

Project Title: Strengthening the financial and operational framework of the national PA system in Guinea-Bissau

<i>Executing Agency:</i>	United Nations Development Programme
<i>Duration:</i>	November 2016 - June 2023
<i>GEF Grant Amount:</i>	USD 2,304,429
<i>Date of Evaluation:</i>	April 11, 2023-29 September 2023
<i>CI-GEF Agency team members responding:</i>	Orissa Samaroo, Aki Marcelino

The CI-GEF team is providing an agency response to the mid-term/terminal evaluation report prepared by Baastel. The following are recommendations/comments from the CI-GEF team in relation to the content of the draft evaluation report.

General Comments:

Lessons Learned

It is important to develop explicit robust project intervention logic. Although their absence does not necessarily result in unsuitable projects, adequate ToC and results frameworks contribute to the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact of projects. The ToC serves as a communication tool not only for international donors but also for national, regional, and local stakeholders and other development partners. A clear ToC promotes active participation, cooperation, and collaboration among all involved parties.

In addition, developing a results framework with SMART indicators is essential for effective monitoring and evaluation. Often more attention should be paid to their specificity. Indicators always need to have baselines. In long projects, mid-term targets are necessary for project steering and management. Additionally, a clear logic that unpacks all components of the project intervention is crucial for understanding the project's progression and impact.

The underestimation of time needed to achieve outcomes 1 and 2 during the project design phase emphasizes the importance of considering contextual elements and internal processes to set realistic timelines for project objectives in the future. For example, the physical accessibility and remote connectivity of target PAs need to be better considered when determining the length and objectives of a project.

Integrating gender considerations and adopting a human rights-based approach during project design and implementation is crucial for promoting inclusivity and addressing gender-related issues effectively and further engage local communities in conservation objectives.

The project's ability to complement other ongoing and future projects stresses the significance of coordination and collaboration among different initiatives for maximum impact and efficient resource utilization.

The adoption of diverse financial mechanisms for conservation actions is critical to ensuring the sustainability of the SNAP. This approach reduces risks and mitigates the impact of shortcomings by avoiding sole dependence on a single funding mechanism.

No.	Recommendation	CI-GEF Agency response to recommendations
A. Recommendations for Implementing/Executing Agency - UNDP		
1	<p>Deepen the Relevance of Future Project Interventions with Strategic Priorities and internal procedures: UNDP should exercise caution and ensure clarity regarding procedures, processes, and feasibility before engaging in project design and implementation. Both CI and UNDP should ensure that future project designs and implementation align closely with their objectives and are within their field of expertise and feasibility in order to maximize effectiveness and efficiency. Ambiguous elements should be avoided while ensuring strong alignment with their respective missions in order to contribute to more impactful and successful interventions.</p>	
2	<p>IBAP and the FBG to further ensure an effective SNAP system in the future by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a comprehensive sustainability strategy for future projects that takes into account the various potential risks related to conservation actions in Guinea Bissau. This strategy should address political, financial, and social risks to ensure the long-term success and continuity of conservation efforts. • Developing effective safeguards to guarantee that political instability does not hinder the objectives for the SNAP and its funding in the future. • Strengthen Communication and Collaboration: IBAP should enhance communication with international stakeholders to ensure that other projects they develop align with and support conservation goals. Linking future projects with other relevant initiatives will facilitate consolidated efforts towards biodiversity conservation. 	
B. Recommendations for Implementing/Executing Agency - CI-GEF		
1	<p>Strengthen Gender Integration: Strengthen the integration of gender considerations throughout the project's design and implementation phases. Allocate sufficient resources and specific activities to address gender-related issues and promote gender equality.</p>	Understood. Note that CI was not responsible for the project design but we will take this into account for our portfolio.
2	<p>Enhance Monitoring and Reporting: Invest in adequate resources and tools for monitoring and reporting, both at project management level and especially at local level. Ensure that monitoring reports include quantitative data and use appropriate monitoring tools to disseminate project information effectively.</p>	Same as above
C. Others		

1	Improve project design in terms of intervention and indicator framework: Strengthen future logical and results frameworks to ensure that the project has a consolidated approach and that SMART indicators are developed from the project design phase to provide an enlightened monitoring process that can really feed into gearing project management and take adaptive measures. Clearly distinguish between outcome and output indicators to enable better monitoring and evaluation of the project's progress.	
2	Accurate Timeframe Estimation: During project design, carefully consider contextual elements and internal processes to accurately estimate the timeframe needed to achieve the main results.	
3	Adaptive Management: For implementing and executing institutions, continue to prioritize adaptive management practices, especially in the face of challenges and delays. Engage in effective stakeholder communication and coordination to find solutions and overcome obstacles to project implementation.	
4	Financial Sustainability: For FBG to further develop its communication strategy to further secure funding and capitalisation of the endowment fund and ensure the financial sustainability of the SNAP. Explore additional financial mechanisms like REDD+ and international grants to support the SNAP in the short term and clarify benefit sharing among the different national stakeholders in an official agreement.	
5	Capacity Development and Knowledge Sharing: Provide continuous capacity building and training for implementing institutions to improve technical and operational capacities. Furthermore, IBAP should continue strengthening knowledge management and information sharing at both central and local levels to disseminate good practices, lessons learned, and project interventions effectively.	
6	Community Engagement and Alternative Livelihoods: Further strengthen the involvement of local stakeholders into the CNP management to enhance their contribution towards conservation objectives. Promote alternative livelihoods to reduce their reliance on natural resources and enhance their engagement in biodiversity management. This should be done through a consolidated approach for sustainable economic activities development, ensuring that the most effective approach and the adequate fundings are available to really contribute to improved livelihoods at local level.	
7	Ecological Sustainability: Conduct rigorous Environmental Impact Assessments and oversee ongoing development projects that may impact the CNP and its ecological corridors. Ensure proper monitoring and conservation actions to mitigate threats to biodiversity and critical habitats.	