happen at TE.</p>	<p>No Action Required</p>
<p>Recommendation (10)</p> <p>At the TE, analyze the effects of change in political administration on the sustainability of the project.</p>	<p>Agreed. The results of the MTR will be presented to the new government team to start the process</p>	<p>No Action Required</p>

Table 4 (page 12)

Note: See CI-GEF responses to Recommendations in Annex VII. CI added a column to the Table of Summary Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations.