# Executive Summary

Synoptic table of the project

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| **Title of the project:** | "PROMOTING THE APPLICATION OF THE NAGOYA PROTOCOL THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF PRODUCTS BASED ON NATURE, THE DISTRIBUTION OF BENEFITS AND CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY IN COSTA RICA" | | | | | |
| Identification of the GEF project: | | 5420 |  | *Budget at the time of approval (millions of USD)* | | *at the time of completion (millions of USD)* |
| Identification of the UNDP project: | | PIMS 4962/ 00090102 | GEF financing: | 979,566 | | N/A |
| Country: | | Costa Rica | ECOS: | 1,615,000 | | N/A |
| Region: | | LAC | INBIO | 1,726,000 | | N/A |
| Area of interest: | | Biodiversity | Formuquisa | 963,009 | | N/A |
| Operational programme: | | GEF 4, SO-2 (SP4, SP5) | Monreri | 233,000 | | N/A |
| Executing Agency: | | Initially, INBIO, at the end UNDP | Total project expenditure: | 5,517,375 | | N/A |
| Other partners involved: | |  | Signing of the project document (project start date): | | | 03 /2015 |
| Closing date (Operational): | | Budget:  03/2018 | Real:  12 / 2018 |

***Source: Project Files***

Project description

The Project was designed to implement the Nagoya Protocol on ABS through the development of crop protection products based on nature and strengthening the capacity of the national authority. These protection products are based on plant and fungal compounds, and licensing conditions that will be established for future agreements with the parties interested in their commercialization. The agreements can be identified as the second generation due to the contractual relationship, participation and contributions of the companies involved and the knowledge generated through the research. These studies have been carried out entirely in Costa Rica by Costa Rican professionals. These two potential products, whose active ingredients are chemically characterized, have been evaluated in vitro, in the greenhouse, and in the field, but at the level of preliminary tests on crops. Technically, the project seeks to validate the effectiveness of these crop protection agents and promote the conditions for the extension and licensing of new natural products, generating economic benefits that will be shared among the different stakeholders and used to support conservation. At the same time, it will improve the skills and capabilities of the private sector to negotiate good access models and benefit-sharing contracts. Finally, the project will update and strengthen the national ABS legal framework, in light of the provisions of the Nagoya Protocol, and develop new mechanisms to improve the administrative permit system and the decision-making process.

This solution rests on four main pillars.

1. Proof of concept of crop protection agents based on nature.
2. Optimization, scaling and licensing of crop protection agents.
3. Benefit sharing from genetic resources.
4. Increase in national capacity to ratify and implement the Nagoya Protocol.

Evaluation score table

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| **Project performance rating** | | | |
| **1. Monitoring and evaluation** | ***qualification*** | **2. Execution of the IA and EA:** | ***qualification*** |
| M&E input design | Satisfactory | Quality of UNDP enforcement | Satisfactory |
| M&E Execution plan | Satisfactory | Quality of execution: executing agency (INBio) | Unsatisfactory |
| M&E overall quality | Satisfactory | Overall quality of enforcement and execution | Moderately Unsatisfactory |
| **3. Evaluation of the results** | ***qualification*** | **4. Sustainability** | ***Qualification*** |
| Relevance | Relevant | Financial resources: | Moderately unlikely |
| Effectiveness | Satisfactory | Socio-politicians: | Moderately unlikely |
| Efficiency | Satisfactory | Institutional framework and governance: | Likely |
| Overall rating of project results | Moderately Satisfactory | Environmental: | Likely |
| Impact | High | The overall probability of sustainability: | Moderately unlikely |

Summary of conclusions, recommendations, and lessons

**Findings and Conclusions**

* The evaluation concludes that the project was relevant from the onset and continues to be so because it focuses on an environmental and development priority that is aligned with the interests of Costa Rica, UNDP, GEF, the environment in general, the agricultural sector, and local producers.
* The initial design assumed several postulations and hypotheses, as political factors outside the control of the project, which affected the implementation because the contexts and the dynamics are changing, the priorities and the stakeholders involved were also changing over time.
* The design of the project was very ambitious due to the magnitude of the goals in three significant areas: creation of products from biogenetic resources, application of the protocol of Nagoya and the negotiation of distribution of benefits in the country as a demonstrative experience.
* The main risk that affected the performance of the project was the political will in the case of the ratification of the Nagoya Protocol, and also the institutional crisis of INBIO, the field experiments have not yet been concluded to determine if there is adequate control of diseases or pests or an increment in crops resistance deriving from biological products. These risks are beyond the project and could not be mitigated without changing the structural design of the project.
* The comparative advantage of UNDP was the technical capacity in the implementation of projects for the conservation of the environment and biodiversity, and also the vision that of the potential of Costa Rica to be one of the leaders in the world in the application of the Nagoya protocol.
* The project included standard tools for the M&E of the GEF budget, with quality outcome indicators. The most prominent results of the project were: technical and scientific progress in the development of biological products for the control of pests, scientific information of great use on the process, and the agreement between different stakeholders to share benefits between users and producers of biological resources. It is important to highlight that this project managed to involve companies from the private sector (with working experience in agrochemical sectors), academia, NGOs and international cooperation around an initiative of biological products to reduce the use of agrochemicals. Despite some delays, the expected results, goals and indicators were mostly achieved.
* The project delivered a series of high-quality products that can be used by stakeholders, the government or third parties to generate positive changes and more favorable conditions for the use of biological diversity in reducing the chemical load for synthetic agricultural products.
* The project had to extend its execution period (18 months) due to implementation problems due to financial problems and administrative management of the INBIO implementing agency.
* The project supports a multi-year research initiative, managing to reduce the learning curve in a sector of research that is characterized by many years and high amounts of investment to achieve viable, active ingredients.
* Sustainability is the main concern of the evaluation of this project; at the date of conclusion of the evaluation there is no hard data to affirm the commercial viability of the biological products and therefore their use. The financial situation of INBIO is also an adverse factor of sustainability, which although it can be overcome, there is no guarantee of its continuity.

**Design and programming recommendations for future interventions (UNDP - GEF):**

* Regarding the design and programming of similar interventions in the future, the evaluation recommends establishing the specific problem to be solved from the beginning, with a theory of change according to where the route is visualized from the inputs, activities, and products to the expected results or effects.
* Investments must be made in products that can be achieved through projects that do not depend on external factors or political will (for example, ratification of treaties). Considering the political swings is essential.
* During the design phase, it is essential to analyze the experience of the Nagoya project by including different organizations from different sectors, but especially by linking the private sector and civil society.
* For future interventions that require an implementing agency, it is important to analyze the financial solvency in detail[[1]](#footnote-1), as well as the technical capacity, experience, and prestige.
* All GEF interventions need to consider gender mainstreaming strategies from the onset, as well as a clear link to the achievement of the SDGs.

**Short-term operational recommendations:**

* Dissemination and communication: the project should make a compilation of the lessons learned and good practices in the process of negotiating the distribution of benefits, focusing on the active participation of different organizations, the incentives to keep an active collaboration, and the human process of Biological products. This information can be translated into a common language, identifying key messages and narratives to disseminate through the UNDP website, email lists, media, and social networks. Likewise, this information can be used for the systematization of Nagoya experiences.
* The project needs to elaborate a detailed exit strategy, establishing the steps to be taken and pending issues (for example, the appropriation of the project by the stakeholders involved, viability strategies for INBIO, management of missing data on commercial viability and economic, possible investment by the actors involved and / or third parties, possible linking of the lessons of this project to the portfolio of UNDP projects).

**Lessons learned**

* Every design must include from the beginning a clear theory of change that allows identifying the chain of results from the inputs, through the activities, products and expected results.
* The number of goals and objectives, as well as their scope, must be carefully contemplated to avoid ambitious designs.
* Projects should not include expected results or impacts that depend mainly on external factors.

1. The risk analysis was complex to perform for the implementing agency, since it was an organization with more than 20 years, positioned not only nationally but internationally with political and financial support from the governments for the last 20 years. In terms of financial solvency, the micro evaluation (HACT) had shown low risk. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)