

**PROJECT EVALUATION SERIES**

**Final evaluation of the project  
"Management of Chimborazo's Natural  
Resources"**

**GCP /ECU/080/GFF  
GEF ID: 3266**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
OFFICE OF EVALUATION  
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## **Acronyms and abbreviations**

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FAOEC	FAO Representation in Ecuador
GEF	Global Environment Facility
DAG	Decentralised Autonomous Government
GADPCH	Decentralised Autonomous Government of the Province of Chimborazo
MAE	Ministry of Environment of Ecuador
OPIM	Operational Partner Implementation Modality
RPFCH	Chimborazo Fauna Production Reserve



## Executive Summary

### Introduction

1. This report presents the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the final evaluation of the project "Management of Chimborazo's Natural Resources" GCP/ECU/080/GFF, which began on 1 October 2011<sup>1and2</sup> and officially finished in May 2018. It was forecast that the project would last five years but it was extended twice<sup>3</sup> and lasted almost seven years. The total budget of the project was USD 10,311,600, of which USD 3,870,000 was funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The remainder was provided as co-funding (whether in cash or in kind) from the partners of the Project and their national counterparts<sup>4</sup>.
2. The project was implemented in Ecuador, one of the 17 most megadiverse countries in the world. The ecosystem that we aim to conserve and sustainably manage is the páramo characterised by its endemism and due to the fact it offers important environmental services, particularly the production of water, the capture of CO<sup>2</sup> and tourism.
3. The **Global Environment Objective** of the project is to "Conserve and sustainably manage Chimborazo's páramos and the biodiversity of the mountain ecosystems and to improve local livelihoods through strengthening of policy, legal and institutional frameworks and local awareness, capacities and incentives for participation in planning and sustainable natural resource management". The project's **Development Objective** is to reestablish and sustainably use the agrobiodiversity and ecosystems of the páramos and to improve the food sovereignty of the local indigenous population dependent on Chimborazo's mountain ecosystems applying modern watershed management approaches.
4. The **specific objectives**, which were formulated as components are: i) Conservation of the páramos and of the related upper mountain ecosystems; ii) Strengthening of the management and conservation of the Chimborazo Fauna Production Reserve; and iii) Strengthening of the capacities of Chimborazo Provincial Government.
5. This evaluation has the dual purpose of accountability and learning. This evaluation analyses the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability/replicability. In addition, the main aspects were taken into consideration: appropriation by the stakeholders, risk management and coherence with the other regulatory values of FAO (inclusiveness and equity,

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<sup>1</sup> Project start date reported in the ToR of the Evaluation (paragraph 2), in the 2016 PIR (PROJECT FILE).

<sup>2</sup> 2011 corresponds to the fifth replenishment of the GEF.

<sup>3</sup> First extension of one year with closing date of 30 September 2017 agreed upon by means of amendment Implementing Agreement, signed in November 2016 by representatives of GADPCH and FAO EC, and second extension to April 2018.

<sup>4</sup> USD 2,230,000 from the Decentralised Autonomous Government (DAG) of Chimborazo, USD 3,200,000 from the World Bank (by means of the Development Investment Project PIDD<sup>4</sup>), USD 661,600 from the Ministry of Environment of Ecuador (MAE), USD 150,000 from the Confederation of the Indigenous Movement of Chimborazo (COMICH), USD 100,000 from EcoCiencia and USD 100,000 from local organisations.

and gender). As a guide, the evaluation developed a matrix of questions, indicators and methods of evaluation prepared based on six main questions.

6. The final evaluation began in September 2017. At the request of FAO Ecuador, the evaluation took place at the same time as the final evaluation of the Project: "Mainstreaming of the use and conservation of agrobiodiversity in public policies through integrated strategies and *in situ* implementation in four Andean Highlands provinces" (GCP/ECU/086/GFF - GEF ID4777) and the mid-term evaluation of the Project "Conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, forests, soil and water to achieve good living/Sumac Kawsay" in the Napo Province (GCP/ECU/082/GFF - GEF ID4774), both with funding from the GEF, in order to minimise the logistical aspects and maximise the time and use of the evaluations.

## **Main findings**

### **Overall rating of the project: Moderately satisfactory<sup>56</sup>**

7. The project aimed to resolve high priority problems such as the conservation and sustainable use of the páramo's natural resources, and biodiversity, in accordance with international<sup>7</sup>, national<sup>8</sup> and provincial<sup>9</sup> policies. The project's achievements were significant in the province of Chimborazo, such as raising environmental awareness regarding the conservation of water resources, the construction of the regulation in the province to implement compensation mechanisms for environmental services in order to improve the governance of natural resources, the approval of ordinances at provincial and cantonal DAG level to protect the biodiversity, storage and optimisation of the use of irrigation water by creating committees of irrigators and water for human consumption. However, some of the outcomes set forth under components 1 and 2 were not achieved, for example, the conservation of the endemic biodiversity (including agrobiodiversity), or the implementation of information systems regarding the state of biodiversity in the Chimborazo Reserve. The OPIM managed to execute all of the funds budgeted by GEF and was instrumental in executing more cofinancing than foreseen in the Prodoc. However, it was necessary to extend the project by almost two years until May 2018 to fulfil these achievements and it was evident that almost 20 percent of the budget (USD 762,647) was executed in the last six months, confirming that the implementation was slower than foreseen and there was not sufficient time to consolidate the activities performed in these last six months of the project.

**Relevance:** *Were the project strategy and actions appropriate for meeting the needs of all the stakeholders involved in matters of conservation and the integrated management of natural resources, including support for implementing policies and programmes by the Government of Ecuador, the GEF 5 (BD2 and BD4) and FAO (particularly SO2)?*

### **Relevance rating: Satisfactory**

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<sup>5</sup> Range of assessment: Highly Satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Moderately Satisfactory (MS), Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), Highly Unsatisfactory (HU), Cannot be Evaluated (CE).

<sup>6</sup> Overall rating of the project in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency.

<sup>7</sup> CBD, GEF mandate.

<sup>8</sup> Constitution of the National Biodiversity Republic, Policy and Strategy.

<sup>9</sup> Land Use and Development Plan (2015), GADPCH Policy.

8. The project design is coherent with the objectives of GEF<sup>10</sup>, FAO and national and provincial objectives (legal and institutional<sup>11</sup> framework) and responds extensively to the needs of local communities to reduce a high rate of poverty through the promotion of local sustainable development based on the conservation of high micro watersheds and their environmental services as well as the protection of endemic species. In addition, due to the fact that the project was designed with the participation of the authorities of the Provincial Government of Chimborazo (GADPCH), the project managed to achieve a strong sense of appropriation and alignment with the Land Use and Development Plan (LUDP) of the GADPCH. In addition, the communities consulted showed great acceptance during the implementation of the project.
9. However, the project design does not have a final objective and includes too many objectives and outcomes to fulfil (in an isolated manner) taking into consideration that the legal framework for the conservation of agrobiodiversity was not clarified until the approval of the new National Strategy for Biodiversity (2016) and the approval of the Law on Agrobiodiversity and Seeds (2017). In addition, the GADPCH has limited capacity to directly execute large projects and manage a wide range of participants as was evidenced by its decision to assign the project under the Environment Coordination Committee instead of the Planning Coordination Committee.

**Effectiveness:** How effective has the project been in achieving the objectives and expected outcomes?

**Effectiveness rating: Moderately satisfactory<sup>12</sup>**

10. The project managed to achieve the specific objectives established with regard to its three components. In particular, the fulfilment of the following expected outcomes was verified:
  - ✓ The creation of Management Committees for the five selected micro watersheds with five management plans incorporating productive subprojects.
  - ✓ The establishment of a pilot compensation mechanism for environmental services and a valuation study of the páramo environmental services.
  - ✓ The preparation of a new management plan to facilitate the improvement of the management of the Chimborazo Fauna Production Reserve (RPFCH) and for the management of the vicuña.
  - ✓ The approval of provincial ordinances and parish resolutions that favour the conservation of the páramo and of biodiversity.
  - ✓ Raising awareness among different levels of stakeholders about the need to protect the páramo for its water resources.

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<sup>10</sup> Biodiversity Convention, GEF guidelines for the Biodiversity Strategy Area and within such its Strategic Objective 2 "Integration of biodiversity in production landscapes/seascapes and sectors" and Strategic Programme (SP) 4 and 5. SP-4 Strengthening of the regulatory framework and policy for the integration of biodiversity. SP-5 Promotion of biodiversity goods and services markets.

<sup>11</sup> Constitución del Ecuador 2008, Art 83.395, 400. National Plan for Good Living (2009 – 2013 and 2013-2017) which includes statements on productive development, equity and sustainable management of natural resources. Land Use and Development Plan (2015 document); Ecuador Biodiversity Policy and Strategy (2001 - 2010). Páramo Working Group (PWG).

<sup>12</sup> Range of assessment: Highly Satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Moderately Satisfactory (MS), Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), Highly Unsatisfactory (HU), Cannot be Evaluated (CE).

- ✓ The creation of monitoring networks to monitor the quality and quantity of water (SIMOV) and the hydrometeorological network.

11. However, it has only managed to partially fulfil the high level objectives, in other words the development and environment objectives of the project. The evaluation identified some deficiencies, in particular the establishment of a comprehensive overview as regards land use planning and sustainable development in the province. For example, the full integration of the conservation of biodiversity, particularly of the endemic flora and the agrobiodiversity, was not identified in the co-management plans executed in the five micro watersheds or in the new management plan of the Chimborazo Reserve and its buffer zone.<sup>13</sup> In addition, an information system was not implemented and/or harmonised to assess the status of biodiversity (or of the natural resources) within the GADPCH structure. In addition, it is worth mentioning that some infrastructure works had not sufficiently incorporated environmental considerations during their design and/or construction such as, for example, the visitor centre for the Chimborazo Reserve, which does not fulfil the requirements of the Ministry of Environment (MAE).

**Efficiency:** *Have the intervention methods, institutional structure and financial, technical and operational resources and procedures available helped or hindered the achievement of the project outcomes and objectives?*

**Efficiency rating: Moderately unsatisfactory<sup>14</sup>**

12. The OPIM showed that it is a feasible mechanism for the execution of projects funded by GEF by a national entity and that it can capture and execute more co-funding funds than foreseen in the Prodoc. It was also found that it made a substantial contribution to the generation of local planning skills in accordance with the LUDP guidelines based on participatory consultations with the different interested parties, including local communities. However, it was necessary to extend the duration of the project by around two years and 20 percent of the GEF funds were executed in the last six months. In addition, some obstacles were found that did not permit ongoing institutional strengthening in the province or of the MAE with regard to component 2. In particular, the high turnover of staff in the OPIM, the GADPCH and the cantonal and parish DAGs, the lack of clarification of the responsibilities of the OPIM and of the FAO-EC (particularly at the beginning of the project, after the change in staff of the OPIM in 2013 and after the MTE at the end of 2015) and the lack of monitoring of the outcomes and risk management by the OPIM technical team to mitigate the problems associated with the slow execution of the project in time.

**Rating of the Monitoring and Evaluation System: Moderately unsatisfactory**

13. The project objectives included the establishment of one system to monitor the project components and another relating to the biological and ecological indicators within the GADPCH, (applying the good practices of the system adopted by the project). However, the project established a monitoring system focussed on the execution of actions. Consequently, it

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<sup>13</sup> The project reports that conservation areas were set up but the evaluation found that they result from another programme. In addition, there was no evidence of contribution by the project for its declaration or regarding its contribution in terms that biodiversity was protected.

<sup>14</sup> Range of assessment: Highly Satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Moderately Satisfactory (MS), Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), Highly Unsatisfactory (HU), Cannot be Evaluated (CE).



did not generate information about the project's outcomes and achievements, both at the level of the conservation of species/of the páramo ecosystem and of agrobiodiversity, and to quantify the socioeconomic achievements, for example in terms of profitability.

**Regulatory values (inclusiveness and participation):** *To what extent has the project, in its work with local communities, ensured that all the stakeholders participated in the decision-making process (including the implementation of activities) and the empowerment of farmers in progressing with their rights?*

**Inclusiveness rating: Satisfactory<sup>15</sup>**

14. The project managed to actively involve a high number of stakeholders and local communities. For example, 111 communities participated in the generation of the management and co-management plans based on zoning in five micro watersheds and that included a participatory prioritisation of pilot subprojects through mutual agreement between the GADPCH and the communities. In another example, seven communities of the RPFCH buffer zone participated in the design of the co-management plans and a vicuña<sup>16</sup> working group was created to define by consensus who the beneficiaries would be and how they would be involved. The selection of the final participants was performed in coordination with the GADPCH and another operational project in the area of intervention (PIDD project) to avoid the overlapping of beneficiaries in the pilot projects identified and ensure that the beneficiaries selected agreed to co-fund their implementation (by means of the rendering of manual labour, the delivery of local materials, etc.) and with the aim of promoting their appropriation and the sustainability perspectives.

**Regulatory values (gender):** *To what extent has the project addressed gender equality issues in its design and contributed to the empowerment of women, young people and other vulnerable groups throughout its completion?*

**Gender rating: Satisfactory**

15. The evaluation was satisfied that the project had integrated a gender focus. For example, the women interviewed stated that they played an important role in the project - taking into consideration that the majority are the heads of their families due to the high migration of men in the area of intervention. Without doubt, this situation facilitated a high level of training of female leaders in the vast majority of communities involved. In addition, it was found that there was substantial participation by female professionals in the OPIM and at various levels of the DAGs. However, the project did not apply the monitoring of the participation of women or young people aged 15-25 in the training events and in the different initiatives implemented, or specific data to determine whether the project had contributed towards improving their rights such as, for example, their level of access to training and financial resources.

**Sustainability:** *How sustainable are the outcomes achieved by the project at an environmental, social, financial and institutional level?*

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<sup>15</sup> Range of assessment: Highly Satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Moderately Satisfactory (MS), Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), Highly Unsatisfactory (HI), Cannot be Evaluated (CE).

<sup>16</sup> Inter-institutional working group for making policy decisions regarding vicuña.

**Sustainability rating: Moderately likely**

16. The evaluation found that the sustainability perspectives of some activities are favourable given that, on the one hand, the prefecture has extended the contracts of three of the OPIM professionals to continue the project's priority objectives within the structure of the GADPCH, and on the other hand, the application of the management plans and the application of the payments for environmental services, in the parish DAGs of Quimiag and Candelaria, have achieved cofinancing agreements and tie in with the activities to promote under the "Biophysical Component" (3.2 of the LUDP). Undoubtedly, in these cases there will be opportunities to continue strengthening institutional structures at community level, such as the co-management committees of said management plans because the GADPCH will continue with campaigns to raise awareness of the importance of conserving the páramo. In other cases, the evaluation is not satisfied that the GADPCH has the sufficient resources to ensure the sustainability of certain activities supported by the project, such as the case of the maintenance and extension of the works to gather water, the long-term continuation of technical monitoring services to make progress with the sustainable use and conservation of natural resources in the province, or the consolidation of the economic activities performed, particularly in relation to the sale of vicuña wool, the cooperative operation of the refrigeration systems and the sale of milk.
  
17. In terms of the replicability of the infrastructure projects it was found that the GADPCH and the cantonal and parish DAGs have not been able to assess their cost-efficiency to date<sup>17</sup> in order to prioritise the works to replicate (in accordance with the LUDP priorities). However, taking into consideration the significant budgetary cuts in the country since 2016, it is probable that the level of replicability will be low in the next few years due to its high cost. Regarding the replicability of economic activities, the evaluation was not able to determine their level of profitability at this time as they are still being performed. In the majority of cases observed (handicrafts, dyeing of wool, etc.), the indications are that the beneficiaries still require training on topics such as quality control and the sale and marketing of their products and services. However, the opportunities for profitability resulting from activities such as the sale of vicuña wool is more guaranteed due to its high price in the official market (USD 500/kilo for non-processed wool).

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<sup>17</sup> This refers, here and throughout the text, to the date of the evaluation mission: December 2017.

## Lessons learned

18. The evaluation identified the following lessons learned:

**Lesson 1:** When there is no clear vertical nor horizontal intervention logic that identifies a sole final objective, it is difficult for the interested parties to reach an agreement for the management and internal system of monitoring based on outcomes and tangible changes to adopt, which is important to facilitate learning and a policy dialogue between said interested parties.

**Lesson 2:** The identification of elements that highly concern and interest the institutions, executors and participants (such as the reduction of the amount and quality of water) needs to be viewed as an opportunity to bring together the parties interested in developing a vision of comprehensive landscape management that includes the conservation of its biodiversity (such as the páramo and its water basins). In this manner it is possible to give value and recognition to specific elements such as the conservation of endemic biodiversity as "a service" for regulating water, food production, etc.

**Lesson 3:** Without a comprehensive vision of the landscape/territory, socialisation campaigns in the sub-basins tend to reinforce the participation and appropriation of activities completed based on erroneous concepts such as the management of micro watersheds guarantees water production (rather than a livelihood), instead of sufficiently socialising the interested parties regarding the importance of conserving biodiversity as one of the most important matters that the project obtained funding for.

**Lesson 4:** The OPIM represents a feasible opportunity to decentralise the management and implementation of GEF projects. However, to improve its efficiency and efficacy it is essential to clarify its role and responsibilities during the design phase of each new project. In addition, it is important to ensure that the authorities involved participate in this process together with FAO in order to be aware of GEF's policies and principles and how they can be executed within the country's political and legal framework (and/or the area to face within this framework).

**Lesson 5:** In order to have sufficient planning that takes into account the timings required for the preparation of contracts and their execution without delays, particularly for productive projects, it is important that their duration fits in with the agricultural and forestry sowing calendar instead of the fiscal calendar. In addition, under the OPIM modality, it is important that the planning and coordination have more extensive periods to take the state and provincial processes and requirements into account when designing the project.

## Conclusions

The **general conclusion** is that the project was necessary for the GADPCH and local communities but only partially managed to achieve its objectives. In particular, the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources was mainly focussed on the harvesting of water resources in the upper páramo basins and sub-basins and the optimisation of their use, the application of a pilot model of compensation mechanisms for the Payment for Environmental Services (PSA). In contrast, the conservation of biodiversity and agrobiodiversity in the páramos was much less evident, partly because there was not enough awareness and recognition of their use and function. Consequently, for example, it was observed that adaptation to climate change using local resistant crops in order to consolidate the food sovereignty and security of the communities involved in accordance with the

project objectives and the current legal framework (particularly the Law on Agrobiodiversity and Seeds) was not promoted.

**Conclusion 1 - relevance:** The project showed significant coherence with different levels of stakeholders at national and international level. It was coherent with the GEF mandate on fitting FAO's Strategic Objective 2 into its Biodiversity Strategy Area (Objectives 1 and 2). At national and sub-national level it was coherent with the National Biodiversity Strategy and the Strategic Plan of the National System of Protected Areas of Ecuador and, at provincial level, with the LUDP and the GADPCH. In terms of the beneficiary communities, there was a high level of acceptance of the project as it responded to their needs, including their adaptation to the effects of climate change, particularly a marked reduction of water in the water basins in recent years.

**Conclusion 2 - effectiveness:** The project only partially achieved its objectives because despite the completion of the majority of the outputs planned in the components, a weak level of execution was observed to achieve the development and environment objectives, and the tangible changes expected in the Prodoc have not arisen to date. This situation is partly due to the lack of a final objective, the need to perform a high number of activities and works in the last semester of the project and the lack of a role of responsibilities agreed upon between the OPIM/GADPCH and FAO since the start of the project. FAO's role in guiding and monitoring the planning and operations of the OPIM and the GADPCH was weak, particularly where there were gaps in the execution, such as in the conservation of biodiversity/agrobiodiversity, the development of economic activities, the establishment of a system to monitor biotic resources and the lack of recognition of the competencies of the RPFCH authorities in directly executing the new RPFCH management plan.

**Conclusion 3 - efficiency:** The OPIM showed that it is a mode of management that can execute GEF funds in a decentralised manner in the subnational institutional infrastructure and convert its funds into the outcomes and tangible changes foreseen in the Prodoc. However, the OPIM experienced difficulties in executing its funds on time, which resulted in the need to extend the duration of the project by two years until May 2018. The absence in the Prodoc of a clear and agreed upon description of the training to be provided by the FAO-EC regarding the regulation that the OPIM management modality applies was an important factor underlying the slow execution of activities. Other important factors identified were the absence of risk management in the planning and the lack of monitoring of results backed up by a communication strategy and an appropriate institutional arrangement geared towards reducing the inter-institutional interaction difficulties experienced (particularly under Component 2).

**Conclusion 4 - sustainability:** The project managed to generate favourable conditions for the sustainability of some outcomes, such as the preparation of a legal framework in line with the protection of the páramo (so far one ordinance was approved at cantonal level, as well as several parish resolutions), the handling of vicuñas, the creation of capacities that enable better management of camelids, and the construction of rural infrastructure encouraged the community organisation to take charge of the management of its micro watersheds. However, the execution of some outputs completed in the last months of the project could experience sustainability difficulties as a result of not having a formal subsequent transfer of technical monitoring, and taking into consideration that the project did not establish some activities to support the conservation and the

proper management of the páramo, such as, for example, a system to monitor the outcomes and tangible changes at an environmental, social and economic level.

19. R19 The evaluation team suggests the following recommendations:

### **Recommendations**

**Recommendation 1 to the GADPCH and FAO-EC - systematisation:** Identify, document and disseminate, by means of an inclusive analysis with the final beneficiary parties, the final lessons learned and good practices of the project, and systematise the most relevant so that GEF and FAO apply them in future projects and in the policy dialogue with the government of Ecuador. Similarly, collect information regarding the elements that led to the weaknesses, in order to include them in the risk analysis and prevent them.

**Recommendation 2 to the GEF and FAO (HQ and FAO Representation in Ecuador) – regarding the objectives, indicators and management of risk in the projects funded using GEF funds:** When designing future projects, they should define a clear and coherent intervention logic based on a final objective and observing the vertical relationship between specific objectives (components) as well as the horizontal relationship between such to achieve a comprehensive vision.

### **Suggestions:**

- 1) The objectives must be aligned with GEF and FAO requirements in order to observe the relevant international policies and plans (for example, the Aichi Targets) as well as national and subnational ones (for example, the LUDP) and be realistic pursuant to the duration and resources available. In addition, they should be based on a prior analysis of the needs and capacities of the interested parties and final beneficiaries and specific training regarding the regulation the OPIM applies. The cross-cutting objectives such as, for example, gender equality and governance must be explicit in the vertical objectives.
- 2) The application of indicators must be based on outcomes and tangible changes made that have base lines (geo-referenced where relevant) to facilitate the comprehensive analysis of the project, and to define targets for specific periods of time.
- 3) The risk assessment must be classified in accordance with GEF good practices (high, medium and low) and clarify the risk mitigation measures classified as high and medium that must be updated during the execution.

**Recommendation 3 to GEF, FAO – regarding environmental indicators for the national and subnational public authorities:** the environmental indicators must be geo-referenced where relevant (to understand the interaction between the local and global dimensions) and have a dedicated budget to be able to report the contribution of each project to the most relevant international, national and subnational environment objectives. For example, regarding the conservation of the endemic species indicated in 3.3 of the Prodoc, an indicator should have been established with its base line using sources such as the Red List of threatened species of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the subjects of conservation identified in

the document to support the Management Plan of the RPFCH (contracted at the start of the project), or the surveys regarding agrobiodiversity performed by the agrobiodiversity project funded by GEF.

**Recommendation 4 to the FAO (HQ and FAO Representation in Ecuador) - regarding the capacity of the counterparts:** The role of the FAO-EC must be clarified to perform the rating of the capacities of the counterparts and with their participation design a plan for training the executing entity in the areas where it has weaknesses or limitations. Similarly, the evaluation of the capacities of the counterparts must include a study of the conditions of the context and of the GEF and FAO regulations, as well as national and local regulations.

**Recommendation 5 for GEF and FAO (HQ) – regarding the OPIM:** Due to the complexity of the requirements and/or of the options that the GEF projects implemented with the "OPIM" modality present during the project design, it is important to have an operating manual that clarifies their responsibilities regarding the local authorities in order that at the start of project operations the GEF and FAO procedures and policies are correctly applied in the planning, implementation and monitoring of the project.

**Suggestions:**

- 1) The manual must: a) clarify the responsibilities of the interested parties, particularly of FAO with regard to the authorities responsible for executing the project in the OPIM modality; b) include the training that FAO should offer (see recommendation 4) to the local executors so that they apply the manual correctly; and c) have a subheading profiling the ecosystems included in the project and the requirements for their conservation (particularly their biodiversity) pursuant to its ecological dynamics and in accordance with the GEF and FAO policies on the matter.
- 2) In Projects that include production landscapes, developing a comprehensive vision based on a description of how the conservation would be integrated within sustainable development practices is recommended.

**Recommendation 6 to the Office of the GADPCH – about the content of future biodiversity conservation and local development programmes:** ensure that the GEF projects that focus on the integration of the conservation of biodiversity within production landscapes that promote awareness-raising campaigns on the role of agrobiodiversity as a means to increase the resilience and food sovereignty of local communities vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

**Suggestions:**

- 1) Promote a comprehensive vision of land development and planning that includes the *in situ* conservation of agrobiodiversity by means of an assessment and recognition of local knowledge of peasant men and women and their native technologies;
- 2) Identify the agrobiodiversity that can generate economic income (in accordance with the law on agrobiodiversity and seeds).
- 3) Identify friendly practices for the conservation of the species of flora and fauna in the productive landscapes and promote such by means of consultations with the local producers (particularly women) and other similar projects/countries (within the country and in other Andean countries).

- 4) In addition, for the conservation of biodiversity in Protected Areas and for the development of a comprehensive vision of sustainable development in a landscape/territory (such as the páramos), it is recommended to implement awareness-raising campaigns with the aforementioned points of focus to develop an awareness of the intrinsic and instrumental values of agrobiodiversity so that they are fully included and integrated in the development plans (LUDP), the sub-basin management plans and other relevant plans.

**Recommendation 7 to FAO-EC and to the GADPCH - regarding the sustainability and replication of the outcomes:** FAO must consider the allocation of dedicated funds to provide technical assistance in the post-closure phase of GEF projects in order that beneficiary authorities such as GADPCH apply an internal monitoring and surveillance system (based on outcomes and tangible changes with base lines taken from relevant studies, the Prodoc, etc. and their respective targets) whose objective it is to monitor the development plans (such as the LUDP).

**Recommendation 8 to FAO-EC and GADPCH – regarding communications:** Designing and implementing a communication strategy in accordance with the needs and interests of the different interested parties to ensure the diffusion of the materials produced by the project is recommended. For example, at the level of the local communities, the communication strategy must focus on promoting and optimising the information centres of the communal areas of the communities as a mechanism to distribute, on a larger scale, the training materials produced by the project to target groups identified within the communities.