TERMINAL EVALUATION

Project ID:	9579
Project Name:	Resilient Landscapes Management Project
Countr(ies):	Nicaragua
Implementing Agency:	FAO

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I. Overview

A. Description

Project name Resilient Landscapes Management Project	
Country Nicaragua	
GEF ID 9579	Implementing Agency FAO
Executing Entity Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources	
Trust Fund GET	Project Type FSP

Objective

Project Objective: Strengthening the National System of Protected Areas and support sustainable land use and restoration practices in selected areas of Nicaragua's Dry Corridor and the northern Caribbean coast to promote biodiversity conservation, resilient landscapes and local livelihoods.

B. Key Dates

CEO Endorsement/Approval 6/9/2020	Agency Approval 2/24/2020
Implementation Start 11/12/2020	First Disbursement 12/1/2020
Expected MTR	MTR Submission 6/30/2026
Actual MTR	Expected Completion 11/11/2025
Actual Completion 11/11/2025	Actual TE 1/31/2026
TE Submission 6/30/2026	Final Disbursement

C. Disbursements

Project Financing 4,806,241.00	Cumulative Disbursement 3,759,000.00

II. PROGRESS STATUS AND ISSUES

A. Main Terminal Evaluation Findings

This memorandum is submitted in lieu of a Terminal Evaluation, in accordance with paragraph 22 of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Independent Evaluation Office "Guidelines for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of Full Size Projects". Due to the closure of the FAO Country Office and the resulting limitations in accessing project stakeholders and additional documentation, this memorandum was prepared based on a desk review of information available to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). As indicated in paragraph 22 of the Guidelines, the document reports on the status of project results, implementation, and utilization of resources at closure.

The Nicaraguan Pine Corridor forms part of the broader Central American pine forest ecoregion, extending from southern Mexico through the southern highlands of Guatemala, across most of Honduras and El Salvador, and into the central-western region and Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua. Within this landscape, several key protected areas belonging to the National System of Protected Areas (SINAP) face persistent pressures of deforestation and forest degradation. These challenges are consistent with trends observed across the regional ecoregion. This degradation poses significant risks to high-productivity pine species and to the ecological integrity of these protected areas. Direct drivers include inadequate agricultural and livestock practices, recurrent forest fires, legal and illegal logging, and the extraction of forest products for energy use (fuelwood). Underlying drivers relate to institutional limitations in land-use monitoring and law enforcement, insufficient interinstitutional coordination, and socioeconomic constraints affecting communities in the area.

To address these barriers, the project aimed to strengthen the SINAP and to support sustainable land use and restoration practices in selected areas of the Dry Corridor and the Northern Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua, thereby contributing to biodiversity conservation, resilient landscapes and improved local livelihoods. The project adopted a landscape management approach, linking the conservation of core areas with enhanced livelihood opportunities and income generation for landholders in exchange for improved conservation practices on their properties. Primary beneficiaries included public institutions — whose technical capacities in forest and land-use monitoring and control were strengthened — local communities (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous) through the establishment and operation of Collaborative Management Committees (CMCs), and the ecosystems and biodiversity within nine protected areas, with particular emphasis on conserving pine species and associated flora and fauna.

The project achieved restoration and conservation outcomes across 19 030.65 ha of forest, including 5 719.7 ha in the Dry Corridor and 13 352 ha in the Humid Corridor. A total of 1 572 beneficiaries participated directly in implementation (75 percent Mestizo, 10 percent Miskito, and 15 percent Chorotega), comprising 938 men and 634 women. The project exceeded the target for women's participation, achieving more than 100 percent of the planned indicator. Through participatory processes, 100 farm plans, 27 subprojects, and ten sustainable restoration initiatives were developed and implemented. The Environmental Incentives Program under the REDD+ Framework (PIA-REDD+) was designed and piloted, enabling the delivery of non-monetary incentives in Indigenous and Afro-descendant territories along the Northern Caribbean Coast. The Program contributed to an estimated 84 679.31 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO_2-e) in reduced emissions.

In terms of capacity development and participatory governance, the project strengthened the technical skills of public officials, local authorities, and restoration and conservation

participants. Interventions enhanced protected area monitoring systems, supported community-based biodiversity monitoring, and promoted forest fire prevention and management. It also contributed to the restoration and protection of key habitats in pine and oak forests and facilitated the establishment of 28 community nurseries across the nine protected areas, producing 518 435 native forest seedlings as part of the restoration strategy. However, the project was unable to complete its planned implementation and formal closure due to two decisions taken by the Government of Nicaragua, namely: (i) the discontinuation of externally supported project implementation in the Caribbean Region, and (ii) the national decision to withdraw from FAO. This resulted in the closure of the FAO Country Office and the consequent early termination of the project.
As a result of the early closure of project activities, generated by the government's decision to close FAO operations in Nicaragua, this document is based on the various reports produced the by Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MARENA) and FAO up to December 2024 and compiled in 2025. The main information gap relates to the inability to gather information in the field, request additional information or clarification from MARENA, and organize interviews with key informants involved in the project. The report was reviewed to reconcile financial information provided by MARENA in January 2026.
The principal changes between project design and actual implementation relate to shifts in the implementing agency due to the national context, transitioning from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to the World Bank and subsequently to FAO.

B. Stakeholder Engagement

To achieve the above results, the project was designed to be implemented in a complementary manner with initiatives such as the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) through the ENDE-REDD+ project and the Emission Reductions Program Document (ERPD) — both of which ultimately were not implemented. Synergies were also planned and partially realized with the Nicaraguan Dry Corridor Rural Family Sustainable Development Project (NICAVIDA) funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI), the Community Management Project in the Dipilto River Basin funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Adapting to Markets and Climate Change Project (NICADAPTA-IFAD), all of which were concluded between 2021 and 2024. In addition, the project was implemented in coordination with the GEF-funded initiative "Strengthening the Resilience of Multiple-Use Protected Areas to Deliver Multiple Global Environmental Benefits." Complementarity was also envisioned with the Bio-clima Project ("Integrated Climate Action to Reduce Deforestation and Increase Resilience in the BOSAWAS and Río San Juan Biosphere Reserves"); however, this initiative was not implemented due to its cancellation by the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

C. Gender Equality

Gender equality
The project had a gender plan in place from its inception, which was updated and implemented throughout its duration. The project promoted public activities such as fairs, community exchanges, field visits, environmental brigades, and fire-management brigades, where women and men strengthened their relationships and alliances with other stakeholders and organizations. These spaces contributed to women transitioning from the domestic to the public sphere. The project also supported increased recognition of women's contributions —

in their multiple roles — to the actions promoted by the initiative:
A total of 634 women (40 percent of the 1 572 beneficiaries) gained access to and control over environmental incentives provided by the project (both vegetative and nonvegetative material) for forest conservation and restoration. Of the 100 farm plans developed, 28 were presented by women, as landowners of their plots. The CMCs formed by the project were composed of 227 members, of whom 30 percent were women from government institutions, community leadership structures, and project participants. Women held 46 percent of leadership positions within these committees.
The project established an information management system that incorporated sex- and ethnicity-disaggregated data, enabling gender analysis across all project components.
The Project Management Unit included a Gender and Indigenous Peoples Specialist, responsible for ensuring the implementation of the Gender Strategy across all project interventions and for promoting gender awareness among both women and men.
In addition, capacity-building workshops were delivered for MARENA technical staff on gender analysis, basic gender concepts and related legislation, leadership, empowerment, and teamwork.

D. Knowledge Management

Visibility
Project communication and visibility actions were aligned with MARENA's Institutional Communication Strategy, which was implemented through local and national media outlets, the institutional website, and social media platforms, as key tools for information dissemination:
− MARENA website: https://www.marena.gob.ni/
− MARENA Nicaragua -YouTube:
https://www.youtube.com/@MARENANicaraguaOficial
− MARENA Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/marenanicaragua/
− Marena Nicaragua on X: https://x.com/marenanicaragua?s=11
− Instagram photos and videos: https://www.instagram.com/marenanicaragua/

III. Core Indicators

Indicator 1 Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
	141355.88		

Indicator 1.1 Terrestrial Protected Areas Newly created

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Name of the Protected Area	WDPA ID	IUCN Category	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 1.2 Terrestrial Protected Areas Under improved Management effectiveness

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
	141355.88		

Name of the Protected Area	WDPA ID	IUCN Category	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)	METT score (Baseline at CEO Endorsement)	METT score (Achieved at MTR)	METT score (Achieved at TE)
Alamikamba	34691	Habitat/Species Management Area		3,809.60			41.00		
Cañón de Somoto	107231	Natural Monument or Feature		636.80			57.00		80.00
Cerro Quiabuc-Las Brisas	61050	Habitat/Species Management Area		25,463.36			61.00		76.77
Cerro Tisey-La Estanzuela	12680	Habitat/Species Management Area		22,094.87			63.00		81.29
Cerro Tomabú	12670	Habitat/Species Management Area		2,134.70			58.00		76.12
Limbaika	61071	Habitat/Species Management Area		4,897.50			41.00		
Serranía Dipilto Jalapa	12657	Habitat/Species Management Area		52,625.84			56.00		79.00
Tepesomoto La Pataste	61049	Habitat/Species Management Area		21,542.65			50.00		60.64
Yucul	30629	Strict Nature Reserve		8,150.56			41.00		84.50

Indicator 3 Area of land and ecosystems under restoration

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
	10000		8524.9

Indicator 3.1 Area of degraded agricultural lands under restoration

Disaggregation Type	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 3.2 Area of forest and forest land under restoration

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
	10,000.00		8,524.90

Indicator 3.3 Area of natural grass and woodland under restoration

Disaggregation Type	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 3.4 Area of wetlands (including estuaries, mangroves) under restoration

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 4 Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
	10000		5719.7

Indicator 4.1 Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity (hectares, qualitative assessment, non-certified)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
	10,000.00		5,719.70

Indicator 4.2 Area of landscapes under third-party certification incorporating biodiversity considerations

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Type/Name of Third Party Certification

Indicator 4.3 Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 4.4 Area of High Conservation Value or other forest loss avoided

Disaggregation Type	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 4.5 Terrestrial OECMs supported

Name of the OECMs	WDPA-ID	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)

Documents (Document(s) that justifies the HCVF)

Title

Indicator 6 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (direct)		150000		
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (indirect)		710000		

Indicator 6.1 Carbon Sequestered or Emissions Avoided in the AFOLU (Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use) sector

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (direct)		150,000		
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (indirect)		710,000		
Anticipated start year of accounting		2021		
Duration of accounting		4		

Indicator 6.2 Emissions Avoided Outside AFOLU (Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use) Sector

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (direct)				
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (indirect)				
Anticipated start year of accounting				
Duration of accounting				

Indicator 6.3 Energy Saved (Use this sub-indicator in addition to the sub-indicator 6.2 if applicable)

Total Target Benefit	Energy (MJ) (At PIF)	Energy (MJ) (At CEO Endorsement)	Energy (MJ) (Achieved at MTR)	Energy (MJ) (Achieved at TE)
Target Energy Saved (MJ)				

Indicator 6.4 Increase in Installed Renewable Energy Capacity per Technology (Use this sub-indicator in addition to the sub-indicator 6.2 if applicable)

Technology	Capacity (MW) (Expected at PIF)	Capacity (MW) (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Capacity (MW) (Achieved at MTR)	Capacity (MW) (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 11 People benefiting from GEF-financed investments

	Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
Female		333		694
Male		1,009		997
Total	**0**	**1,342**	0	**1691**

IV: Co Financing

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Anticipated at CEO($)	Materialized at MTR($)	Materialized at TE($)
Recipient Country Government	MEFCCA - NICAVIDA - 2000001242	Loan		2,300,055.00		
Recipient Country Government	MEFCCA - NICADAPTA - 1100001683	Loan		4,237,809.00		
Recipient Country Government	MEFCCA - PAIPSAN	Loan		636,878.00		
Recipient Country Government	MARENA (Recurrent expend.)	In-kind		1,879,529.00		
Recipient Country Government	MARENA - REDD+ (FCPF099264)	Grant		704,000.00		
Recipient Country Government	MARENA - COSUDE (Rio Dipilto)	Grant		5,500,000.00		
Recipient Country Government	INAFOR	In-kind		1,125,805.00		
Total Co-financing				**16,384,076.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**

Comments

Information not available

V: ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS

Overall Project/Program Risk Classification

PIF	CEO Endorsement/Approval	MTR	TE

			Not available at this stage

Measures to address identified risks and impacts

VI. ANNEX

Uploaded Document

Document Category	Prefix	Title
M and E Document	Terminal Evaluation (TE)	GEFID9579_TER_FAO_Nicaragua
M and E Document	Terminal Evaluation (TE)	GEFID9579_TER_FAO_Nicaragua