

**MIDTERM REVIEW (MTR) OF THE  
FIFTH OPERATIONAL PHASE OF THE  
GEF SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM IN ECUADOR**

**FINAL REPORT**

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**September 2014**

## I. BASIC REPORT INFORMATION

### Title of UNDP supported GEF financed project

Fifth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Program in Ecuador

### UNDP and GEF project ID#s.

GEF ID#: 4375

UNDP PROJECT#: 4518

### Evaluation timeframe and date of evaluation report

The evaluation was carried out in July-August 2014. The field visit occurred between July 14 and 24, 2014. The Initial Findings Report was sent on August 4, 2014 and comments were received up to August 20<sup>th</sup>. The Draft Final Report Draft was dated September 6, 2014. The Final Report is dated September 22, 2014.

### Region and countries included in the project

The Project was implemented in Ecuador in the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) Region

### GEF Focal Area / Operational Programs

The GEF Focal Area of this project is Biodiversity under GEF BD Operational Program 2, "Increase in sustainably managed landscapes and seascapes that integrate biodiversity conservation".

### Implementing Partner and other project partners

The GEF Implementing Partner of the Project was UNDP with UNOPS as executing agency. Other Project Partners include the organizations receiving the small grants and other national organizations (Governmental, academic and civil) participating in different steering and advising structures.

### Evaluation team members

The Midterm Review (MTR) was carried out by Alejandro C. Imbach.

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### III. ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

APR	Annual Project Report
APR/PIR	Annual Project Review/Project Implementation Review
BC	Biological Corridor
BD	Biodiversity
CBD	Convention of Biological Diversity
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CCF	Country Cooperation Framework
CCM	Climate Change Mitigation
CEPF	Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
CO	Country Office
CP	Country Program
CPAP	Country Program Action Plan
CPD	Country Program Document Framework
CPMT	Central Program Management Team
CPS	Country Program Strategy
COP	Conference of the Parties
EQUIPATE	Technical Assistance Team (regional) / Equipo de Asistencia Tecnica
EQUIPATEN	National Technical Assistance Team / Equipo de Asistencia Tecnica Nacional
FSP	Full Size Project
GAD	Decentralized Autonomous Government / Gobierno Autónomo Descentralizado
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GTT	Territorial Working Group / Grupo de Trabajo Territorial
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IW	International Waters
LAC	Latin American and the Caribbean
LD	Land Degradation
LFA	Logical Framework Analysis
LULUCF	Land Use, Land Use Change, and Forestry
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MTB	Biocorridor Working Group / Mesa de Trabajo de Biocorredor
NGO	Non-government Organization
NSC	National Steering Committee
OP	Operational Program
PA	Protected Area
PES	Payments for Environmental Services
PIF	Project Identification Form
PIR	Project Implementation Review
PMU	Program Management Unit
PPR	Project Progress Reports
QPR	Quarterly Project Review
RR	Resident Representative
RTA	Regional Technical Advisor
SGP	GEF Small Grants Program
STA	Senior Technical Advisor
STAR	System for Transparent Allocation of Resources
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDAF	UN Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Project Information Table

PROJECT SUMMARY TABLE				
Project Title:	Fifth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Program in Ecuador			
GEF Project ID:	4375		<i>at endorsement (Million US\$)</i>	<i>At completion (Million US\$)</i>
UNDP Project ID:	PIMS 4518	GEF financing:	4.398.145.-	
Country:	Ecuador	IA/EA own:	1.000.000.-	
Region:	LAC	Government:	2.150.000.-	
Focal Area:	Biodiversity	Other:	1.650.000.-	
Operational Program:	Biodiversity	Total co-financing:	4.800.000.-	
Executing Agency:	UNOPS	Total Project Cost:	9.198.145.-	
Other Partners involved:		PRODOC Signature (date Project began):		September 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2011
		(Operational) Closing Date:	Proposed: June 30, 2015	Actual: June 30, 2015

### Project Description

The Ecuador SGP Country Program was “upgraded” at the start of GEF OP5. “Upgrading” means that the Country Program is implemented as a GEF full-size project financed under the OP5 STAR allocation to Ecuador.

The long-term project Objective is to conserve biodiversity by reducing habitat fragmentation and strengthening ecological connectivity across production landscapes through community initiatives and actions in globally significant ecosystems in Ecuador.

The project is achieving global environmental benefits through a) effective community land use governance and planning in place for increasing ecological connectivity in four regions b) rural communities with increased sustainable livelihood options appropriate for fragile and globally significant ecosystems, and c) knowledge systematized and disseminated, and communities trained in project design, monitoring and evaluation for adaptive management and learning

The project is executed by UNOPS as Implementing Partner using the existing Country Program mechanism of the GEF Small Grants Program (SGP) in Ecuador, including grant approval by the National Steering Committee and day-to-day management by the Country Program Team under the leadership of the Country Program Manager (National Coordinator). The project collaborates with a large number of partners including Governmental institutions, national and local NGOs and scientific institutions.

The Ecuador SGP Country Program adopted a very innovative approach in GEF OP5 (see subsection Project Strategy within Section 3.3 Project description and strategy). The key innovation is the adoption of a territorial approach based on three elements: ecological connectivity, productive landscapes and associativity. While the territorial approach concept is not new, the way in which it is implemented is quite interesting. It started with a process of analysis of the long SGP experience and what was learned from it, including who worked with the SGP and how, and the territorial priorities linked to the experiences. From this analysis, SGP Ecuador prioritized four ecological regions (territories) at the country level: Sierra Norte (mountains), Sierra Central y Sur (mountains), Amazonia and Costa (Coast). In each of them a participatory Territorial Working Group (GTT) was established, including Governmental organizations, local Governments and social organizations. Each GTT developed a Territorial Action Agreement (ASOCIATE) among its participants and adjusted the definition of several “biocorridors” within its region/territory (16 biocorridors for the whole project). In each biocorridor a Biocorridor Working Group (Mesa de Trabajo del Biocorredor - MTB) was established again as a participatory mechanism with the local organizations, local Governments and active governmental organizations in the biocorridor. Each MTB developed a plan (ACBIO, Biocorridor Action Plan) for its biocorridor, and based on these plans the projects to be supported by SGP were identified as well as the organizations who will manage them, and the neighbor organization who will participate in each project. In this way, the MTB aims to achieve ecological connectivity impacts at biocorridor level (e.g. paramo protection at large scale); production landscapes (recuperation of traditional forgotten crops, ecological agriculture, local markets for ecological products, value adding to raw agricultural products, etc. benefiting local communities and groups regarding income and food security aspects); and, not less important, strengthening the local “social fabric” by having different organizations working together in the same project.

While it is still too early to identify impacts because grant projects have been running for just 12 to 14 months, this approach should be followed closely because it can provide good directions to address the perennial constraint of the small projects: how to achieve larger scale impacts.

### Project Progress Summary

The Project is progressing very well, as shown in the Summary Table of Progress Towards Results below, and the subsequent Summary Table of Progress Towards Project Objectives.

In the first table, seven of the ten Outcome Indicators are already achieved and the remaining three are assessed as On-target considering the degree of progress and the commitments of the proposals under implementation. Considering this level of advance it is expected that SGP Ecuador will achieve this project’s Outcome indicators and targets successfully.

In the second table one of the Project Objective Indicators is already achieved and surpassed, another two are on-target, and the two remaining ones are planned to be evaluated at the end of the project; therefore, there is no information to assess them at MTR.

Both tables are presented in the following pages, and expanded in detail in section 4.3 Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

Description	Indicator	Target at end of project	Achievement Rating
OUTCOME 1 Effective community land use governance and planning is in place for increasing ecological connectivity in 4 ecosystems	Number of biological corridor management plans developed by communities in partnership with CBOs, local government, private sector and NGOs	At least 12 additional biological corridors (among the 15 identified) with management plans covering an area of some 1'900,000 ha	Achieved
	Number of functioning coordinating territorial bodies	At least 9 additional community biological corridor management bodies representing a total of 300 communities operating effectively and in cooperation with local and regional government, community organizations and other stakeholders	Achieved
	Increased number of watershed management plans in project focus areas	15 micro-watersheds within biological corridor areas with management plans	Achieved
OUTCOME 2 Rural communities have increased sustainable livelihood options appropriate for fragile and globally significant ecosystems	Improved food security of local communities through crop diversification using local cultivars, agro-ecological practices, and other sustainable food production practices	10 Andean crop species recovered (an additional 240 hectares) and incorporated in the family diet, contributing to food security of 60 communities and 1,000 families. Mollusks and crustaceans available in a sustainable manner in 4 communities involving 35 families	Achieved
	Increased number of communities generating income from sustainable production practices such as non-timber forest products, eco-tourism, and alpaca wool	142 additional communities generate income from sustainable production practices involving some 1,500 families: Non-timber forest products (50 communities); Alpaca wool (6 communities); Sustainable tourism (21 communities); Cocoa and coffee production in agro-forestry systems (65)	Achieved
	Improved distribution of household income throughout the year as a result of sustainable production activities	At least 1,500 families obtain income at least 4 times a year from sustainable use of biodiversity	On target
	Improved gender equity as a result of increased income generation opportunities for women	40% of SGP-funded initiatives will be controlled by women and benefits will accrue to them	Achieved
OUTCOME 3 Knowledge systematized and disseminated, and communities trained in project design, monitoring and evaluation for adaptive management and learning	Percentage of successful community projects	The current 90% rate of successful projects will be maintained or increased during this SGP phase.	On target
	Increased number of community leaders active and with demonstrated socio-economic and environmental capacity to represent communities in bio-corridor governance bodies and other relevant policy and sustainable development activities	At least 10 individuals per project with enhanced knowledge and leadership capacities to work with communities in sustainable ecosystem and resources management and to represent them effectively in various bodies and fora. Of these 60% male and 40% female.	On target
	Number of community projects that apply adaptive management as a result of timely input from SIMONA	At least 80% of projects show evidence of timely course change or improvements in project delivery based on SIMONA inputs	Achieved

In terms of progress towards projects results, closely linked to the GEF Biodiversity Tracking Tool, a copy of the situation reported in this tool is presented in the [Reporting](#) subsection of section 4.3 Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

SGP Ecuador progress towards project objectives are summarized in the following table.

	Indicator	Targets End of Project	Achievement Rating
<b>Project Objective Community initiatives reduce habitat fragmentation and improve ecological connectivity across production landscapes in four priority regions of Ecuador</b>	Increase in sustainably managed landscapes and seascapes that integrate biodiversity conservation in the following ecosystems: - Paramo - Mangroves - Coastal dry forests - Amazon tropical rainforest	At least 100 additional communities implementing strategies and carrying out activities that increase sustainably managed landscapes and seascapes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 14,000 ha in the Paramo ecosystem</li><li>• 600 ha in mangrove ecosystems</li><li>• 10,000 ha in the coastal dry forest ecosystem</li><li>• 20,000 ha in the Amazon tropical rainforest</li><li>• TOTAL: 44,600 HAS</li></ul>	On target
	Habitat coverage in hectares  And/or  Reduced habitat fragmentation rates in targeted areas	Habitat coverage remains the same or higher in at least 70% of land in grant receiving communities	Not assessed at MTR time; planned at end of project
	Number of biological corridors with community strategies to prevent habitat fragmentation	At least 12 bio-corridors with community implementation strategies to reduce habitat fragmentation among the following 15 potential areas: North Andean region (Paramo & Andean forest): 3 biocorridors Central Andean region (Paramo & Andean forest): 5 biocorridors Coastal region (mangrove and dry forests): 5 bio-corridors Amazon region (tropical rainforest): 2 bio-corridors	Achieved
	Increased number of communities that obtain certification against national or international standards	At least 60% of communities obtain certification by relevant entities for their sustainable livelihood activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Agro-ecological practices</li><li>- Sustainable tourism</li><li>- Sustainable use of species</li><li>- Non-timber forest products</li></ul>	On target
	Increased number of communities aware of importance of maintaining ecological connectivity and of existence of sustainable livelihood options	At least 40% of adult community members in target areas are aware of the importance to maintain ecological connectivity and are able to quote environmentally friendly production practices	Not assessed at MTR time; planned at end of project

Based on the above results and other information presented in the main text, the following Project Evaluation Rating Table was prepared.

Evaluation Rating Table

<b>Measure</b>	<b>MTR Rating</b>	<b>Achievement Description</b>
<b>Project Strategy</b>	N/A	The Project strategy is sound. The Project Logical Framework is well constructed and it is constantly used by the project (National Steering Committee and National Coordination).
<b>Progress Towards Results</b>	Objective Achievement Rating: 6 Highly satisfactory	The Achievement Rating is based on the Achievement of individual results below. In turn, these are based on the Summary Table of Progress Towards Results (previous section) and the fully detailed table in section 4.2 Progress Towards Results. Moreover, the MTR has not identified areas of concern or remaining barriers to achieving the results.
	Outcome 1 <i>Effective community land use governance and planning is in place for increasing ecological connectivity in 4 ecosystems</i> Achievement Rating: 6 Highly satisfactory	According to the above Tables, the SGP has already achieved all three indicators and targets of this Outcome.
	Outcome 2 <i>Rural communities have increased sustainable livelihood options appropriate for fragile and globally significant ecosystems</i> Achievement Rating: 6 Highly satisfactory	According to the above Tables, the SGP has already achieved four of the five agreed Indicators and the fifth is assessed as On-target based on the commitments established in the pertinent proposals still under implementation.
	Outcome 3 <i>Knowledge systematized and disseminated, and communities trained in project design, monitoring and evaluation for adaptive management and learning</i> 6 Highly satisfactory	According to the Tables mentioned above, the SGP has already achieved 1 indicator and its targets for this Outcome, while the remaining two show considerable progress and are assessed as On-target.
<b>Project Implementation &amp; Adaptive Management</b>	6 Highly satisfactory	According to the results shown in Section 4.3 (Management Arrangements) regarding Work planning, Finance and co-finance, Project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, Stakeholder engagement, Reporting and Communications, all these areas are managed adequately and the MTR did not identify any major concern about them.
<b>Sustainability</b>	4 Likely	According to the results shown in Section 4.4 Sustainability, the MTR did not identify any major concern about them and in three different sustainability areas (financial, socioeconomic and environmental) were assessed as Likely, while the fourth area (institutional and governance) is assessed as Moderately Likely.

## Summary of conclusions and recommendations

### Conclusions

1. The current GEF full-size project Ecuador SGP Country Program corresponding to the 5th Operational Phase of the GEF SGP is relevant to the objectives with which it must maintain consistency (GEF and country).
2. The project is implementing the planned activities as expected and the progress achieved during the first year of implementation appears to be successfully reaching and surpassing the agreed indicators.
3. The project has operated within the historical average efficiency of SGP projects. Some previous studies have shown that this efficiency can be assessed as good in relation to the general population of projects funded by the GEF.
4. The project has designed and implemented a pioneering initiative that aims to develop territorial processes qualitatively different from its prior financing scheme based on isolated individual initiatives. This approach led to successful planning processes whose implementation is already underway and progressing solidly with good prospects of achieving the proposed results.
5. The sustainability of the funded initiatives at the level of local organizations implementing them is good and varies according to the lines; therefore they should continue as planned until the end of the project. Given the adoption of the new territorial approach, sustainability must also be analyzed at the territorial level in addition to the implementing local organization level. At this point, with only one year of project implementation it is too premature to assess the level of sustainability achieved in this territorial scale.
6. The SGP in Ecuador achieved, throughout its history and including this reviewed phase, many impacts as evidenced in part by what was stated in the section on sustainability. These impacts are visible at the level of individual organizations and, again, it is still premature to attempt to define and assess impacts at biocorridor or region scales due to the limited time of implementation of the grant projects under this new approach.
7. The varied and numerous SGP Country Program strengths and opportunities and its innovative nature should lead to an attractive proposal for the GEF 6th Operational Phase and the eventual subsequent execution should continue and expand the actions and impacts achieved so far.

## Recommendations

1. To complete the current Fifth Operational Phase of the SGP in Ecuador, maintaining the current existing operational procedures and systems that have proven effective and efficient in achieving the proposed results. Overall, the SGP Ecuador project is implemented very appropriately; therefore, the first recommendation is to keep up the good work.
2. To expand the Terms of Reference of the National Steering Committee (NSC) to include key strategic management decisions currently in a situation of uncertainty due to the Ecuador SGP upgrading. While several important aspects are already in the TOR of the National Steering Committee such as the evaluation of the National Coordination, the regular renewal of the members of the NSC, the monitoring of different significant aspects, etc., the key issue about what is the strategic decision-making reporting line of the SGP Country Program is not explicitly defined. In other words, it is necessary to define who has the decision-making authority and what is the decision-making process to decide about the strategic orientation of the SGP Country Program (approach, priority areas, program scope and reach, NSC composition, NC staffing, etc.) if the case arises in which different stakeholders (UNDP CO, NSC and/or UNDP-GTA) have non-negotiable differences about these aspects. The MTR view is that the final decision authority should be in the hands of the National Steering Committee, but this is obviously an issue that exceeds the reach of the MTR. Therefore, the MTR also recommends that the task of extending the terms of reference of the National Steering Committee should be coordinated by the UNDP-GEF Global Technical Advisor for SGP Upgrading Country Programs in order to ensure consistency across the group of SGP upgrading country programs.
3. To strengthen the capacities of the National Steering Committee to address the conceptual and practical aspects of the new territorial approach and the new strategic management functions mentioned above. This strengthening should include both specific training and field visits and exchanges of experiences within the SGP and with other organizations and networks.
4. To make all necessary efforts to develop a new project proposal for the next GEF Operational Phase that maintains the key characteristics of the current phase in order to properly assess the significant potential benefits of the territorial approach that this Country Program is testing.
5. To strengthen the work with youth groups incorporating preference criteria for proposals submitted by them within the existing territorial framework defined in the regional plans (ASOCIATE) and the Biocorridor Action Plans (ACBIO). A recognition as actors of territorial development can help to motivate these groups to contribute to the local processes rather than to migrate looking for other options.
6. To develop a stronger internal analysis and discussion within the SGP, involving the NSC, the National Coordination and the support structures (EQUIPATEN and EQUIPATE) about the best ways to address the challenges generated by the differences in organizational development among implementing organizations within the biocorridors and the differences of key characteristics between biocorridors (e.g. smaller ecological connectivity in the Sierra and less social connectivity in the Amazon).

## 2. INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 Purpose of the evaluation

This mid-term review (MTR) has the following purposes according to the new UNDP-GEF Midterm Review Terms of Reference:

1. To assess progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outcomes as specified in the Project Document,
2. To assess early signs of project success or failure with the goal of identifying the necessary changes to be made in order to set the project on-track to achieve its intended results.
3. To review the project's strategy and its risks to sustainability.

### 2.2 Scope & Methodology

#### Scope

The MTR assessed the main key areas related to the above purposes as follows:

- a. Project Strategy
  - Project design
  - Results framework / Logframe
- b. Progress Towards Results
  - Progress Towards Outcomes Analysis
- c. Project Implementation and Adaptive Management
  - Management Arrangements
  - Work Planning
  - Finance and co-finance
  - Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy
  - Stakeholder Engagement
  - Reporting
  - Communications
- e. Sustainability
  - Financial risks to sustainability
  - Socio-economic risks to sustainability
  - Institutional Frameworks and Governance risks to sustainability
  - Environmental risks to sustainability

#### Methodology

Based on the evaluation purpose and scope, an evaluation matrix including evaluation questions, indicators, sources of information and methods to obtain information was developed and used to guide the evaluation. This matrix was included in the Evaluation Inception Report submitted to the different stakeholders before the beginning of the evaluation. This matrix is presented as Annex 2.

The evaluation process was carried out according to the following steps:

1. Reading and analysis of existing documentation (including those documents listed in the TOR and the UNDP guidelines for these evaluations, as well as websites and information available online and documents provided directly by the visited organizations and institutions). The list of documents analyzed is included as Annex 5.
2. Development of data collection instruments (questionnaires, interview guides and field visits, observation and other protocols.
3. Field visit to collect primary information through interviews, observations, field visits and meetings. The itinerary of this visit is included as Annex 4. The list of persons interviewed for this evaluation is included as Annex 5.
4. Preparation of an Initial Findings Report immediately after the field visit. This Report was distributed to the key stakeholders for verification of information accuracy.
5. Preparation of the Draft Final Report and distribution to users established for feedback and comments.
6. Reception of comments and feedback and preparation of the "audit trail"
7. Preparation and submission of the Final Report , including verification of the facts on the basis of comments on drafts , incorporating new materials and adjustments to the Draft Final Report

### 2.3 Structure of the evaluation report

The contents for the report were organized on the basis of the Table of Contents included in the new UNDP-GEF Midterm Review Terms of Reference to be used from July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014.

This Table of Contents has some differences with the one originally included in the TOR but it was adopted aiming to comply with the new UNDP-GEF requirements in place since the mentioned date. The Table of Contents complies and is consistent with the original TOR and the guidelines established in the GEF-UNDP Guidance for Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects guiding the mid-term reviews from July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014.

### 3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND CONTEXT

#### 3.1 Development context

Ecuador is known worldwide for its rich biodiversity and varied landscapes. It is the country with the highest biological diversity per unit area in Latin America, and one of the world's 17 megadiverse countries. Factors influencing Ecuador's biological richness are multiple, including the Andes mountain range, which provides diverse altitudes with specific microclimates, and a broad range of life zones occurring in Ecuador's four regions (coast, highlands, Amazon region and islands) where the country's vast natural wealth has given rise to diverse cultures. Three of the Ecuadorian ecosystems of global importance are the coastal dry forest and mangroves, the paramo, and the Amazon rain forest.

The paramo ecosystem is found from 3,000 to 4,500 meters above sea level, from tree line to the highest rocky slopes and snowcaps. The isolated and fragmented occurrence of the paramo over the Andean highlands promotes high speciation and an exceptionally high endemism. The ecosystem hosts about 5000 different plant species. About 60% of these species are endemic, adapted to the ecosystem's specific physio-chemical and climatic conditions, such as the low atmospheric pressure, intense ultra-violet radiation, and the drying effects of wind. The vegetation consists mainly of tussock grasses, ground rosettes, dwarf shrubs, cushion plants and conspicuous giant rosettes such as *Espeletia sp* and *Puya*.

In some areas, a clear altitudinal vegetation gradient is present. In the subparamo, 2500-3100 m altitude, mosaics with shrubs and small trees alternate with grasslands. Extensive cloud forests may develop, consisting of small, twisted and gnarled trees with small and thick, notophyllous leaves and many epiphytes. In the paramo proper (3100 - 4100 m), grasslands dominate and patches of woody species such as *Polylepis* and *Gynoxys* occur only in sheltered locations and along streams. The superparamo is a narrow zone with scarce vegetation between the grass paramo and the snow line. In all vegetation belts, azonal vegetation types (cushion bogs, mires, and aquatic vegetation) occur in flat, hyperhumid areas.

The paramo accounts for 5% of Ecuador's land area and is believed to contain 10% of Ecuador's flora and 30% of its vascular plants, as well as 88 species of birds. In this life zone, local peoples have lived for millennia producing food and other products from a rich diversity of domesticated, agrestic and wild species of agricultural importance, especially tubers and native Andean cereals. These include melloco (*Ullucus tuberosus*), oca (*Oxalis tuberosa*), mashua (*Tropaeolum tuberosum*), jícama (*Polymnia sonchifolia*), achira (*Canna edulis*), quinoa (*Chenopodium quinoa*), and chocho (*Lupinus mutabilis*), among those most important for food security. The paramo ecosystem is especially important for its role in water retention and regulation. In Ecuador, nearly 500,000 people depend on the paramo for their day-to-day livelihoods. Moreover, the entire population of Ecuador depends indirectly on the paramo's environmental services for water supply, irrigation and hydroelectric energy.

The dry forests and mangroves are located along the Pacific coast and are highly varied in terms of diversity as well as in their structural characteristics such as density, canopy height and basal area. The flora and fauna of these forests are characterized by having acquired certain physiological-adaptive characteristics that have allowed them to survive extreme conditions of temperature and dryness. The presence of dwarf and ramified shrubs, thickened leaves and thorny plants help characterize the harsh conditions in this ecoregion. This evolutionary factor not only increases the richness, species endemism and importance of the zone but also makes it vulnerable to human intervention. Although this ecoregion can be considered a zone with low biodiversity relative to wet forests, it has been recognized for its high level of local and regional endemism. Approximately 180

tree species have been classified and it is estimated that about 19% of the region's vegetation is endemic to western Ecuador. This unique ecosystem is found nowhere in the world but southern Ecuador (87,000 ha.) and northern Peru. Important species include trees of the Moraceae family (*Pseudolmedia*), Bignonaceae (*Exarata chocoensis*) and several species of Algarrobo (*Prosopis juliflora*); Barba salvaje (*Tillandsia usneoides*); Barbasco (*Jacquenia pubescens*); Bototillo (*Cochlospermum vitifolium*); Cactus (*Cereus sp.*); Ceibo (*Ceiba trichistandra*), etc., as well as medicinal products (*Myroxylon peruiferum* and *Bursera graveolens*), animal feed (*Prosopis juliflora* and *Ceiba trichistandra*); fruit (*Malpighia emarginata*), for fishing (*Piscidia carthagenensis*) Approximately 65,000 people live in this ecosystem and depend directly on it for survival and to produce and obtain fresh water. The dry forest is also important as the ecosystem that generates water for the coastal region. Dry forests are very fragile and have vanished from a huge portion of their original area, placing them among the world's most endangered ecosystems.

Associated with the dry forest, at the interface between land and sea, are mangroves growing along coastlines, estuaries and deltas. Mangrove forests cannot be considered as an ecosystem separate from their surroundings due to the extensive areas they cover which are influenced by surface waters, sea water column and estuaries, soil and surrounding landscape vegetation. The mangroves' complex root systems harbor a large number of animal species (birds, fish, mollusks, crustaceans), where marine life takes refuge to grow and develop. Mangroves also protect coastlines from erosion, hurricanes, tsunamis and storms, attenuating the impacts of recurrent natural phenomena. Mangrove ecosystems in Ecuador include five mangrove species of global importance (*Rhizophora mangle*, *Rhizophora harrisonii*, *Avicennia germinans*, *Laguncularia racemosa* L-Gaerth F, *Conocarpus erectus*, *Pelluciera rhizophorae*, and *Mora megistosperma*). Ancestral communities who live in and around the mangroves have organized their lives and culture around this ecosystem's goods and services. Approximately 50,000 mestizo, Afro-Ecuadorian, and other rural inhabitants depend on the mangrove ecosystem.

Ecuador's Amazon rainforest covers 30% of the country's total land area (13,909 km<sup>2</sup>), making it the country's largest bio-geographical region and one that has been characterized as "hyper-diverse". At Yasuní in the Amazon region, in addition to the 600 species of birds and 170 of mammals, approximately 1,100 species of trees can be found in a 25 hectare plot—more than in all of the U.S. and Canada, combined. In the Ecuadorean Amazon as a whole there are possibly as many as 30 million species of insects with one acre potentially containing 70,000 species.

Within the waters of the Amazon Basin region, it is estimated that there are over 1000 species of fish as well as more than 400 species of amphibians and reptiles. There are also freshwater dolphins and manatees living in this environment.

Under the Sumak Kausay (Living Well) principle enshrined in the 2008 National Constitution, the Ecuadorean government is addressing biodiversity loss and conservation principally through the establishment of an extensive system of protected areas. Protected areas encompass high conservation value areas in landscapes and seascapes under serious threat of habitat conversion or alteration and species extinction. However, these protected areas run the risk of becoming increasingly isolated islands of pristine habitat in a larger landscape devoid of significant biodiversity i.e. in the case of forests, areas that have been cleared of primary vegetation for agriculture, livestock, and other economic uses. On the other hand, the government has passed laws and regulations enabling sustainable use of forests and other natural resources in the broader production landscape. It has also provided technical assistance and training in forest management, aquaculture, and other economic activities to some communities through its extension services. However, unless the production landscape is organized and administered to enhance ecosystem connectivity and overall compatibility with conservation goals, biodiversity will not be conserved in the long term.

Ecuador's civil society is vibrant and there are many well-established NGOs working on environment and development issues at national and local levels. The presence of NGOs in every province facilitates technical assistance to communities and local organizations. There are also myriad CBOs in the rural areas of Ecuador struggling to address the multiple development needs of local communities. However, CBO governance and capacities are often weak, especially in the coastal and Amazon regions. Very few CBOs have access to external financial resources nor do they have experience in project development, implementation and reporting. Individual CBOs are isolated with few linkages to similar organizations within their parish or municipality. Network organizations and associations exist in Ecuador but more are needed, bringing CBOs together as well as CBOs with national NGOs.

Communities have been the guardians of this biodiversity since ancestral times and they are the reason why forest patches remain. Communities control and use lands that are crucial for the long term conservation of biodiversity and to establish or enhance connectivity between intact forest and grassland fragments across the landscape, including protected areas, and integrating biodiversity conservation into the production landscape. These lands are also the source of food security and income for these communities through agriculture and the harvest of timber and other ecosystem goods and services. Unfortunately, though surrounded by a wealth of natural resources, communities often remain poor and marginalized.

### 3.2 Problems that the project sought to address: threats and barriers targeted

The following key barriers need to be addressed to achieve the GEF and Project objectives and results in Ecuador. The first is the communities lack the means and/or motivation to plan, manage or coordinate community production landscapes for conservation of biodiversity, enhanced connectivity and increasing long term productivity of ecosystem goods and services. The establishment and maintenance of biological corridors requires a high degree of planning and governance within and between communities in a production landscape based on an agreed strategic vision and supported by a policy and incentive framework to enable participation and regulatory compliance of community smallholders. Communities have formal and non-formal mechanisms for communal decision making and action, as well as local governance, but these are often weak or ineffective and generally lack an explicit long-term strategic vision. Moreover, mechanisms that allow for cooperation between several communities in larger geographical areas do not exist. Policies may be unsupportive of community-based landscape planning and management, and the incentives for smallholders to participate or comply with land use planning strictures are largely absent. Understanding of the long-term benefits of a more sustainable and productive landscape that conserves biodiversity is weak to non-existent. With such deficient community capacities, effective intercommunity planning and management of production landscapes for biodiversity conservation is remote.

While individual smallholders and community organizations may adopt sustainable production practices and alternative income generating activities, the impact on biodiversity across the landscape depends on their coordinated response guided by a strategic vision integrating productivity, connectivity, conservation and sustainable use goals. Community organizations must have the capacities to articulate this vision, set strategic objectives, define outcomes, identify trade-offs, formulate action plans and negotiate and agree individual contributions to fulfillment of these plans. Communities must be able to negotiate and agree to complementary courses of action among themselves in pursuit of the strategic objectives and define and implement inter-community landscape governance mechanisms, whether formal or non-formal.

Effective community and inter-community coordination can be used to leverage greater economic benefits associated with sustainable income generating activities. For example, the ability to attract sufficient visitors to an ecotourism destination in order to produce a steady income is essential; individual community enterprises are hard pressed to market their ecotourism attractions effectively, and for ecotourism to achieve a significant impact on habitat conservation, it must be done at scale by sufficient numbers of communities. The ability of communities to collaborate across the landscape in developing complementary ecotourism destinations and experiences is crucial to achieving biodiversity impacts at the regional level. Marketing of non-timber forest products, certified agricultural products, or other sustainably produced goods will also benefit from inter-community coordination. To achieve economies of scale in marketing and sales of sustainable products, communities need the ability to partner with knowledgeable and trustworthy private sector groups, NGOs and each other to ensure a steady stream of high quality products.

A second barrier is that communities are unable to adequately identify and adopt sustainable use practices and systems at scale in forest and grassland areas of high biodiversity value. Through its work over the years SGP has assisted communities to develop a series of successful production practices and systems in a variety of circumstances that have benefited both the global environment and local sustainable development and rural livelihoods. These include initiatives related to agro-ecological production, sustainable production of non-timber forest products, fisheries management, aquaculture, and alpaca breeding and wool production. These practices, however, must be implemented by sufficient numbers of smallholders and communities over time to reach a tipping point where smallholder communities increasingly adopt these practices because of visible proof of their benefits to sustainable rural livelihoods, whether through increased income or greater food security.

Most smallholder communities have practiced traditional agriculture for generations based on in-depth knowledge of species and agro-ecosystem function, with an underlying rationale of risk reduction and labor efficiency. While this has enabled survival and a degree of food security and well-being, the unintended long-term environmental consequences of some of these practices in changing ecological and socio-economic circumstances require the development and incorporation of new practices and techniques to achieve sustainability while augmenting productivity to meet increasing development demands. Smallholders must develop the skills and knowledge to adapt agro-ecological principles to current farming systems with the aim of maintaining or increasing productivity while conserving habitats important for ecological connectivity and biodiversity conservation. Agroforestry systems and low-input agricultural practices such as multi-cropping, polycultures, composting, fallowing, cover crops and other soil conservation measures can raise yields through increased soil productivity and maintain them over longer periods, perhaps permanently, thereby reducing the need to clear new land for agriculture, as is the case under current systems. For adoption to be successful, the economic benefits to the smallholder must be clear in terms of increased income or food security. Smallholders must have the access and ability to market agricultural, aquacultural, fisheries and non-timber forest products, including wool produced through sustainable alpaca raising.

Artisanal fisheries management, aquaculture, and harvest of non-timber forest products require substantial knowledge of species life cycle requirements as well as planning and management skills. For certain lands and resources like communal lands or open access lands, good governance of these commons is required to avoid diminishing the productivity and availability of the resource and generating conflicts. At the same time, new practices must be identified and developed and the appropriate skills acquired on a fairly continuous basis given the nature of these living systems. SGP experience in Ecuador with community ecotourism initiatives has shown that they can generate income based on the conservation of species, habitats and ecosystems. Nevertheless, to achieve sustainability over the long term, communities must have the business planning and management

skills to continually produce a high quality experience for visitors or to maintain the quality of goods they produce for the tourism industry.

A final, but not less significant barrier is the communities' lack of information, knowledge and skills to design, implement, monitor and evaluate projects for effective learning and adaptive management. To effectively conserve biodiversity over the long term across the production landscape and establish connectivity between forest or grassland fragments and protected areas, thousands of communities in the three regions will have to plan and manage land use to achieve integrated productivity, connectivity, conservation and sustainable use objectives, as well as to adopt and implement biodiversity friendly production practices and systems.

For this change to occur across the region, these practices and systems must be adopted by a critical number of communities. Construction of this critical mass cannot develop only through the day-to-day aggregation of communities and their small grant initiatives, but needs to be hastened with a systematic program of knowledge dissemination and capacity building to reach both participating communities and communities that may be interested in participating in the future.

### 3.3 Project Description and Strategy

#### Project Description

##### The SGP Ecuador Country Program as a GEF full-size project

A first key aspect that should be kept in mind when analyzing the SGP OP5 Project in Ecuador is that this is an unusual GEF full-size project. A typical Project defines a priori results to be achieved, inputs to be used to generate outputs to reach the results (all evidenced by indicators) and the required resources (funding and time) to perform the activities. The SGP Country Program does not work this way.

The SGP was created by GEF as a funding window to support projects from CBOs (community based organizations) and small and medium NGOs. It was established to balance the portfolio of full-size and medium-sized projects aimed at Governmental organizations and, to some extent, large NGOs (national and international).

Because of this origin, the SGP was established as a GEF corporate program, implemented by UNDP on behalf of the GEF partnership. This GEF-UNDP SGP has a centralized unit at UNDP Headquarters (CPMT) and from which the national SGPs (such as the former Ecuador SGP) were coordinated and funded. The national SGPs, in turn, channeled small funds (usually around US\$ 50,000 in Ecuador) to CBOs and NGOs in the form of small grants with specific requirements.

This initiative was highly successful as documented in different evaluations and it was renewed with each one of the different GEF OPs. Therefore, and given both its continuity and *modus operandi* these national SGPs became programmatic, in the sense of long-term interventions based on the demands from local communities and civil society.

SGP success led to increased demand from the countries, quick program growth and the expected problems of managing a program in dozens of different countries with a limited budget. Therefore, at the end of OP4 there was a decision to “upgrade” or “graduate” the most successful and best established national SGPs to a different category. The chosen way to accommodate these new upgrading SGPs was to incorporate them as full-size Country Program projects within the GEF national portfolios starting with GEF OP5.

Therefore, at the end of OP5, these so called “projects” are evaluated in a similar way to the traditional GEF full-size projects. Obviously, it is necessary to briefly recall the SGP history to understand that this type of full-size project has some very specific characteristics that should not be forgotten at evaluation time.

A key aspect to be considered is that SGP Country Programs Projects do not implement directly. They don't have staff, resources, equipment or the mandate for direct implementation of activities leading to results and fulfillment of agreed indicators. These projects work by opening calls for proposals from CBOs and NGOs with a scope of areas of work based on the Project Document; therefore, the implementation of activities and achievements of results depends on the interest and willingness of other organizations to submit proposals within the defined scope of actions. If the organizations do not submit proposals the calls go unanswered and there are no actions made, money spent or results achieved.

Considering these aspects it is easy to understand that different aspects of the planning, monitoring and evaluation cycle are significantly affected by these conditions of operation and they need to be considered when assessing the different components and parts of the project cycle.

### Strategy

The new situation of the Ecuador SGP Country Program and the new operation as a 4-year project within the national GEF portfolio opened the possibilities of working with a medium-term perspective without the limitations of annual funding. This situation provided greater flexibility and innovation possibilities for SGP Ecuador who carried out a systematic and systemic analysis of its experience in order to conceptualize an innovative and more effective way to achieve its goals.

The analysis brought to light some of the limitations of the traditional approach (dispersion of efforts, higher management costs, difficulties to articulate small projects and create synergies among them across the country, and other issues).

From this analysis also emerged the concept about changing the Country Program focus to a territorial approach, meaning focusing the actions of the supported groups in specific territories and including in the project design criteria a variety of actions aimed at the integration of the work of these groups with a territorial impact perspective and beyond the geographical and social space of each individual group. With this approach it is expected to achieve impacts exceeding each participant organization and to influence a larger territory with a larger number of direct and indirect beneficiaries.

The implementation of this new approach began with a regionalization of the country based on key ecosystems (biodiversity) in which organizations with active and demonstrated presence are identified and able to implement actions with communities previously reached by the SGP Country Program team. In other words, regionalization was built based on biodiversity criteria but also capitalizing on the SGP's 20-year work experience in the country.

This regionalization process resulted in four regions: Northern Sierra, Sierra Center - South, Amazonia and Costa. Within each region several "biocorridors for good living" or “biocorridors for living well” (“biocorredores para el buen vivir”) were identified to work in these territories totaling 16 biocorridors. In each of these biocorridors several different organizations run different coordinated projects funded by the SGP Country Program.

In each of the four territories a participatory land use planning process was implemented based on the experience of the ART/UNDP program. This process was implemented in nine months because of its participatory nature.

Work began at the level of the four territories with the formation of Territorial Working Groups (GTT, for its Spanish acronym) in which various, non-governmental, governmental and social organizations, including Decentralized Autonomous Government (GAD, Spanish acronym) at the province, county and parish levels. The GTT work led to the development of specific Socio-environmental Territorial Agreement (ASOCIATE, for its Spanish acronym) for each territory in which working arrangements in the territory and the collaborative role of the various actors are defined around the three axes proposed by the SGP Country Program to guide territorial actions: ecological connectivity, sustainable production landscapes and associativity. These agreements are articulated with the Development and Land Use Plans (PDOT, Spanish acronym) of the GADs at different levels.

In the second stage, the work shifts its focus to the biocorridors identified in the previous step with the formation of Biocorridor Working Groups (MTB, Spanish acronym) for each of them. These groups developed Biocorridor Action Plans (ACBIO, Spanish acronym) for each of their territories and also identified the pertinent associative projects proposals for each biocorridor. This locally-based, participatory mechanism of project identification, replaced the traditional mechanism of national calls for project proposals previously used by SGP.

The identified projects were prioritized by the MTB and then designed and submitted to the SGP Country Program who reviewed them through its regular mechanism via its National Steering Committee (NSC). Thus, using the allocated GEF funds 43 projects were financed. Five additional projects were added through resource provided by the COMDEKS mechanism (Satoyama Initiative) and 11 GEF-funded grant projects received additional funding from the PASNAP Project (National Protected Areas System Support Program) of the Ministry of Environment. In addition to the mentioned, five Strategic Projects were assigned to the organizations running the EQUIPATE and EQUIPATEN and another five supported national networks interacting with the SGP grant projects in the field. Summarizing, a total of 62 associative projects in 16 biocorridors, territories and national level are funded.

The support, technical assistance and monitoring of these projects are organized through four regionally Technical Assistance and Evaluation Teams (EQUIPATE, Spanish acronym), one for each region and a national team (EQUIPATEN) which in turn supports and monitors the regional teams. Each of these teams consists of professionals from recognized non-governmental organizations with previous experience working with the SGP selected through an open call process for this specific purpose. Each organization selected for this task was awarded a SGP strategic project.

In this way it was possible to integrate a formal system of support, assistance, specific monitoring and evaluation for each of the regions, properly articulated with each other and with the SGP National Coordination, able to support properly the regions, biocorridors, projects and various government and civil partners involved in this new process ensuring that both GTTs and MTBs operate fluidly by providing logistic and secretariat support to them.

Additionally, in order to ensure that local biocorridor initiatives are coordinated with national processes and to avoid them becoming isolated in their local geographic areas, the SGP Country Program also supports several active national networks on topics of interest to the project (biodiversity, agroecology, regional and national networks of community groups, energy and other) to organize and carry out activities in the biocorridors and territories to enable local organizations to articulate their initiatives with processes at regional and national level.

The SGP National Steering Committee (NSC) continues to operate in Ecuador based on its structure of representatives from different national institutions (MAE and MAGAP), UNDP and representatives of sectoral organizations (environment, indigenous people, women, universities and local governments). An innovation introduced in OP5 due to the new territorial approach was to incorporate four territorial representatives (one from each SGP region) into the National Steering Committee. This innovation embodies at the NSC level the adoption of the territorial approach by the SGP Country Program.

All OP5 projects are within the GEF Biodiversity area and its main themes of work include ecosystem restoration (paramos, forests, mangroves, etc.), conservation of natural resources (soil, water), community-based tourism, agroecology, handicrafts, product marketing, value adding chains for local rural products (products with territorial identity), conservation and recovery of tree cover, crop diversification for food security, agricultural biodiversity, reintroduction of native species, capacity building, and others.

Obviously this profound transformation in SGP strategy and operations had its counterpart in the adaptation of the Monitoring and Support system (SIMONA) that had to be significantly adapted to meet the work demands arising from a regionalized structure operating with different levels of complexity (project biocorridor, territory, country) that required new indicators and tracking tools at these different levels. Modifications were also made to include technical assistance aspects in the operation of SIMONAA that were previously absent.

At the time of the MTR, the SGP Country Program is financing 62 field projects in total, of which 43 are supported with GEF funds in the approximate amount of \$ 4.3 million over a period of four years ending in mid 2015.

All projects have an approximate SGP budget of \$ 50,000, while five strategic projects are budgeted around US\$ 150,000 each. All projects should provide co-financing as globally defined for SGP (1:1 relation).

## Objectives, outcomes and indicators

<b>Project Goal: To conserve fragile and globally significant biodiversity and to contribute to achieve the conservation objectives of Ecuador and improve communities well-being</b>			
	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Targets End of Project</b>
<b>Project Objective Community initiatives reduce habitat fragmentation and improve ecological connectivity across production landscapes in four priority regions of Ecuador</b>	Increase in sustainably managed landscapes and seascapes that integrate biodiversity conservation in the following ecosystems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Paramo</li> <li>- Mangroves</li> <li>- Coastal dry forests</li> <li>- Amazon tropical rainforest</li> </ul>	Some 200 communities sustainably manage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 35,000 ha of Paramo<sup>1</sup></li> <li>- 1,300 ha of mangroves<sup>2</sup></li> <li>- 8,500 ha of coastal dry forest<sup>3</sup></li> <li>- 72,300 ha of tropical rainforest in the Amazon<sup>4</sup></li> </ul>	At least 100 additional communities implementing strategies and carrying out activities that increase sustainably managed landscapes and seascapes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 14,000 ha in the Paramo ecosystem</li> <li>- 600 ha in mangrove ecosystems</li> <li>- 10,000 ha in the coastal dry forest ecosystem</li> <li>- 20,000 ha in the Amazon tropical rainforest</li> </ul>
	Habitat coverage in hectares  And/or  Reduced habitat fragmentation rates in targeted areas	Target areas have various rates of ecosystem fragmentation (e.g. annual deforestation rate in Northeast Amazon is 3% and in the Coastal region varies between 2 and 4%) Habitat coverage will be determined for each area targeted by individual grants and, if information available, specific fragmentation rates will also be established	Habitat coverage remains the same or higher in at least 70% of land in grant receiving communities
	Number of biological corridors with community strategies to prevent habitat fragmentation	Connectivity areas identified for all bio-corridors but without governance or implementation mechanisms  Yanuncay Biological corridor with management plan and implementation mechanism	At least 12 bio-corridors with community implementation strategies to reduce habitat fragmentation among the following 15 potential areas identified: North Andean region (Paramo and Andean forest): 3 bio-corridors Central Andean region (Paramo and Andean forest): 5 bio-corridors Coastal region (mangrove and dry forests): 5 bio-corridors Amazon region (tropical rainforest): 2 bio-corridors

<sup>1</sup> Paramos ecosystems in the buffer zones of: Lakes Mojanda and San Pablo; Cayambe-Coca Reserve; Chimborazo Fauna Reserve; Sangay National Park; Cajas National Park; and Forest Reserve of Jeco.

<sup>2</sup> Buffer zones of: Río Chone estuary (Isla Corazón and Fraguatas); Portoviejo river estuary; and El Palmar mangrove.

<sup>3</sup> Buffer zones of the Forest Reserve of Montecristi-Sancan-Cantagallo; Wildlife Refuge of Pacoche, Forest Reserve of Chongon – Colonche. Agroforestry in San Placido and Honorato Vasquez.

<sup>4</sup> Buffer zones of the Llanganates National Park; Sumaco National Park; and Antisana and Yasuní Biosphere Reserves.

	Increased number of communities that obtain certification against national or international standards	20% of communities have obtained certification.	At least 60% of communities obtain certification by relevant entities for their sustainable livelihood activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Agro-ecological practices</li> <li>- Sustainable tourism</li> <li>- Sustainable use of species</li> <li>- Non-timber forest products</li> </ul>
	Increased number of communities aware of importance of maintaining ecological connectivity and of existence of sustainable livelihood options	TBD. A survey will be conducted at project inception in a representative sample of communities in the target areas	At least 40% of adult community members in target areas are aware of the importance to maintain ecological connectivity and are able to quote environmentally friendly production practices
<b>Outcome 1</b> <b>Effective community land use governance and planning is in place for increasing ecological connectivity in 4 ecosystems</b>	Number of biological corridor management plans developed by communities in partnership with CBOs, local government, private sector and NGOs	Yanuncay biological corridor covering 41,000 ha designed by 10 local communities and with a management plan (Andean region)	At least 12 additional biological corridors (among the 15 identified) with management plans covering an area of some 1'900,000 ha
	Number of functioning coordinating territorial bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One coordinating entity for the Yanuncay biological corridor functioning (Andean region)</li> <li>- Two coordination bodies for environmental management with working groups established for Paramo and mangrove ecosystems</li> </ul>	At least 9 additional community biological corridor management bodies representing a total of 300 communities operating effectively and in cooperation with local and regional government, community organizations and other stakeholders
	Increased number of watershed management plans in project focus areas	6 environmental management plans for the following watersheds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tabacay in the Canar Province</li> <li>Yanuncay and Jubones in the Azuay Province</li> <li>Chimborazo and Ajuela in the Chimborazo Province</li> <li>Bigal River in the Amazon</li> </ul>	15 micro-watersheds within biological corridor areas with management plans

<b>Outcome 2</b> <b>Rural communities have increased sustainable livelihood options appropriate for fragile and globally significant ecosystems</b>	Improved food security of local communities through crop diversification using local cultivars, agro-ecological practices, and other sustainable food production practices	10 Andean crop species <sup>5</sup> being recovered in the Paramo in 400 hectares involving 130 communities and 3,900 families  2 marine species sustainably managed by local communities in 2 sites	10 Andean crop species recovered (an additional 240 hectares) and incorporated in the family diet, contributing to food security of 60 communities and 1.000 families.  Mollusks and crustaceans available in a sustainable manner in 4 communities involving 35 families
	Increased number of communities generating income from sustainable production practices such as non-timber forest products, eco-tourism, and alpaca wool	280 communities currently obtain income from sustainable production initiatives	142 additional communities generate income from sustainable production practices involving some 1,500 families: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-timber forest products (50 communities)</li> <li>• Alpaca wool (6 communities)</li> <li>• Sustainable tourism (21 communities)</li> <li>• Cocoa and coffee production in agro-forestry systems (65)</li> </ul>
	Improved distribution of household income throughout the year as a result of sustainable production activities	- Income from 80% of local communities depends on the harvest of one cash crop - 5,000 families supported by SGP obtain additional income from sustainable production activities at least once a year in the last 5 years in project area	At least 1,500 families obtain income at least 4 times a year from sustainable use of biodiversity
	Improved gender equity as a result of increased income generation opportunities for women	20% of SGP-funded initiatives in the project areas managed by women with benefits accruing to them.	40% of SGP-funded initiatives will be controlled by women and benefits will accrue to them

<sup>5</sup> The species are: mashua (*Tropaeolum tuberosum*), oca (*Oxalis tuberosa*), melloco (*Ullucus tuberosus*), quinoa (*Chenopodium quinoa*), chocho (*Lupinus mutabilis*), white and purple carrots (*Arracacia xanthorrhiza*), Andean potatoes (*Solanum tuberosum*), jícama (*Polymnia sonchifolia*), jíquima (*Pachyrhizus tuberosus*), achira (*Canna edulis*), haba (*Phaseolus lunatus*), and amaranto (*Amaranthus* spp.).

<b>Outcome 3</b> <b>Knowledge systematized and disseminated, and communities trained in project design, monitoring and evaluation for adaptive management and learning</b>	Percentage of successful community projects	90% of SGP-funded projects rated as successful by evaluations (outcomes, outputs and targets met and likelihood of sustainability).	The current 90% rate of successful projects will be maintained or increased during this SGP phase.
	Increased number of community leaders active and with demonstrated socio-economic and environmental capacity to represent communities in bio-corridor governance bodies and other relevant policy and sustainable development activities	30 leaders (80% male and 20% female) with improved capacities in each selected area	At least 10 individuals per project with enhanced knowledge and leadership capacities to work with communities in sustainable ecosystem and resources management and to represent them effectively in various bodies and fora. Of these 60% male and 40% female.
	Number of community projects that apply adaptive management as a result of timely input from SIMONA	80% of previous projects use SIMONA inputs for adaptive management	At least 80% of projects show evidence of timely course change or improvements in project delivery based on SIMONA inputs

### 3.4 Project Implementation Arrangements

The SGP in Ecuador is executed by UNDP and implemented by UNOPS, through a small country program team.

UNDP provides overall program oversight and takes responsibility for standard GEF project cycle management services beyond assistance and oversight of project design and negotiation, including project monitoring, periodic evaluations, troubleshooting, and reporting to the GEF.

The SGP Country Program in Ecuador is guided by a National Steering Committee (NSC) integrated by governmental and non-governmental organizations with a non-governmental majority, a UNDP representative, representatives from different sectors and organizations and individuals with expertise in the GEF Focal Areas, and representatives from the four regions where SGP supports field activities. The NSC is responsible for grant approval and for determining the overall strategy of the SGP in the country. The proposed members of the NSC are appointed formally by the UNDP Resident Representative after clearance by the Global Technical Advisor.

As described in Section 3.3 (Project Description-Strategy) the project proposals were identified at the biocorridor level in each region by the MTBs (Biocorridor Working Groups) through a participatory planning process. This project identification at the territorial level ensures common goals and coordination among the organizations and with the desired territorial focus from the beginning. In this case, the NSC role is to provide analysis and advice and, as always, to ensure the quality of the proposals to be funded.

The National Coordination (Country Team) is composed of a National Coordinator, a Program Assistant, a Project Assistant and an Assistant/Driver recruited through competitive processes. Temporarily this team is enlarged with consultants hired to deal with specific funds (e.g. COMDEKS). The National Coordination is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the program.

In the Ecuador SGP Country Program the grants are usually on the order of US\$ 50,000. During this period each project is visited and supported on a regular basis by the EQUIPATE (Technical Assistance and Monitoring Teams) and the organization should submit regular reports that are reviewed (and returned with comments when necessary) by the National Coordination.

At the end of each grant project external independent evaluation is performed by third parties (other organizations or consultants).

### 3.5 Project timing and milestones

The Ecuador SGP Country Program began its Fifth Operational Phase (OP5) in September 2011 with the CEO Endorsement of the full-size project (FSP). The internal arrangements within UNDP and UNOPS (e.g. developing the Project Document) to accommodate the new upgrading Country Program took the rest of the year and a few months of 2012. The next phase was the development of the ASOCIATE plans at regional level and the ACBIO plans at biocorridor levels

During 2012, the EQUIPATE and EQUIPATEN began to operate supporting the new implementation approach and structure working with the GTT and MTB in developing the ASOCIATE and ACBIO. In early 2013 the NSC received, analyzed, commented and approved grant projects submitted through the new mechanism, while the operation of the EQUIPATE and EQUIPATEN was defined, approved and the performing organizations were selected.

Finally, the Ecuador SGP grant projects for OP5 began in early 2013 and their regular implementation will take until mid-2015, as planned.

#### Main stakeholders - summary

The primary stakeholders for this project are the approximately 140 rural communities in the focal territories managing paramo, dry forest, mangrove and rainforest ecosystems for food security and income, and who will benefit from SGP grants. Also included are social organizations, local NGOs and five national networks made up of organizations and institutions supporting the National Environmental Agenda, providing technical assistance and other forms of support to communities, and receive knowledge and information from the project. Secondary stakeholders include the National Steering Committee comprising representatives of civil society, government and others who provide essential governance for the Country Program, including selection of grants, strategic guidance, and networking with broader constituencies and institutions in the country.

Although national government institutions and local governments cannot receive SGP grants, they share responsibility for project outcomes and their sustainability, and contribute co-financing and other forms of support to CBOs and NGOs.

At the national level there are useful alliances such as the one with the Ministry of Environment's programs and projects, specifically with the project for "Sustainable Financing of Ecuador's National System of Protected Areas (SNAP) and Associated Private and Community-managed PA Subsystems" financed by the GEF, whose objective is to improve the sustainability of the national system of protected areas and has a focus on buffer zones and biological corridors and private and community conservation areas; and the project Supporting Sustainable Finance of Protected Areas, financed by the Ministry of Environment through the German Cooperation (KfW). There are also specific strategic partnerships with the Ministry to Coordinate Natural and Cultural Heritage, with the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Aquaculture and Fishing (MAGAP), and with the Institute of Popular and Solidary Economics (Instituto de Economía Popular y Solidaria, IEPS) of the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion (MIES).

At the provincial and local level, the project coordinates its actions with provincial and municipal governments, as well as with the organizations present in local territories. Additionally, SGP benefited from the experience of two programs implemented by the United Nations System for the Millennium Development Goals: "Conservation and sustainable management of natural and cultural heritage in the Yasuní Biosphere Reserve" and "Cultural diversity to reduce poverty and social inclusion", implemented by the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry to Coordinate Natural and Cultural Heritage, respectively; both projects ended three years ago. The SGP project collaborated significantly with the Program to Articulate Territorial Networks (ART) of the United Nations.

SGP cooperates and coordinates with the following on-going GEF-financed projects:

- Sustainable Financing of Ecuador's National System of Protected Areas (NSPA) and Associated Private and Community-managed PA Subsystems (UNDP)
- Management of Chimborazo's Natural Resources (FAO)
- Marine and Coastal Biodiversity Conservation Project (IADB)
- Conservation of the biodiversity of the Paramo in the Northern and Central Andes (UNEP)

## 4. FINDINGS

### 4.1 Project Strategy

#### Project Design

Conceptually, the project is very innovative and well designed. The key innovation brought by the Ecuador SGP Country Program was the shift from the traditional allocation for grants based on proposals submitted by individual organizations scattered across the country to the new system based on a territorial approach. Under the previous operation, even when the projects were located in prioritized areas, they were implemented by a single organization without major involvement of other neighboring groups. The new territorial approach addresses this constraint by having the grant receiving organizations to negotiate and include other organizations in the funding and implementation aiming to develop working relationships among them and reaching larger territorial impacts in ecological connectivity, sustainable production, ecosystem management, etc.

This innovation is a clear example of ways in which the SGP can overcome the constraints of limited impact due to its small-grant nature, and aim to impact larger areas with the significant additional benefits in terms of biodiversity conservation and wellbeing of local communities.

Needless to say, the innovation is not so much about the concept of shifting to territorial approach (there are numerous initiatives, recommendations and claims about this principle) but the way in which it was implemented. This implementation model is something to be considered, adopted and adapted by many other projects within and outside the SGP family.

A few key aspects to be noted in this regard are:

- Structuring the territorial approach at different levels, starting by a broader one (the region) where the nature of the participatory platform is more “political” with the involvement of local Governments, national institutions, and regional and local representatives. Within this level operate several smaller scale territories (biocorridors) whose participatory structures have a larger influence from local organizations, technical experts, NGOs and local governments. The first one deals with the big-picture issues (regional trends, links with the national institutions, access to budget allocations at a larger scale, etc,) while the second is more focused on project implementation, developing and strengthening associativity and ensuring that biocorridor-scale environmental and social results are achieved.
- The way in which technical assistance, follow-up (monitoring) and training was organized is also very innovative. These tasks are commissioned to local organizations at the biocorridor level, ensuring that local experienced professionals provide these services and that they are easily available for the local groups and able to provide rapid response. The coordination and support of these groups in, in turn, commissioned to another organization working at the national level and able to maintain a close connection with the local processes and the SGP National Coordination and also maintaining a consistent technical approach among the processes in the different biocorridors, keeping always in mind their particular specificities. Besides the obvious benefits of increased local self-reliance and quick response, this monitoring and support structure has the benefit of reducing the field monitoring workload of the National Coordination freeing valuable time for other essential activities for the SGP Country Program.

- Linking local efforts and processes at biocorridor and territorial levels with national processes through the connection of grant projects and technical teams (EQUIPATE and EQUIPATEN with different thematic networks (five) operating at the national level. This connection enables the local experiences to influence national processes and debates while taking these debates to the local levels. These processes allow for a multi-level and multi-stakeholder articulated structure whose design benefited from the experience and joint work with UNDP-ART

All these processes were made simultaneously with the SGP design for OP5 in Ecuador as a Country Program faced the challenge of its “upgrading”. This “upgrading” process meant evolving from an operation centrally coordinated and supervised by the SGP-CPMT in UNDP HQ and receiving annual budgets through CPMT to become a GEF full-size project, with a 4-year implementation period and pre-assigned funds for the entire period based on a budget coming from the Ecuador GEF STAR allocation. The change also implied reducing the CPMT supervision function to a broad one of general coordination and projection of the GEF corporate image and presence at the global level e.g. at COPs of the different Conventions, etc.

Probably the most difficult part of the new project design is how to define indicators, baselines and goals at the end of the project based on an implementation model that is not based on direct implementation by a project team with its own staff, equipment and resources (as the usual GEF full-size project). Instead, the SGP is based on proposals submitted by independent organizations responding to participatory processes in the territories (biocorridors), including a number of specific themes and aspects to be implemented in those territories.

This difficult aspect seems to have been well addressed by the Ecuador SGP Country Program because the achieved partial results and a few final ones from early OP5 projects seem to be relatively well on target (see next section 4.2 for a detailed analysis of this subject) and both the M&E system (SIMONA) and the GEF Tracking Tools are being used without problems despite being highly demanding.

Finally, but not less important, the SGP project is well aligned with global and national priorities. Ecuador, as signatory of the Biodiversity Convention is an eligible country for GEF funding in this area.

In terms of consistency with UN activities in Ecuador, the five strategic components for the UNDAF for the period 2010-2014, are i) capacities, potential, quality of life, and life expectancy; ii) production, employment, food sovereignty and economic solidarity; iii) environmental sustainability and risk management; iv) state reform, participation, justice and human rights; v) development, peace and integration of the northern frontier. Cross-cutting issues include human rights, gender equity, and inter-culturalism.

Of relevance to this project is Outcome 5 of Strategic component 3, Environmental sustainability and risk management: Institutions and local stakeholders promote a safe and healthy environment and environmental sustainability, considering biodiversity conservation, natural resources and environmental management. Another is Output 3 Strengthening capacities to prioritize in the national agenda biodiversity conservation and its use, access and equitable management.

The UNDP Ecuador Country Office is organized along two main clusters (originally three), each of which has a Cluster Manager and a Program Associate who will contribute to SGP’s project work: the Sustainable Development Cluster Manager leads the UN Country Team on Environment; the Cluster has over ten years of experience in GEF project design and implementation, particularly in the areas of biodiversity and climate change. The Governance and Poverty Reduction Cluster has

experience in linking communities to market networks and in capacity development, which is very important for project sustainability.

In addition to the expertise made available by UNDP to the SGP, it should be noted that SGP NSC members are well-known experts in fields such as biodiversity conservation, forestry, climate change, land use planning, agriculture, and gender and development; with the new territorial representative members, knowledge from the territories is considered.

In terms of gender issues, the PRODOC has a specific indicator for gender under Outcome 2: *“Improved gender equity as a result of increased income generation opportunities for women”*, and a specific target: *“40% of SGP-funded initiatives will be controlled by women and benefits will accrue to them”*. Additionally other gender issues are tracked specifically by the M&E System (SIMONA)

Summarizing, from the MTR perspective there are no major or significant concerns about the design of this project. Not only that, from the MTR perspective there are several elements in the project design of the SGP Ecuador Country Program that should be seriously considered by other programs aiming to achieve territorial impacts and results.

#### Results Framework/Logframe

The Project Results Framework is technically sound. Its different components are well defined and articulated and a clear logic can be easily identified across the different vertical layers (Project Objective, Outcome, Outputs) and horizontal components (Objective/Outcomes, Indicators, Baseline situation, End of Project Target, Source of verification and Assumptions).

The SGP Ecuador was able to make the links between this clear logical structure with the SGP implementation mechanism, particularly at the level of the indicators and targets of the Project Objectives that are linked to the GEF Tracking Tools for Biodiversity. In turn, these elements are incorporated into the M&E system (SIMONA) which is also able to provide the required information to deal with these different indicators.

Summarizing, there are no MTR concerns in this area of project design linked specifically to the Project Results Framework

## 4.2 Progress Towards Results

### Progress towards outcomes analysis

The analysis of progress towards outcomes based on the results of the project M&E System (SIMONA) regarding partial progress achieved by projects under implementation and the field visits to a dozen grant projects demonstrate that the SGP project is going very well and that the agreed products and results will be achieved as planned by the end of the OP5.

The following table shows progress by outcome and indicators as reported by the M&E System at the time of the MTR. The following Table presents similar information about progress towards project objective indicators. Finally the pertinent MTR ratings and their justification are presented.

## Progress Towards Project Results

Description	Description of Indicator	Baseline Level	Target Level at end of project	Progress Level at 30 June 2014	Achievement Rating	Justification for rating
OUTCOME 1 Effective community land use governance and planning is in place for increasing ecological connectivity in 4 ecosystems	Number of biological corridor management plans developed by communities in partnership with CBOs, local government, private sector and NGOs	Yanuncay biological corridor covering 41,000 ha designed by 10 local communities and with a management plan (Andean region)	At least 12 additional biological corridors (among the 15 identified) with management plans covering an area of some 1'900,000 ha	16 biocorridors were identified in the four regions. The territorial processes advanced through the 16 Working Groups (MTB in Spanish), which are multi-stakeholder forums where local actors work collaboratively to build the Biocorridors for Living Well. In these forums, community organizations coordinate their activities with regional actors such as Municipal and Parish decentralized governments (GAD in Spanish), international cooperation, universities and others. Each Biocorridor has its Action Plan (ACBIO), which is being partially implemented through the activities of the partnership projects, which began their activities in June 2013. All corridors cover an area of 1'887,108.26 Ha.	Achieved	Target on number of corridors surpassed by 33%  Area achieved (more than 99%)
	Number of functioning coordinating territorial bodies	One coordinating entity for the Yanuncay biological corridor functioning (Andean region). Two coordination bodies for environmental management with working groups established for Paramo and mangrove ecosystems	At least 9 additional community biological corridor management bodies representing a total of 300 communities operating effectively and in cooperation with local and regional government, community organizations and other stakeholders	The 4 Regional Working Groups (GTT in Spanish) and the 16 Biocorridor Working Groups (MTB in Spanish) operating through biannual and quarterly meetings. These working groups are led, in several cases, by the provincial, municipal and/or parish decentralized governments (GAD in Spanish), where community organizations, universities, international cooperation and other local actors participate. During these meeting, participants reach new agreements, the progress of projects is presented by project coordinators, they discuss issues of collective interest, and in some cases there are capacity building activities on specific topics. The GTT and MTB are of interest to the GAD, who see in them an opportunity for community outreach and implementation of their development plans, especially on environmental issues. The goal for the number of communities involved in the 46 associative projects has been surpassed, from 300 to 458 communities in the four territories.	Achieved	Target on number o involved communities already surpassed by 50%
	Increased number of watershed management plans in project focus areas	6 environmental management plans for the following watersheds: Tabacay (Canar); Yanuncay and Jubones (Azuay); Chimborazo & Ajuela Chimborazo); Bigal River (Amazon)	15 micro-watersheds within biological corridor areas with management plans	16 ACBIOS include an approach for micro-watershed management in the four territories, which are being implemented through activities from the associative projects.	Achieved	Target on micro-watershed with management plans reached. While the plans are centered on biocorridors and not specifically on micro-watersheds, these are embedded in the biocorridors.

<p>OUTCOME 2 Rural communities have increased sustainable livelihood options appropriate for fragile and globally significant ecosystems</p>	<p>Improved food security of local communities through crop diversification using local cultivars, agro-ecological practices, and other sustainable food production practices</p>	<p>10 Andean crop species[1] being recovered in the Paramo in 400 hectares involving 130 communities and 3,900 families. 2 marine species sustainably managed in 2 sites</p>	<p>10 Andean crop species recovered (an additional 240 hectares) and incorporated in the family diet, contributing to food security of 60 communities and 1,000 families. Mollusks and crustaceans available in a sustainable manner in 4 communities involving 35 families</p>	<p>During the first year of implementation of the associative projects, there have been some important achievements in the 4 territories: 18 projects are working on the recovery of agrobiodiversity species. 7 are located in the Highlands (North and Central Highlands together) and they contribute to the recovery of 20 Andean species - mainly potatoes, oca, mashua, andean seeds, andean cereals, blackberry (the spread of native blackberry and mortiño is being investigated by the communities through applied research) through the construction, improvement or conservation of 204 agroecological farms in additional 250 hectares involving 1852 families in 119 communities. The recovery of these species contributes to both food security, as well as value-added production for sale: mainly jam, cakes, toasted organic banana chips.</p> <p>In addition, 3 projects located in the coastal region are working on the recovery of mollusks and crustaceans. During the first year of implementation it has reached 332 families, the species are mangrove crab (<i>Ucides occidentales</i>) and dark shell (<i>Anadara tuberculosa</i>). Also in this region two projects are working with gadua cane and honey, reaching 417 families and 22 communities.</p> <p>The species of fauna involved in the 8 Amazon associative projects are: cachama, (<i>Piaractus brachypomun</i>) acarahuasú (<i>Astronotus ocellatus</i>) and two species of cichlids (<i>Aequidens</i> sp), where 354 families from 20 communities participate through the project "Lianas" who leads the implementation process of fish production in the region.</p>	Achieved	<p>Targets in both areas (paramo and mangroves) achieved and surpassed in number of species, communities, families and area (hectares)</p>
	<p>Increased number of communities generating income from sustainable production practices such as non-timber forest products, eco-tourism, and alpaca wool</p>	<p>280 communities currently obtain income from sustainable production initiatives</p>	<p>142 additional communities generate income from sustainable production practices involving some 1,500 families: Non-timber forest products (50 communities); Alpaca wool (6 communities); Sustainable tourism (21</p>	<p>The results for income generating from sustainable production practices are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 23 projects with agrobiodiversity management and conservation practices using an agro-ecological approach and marketing of surplus production are applied in 119 communities with a scope of 1852 families for the first year of implementation in 249.69 Hectares. The products are sold through agroecological fairs and some of them have a transforming process (jam, cakes, herbal infusions, chips, etc).</li> <li>- 1 project manufactures handicrafts with alpaca wool implemented in 4 communities with 90 families involved. At the moment this initiative has already 9 Alpacas.</li> <li>- 7 projects with community-managed sustainable tourism are implementd in 25 communities with 154 families involved.</li> <li>- 24 projects with community business skills and production</li> </ul>	Achieved	<p>Targets on number of communities and families involved achieved and surpassed in different degrees</p>

			communities); Cocoa and coffee production in agro-forestry systems (65)	capacity program for management of sustainable harvesting and marketing of non-timber forest products are applied in 195 communities with 1878 families. For example: organic coffee, Lignum vitae, mora, tomato tree, naranjilla or guava pulp, cooked jicama pulp, quinoa cake, chocho cake, honey, straw shawl (feedstock for handicrafts), chambira (material for handicrafts) and blue crab dishes - Other products that are being developed are: fried guinea pig, salt, chilli, humus, coffee, native fish, fine flavor cocoa (cacao fino de aroma), handicrafts with local fibers and seeds, achira ( <i>Canna indica</i> ) bread.		
	Improved distribution of household income throughout the year as a result of sustainable production activities	Income from 80% of local communities depends on the harvest of one cash crop. 5,000 families supported by SGP obtain additional income from sustainable production activities at least once a year in the last 5 years in project area	At least 1,500 families obtain income at least 4 times a year from sustainable use of biodiversity	24 projects are currently producing and selling biodiversity products, involving 851 families obtaining incomes at least 4 times a year from their sustainable use. This process is linked to local distribution and regional markets.	On target	More than 50% of the target number is already achieved and a full year of operation remains with all process fully progressing
	Improved gender equity as a result of increased income generation opportunities for women	20% of SGP-funded initiatives in the project areas managed by women with benefits accruing to them.	40% of SGP-funded initiatives will be controlled by women and benefits will accrue to them	The number of projects controlled by women is 20 out of 49, that is an average of 40% of the total project portfolio.	Achieved	Target on number of initiatives led by women with benefits reaching them is reached (41%)

<p><b>OUTCOME 3</b> Knowledge systematized and disseminated, and communities trained in project design, monitoring and evaluation for adaptive management and learning</p>	<p>Percentage of successful community projects</p>	<p>90% of SGP-funded projects rated as successful by evaluations (outcomes, outputs and targets met and likelihood of sustainability).</p>	<p>The current 90% rate of successful projects will be maintained or increased during this SGP phase.</p>	<p>During this first year of implementation of the associative- projects, the 90% rate of successful projects is ensured through: 1) the permanent support of the National and Regional Technical Assistance, Monitoring and Evaluation Teams (EQUIPATEN and EQUIPATES), and the permanent implementation of the Monitoring and Technical Support System (SIMONAA) that guarantees the accomplishment of the project objectives 2) The OP5 network modality provide knowledge management and strengthening local capacities, building strategic alliances, implementing initiatives in regional and national contexts, supporting participation in the design of public policy and building the National Environment Agenda (NEA).</p>	<p>On target</p>	<p>Target on percentage of successful projects achieved. Everything reviewed during the MTR points in the direction that this level will be maintained during the remaining year of the Project.</p>
	<p>Increased number of community leaders active and with demonstrated socio-economic and environmental capacity to represent communities in bio-corridor governance bodies and other relevant policy and sustainable development activities</p>	<p>30 leaders (80% male and 20% female) with improved capacities in each selected area</p>	<p>At least 10 individuals per project with enhanced knowledge and leadership capacities to work with communities in sustainable ecosystem and resources management and to represent them effectively in various bodies and fora. Of these 60% male and 40% female.</p>	<p>Thanks to the support by the National Technical Assistance, Monitoring and Evaluation Team (EQUIPATEN) the achievement of this result is ensured through the implementation of a capacitation plan that has been built with the help of the 4 Regional Technical Assistance, Monitoring and Evaluation Teams (EQUIPATE) and the associative projects. Currently, in addition SIMONAA shows that 1682 people have participated in strengthened capacities events, where the 63.8% (1073) were women. Within the total number of people, 308 people received specific training in leadership where 66% (203) were women. This is an average of 6 individuals per project. At the end of the OP5 this indicator will be achieved in 11 people per project, due to the initiatives outcomes. It is noteworthy that at this time there are training events in progress with high participation of women and youth in a variety of topics, ranging from the productive, commercial, organizational, environmental, rights, etc.</p>	<p>On target</p>	<p>The target number is 490 (10 persons per each of the 49 projects). 308 persons already trained (66% women); according to the evidence collected in the MTR the target will be achieved and probably surpassed</p>
	<p>Number of community projects that apply adaptive management as a result of timely input from SIMONA</p>	<p>80% of previous projects use SIMONA inputs for adaptive management</p>	<p>At least 80% of projects show evidence of timely course change or improvements in project delivery based on SIMONA inputs</p>	<p>The 49 SGP associative projects are currently working with the SIMONAA, to gather the information requested to measure the indicators from the Annual Operating Plan (POA in Spanish) and the goals of the logical framework. Each EQUIPATE verifies complements and validates the information given by the projects, in order to build a "chain" of information to obtain consolidated results at bio-corridor and territorial level. This process is very important because at local level, EQUIPATES visits the projects, where they can check the verification means and incorporate observations to the implementation of activities, achieving real-time corrections and in some cases they can report any situation that present threat to project performance regarding administrative, financial or political malpractices.</p>	<p>Achieved</p>	<p>All Projects (100%) are working with SIMONA, surpassing the 80% target. MTR evidence shows impressive level of adoption of SIMONA; therefore there is no reason to assume that the current level of SIMONA use will decay.</p>

## Progress Towards Project Objectives

	Indicator	Baseline	Targets End of Project	Progress at 30 June 2014	Achievement Rating	Justification for rating
Project Objective Community initiatives reduce habitat fragmentation and improve ecological connectivity across production landscapes in four priority regions of Ecuador	Increase in sustainably managed landscapes and seascapes that integrate biodiversity conservation in the following ecosystems: - Paramo - Mangroves - Coastal dry forests - Amazon tropical rainforest	Some 200 communities sustainably manage: - 35,000 ha of Paramo <sup>6</sup> - 1,300 ha of mangroves <sup>7</sup> - 8,500 ha of coastal dry forest <sup>8</sup> - 72,300 ha of tropical rainforest in the Amazon <sup>9</sup>	At least 100 additional communities implementing strategies and carrying out activities that increase sustainably managed landscapes and seascapes: • 14,000 ha in the Paramo ecosystem • 600 ha in mangrove ecosystems • 10,000 ha in the coastal dry forest ecosystem • 20,000 ha in the Amazon tropical rainforest • TOTAL: 44,600 HAS	42,802 has directly under management by more than 500 communities supported by SGP (343 working agroecology, tourism and non-timber species and 161 working on recovery of local species) covering: • 18,808 Ha in the Paramo ecosystem • 1,262 ha Mangroves • 1,305 ha Dry forest • 178 ha Coastal Tropical forest • 8,454 ha Andean forest • 12,795 ha Amazon tropical rainforest	On target	Number of involved communities widely surpassed. Total area almost achieved (96%) Dry forests and Amazonia not achieved yet, but progressing well Paramo and Andean forests widely higher than planned.
	Habitat coverage in hectares  And/or  Reduced habitat fragmentation rates in targeted areas	Target areas have various rates of ecosystem fragmentation (e.g. annual deforestation rate in Northeast Amazon is 3% and in the Coastal region (between 2 and 4%) Habitat coverage will be determined for each area and, if information available, specific fragmentation rates will also be established	Habitat coverage remains the same or higher in at least 70% of land in grant receiving communities	No information available yet	Not assessed	Information will be collected during the last year and available at end of project.

<sup>6</sup> Páramos ecosystems in the buffer zones of: Lakes Mojanda and San Pablo; Cayambe-Coca Reserve; Chimborazo Fauna Reserve; Sangay National Park; Cajas National Park; and Forest Reserve of Jeco.

<sup>7</sup> Buffer zones of: Río Chone estuary (Isla Corazón and Fragatas); Portoviejo river estuary; and El Palmar mangrove.

<sup>8</sup> Buffer zones of the Forest Reserve of Montecristi-Sancan-Cantagallo; Wildlife Refuge of Pacoche, Forest Reserve of Chongon –Colonche. Agroforestry in San Placido and Honorato Vasquez.

<sup>9</sup> Buffer zones of the Llanganates National Park; Sumaco National Park; and Antisana and Yasuní Biosphere Reserves.

	Number of biological corridors with community strategies to prevent habitat fragmentation	Connectivity areas identified for all bio-corridors but without governance or implementation mechanisms  Yanuncay Biological corridor with management plan and implementation mechanism	At least 12 bio-corridors with community implementation strategies to reduce habitat fragmentation among the following 15 potential areas: North Andean region (Paramo & Andean forest): 3 biocorridors Central Andean region (Paramo & Andean forest): 5 biocorridors Coastal region (mangrove and dry forests): 5 bio-corridors Amazon region (tropical rainforest): 2 bio-corridors	16 biocorridors established and operating	Achieved	Biocorridor participatory platforms in operation, biocorridor plans designed; projects under implementation
	Increased number of communities that obtain certification against national or international standards	20% of communities have obtained certification.	At least 60% of communities obtain certification by relevant entities for their sustainable livelihood activities: - Agro-ecological practices - Sustainable tourism - Sustainable use of species - Non-timber forest products	The target is 177 communities (60% of those with certifiable activities). 42 communities are working directly for the SGP certification in the Andean region.	On target	The remaining 135 are planned for the last Project year working on mangroves (coast) and tourism (Amazon) and that seems feasible considering past experience
	Increased number of communities aware of importance of maintaining ecological connectivity and of existence of sustainable livelihood options	TBD. A survey will be conducted at project inception in a representative sample of communities in the target areas	At least 40% of adult community members in target areas are aware of the importance to maintain ecological connectivity and are able to quote environmentally friendly production practices	No information available yet	Not assessed	Information will be collected during the last year and available at end of project.

### Remaining barriers to achieving the project objective

Based on the information from the table in the previous section it is fairly evident that the project has already achieved most of the agreed end-of-project targets and it is more than well positioned to achieve those assessed as on-target at the planned date for the end of the project next June 2015.

Summarizing, the MTR did not identify significant remaining barriers constraining the achievement of the project results and objectives at the end of the current phase.

## 4.3 Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

### Management Arrangements

During this OP5, and with the SGP operating as an “upgrading” program, management arrangements and procedures worked well, according to all interviewed parties.

The coordination with the UNDP CO was good; the UNDP Program Officer is a member of the NSC and participates in most of the meetings and tasks and maintains a good idea of project activities, potential, problems, etc.

The Ecuador SGP is well recognized and respected within UNDP CO and there is a good working relationship with different units and projects. This situation is helped by the fact that the SGP National Coordination team is hosted by the UNDP CO. The SGP National Coordinator participates as a regular member of the weekly coordination meetings held by the UNDP Country Representative.

The NSC meets regularly and contributes to the overall management of the SGP by reviewing periodically the progress towards results and indicators and making decisions about adjustments in different priorities based on the M&E system (SIMONA) results.

The monitoring, technical assistance and technical structure (EQUIPATE and EQUIPATEN) developed by the SGP Country Program works very well ensuring that each grant project is visited at least twice a year for monitoring purposes and thrice a year for technical assistance. This close follow-up generates two significant benefits: appropriate support to the local organizations implementing grant projects and to the territorial governance structures (MTB and GTT), and significant reduction of the workload of the National Coordination that keeps a very good sense of the field processes and its challenges without a heavy load of travel all over the country. This situation enables the National Coordination to devote time to other relevant actions such as coordination and joint work with national institutions, UNDP, other international organizations, other projects, etc. Moreover, this decentralized structure creates more local self-reliance and less dependence from centralized structures, something that is highly desirable under the SGP general approach to conservation and local development.

Despite the good and harmonious operation of the SGP Ecuador as an upgrading country program during OP5, a basic vacuum remains in terms of strategic management and decision making about the SGP itself. During the previous Operational Phases, as a regular SGP participant in the SGP Global Program, the Ecuador SGP reported directly to the SGP CPMT (Central Program Management Team) at the SGP central office at UNDP HQ in New York.

With the “upgrading”, this reporting line was replaced by a coordination line and no reporting line was established. Therefore, there are no operational problems when everything goes well, but there are no clear supervision mechanisms for when they don't.

The obvious solution is to create a strategic management function to address these issues and the evaluation's opinion is that this new function of SGP strategic management should be incorporated into the TOR of the National Steering Committee (see Conclusions and Recommendations for more details on this). The justification for this recommendation is that it is the governing structure of the SGP at country level, all stakeholders are represented on the NSC and it is a structure that already exists formally and is widely recognized.

### Work planning

Work planning does not present major problems. The SGP develops and follows an Annual Workplan that is used to develop monthly workplans.

All approved project proposals are based on the SGP logframe results and indicators, and there is a clear and visible connection between the project logframe and the proposals. As said before, monitoring and evaluation becomes demanding because each small project and biocorridor targets different indicators and goals, multiplying the tracking of results and their aggregation across different projects, but the combination of SIMONA and the monitoring teams (EQUIPATE and EQUIPATEN) are addressing the task without major problems.

Reviewing the NSC meeting reports, the comments on project proposals, the project reports and the final project reports and audits it is clear that the SGP logframe is widely used to keep the project on the right track.

The MTR finds that work planning is well conducted and there are no MTR concerns in this regard.

### Finance and co-finance

The project management costs have remained at similar levels to previous stages. Some previous studies indicate that the efficiency of SGP is comparable or better than the average of GEF projects; therefore there is not much more to comment on this.

In terms of co-financing, the Governmental contributions are progressing at a slower pace than planned, but the main problem is with their reporting on technical assistance and other services they provide in-kind. In other words, there is a contribution but it was not possible for the SGP to include it in the co-financing accounting.

UNDP was able to contribute half of the co-financing identified at project design; therefore it is expected that this contribution will grow during the remaining year.

The bulk (70%) of the accounted co-financing is coming from the grantee organizations, despite the fact that at project design they were expected to contribute only one third of the total co-financing. This situation cannot be considered a surprise because it has already happened in the previous phases of the SGP, reflecting the strong commitment of the grantee organizations and better procedures to better accounting of their in-kind contributions.

The overall co-financing situation of the Ecuador SGP is summarized below.

#	Sources of Co-Funding	Name of Co-Financier (source)	Type of Co-financing	Amount at design	Disbursed until June 2014	Notes
1	National Government	Ministerio de Agricultura, Ganadería, Acuacultura y Pesca	Cash	1,000,000	5,000.00	Disbursed up to MTR date, no final accounting yet
2	National Government	Ministerio de Agricultura, Ganadería, Acuacultura y Pesca	In Kind	1,000,000.-	n.a.	There are some activities under implementation but there are no partial or final accounting reports from MAGAP at the time of MTR
3	National Government	Other potential Governmental contributions (Ministry of Environment)	Cash	150,000.-	616,043.-	There is a Letter of understanding with the Ministry of Environment (MAE) for US\$ three million;- US\$ 616,043.- already disbursed in cash. There are some other activities under implementation but no partial or final accounting reports from MAE at MTR time
5	GEF Agency	UNDP	Cash	1,000,000.	323,250.-	Satoyama Initiative negotiated by UNDP, plus UNDP TRAC contribution
6	GEF Agency	UNDP	In Kind	n.a.	150,000.-	ART/UNDP technical assistance
7	CSO	Grantees, private sector, other multilateral and bilateral agencies	Cash	960,000.-	1,044,738.-	It includes C-CONDEM and FOTAENA and all the grantees. It also includes grantees from the Satoyama Fund.
8	CSO	Grantees, private sector, other multilateral and bilateral agencies	In Kind	690,000.-	1,625,943.-	It includes C-CONDEM and FOTAENA and all the grantees. It also includes grantees from the Satoyama Fund.
	<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>4,800,000.-</b>	<b>3,764,974.-</b>	<b>78.5% of the co-financing at Project design already disbursed</b>

From this table it becomes evident that the Ecuador SGP Country Program is well positioned towards surpassing its co-financing targets, accepting that the proportion between cash and in-kind contributions will be more skewed towards the latter than planned.

It is important to highlight that almost all contributions have not been fully accounted for yet because projects are still under implementation. Moreover, considering how grantee co-financing is already evolving towards figures much higher than committed at the project proposal stage, it is reasonable to expect that co-financing at the end of the project will be higher than these current figures and probably higher than defined at project design.

### Project-level monitoring and evaluation systems

The monitoring and evaluation of the Ecuador SGP Country Program (SIMONA) is very good. It is well conceptualized and it is in use since early stages of the SGP, but it underwent a significant upgrade in OP5 to adjust it to the new territorial approach developed and adopted by the Ecuador Country Program.

This system is really excellent and has become a very important tool for decision-making for the National Coordination, the NSC (National Steering Committee) and to supply information to other organizations such as the UNDP Country Office as well as national institutions and projects.

It is remarkable that during the MTR field visits several organizations and their coordinators and leaders used the SIMONA structure and information to provide quantitative information about the progress of their work. This fact provides evidence of the widespread adoption and use of the system by the local organizations, in addition to the EQUIPATE and EQUIPATEN. The multi-level and multi-stakeholder structure (local project, biocorridor, territory/region, national levels) with specific indicators and assessment tools helped significantly in achieving this high degree of adoption at the mentioned levels.

Finally, but no less important, the Project Document includes gender indicators. The last Indicator of Outcome 2 has a target of 40% of SGP-funded initiatives managed by women and with benefits accrued to them; similarly, the second indicator of Outcome 3 on leadership development has a target of 10 individuals per project with enhanced knowledge and leadership capacities to work with communities in sustainable ecosystem and resources management and to represent them effectively; of these 60% male and 40% female.

The M&E system (SIMONA) keeps detailed track of both indicators and targets.

The M&E Budget is well presented in the SGP ProDoc with adequate detail in both activities and budget. Budgets seem appropriate for the different tasks and they are spent without obstacles, as evidenced by the different reports, interviews and field visits.

The Project M&E does not present any area of concern for the MTR.

### Stakeholder engagement

The SGP in Ecuador has formed well established and long-standing relationships with national and community level initiatives and partners (public and private sector) and has continued seeking synergies during OP5.

Local community groups located in the biocorridors of the four prioritized regions are the most important SGP partners, including indigenous organizations.

In addition to the gender indicators and progress mentioned in previous sections, during the MTR visits and interviews it became evident that gender equity is an aspect that runs effectively across all project activities.

In a similar analysis, it can be said that something similar is happening in relation to the rural youth, but they are less visible in both the project document and SIMONA. The field information gathered during the MTR is clear that young men, women, adolescents and children are included in grant project activities. Considering the persistent tendency of the youth to emigrate from rural

areas to urban centers it may be useful for SGP Ecuador to consider giving youth a similar level of visibility and attention as that given to women.

Based on the evidence provided by the field visits and interviews, it becomes clear that there is a close communication between the Country Program Team and the local partners, particularly through the constant presence and activities of the EQUIPATE and EQUIPATEN. These mechanisms contributed to develop an active and fluid relationship between the project and the local organizations providing a strong base for a better engagement of the stakeholders in all project activities.

Summarizing, there are no significant MTR concerns regarding stakeholder engagement in the Ecuador SGP Country Program.

### Reporting

Reporting works smoothly in general, particularly regarding the reporting from the local monitoring and support teams (EQUIPATE and EQUIPATEN) to the National Coordination (NC), and from there to the National Steering Committee. In addition to the regular NC and NSC meetings usually attended by all representatives, there is a significant flow of information within the system through email and other digital means.

NSC members feel well informed and updated about project progress and well consulted by the National Coordination regarding critical issues. At the same time, the National Coordination perception is that the NSC provides good support to the project and a good space to address project problems, analyze new ideas, etc.

GEF reporting is well performed in general. During OP5, PIR documents for 2012 were completed on schedule in 2013, and PIR documentation for 2013 was ready for submission at the time of this MTR in 2014.

#### GEF Biodiversity Tracking Tools

The SGP Ecuador Country Program maintains its GEF Biodiversity Tracking Tools information updated.

The following Table shows the reporting status as of March 2014 (three months before the MTR date). Given the nature of the SGP Country Program, Objectives 1 (Protected Areas) and 3 (Biosafety) of the GEF Tracking Tools are not completed because the project does not have activities in these aspects. The information from the SGP Ecuador falls entirely under Objective 2: Mainstreaming Biodiversity Conservation in Production Landscapes/Seascapes and Sectors



## Tracking Tool for Biodiversity Projects in GEF-3, GEF-4, and GEF-5

<b>Objective 2: Mainstreaming Biodiversity Conservation in Production Landscapes/Seascapes and Sectors</b>		
<p><b>Objective:</b> To measure progress in achieving the impacts and outcomes established at the portfolio level under the biodiversity focal area.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Project data from the GEF-3, GEF-4, and GEF-5 project cohort will be aggregated for analysis of directional trends and patterns at a portfolio-wide level to inform the development of future GEF strategies and to report to GEF Council on portfolio-level performance in the biodiversity focal area.</p> <p><b>Structure of Tracking Tool:</b> Each tracking tool requests background and coverage information on the project and specific information required to track portfolio level indicators in the GEF-3, GEF-4, and GEF-5 strategy.</p> <p><b>Guidance in Applying GEF Tracking Tools:</b> GEF tracking tools are applied three times: at CEO endorsement, at project mid-term, and at project completion.</p> <p><b>Submission:</b> The finalized tracking tool will be cleared by the GEF Agencies as being correctly completed.</p>		
I. General Data	Please indicate your answer here	Notes
Project Title	Fifth Operational Phase of The Small Grant Programme in Ecuador	
GEF Project ID	4375	
Agency Project ID	4518	
Implementing Agency	UNDP Ecuador	
Project Type	FSP	FSP or MSP
Country	Ecuador	
Region	LCR	
Date of submission of the tracking tool	March 26, 2014	Month DD, YYYY (e.g., May 12, 2010)
Name of reviewers completing tracking tool and completion date	March 25, 2014	Completion Date
Planned project duration	4	years
Actual project duration	3	years
Lead Project Executing Agency (ies)		
Date of Council/CEO Approval	February 10, 2012	Month DD, YYYY (e.g., May 12, 2010)
GEF Grant (US\$)	4,398,145	
Cofinancing expected (US\$)	4,800,000	
Please identify production sectors and/or ecosystem services directly targeted by project:		
Agriculture	1	1: Primarily and directly targeted by the project 2: Secondary or incidentally affected by the project
Fisheries	2	
Forestry	1	
Tourism	1	
Mining	n.a	
Oil	n.a	
Transportation	n.a	
Other (please specify)	Biodiversity Conservation	

## II. Project Landscape/Seascape Coverage

<b>1. What is the extent (in hectares) of the landscape or seascape where the project will directly or indirectly contribute to biodiversity conservation or sustainable use of its components? An example is provided in the table below.</b>		
<b>Foreseen at project start (to be completed at CEO approval or endorsement)</b>		
Landscape/seascape <sup>[1]</sup> area <u>directly</u> <sup>[2]</sup> covered by the project (ha)	72,722	
Landscape/seascape area indirectly <sup>[3]</sup> covered by the project (ha)	117,100	
Explanation for indirect coverage numbers:	Baseline data collected at project start - area currently preserved	Please indicate reasons
<b>Actual at mid-term</b>		
Landscape/seascape <sup>[1]</sup> area <u>directly</u> <sup>[2]</sup> covered by the project (ha)	23,812	
Landscape/seascape area indirectly <sup>[3]</sup> covered by the project (ha)	35,130	
Explanation for indirect coverage numbers:	Area preserved by the communities in addition to the SGP programme	
<b>Actual at project closure</b>		
Landscape/seascape <sup>[1]</sup> area <u>directly</u> <sup>[2]</sup> covered by the project (ha)	N/A	
Landscape/seascape area indirectly <sup>[3]</sup> covered by the project (ha)	N/A	
Explanation for indirect coverage numbers:	N/A	Please indicate reasons

[1] For projects working in seascapes (large marine ecosystems, fisheries etc.) please provide coverage figures and include explanatory text as necessary if reporting in hectares is not applicable or feasible.

[2] Direct coverage refers to the area that is targeted by the project's site intervention. For example, a project may be mainstreaming biodiversity into floodplain management in a pilot area of 1,000 hectares that is part of a much larger floodplain of 10,000 hectares.

[3] Using the example in footnote 2 above, the same project may, for example, "indirectly" cover or influence the remaining 9,000 hectares of the floodplain through promoting learning exchanges and training at the project site as part of an awareness raising and capacity building strategy for the rest of the floodplain. Please explain the basis for extrapolation of indirect coverage when completing this part of the table.

2. Are there Protected Areas within the landscape/seascape covered by the project? If so, names these PAs, their IUCN or national PA category, and their extent in hectares		
Name of Protected Areas	IUCN and/or national category of PA	Extent in hectares of PA
Isla Corazon	National PA category	800
Colonso	National PA category	11924
Parque Nacional Cayambe Coca	National PA category	8062
N/A		

OP5 projects do not work on PA but in Biocorridors that include buffer zones of protected areas, ecological connectivity approach link two protected areas or zones of significant biodiversity (whether or not they are part of SNAP the National System of Protected Areas) either through a corridor or through sustainable production landscapes which reduce pressure on the areas to be conserved.  
Different communitarian projects manage Community Conserved Areas looking for being gazetted by the SNAP.

3. Within the landscape/seascape covered by the project, is the project implementing payment for environmental service schemes? If so, please complete the table below. Example is provided.		
<i>e.g. Foreseen at Project Start</i>	N/A	<i>Please Indicate Environmental Service</i>
	N/A	<i>Extent in hectares</i>
	N/A	<i>Payments generated (US\$)/ha/yr if known at time of CEO endorsement</i>
Foreseen at project start (to be completed at CEO approval or endorsement)	N/A	Please Indicate Environmental Service
	N/A	Extent in hectares
	N/A	Payments generated (US\$)/ha/yr
Actual at mid-term	N/A	Please Indicate Environmental Service
	N/A	Extent in hectares
	N/A	Payments generated (US\$)/ha/yr
Actual at project closure	N/A	Please Indicate Environmental Service
	N/A	Extent in hectares
	N/A	Payments generated (US\$)/ha/yr

**Part III. Management Practices Applied**

4. Within the scope and objectives of the project, please identify in the table below the management practices employed by project beneficiaries that integrate biodiversity considerations and the area of coverage of these management practices. Please also note if a certification system is being applied and identify the certification system being used. Note: this could range from farmers applying organic agricultural practices, forest management agencies managing forests per Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) guidelines or other forest certification schemes, artisanal fisherfolk practicing sustainable fisheries management, or industries satisfying other similar agreed international standards, etc.

Foreseen at project start (to be completed at CEO approval or endorsement)	Design and construction of Biocorridors for Good Living. (Generate or re-establish socio-environmental connectivity in four ecosystems which are of local, national and global importance: paramo, dry forests, mangroves and tropical rainforests)	Please indicate specific management practices that integrate BD
	Participatory Guarantee System (PGS)	Name of certification system being used (insert NA if no certification system is being applied)
	72,772 hectares	Area of coverage
Actual at mid-term	Connectivity in five ecosystems (paramo, Andean forest, dry forests, mangroves and tropical rainforests)	Please indicate specific management practices that integrate BD
	Participatory Guarantee System (PGS)	Name of certification system being used (insert NA if no certification system is being applied)
	23,812 hectares	Area of coverage
Actual at project closure	N/A	Please indicate specific management practices that integrate BD
	N/A	Name of certification system being used (insert NA if no certification system is being applied)
	N/A	Area of coverage

**Part IV. Market Transformation (DOES NOT APPLY TO ECUADOR SGP)**

**Part V. Policy and Regulatory frameworks (DOES NOT APPLY TO ECUADOR SGP)**

**Part VI. Tracking Tool for Invasive Alien Species Projects in GEF 4 and GEF 5  
(DOES NOT APPLY TO ECUADOR SGP)**

Summarizing, there are no significant MTR concerns regarding reporting with the Ecuador SGP Country Program.

## Communications

As presented above in the section on stakeholder engagement, SGP communications with stakeholders and partners are excellent. No other comments are needed about this.

In terms of public communications the situation is very good, mainly due to its Website. The project website (<http://www.ppd-ecuador.org>) is attractive and has lots of information for those visiting it for the first time as well for others looking for specific information; moreover, at the MTR time it was being further improved and updated. An important aspect to highlight is that many documents and some videos that present an important part of the SGP experience -including a significant number of documents of analysis of experiences- are available in the section of documents and publications.

Ecuador SGP systematizes its experiences regularly. As an example, the experience of the planning phase of the current SGP OP5 is already analyzed, published and available at the Website as “Planificando participativamente Biocorredores para el Buen Vivir: Sistematización de la Fase de Planificación de la FO5/PPD” (Participatory planning of the Biocorridors to live well: a systematization of the SGP/OP5 Planning Phase).

This richness of experience and lessons is one of the greatest legacies of the Ecuador SGP (in addition to its concrete field results) and the fact that they are easily accessible to the public is a strength to highlight and maintain.

As a summary, there are no major MTR concerns about the SGP Ecuador communications.

## 4.4 Sustainability

### Financial risks to sustainability

The financial risks to the sustainability of the actions funded in OP5 do not seem important. In other words, the invested resources are there in the hands of the local organizations and well incorporated into their actions. Because of the co-financing procedures, the different operating networks and the learning process that participating in the SGP process means for the local organizations it is reasonable to expect that a large majority of the products and results of the funded projects will remain in place, as products from previous SGP phases can be seen today.

Moving into a more detailed assessment, the first thing that becomes evident is that there are some lines of work that can be considered already as sustainable and autonomous from the SGP. This does not necessarily mean that the SGP should remove itself from these lines, but it means that they will be able to continue their development in the event of a disruption of SGP Country Program operations. The lines of work that can be considered in this situation include rural tourism, organic agriculture, cacao and food security.

Other lines are implemented in coordination with local Governments (GADs) and it is expected that the latter guarantee the continuity of these lines. This is the case for SGP supported work on marketing different agricultural products, handicrafts and other.

Last but not least, there are some lines of work that still may depend financially to some degree on the continued action of the SGP Country Program, particularly for their expansion, such as the

territorial approach to achieve larger biodiversity conservation impacts and the work on associativity that is critical to extend the different environmental and socio-economic benefits of the funded actions beyond the boundaries of the recipient organizations.

The fact that the innovative aspects launched by the SGP Country Program in OP5 (territorial approach, associativity) are the ones that depend the most on SGP continuity should not be surprise. These efforts are now under implementation for just a couple of years, and they will reach three years by the end of the current OP. It would be unrealistic to expect sustainable results for these complex and difficult issues still unsolved by most of conservation and development processes in such a short period of time. Definitively the consolidation of these essential aspects of conservation and development will require a longer time and investment effort from GEF, Ecuador as a country and the SGP Ecuador as the field implementing instrument.

Based on the presented aspects the MTR rates the financial sustainability as Likely.

#### Socio-economic risks to sustainability

Socio-economic risks are not significant because of the way in which SGP is implemented. SGP activities are not decided by the SGP National Coordination; they are decided, designed, justified and implemented by the local groups committing their own resources to the activities they propose.

As a consequence, what is perceived in the field visits and interviews with the local groups is that they are entirely committed to the success and continuity of the undertaken efforts.

Similarly, the engagement of national organizations, local governments (GADs) and other stakeholders in the field projects also contribute to create an enabling environment protecting the initiatives from the usual socio-economic problems.

Based on the presented aspects the MTR rates the socio-economic sustainability as Likely.

#### Institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability

The national institutional framework in Ecuador seems to be shifting from a clear commitment with the environment and participatory democracy mechanisms to a much more ambiguous position in these regards. At the time of MTR it is difficult to define or forecast the precise direction and final expected reach of this shifting because some new initiatives such as the “change in the country productive matrix” are not well defined yet, with initial ideas aiming at directing this change towards traditional export of agricultural and mining products (including oil), others are talking about adding value and growing industrialization, and there is a wide lack of definition about the areas not suitable for export crops or mining. As the SGP is active in these last mentioned areas, perhaps there is an opportunity to influence the new process that, as said, still is very incipient.

Similarly, it seems that the push towards devolution and decentralization that characterized the national process over the last years is now being reversed by a stronger push towards recentralization, something that is not well received at the local levels. There are other similar shifting processes taking place, but probably the two mentioned already are the most significant for the SGP Country Program and its activities. Both of them have the potential to create social conflict in rural areas and, therefore, to create a threat to the sustainability of the achieved results.

As the extent of these shifts is not known yet, it is difficult to establish whether or not they represent risks to the sustainability of the Ecuador SGP results. Moreover, most probably during the remaining year of SGP activities these shifts will not be large enough to affect the SGP results in OP5. Definitely these are issues to be addressed with particular attention at the Final Evaluation of the current Ecuador SGP OP5 and the design of the proposal for the next one. Because of this situation the MTR rating of sustainability in this aspect is just Moderately likely.

### Environmental risks to sustainability

The most evident risk to the environmental sustainability of SGP actions is a long-term one: climate change. This is a relevant risk because of its scale and because it has the potential to affect the core component of the SGP (and GEF) approach: biodiversity conservation in protected areas, biological corridors and buffer zones. Everybody expects that the work in environmental connectivity carried out by GEF, SGP and many other agencies and organizations will be enough to reduce the risks that climate change poses for biodiversity conservation, but nobody knows for sure. Therefore, and despite the uncertainty, doing what is being done is still the best no-regrets bet.

Other short-term risks as deforestation, forest fires, environmental degradation (soil, water, etc.) can be significant in very specific parts of the country or to some very specific SGP-supported projects, but they do not imply a generalized risk for the entire set of project activities.

Based on the presented aspects the MTR rates the environmental sustainability as Likely.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Conclusions

#### Conclusions

1. The current GEF full-size project Ecuador SGP Country Program corresponding to the 5th Operational Phase of the GEF SGP is relevant to the objectives with which it must maintain consistency (GEF and country).
2. The project is implementing the planned activities as expected and the progress achieved during the first year of implementation appear to be successfully reaching and surpassing the agreed indicators.
3. The project has operated within the historical average efficiency of SGP projects. Some previous studies have shown that this efficiency can be assessed as good in relation to the general population of projects funded by the GEF.
4. The project has designed and implemented a pioneering initiative that aims to develop territorial processes qualitatively different from its prior financing scheme based on isolated individual initiatives. This approach led to successful planning processes whose implementation is already underway and progressing solidly with good prospects of achieving the proposed results.
5. The sustainability of the funded initiatives at the level of local organizations implementing them is good and varies according to the lines; therefore they should continue as planned until the end of the project. Given the adoption of the new territorial approach, sustainability must also be analyzed at the territorial level in addition to the implementing local organization level. At this point, with only one year of project implementation it is too premature to assess the level of sustainability achieved in this territorial scale.
6. The SGP in Ecuador achieved, throughout its history and including this reviewed phase, many impacts as evidenced in part by what was stated in the previous sections on sustainability. These impacts are visible at the level of individual organizations and, again, it is still premature to attempt to define and assess impacts at biocorridor or region scales due to the limited time of implementation of the grant projects under this new approach.
7. The varied and numerous SGP Country Program strengths and opportunities and its innovative nature should lead to an attractive proposal for the GEF 6th Operational Phase and the eventual subsequent execution should continue and expand the actions and impacts achieved so far.

## Recommendations

1. To complete the current Fifth Operational Phase of the SGP in Ecuador maintaining the current existing operational procedures and systems that have proven effective and efficient in achieving the proposed results. Overall, the SGP Ecuador project is implemented very appropriately; therefore, the first recommendation is to keep up the good work.
2. To expand the Terms of Reference of the National Steering Committee (NSC) to include key strategic management decisions currently in a situation of uncertainty due to the Ecuador SGP upgrading. While several important aspects are already in the TOR of the National Steering Committee such as the evaluation of the National Coordination, the regular renewal of the members of the NSC, the monitoring of different significant aspects, etc., the key issue about what is the strategic decision-making reporting line of the SGP Country Program is not explicitly defined. In other words, it is necessary to define who has the decision-making authority and what is the decision-making process to decide about the strategic orientation of the SGP Country Program (approach, priority areas, program scope and reach, NSC composition, NC staffing, etc.) if the case arises in which different stakeholders (UNDP CO, NSC and/or UNDP-GTA) have non-negotiable differences about these aspects. The MTR view is that the final decision authority should be in the hands of the National Steering Committee, but this is obviously an issue that exceeds the reach of the MTR. Therefore, the MTR also recommends that the task of extending the terms of reference of the National Steering Committee should be coordinated by the UNDP-GEF Global Technical Advisor for SGP Upgrading Country Programs in order to ensure consistency across the group of SGP upgrading country programs.
3. To strengthen the capacities of the National Steering Committee to address the conceptual and practical aspects of the new territorial approach and the new strategic management functions mentioned above. This strengthening should include both specific training and field visits and exchanges of experiences within the SGP and with other organizations and networks.
4. To make all necessary efforts to develop a new project proposal for the next GEF Operational Phase that maintains the key characteristics of the current phase in order to properly assess the significant potential benefits of the territorial approach that this Country Program is testing.
5. To strengthen the work with youth groups incorporating preference criteria for proposals submitted by them within the existing territorial framework defined in the regional plans (ASOCIATE) and the Biocorridor Action Plans (ACBIO). A recognition as actors of territorial development can help to motivate these groups to contribute to the local processes rather than to migrate looking for other options.
6. To develop a stronger internal analysis and discussion within the SGP (involving the NSC, the National Coordination and the support structures (EQUIPATEN and EQUIPATE) about the best ways to address the challenges generated by the differences in organizational development among implementing organizations within the biocorridors and the differences of key characteristics between biocorridors (e.g. smaller ecological connectivity in the Sierra and less social connectivity in the Amazon).

*September 22, 2014*

## **ANNEXES**

## ANNEX 1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

### Terms of Reference

#### *Evaluations of the GEF-financed Full-Size Projects for the Fifth Phase of the GEF Small Grants Program in Bolivia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Kenya and México*

The five projects listed here were approved in GEF OP5 as upgrading country Program projects financed by the GEF. Upgrading SGP Country Program projects are products of the policy approved by GEF Council at the November Council of 2008. Under this policy, countries were encouraged to finance their SGP Country Programs with a higher amount from their STAR allocations. The average GEF financing per upgrading country Program is USD 4.6 million.

Upgrading Country Programs follow SGP Operational Guidelines, in particular in regard to the composition of the National Steering Committee and the role of the National Coordinator. The four-year standard Country Program Strategies have been substituted by UNDP-GEF Project Documents in which a logical framework delineates the expected outputs and outcomes to be produced as a consequence of a focused grant making scheme. In the case of the five UCPs listed here, UNOPS remains the executing agency.

The evaluations of the five projects consist of one Terminal Evaluation (Mexico) and four Midterm Reviews (Bolivia, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Kenya). UNDP-GEF supplies standard TORs for Terminal Evaluations (page 2-13) and Midterm Reviews (page 14-25), which can be found below. The project evaluations will require assessment, against the outcomes and outputs of each project, of the impacts achieved or in progress, identification of lessons learned, identification of bottlenecks and obstacles to further implementation and development of the Country Programs for the future. The evaluator will produce an individual written assessment report for each project, as well as an overall synthetic, comparative report across all projects which will identify trends and patterns in design and implementation as input to SGP Program analysis overall.

## UNDP-GEF Midterm Review Terms of Reference Template

*Note: This template MTR ToR fits the formatting requirements of the UNDP Procurement website.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This is the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the UNDP-GEF Midterm Review (MTR) of the *full or medium*-sized project titled *Project Title* (PIMS#) implemented through the *Executing Agency*, which is to be undertaken in *year*. The project started on the *project document signature date* and is in its *third* year of implementation. In line with the UNDP-GEF Guidance on MTRs, this MTR process was initiated following the completion of the second Annual Project Review/ Project Implementation Report (APR/PIR). This ToR sets out the expectations for this MTR. The MTR process must follow the guidance outlined in the document *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects*.

### 2. PROJECT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The project was designed to: *(provide a brief introduction to the project including project goal, objective and key outcomes, its location, timeframe the justification for the project, total budget and planned co-financing. Briefly describe the institutional arrangements of the project and any other relevant partners and stakeholders).*

### 3. OBJECTIVES OF THIS MTR

The MTR will assess progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outcomes as specified in the Project Document (ProDoc), and assess early signs of project success or failure with the goal of identifying the necessary changes to be made to set the project on-track to achieve results. The MTR will also review the project's strategy, its risks to sustainability and the project's preparation of a strategy for when UNDP-GEF project support ends (if they have one and if they don't, then assist them in preparing one at the midterm).

### 4. MTR APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

The MTR must provide evidence based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The MTR team will review all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase (i.e. PIF, UNDP Initiation Plan, UNDP Environmental & Social Safeguard Policy, the Project Document, project reports including APR/PIRs, project budget revisions, lesson learned reports, other project files, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the team considers useful for this evidence-based review). The MTR team will review the baseline GEF focal area Tracking Tool submitted to the GEF at CEO endorsement, and the midterm GEF focal area Tracking Tool that must be completed before the MTR field mission begins.

The MTR team is expected to follow a collaborative and participatory approach<sup>10</sup> ensuring close engagement with the Project Team, government counterparts (the GEF Operational Focal Point), the UNDP Country Office(s), UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisers, and other key stakeholders.

Engagement of stakeholders is vital to a successful MTR.<sup>11</sup> Stakeholder involvement should include interviews with stakeholders who have project responsibilities, including but not limited to *(list)*; executing agencies, senior officials and task team/ component leaders, key experts and consultants in the subject area, Project Board, project stakeholders, academia, local government and CSOs, etc. Additionally, the MTR team is expected to conduct field missions to *(location)*, including the following project sites *(list)*.

The final MTR report should describe the full MTR approach taken and the rationale for the approach making explicit the underlying assumptions, challenges, strengths and weaknesses about the methods and approach of the review.

<sup>10</sup> For ideas on innovative and participatory Monitoring and Evaluation strategies and techniques, see [UNDP Discussion Paper: Innovations in Monitoring & Evaluating Results](#), 05 Nov 2013.

<sup>11</sup> For more stakeholder engagement in the M&E process, see the [UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results](#), Chapter 3, pg. 93.

## 5. DETAILED SCOPE OF MTR

The MTR team will assess the following four categories of project progress. See the Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects for requirements on ratings. No overall rating is required.

### 5.1 Project Strategy

#### Project design:

- 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. Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated into the project design?
- Review how the project addresses country priorities. Review country ownership. Was the project concept in line with the national sector development priorities and plans of the country (or of participating countries in the case of multi-country projects)?
- Review decision-making processes: were perspectives of those who would be affected by project decisions, those who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the process, taken into account during project design processes?
- If there are major areas of concern, recommend areas for improvement.

#### Results Framework/Logframe:

- Undertake a critical analysis of the project's logframe 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.
- Are the project's objectives and outcomes or components clear, practical, and feasible within its time frame?
- Examine if progress so far has led to, or could in the future catalyse beneficial development effects (i.e. income generation, gender equality and women's empowerment, improved governance etc..) that should be included in the project results framework and monitored on an annual basis.
- Ensure broader development and gender aspects of the project are being monitored effectively. Develop and recommend SMART 'development' indicators, including sex-disaggregated indicators and indicators that capture development benefits.

### 5.2 Project Results

#### Progress Towards Results:

- Review the logframe indicators against progress made towards the end-of-project targets using the Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects; colour code progress in a "traffic light system" based on the level of progress achieved; assign a rating on progress for each outcome; make recommendations from the areas marked as "High risk of not being achieved" (red).
- Compare and analyse the GEF Tracking Tool at the Baseline with the one completed right before the Midterm Review
- By reviewing the aspects of the project that have already been successful, identify ways in which the project can further expand these benefits.

### 5.3 Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

#### Work Planning:

- Review any delays in project start-up and implementation, identify the causes and examine if they have been solved.

- Are work-planning processes results-based? If not, suggest ways to re-orientate work planning to focus on results?
- Examine the use of the project document logical/results framework as a management tool and review any changes made to it since project start. Ensure any revisions meet UNDP-GEF requirements and assess the impact of the revised approach on project management.

#### Finance and co-finance:

- Consider the financial management of the project, with specific reference to the cost-effectiveness of interventions.
- Review the changes to fund allocations as a result of budget revisions and assess the appropriateness and relevance of such revisions.
- Does the project have the appropriate financial controls, including reporting and planning, that allow management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allowed for timely flow of funds?
- Informed by the co-financing monitoring table to be filled out, provide commentary on co-financing: is co-financing being used strategically to help the objectives of the project? Are project teams meeting with all co-financing partners regularly in order to align financing priorities and annual work plans?

#### Monitoring Systems:

- Review the monitoring tools currently being used: Do they provide the necessary information? Do they involve key partners? Are they aligned or mainstreamed with national systems? Do they use existing information? Are they efficient? Are they cost-effective? Are additional tools required? How could they be made more participatory and inclusive?
- Examine the financial management of the project monitoring and evaluation budget. Are sufficient resources being allocated to monitoring and evaluation? Are these resources being allocated effectively?

#### Reporting:

- Assess how adaptive management changes have been reported by the project management and shared with the Project Board.
- Assess how lessons derived from the adaptive management process have been documented, shared with key partners and internalized by partners.

#### Communications:

- Review internal project communication with stakeholders: Is communication regular and effective? Are there key stakeholders left out of communication? Are there feedback mechanisms when communication is received? Does this communication with stakeholders contribute to their awareness of project outcomes and activities and long-term investment in the sustainability of project results?
- Review external project communication: Are proper means of communication established or being established to express to the public the project progress and intended impact (is there a project website or a weekly e-bulletin, for example? Or did the project implement appropriate outreach and public awareness campaigns?)
- For reporting purposes, write one half-page paragraph that summarizes the project's progress towards results in terms of contribution to sustainable development benefits, as well as global environmental benefits.

#### Management Arrangements:

- Review overall effectiveness of project management as outlined in the Project Document. Have changes been made and are they effective? Are responsibilities and reporting lines clear? Is decision-making transparent and undertaken in a timely manner? Recommend areas for improvement.
- Review the quality of execution of the project Implementing Partners and recommend areas for improvement.
- Review the quality of support provided by UNDP and recommend areas for improvement.

### **5.4 Long-term Sustainability**

- Validate whether the risks identified in the Project Document, APR/PIRs and the ATLAS Risk Management Module are the most important and whether the risk ratings applied are appropriate and up to date. If not, explain why. Give particular attention to critical risks.
- Assess overall risk management to sustainability factors of the project in terms of risks to motivations, capacity, and resources. Does the project have sustainability benchmarks built into the project cycle?
- *Financial Sustainability*: What is the likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available once the GEF assistance ends (consider potential resources can be from multiple sources, such as the public and private sectors, income generating activities, and other funding that will be adequate financial resources for sustaining project's outcomes)?
- *Socio-political Sustainability*: Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outcomes? What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership (including ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained? Do the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow? Is there sufficient public / stakeholder awareness in support of the long term objectives of the project? Are lessons learned are being documented by the project team on a continual basis and shared/ transferred to appropriate parties who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it in the future?
- *Institutional and Governance Sustainability*: Do the legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes pose risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project benefits? While assessing this parameter, also consider if the required systems/ mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer are in place.
- *Environmental Sustainability*: Are there any environmental risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project outcomes? The MTR should assess whether certain activities will pose a threat to the sustainability of the project outcomes.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The MTR team will include a section of the report setting out the MTR's evidence-based conclusions, in light of the findings.

Recommendations should be succinct suggestions for critical intervention that are specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant. A recommendation table should be put in the report's executive summary. See the Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects for guidance on a recommendation table.

The MTR team will make recommendations by outcomes, as well as on Project Implementation and on Long-Term Sustainability/ Risk Mitigation strategy; they will make at least 5 key recommendations, and no more than 15 recommendations total.

## 7. TIMEFRAME

The total duration of the MTR will be (# of weeks) starting (date) according to the tentative MTR timeframe as follows:

DATE	ACTIVITY
(dates)	Desk review - 2 days
(date)	MTR Inception Workshop - 1 day
(dates)	Validation of MTR Inception Report - 1 day
(dates)	Stakeholder meetings, interviews, field visits - 6-8 days, depending on number and distances
(dates)	Mission wrap-up & presentation of initial findings 3 days
(dates)	Preparing draft report 5 days
(dates)	Incorporating audit trail on draft report/Finalization of final report (off-site) 2

	<i>days</i>
<i>(dates)</i>	Preparation & Issue of Management Response
<i>(dates)</i>	Comments/ Feedback on the Management Response
<i>(date)</i>	Expected date of full MTR completion

Options for field trips should be provided in the Inception Report.

## 8. MIDTERM REVIEW DELIVERABLES

- **MTR Inception Report:** MTR team clarifies objectives and methods of Midterm Review
  - Timing: No later than 2 weeks before the MTR mission
  - Responsibilities: MTR team submits to the Commissioning Unit
- **Presentation:** Initial Findings
  - Timing: End of MTR mission
  - Responsibilities: MTR Team presents to project management and the Commissioning Unit
- **Draft Final Report:** Full report (as template in Annex B) with annexes
  - Timing: Within 3 weeks of the MTR mission
  - Responsibilities: Sent to the Commissioning Unit, reviewed by RTA, PCU, GEF OFP
- **Final Report:** Revised report with audit trail detailing how all received comment have (and have not) been addressed in the final MTR report
  - Timing: Within 1 week of receiving UNDP comments on draft
  - Responsibilities: Sent to the Commissioning Unit
- **Comments on the Management Response:** Review the Management Response to the Final MTR report and provide comments
  - Timing: Within 1 week of receiving the Management Response
  - Responsibilities: Sent to the Commissioning Unit

## 9. MTR ARRANGEMENTS

The principal responsibility for managing this MTR resides with the Commissioning Unit. The Commissioning Unit for this project's MTR is UNDP-GEF GLECRDS under the responsibility of the UNDP-GEF global manager for the SGP Upgrading Country Programs.

The commissioning unit will contract the consultants and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements within the country for the MTR team. The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the MTR team to provide all relevant documents, set up stakeholder interviews, and arrange field visits.

## 10. TEAM COMPOSITION

A team of two independent consultants will conduct the MTR - one team leader (with experience and exposure to projects and evaluations in other regions globally) and one team expert, usually from the country of the project. The consultants cannot have participated in the project preparation, formulation, and/or implementation (including the writing of the Project Document) and should not have a conflict of interest with project's related activities.

The selection of consultants will be aimed at maximizing the overall "team" qualities in the following areas:

- Recent experience with result-based management evaluation methodologies;
- Experience applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios;
- Competence in adaptive management, as applied to *(fill in GEF Focal Area)*;
- Experience working with the GEF or GEF-evaluations;
- Experience working in *(region of project)*;
- Work experience in relevant technical areas for at least **10 years**;

- Demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender and *(fill in GEF Focal Area)*; experience in gender sensitive evaluation and analysis.
- Excellent communication skills;
- Demonstrable analytical skills;
- Project evaluation/review experiences within United Nations system will be considered an asset.

## **11. PAYMENT MODALITIES AND SPECIFICATIONS**

Upon approval of final version of the Midterm Review report by the Commissioning Unit and the UNDP-GEF RTA/team, 80% of the payment will be disbursed. Upon receipt of comments/ feedback on the Management Response, the remaining 20% of the payment will be disbursed.

## ANNEX 2. EVALUATIVE MATRIX

Evaluation question	Indicators	Sources	Methodology *
<b>PROJECT STRATEGY: How appropriate is the strategy and project design?</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How appropriate was the design of the project?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Correspondence between the problems addressed by the project and underlying assumptions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Documents</li> <li>SGP Staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DR + I</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Correspondence between project strategy and most effective route to achieving goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Documents</li> <li>SGP Staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DR + I</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of incorporating lessons from other projects in the design</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Documents</li> <li>SGP Staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DR + I</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of project alignment with national goals and priorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNDP Documents</li> <li>National Planning Documents</li> <li>Project Documents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DR + I</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of ownership of the project by national organizations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Governmental staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of incorporation of perspectives of local, partners and other stakeholders in the project design</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local stakeholders</li> <li>Governmental staff</li> <li>Representatives of organizations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How appropriate is the Project results framework / logframe?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adequacy of the Project Goals and Indicators (SMART) to its strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PRODOC &amp; Reports</li> <li>SGP Staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DR + I</li> <li>Evaluator's criteria</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Degree of clarity, practicality and feasibility of the Project objectives and results to the situation and time available</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PRODOC &amp; Reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DR</li> <li>Evaluator's criteria</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of effects not considered to be included in the results framework and monitored regularly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PRODOC &amp; Reports</li> <li>Local stakeholders</li> <li>Governmental staff</li> <li>Representatives of organizations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DR + I + DO</li> <li>Evaluator's criteria</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extent to which aspects of gender equity and other of similar amplitude in terms of development are effectively monitored.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PRODOC &amp; Reports</li> <li>SGP Staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DR + I</li> <li>Evaluator's criteria</li> </ul>

<b>PROJECT RESULTS: What is the degree of project progress towards expected results?</b>			
• ¿What are the achievements of the project until MTR?	• Proposed Objectives and Results	• PRODOC	• DR + I
	• Achieved Objectives and Results	• PRODOC & Reports • Partners and participants • Field Visits	• DR + I + DO
	• Degree of correspondence between progress and proposed in the GEF Tracking Tools for the Project Thematic area	• PRODOC & Reports • GEF Tracking Tools • SGP Staff	• DR + I + DO • Evaluator's criteria
	• List of topics and areas in which the project can expand the benefits in terms of achievements	• PRODOC & Reports • Local stakeholders • Governmental staff • Representatives of organizations	• DR + I + DO • Evaluator's criteria
<b>PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT: How appropriate was the implementation of the project so far and to what extent was necessary to implement adaptive management?</b>			
• How appropriate is operational planning?	• List of startup and project implementation delays and measures to address them	• SGP Project Information	• DR + I
	• Extent to which operational planning is guided by results	• SGP Project Information	• DR + I
	• Degree of use of the results matrix and adjustments made to it since the beginning of the Project	• SGP Project Information	• DR + I
• How adequate has been finance and co-finance management?	• Efficiency in the management of project financial resources	• SGP Project Information	• DR + I
	• Changes in the allocation of project funds and relevance and degree of ownership	• SGP Project Information	• DR + I
	• Degree of ownership of the financial controls of the project (including planning and reporting) and its flow of funds (to and from the project)	• SGP Project Information	• DR + I
	• Degree to which the co-financing is provided and its level of strategic use	• SGP Project Information • Co-financing information	• DR + I

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How adequate is the monitoring of the project?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring system in place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SGP Project Information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DR + I</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation and inclusion of partners in monitoring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SGP Project Information</li> <li>• Partners information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DR + I</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alignment with other (national GEF) systems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SGP Project Information</li> <li>• Other systems information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DR + I</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Degree of adequacy of funding for monitoring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SGP Project Information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DR + I</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How suitable are the reports of the project?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level of Reporting of Project adjustments to the Project Committee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SGP Project Information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DR + I</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level of documentation and dissemination of project settings to the partners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SGP Project Information</li> <li>• Partners information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DR + I</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How suitable are project communications?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Degree of regularity, effectiveness and inclusiveness of Project communication efforts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SGP Project Information</li> <li>• Partners information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DR + I</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequacy of public communications of Project activities and achievements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SGP Project Information</li> <li>• Partners information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DR + I + DO</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How suitable are the management arrangements of the project?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall effectiveness of the project management (responsibilities, lines of supervision, decision making)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SGP Project Information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DR + I</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of project implementation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SGP Project Information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DR + I</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of support provided by UNDP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SGP Project Information</li> <li>• UNDP information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DR + I</li> </ul>

**LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY: To what extent there are financial, institutional, socio-economic and / or environmental risks to the project results long term sustainability?**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How suitable are the project's strategies to address the different types of risks to the sustainability of project results?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Degree of relevance of the risks identified in the PRODOC, APR / PIR and ATLAS.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SGP Project Information</li> <li>• Partners and participants perceptions</li> <li>• Field Visits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DR + I + DO</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Degree of risk factors of sustainability in terms of motivation, capacity and resources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SGP Project Information</li> <li>• Partners and participants perceptions</li> <li>• Field Visits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DR + I + DO</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List, relevance and existence and implementation of prevention and mitigation of financial sustainability.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SGP Project Information</li> <li>• Partners and participants perceptions</li> <li>• Field Visits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DR + I + DO</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List, relevance and existence and implementation of prevention and mitigation of socio-political sustainability.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SGP Project Information</li> <li>• Partners and participants perceptions</li> <li>• Field Visits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DR + I + DO</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List, relevance and existence and implementation of prevention and mitigation of institutional and / or governance sustainability.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SGP Project Information</li> <li>• Partners and participants perceptions</li> <li>• Field Visits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DR + I + DO</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List, relevance and existence and implementation of prevention and mitigation of environmental sustainability.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SGP Project Information</li> <li>• Partners and participants perceptions</li> <li>• Field Visits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DR + I + DO</li> </ul>

\* Methodology:

DR. Documents Review

I. Interviews

DO. Direct Observation

### ANNEX 3. MTR RATINGS AND RATINGS SCALE

Measure	MTR Rating	Achievement Description
<b>Project Strategy</b>	N/A	The Project strategy is sound. The Project LFA is well constructed and it is constantly used by the project (National Steering Committee and National Coordination). Identified Project LFA Indicators and Goals are too many and not adequate to SGP implementation mechanisms.
<b>Progress Towards Results</b>	Objective Achievement Rating: 6 Highly satisfactory	The Achievement Rating is based on the Achievement of individual results below. In turn, those are based on the Summary Table of Progress Towards Results (previous section) and the fully detailed table in section 4.2 Progress Towards Results. Moreover, the MTR has not identified areas of concern or remaining barriers to achieve the results.
	Outcome 1 <i>Community-based actions mainstream biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into production landscapes in biological corridors and PA buffer zones</i> Achievement Rating: 6 Highly satisfactory	According to the Tables mentioned above, the SGP has already achieved 3 indicators and targets of this Outcome, while the remaining 3 show considerable progress and are assessed as On-target.
	Outcome 2 Green-house gas emissions reduced and carbon stocks increased through community-based actions. Achievement Rating: 6 Highly satisfactory	According to the Tables mentioned above, the SGP achieved already considerable progress in all indicators of this Outcome and all of them are assessed as On-target based on the commitments established in the pertinent proposals still under implementation.
	Outcome 3 <i>Conservation of productive lands and restoration of degraded lands contribute to sustainability and improved local livelihoods.</i> Achievement Rating: 6 Highly satisfactory	According to the Tables mentioned above, the SGP has already achieved 1 indicator and its targets of this Outcome, while the remaining ones show considerable progress and are assessed as On-target.
	Outcome 4 <i>Community-based organizations and their members with improved capacities and knowledge management for replication and up-scaling of best practices.</i> Achievement Rating: 6 Highly satisfactory	According to the Tables mentioned above, the SGP achieved already considerable progress in all indicators of this Outcome and all of them are assessed as On-target based on the commitments established in the pertinent proposals still under implementation.
<b>Project Implementation &amp; Adaptive Management</b>	5 Satisfactory	According to the results shown in Section 4.3 (Management Arrangements) regarding Work planning, Finance and co-finance, Project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, Stakeholder engagement, Reporting and Communications, all these areas are managed adequately and the MTR did not identify any major concern about them. There are some issues to be addressed during the rest of OP5 (GEF TT, completing the climate change M&E component, etc.) that prevented giving the maximum rating.

<b>Sustainability</b>	4 Likely	According to the results shown in Section 4.4 Sustainability, the MTR did not identify any major concern about them and all different sustainability areas (financial, socioeconomic, institutional and environmental) were assessed as Likely.
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## MTR RATING SCALES

<b>Ratings for Progress Towards Results: (one rating for each outcome and for the objective)</b>		
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.

<b>Ratings for Project Implementation &amp; Adaptive Management: (one overall rating)</b>		
6	Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Implementation of all seven components – management arrangements, work planning, finance and co-finance, 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 action.
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.

<b>Ratings for Sustainability: (one overall rating)</b>		
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 4. MTR MISSION ITINERARY

The field visit was completed in a few different segments between May 19 and June 27, 2014, because the MTR evaluator lives in Ecuador. The itinerary was agreed with the SGP National Coordination with the support of the UNDP Country Office.

The field visit was conducted between July 14 and 24, 2014 in accordance with the following schedule agreed with the National coordination and with support from the UNDP Country Office

<b>July 14</b>	
All day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel Costa Rica (Turrialba) - Quito (Ecuador). Installation.</li> </ul>
<b>July 15</b>	
All day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of documents</li> </ul>
<b>July 16</b>	
Morning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with the National Coordination Team</li> <li>• Visit to the MAGAP Agroecological Fair</li> </ul>
Afternoon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with UNDP-ART Project</li> <li>• Meeting with the UNDP Country Representative</li> <li>• Meeting with the National Coordination Team (part 2)</li> </ul>
<b>July 17</b>	
Morning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with members of the National Steering Committee</li> <li>• Meeting with UNDP Programme Officer</li> <li>• Meeting with PASNAP project, Min. Environment</li> </ul>
Afternoon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with representatives of the networks supported by the SGP</li> <li>• Meeting with representative of MAGAP in the National Steering Committee</li> </ul>
<b>July 18</b>	
Morning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beginning of the field visit to the Sierra Norte Region and biocorridors</li> <li>• Interview with the Major of Pedro Moncayo Municipality and Pisque - Mojanda-San Pablo biocorridor representatives</li> <li>• Visit to the Fair mayor of Pedro Moncayo Agroecological Fair</li> <li>• Meeting with representatives of projects from the biocorridor Pisque-Mojanda-San Pablo, city officials and EQUIPATE members</li> </ul>
Afternoon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit to the training plots of FBU (Foundation Brethren Unida)</li> <li>• Visits to producers of the La Turujta project</li> </ul>
<b>July 19</b>	
Morning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview with the Mayor of Cayambe Municipality and representatives in GGT and CTB Cayambe-Coca</li> <li>• Visit the Cayambe Agroecological Fair</li> <li>• Meeting with representatives of biocorridor Cayambe-Coca projects, city officials and members of the EQUIPATE</li> </ul>
Afternoon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit to producers, artisans and families participating in community tourism in the UNOCIGS projects</li> </ul>

<b>July 20</b>	
All day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beginning of the field visit to the Amazonia Region and biocorridors</li> <li>• Travel Otavalo to Tena</li> <li>• Dinner with EQUIPATE and EQUIPATEN members</li> </ul>
<b>July 21</b>	
Morning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit to the Amanecer Campesino projects accompanied by EQUIPATE and EQUIPATEN members, the Lianas Foundation and councilors of the Municipality of Archidona.</li> </ul>
Afternoon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit to the RETHUS projects accompanied by EQUIPATE and EQUIPATEN members, the Lianas Foundation and councilors of the Municipality of Archidona.</li> </ul>
<b>July 22</b>	
Morning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit to the Santa Rita (Archidona) community projects accompanied by EQUIPATE and EQUIPATEN members, the Lianas Foundation and councilors of the Municipality of Archidona.</li> </ul>
Afternoon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit to the San Jose (Archidona) community projects accompanied by EQUIPATE members, the Lianas Foundation and councilors of the Municipality of Archidona.</li> </ul>
<b>July 23</b>	
Morning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel Tena - Quito</li> </ul>
Afternoon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with the National Coordination Team. Analysis of closing issues and presentation of the preliminary results of the visit</li> </ul>
<b>July 24</b>	
All day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return trip Quito - Costa Rica (Turrialba)</li> </ul>

## ANNEX 5. LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

The list of persons and its organizations interviewed by the MTR includes:

### Community Organizations and persons

UNOCIGS (Unión de Organizaciones Comunitarias Indígenas de González Suárez)

1. Carlos Méndez, President
2. Roberto Tocagon
3. Lucy Tocagon
4. Elsa Bautista
5. Elvia Espinosa (tourism)
6. Marco Cabascán (tourism)
7. María de la Cruz (family orchard)
8. Angelita Santillán (Subcentro de Salud Women Group)

Organization Turujta

1. Daniel Guasgua
2. Jorge Sánchez
3. Silverio Poscuta (producer)
4. Carolina Inlago (midwife and traditional healer)
5. Julián Caliguyín (plants nursery)

Foundation Brethren Unida (FBU)

1. Alfredo Merino, Director
2. Eladio Alvarado

Confederation of the Kayambi People

1. Amílcar Morales
2. Agustín Cachipuendo

Red de Economía Solidaria y Seguridad Alimentaria Kayambi / Kayambi Solidarity Economy and Food Security Network (RESSAK)

1. Soledad Inlago

Ancholag Communities Council

1. Gertrudis Cholca
2. María Pulamarín

Unión de Organizaciones Campesinas Cayambe (UNOCC) / Cayambe Union of Peasant Organizations

1. Susana Chiquima

Amanecer Campesino

1. Raquel Reyna, Administrator
2. Carlos Silvera, Colonia Babahoyo
3. Amalia Romero, Colonia Babahoyo
4. Manuel Rondón, Fuerzas Unidas
5. Jorge Aguindo, Cruz Chicta
6. Eduardo Alvarado, Colonia Babahoyo
7. Cristina Benavidez, Colonia Babahoyo
8. Jenny Reina, Colonia Babahoyo

9. Ron Rodríguez, Colonia Babahoyo
10. Fanny Moya, Wacamayo
11. Candy Moya, Wacamayo
12. Enrique Grena, Colonia Babahoyo
13. Sandra Silvera, Colonia Babahoyo
14. Carlo Silvera, Colonia Babahoyo
15. Marita Silvera, Colonia Babahoyo
16. Alejandro Yumbo, San Ascencio

RETHUS (Huataraco y Suma Suno Tourism Network)

1. Ruth Bonilla. Coordinator, Kamanvi Biocorridor
2. Bolívar Yumbo, Kuriquindí
3. Bartolo Yumbo, Kuriquindí
4. Lucía Licuy, Kuriquindí
5. Martha Tupuy, Kuriquindí
6. Josefina Licuy, Kuriquindí
7. María Licuy, Kuriquindí
8. Rosario Gisela Licuy, Kuriquindí
9. Omar Shinguango, RETHUS
10. Pedro Alvarado, RETHUS Tourism
11. Georgui Yumbo, RETHUS President
12. Marco Siquigua, RETHUS Secretary
13. Eddy Aguinda, RETHUS Environment
14. Ledar Luan Vaca, Colegio Monseñor Alejandro La Vaca
15. María Papa, Colegio Monseñor Alejandro La Vaca
16. Martha Cifuentes, Colegio Monseñor Alejandro La Vaca
17. Ligia Chanabisa, Colegio Monseñor Alejandro La Vaca
18. Vinicio, Colegio Monseñor Alejandro La Vaca
19. Andrea Yañez, Colegio Monseñor Alejandro La Vaca

Santa Rita Community. Sinchi Waricuna Women Group

1. Fanny Grefa. Coordinator
2. Clever Andi. Project Professional
3. Adela Andi, Santa Rita
4. Elena Tanquilla, Santa Rita
5. Sandra Tapuy, Wambula
6. Beatriz Greta, Wambula
7. Estela Alvarado, Santa Rita
8. Yesica Andi, Santa Rita
9. María Yumbo, Santa Rita
10. Humberto Andi, Santa Rita
11. Seneida Andi, Santa Rita

San José Community. Kawsaypak Chakra Project

NOTE. All participants listed below are from San Jose community

1. Sergio Yumbo, Coordinator
2. Monica Licuy
3. Fanny Runay
4. Carmen Greta
5. Angelina Greta
6. Mireya Narvaez
7. Mariela Greta

8. Claudia Greta
9. Darwin Aguinda
10. Ninger Alvarado
11. Franklin Gretqa
12. Gladis Salazar
13. Sandra Licuy
14. Janeth Greta
15. Duncan Greta
16. Angel Licuy
17. Emma Salazar
18. Lidia Tanguila
19. Zenaida Greta
20. Fabiola Andi
21. Adela Tapuy
22. Rosalía Greta
23. Rosario Greta
24. Bartolo Licuy
25. Serafina Greta
26. Fidel Alvarado
27. María Greta
28. Joaquina Tangedo

#### **Other organizations**

1. Antonio Almeida. Lianas Center Foundation
2. Paola Pinto. Somos Ecuador Foundation
3. Esteban Torres. Somos Ecuador Foundation

#### **National Networks**

1. Amanda Yépez, Campaña Amazonia por la vida
2. Cecilia Chérrez, Instituto de Estudios Ecologistas del Tercer Mundo
3. José Rivadeneira. Coordinadora Ecuatoriana de Agroecología (CEA)
4. Natalia Greene. Coordinadora Ecuatoriana de Organizaciones para la Defensa de la Naturaleza y el Medio Ambiente (CEDENMA)
5. Frank Navarrete. Corporación Coordinadora para la Defensa del Manglar (C-CONDEM)
6. Líder Góngora. Corporación Coordinadora para la Defensa del Manglar (C-CONDEM)
7. Gina Napa. Corporación Coordinadora para la Defensa del Manglar (C-CONDEM)

#### **Local Governments / GAD (Municipalities)**

1. Frank Gualsaqui. Major of Pedro Moncayo
2. Guillermo Churuchumbi. Major of Cayambe
3. Teresa Pizango. Vice Major of Archidona
4. Juan Avilés. Archidona Councilor. Territorial Representative in the SGP NSC
5. Juan Alvarado. Archidona Councilor
6. Gabriela Hurtado. GAD Pedro Moncayo
7. Roberto Guerra. GAD Pedro Moncayo
8. Abelio Jaramillo. GAD Pedro Moncayo
9. Karin Hidalgo. GAD Pedro Moncayo
10. Luis Robalino. GAD Pedro Moncayo
11. Braulio Novoa. GAD Cayambe
12. Alexandra Ordóñez. GAD Archidona

### Governmental Officers

1. Pablo Drouet, Ministry of Environment, PASNAP
2. Verónica Quitiguiña, Ministry of Environment, PASNAP
3. Cecilia Ponce, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Aquaculture and Fisheries (MAGAP), General Coordination of Commerce Networks. Member of the Ecuador SGP NSC.

### UNDP Country Office

1. Diego Zorrilla, UNDP Country Representative
2. Carla Chacón, UNDP Environment, Energy and Risk Management Program Associate
3. Sergio Novas, ART UNDP Program
4. Matilde Fresa, ART UNDP Program

### SGP National Coordination

1. Ana María Varea
2. María Alicia Eguiguren
3. Johana Jacome
4. Alejandro Ibarra (consultant)
5. José Defas

### SGP National Steering Committee (NSC)

1. Angel Orellana, Cerro Verde / CEDENMA
2. María Andrade
3. Myriam Paredes, FLACSO
4. Cecilia Ponce, MAGAP
5. Juan Avilés, Archidona Councilor, territorial representative (Amazonia)

### EQUIPATE

1. Luis Ordóñez (ECOPAR)
2. Diana Domínguez (ECOPAR)
3. Germán Carrión (ECOPAR)
4. Humberto Lennon (Sacha Causay)
5. Susana Albán (Sacha Causay)
6. Ruth Cayapa (Sacha Causay)

### EQUIPATEN

1. Patricio Carpio (OFIS)
2. Marisabel Padilla (OFIS)

### SGP Research Students

1. Ana Belén Zúñiga
2. Gabriela Pérez

### UNDP-GEF, Green Low Emissions Climate Resilient Strategies

1. Nick Remple, UNDP Global Technical Advisor for SGP Upgrading Country Programs

## ANNEX 6. LIST OF DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

1. Ecuador SGP Project Document (PRODOC)
2. PPD. Planificando participativamente Biocorredores para el Buen Vivir. Sistematización de la Fase de Planificación de la FO5/PPD
3. PPD. Nuestros biocorredores para el buen vivir
4. PPD. Metodología participativa para la construcción de biocorredores para el buen vivir
5. OFIS, UNDP, SGP. Guía para incorporar género en proyectos socioambientales comunitarios
6. PLASA, CNDN. 2013. Manual para el tratamiento de los conflictos socioambientales bajo el Nuevo marco de derechos constitucionales.
7. PPD. 2014. SISTEMA DE MONITOREO, ASISTENCIA TÉCNICA Y ACOMPAÑAMIENTO -SIMONAA-
8. 2013 Project Implementation Report (PIR)
9. Marco de Cooperación de las Naciones Unidas para el desarrollo en Ecuador (UNDAF) 2010 -2014
10. UNDP Country Program Document Ecuador (CPD) 2010-2014
11. National Steering Committee Meeting Acts (several)
12. SGP Quarterly Project Reports (several)
13. SGP National Coordinator Reports (several)
14. SGP Project M&E Reports (several)
15. Project Proposals submitted to and approved by the SGP (several)
16. Project Progress Reports (several)
17. SGP. Fichas Técnicas de Proyectos (for every visited project)
18. UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects
19. UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results
20. GEF Evaluation Office. The ROTI Handbook: Towards enhancing the Impacts of Environmental Projects
21. UNEG. UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation
22. ASEC; PPD; PNUD; OMT; UDLA. 2012. Manual de buenas prácticas. Turismo en Áreas Naturales con gestión comunitaria.
23. GIZ. 2013. La Chakra Kichwa. Criterios para la conservación y foment de un sistema de producción sostenible en la Asociación KALLARI y sus organizaciones socias
24. Circunscripciones territoriales indígenas (sin año, sin autor)
25. Ministerio del Ambiente del Ecuador. 2013. Lineamientos de gestión para la conectividad con fines de conservación
26. Acción Ecológica. 2013. Análisis de la nueva matriz productiva para el agro.
27. ART. 2013. Prioridades para el desarrollo integral del Cantón Aguarico, Ecuador
28. Centro Lianas de Ciencias, Culturas y Ambiente. 2009. Experiencias en piscicultura comunitaria. Contribuyendo a la seguridad alimentaria amazónica
29. Almeida, A. 2013. Manual de Piscicultura para comunidades indígenas de la Amazonia Ecuatoriana. Fundación Centro Lianas de Ciencias, Culturas y Ambiente.

## ANNEX 7. UNEG CODE OF CONDUCT FOR EVALUATORS/MIDTERM REVIEW CONSULTANTS

### Evaluators/Consultants:

1. Must present information that is complete and fair in its assessment of strengths and weaknesses so that decisions or actions taken are well founded.
2. Must disclose the full set of evaluation findings along with information on their limitations and have this accessible to all affected by the evaluation with expressed legal rights to receive results.
3. Should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. They should provide maximum notice, minimize demands on time, and respect people's right not to engage. Evaluators must respect people's right to provide information in confidence, and must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. Evaluators are not expected to evaluate individuals, and must balance an evaluation of management functions with this general principle.
4. Sometimes uncover evidence of wrongdoing while conducting evaluations. Such cases must be reported discreetly to the appropriate investigative body. Evaluators should consult with other relevant oversight entities when there is any doubt about if and how issues should be reported.
5. Should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty in their relations with all stakeholders. In line with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, evaluators must be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender equality. They should avoid offending the dignity and self-respect of those persons with whom they come in contact in the course of the evaluation. Knowing that evaluation might negatively affect the interests of some stakeholders, evaluators should conduct the evaluation and communicate its purpose and results in a way that clearly respects the stakeholders' dignity and self-worth.
6. Are responsible for their performance and their product(s). They are responsible for the clear, accurate and fair written and/or oral presentation of study limitations, findings and recommendations.
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.

### MTR Consultant Agreement Form

Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System:

Name of Consultant: \_\_\_\_\_ Alejandro Carlos IMBACH \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): \_\_\_\_\_ n.a. \_\_\_\_\_

**I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.**

Signed at \_\_\_\_\_ *Turrialba, Costa Rica* \_\_\_\_\_ (Place) on \_\_\_\_\_ *July 1st, 2014* \_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  


**ANNEX 8. MTR REPORT CLEARANCE FORM**

<b>Midterm Review Report Reviewed and Cleared By:</b>	
<b>Commissioning Unit</b>	
Name: _____	
Signature: _____	Date: _____
<b>UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor</b>	
Name: _____	
Signature: _____	Date: _____