

**Terminal Evaluation Small Grants Programme  
(SGP/GEF/UNDP) in Ecuador: Sixth Operational Phase (OP6).**

**Promoting Biocorridors for Living Well**

**PIMS No. 5746 - ATLAS BU: ECU10**

**Proposal N°: 00085032**

**Project N°: 00092802**

**Terminal Evaluation Final Report**

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Terminal Evaluation's purpose has been to analyze the results from the GEF's Small Grants Programme (SGP) Sixth Operational Phase (OP6) in Ecuador, regarding its objectives.

Ecuador is a country with a rich biodiversity and home to the most varied forms of life amongst its flora, fauna, genetic and ecosystem diversity that occur due to its geographical conditions, its landforms and climate. The SGP has considered and appreciated these characteristics, and thus promotes the Biocorridors for Living Well<sup>1</sup> (BCLW), as a habitat connectivity mechanism linked to a broader scheme of landscapes, that form a comprehensive part of a land management strategy based on landscape ecology and conservation; biodiversity rehabilitation and sustainable use and the environmental services it provides.

Under the National Constitution of Ecuador's framework and considering the experience regarding the Fifth Operational Phase (OP5) achievements and lessons learned, OP6's objective was to reinforce the BCLW proposal by strengthening, replicating, escalating and consolidating the Programme's three operative approaches in the prioritized territories.

The OP6 was implemented in ten biocorridors, privileging fragile ecosystems' conservation such as Andean Paramo, Montane rainforest, mangrove, coastal rainforest, western dry forest and amazon tropical rainforest. This phase's innovation was the adaptive and collective management analysis of the socio – environmental resilient landscape as a strategy to achieve global environmental benefits.

Ecuador's SGP OP6 pursued the development of Crosscutting projects that addressed both "territories and areas conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities" (ICCA), "Products with Territorial Identity" (PTI) and georeferencing. These Crosscutting projects have a great importance of their own and have also strengthened the scope achieved by the projects developed in the ten biocorridors. In this framework, those initiatives boost the PTIs through their positioning in the markets and through strategies for their commercial sustainability stand out. This was achieved by means of community bio entrepreneurship in the territories in order to generate income from PTI management, production and transformation. These PTIs could be handicrafts, food or services such as tourism. The bio-entrepreneurships pursued environmental and financial sustainable solutions based on community responsibility with nature. For its enhancement, an adaptation of OCTANTIS methodology to the community organization's context and the PTIs has been implemented.

The National Strategy for the SGP OP6 emphasized the BCLW management as a collective and participative process through joint projects (from several organizations) for each biocorridor funded by GEF, with UNDP and UNOPS technical support. The implementation period for SGP OP6 is three years long, being the starting date on September 2016 and an expected ending date for September 2019.

### The evaluated portfolio was constituted by:

- 33 projects were selected by the National Steering Committee (NSC)

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<sup>1</sup> Sumak Kawsay is a Quechua term that was spread by Inca conquest during 15th and early part of the 16th centuries. In the most straightforward interpretation, means Good Life, or Living Well. In Spanish it is often translated as "Buen Vivir", or "Vivir Bien"; the latter means "Living Well". In its most general sense, buen vivir denotes, organizes, and constructs a system of knowledge and living based on the communion of humans and nature and on the spatial-temporal harmonious totality of existence. That is, on the necessary interrelation of beings, knowledge, logics, and rationalities of thought, action, existence, and living. The concept was incorporated into Ecuador's new Constitution in 2008. A slightly different Quechua version was included in Bolivian's Constitution the following year. (<http://upsidedownworld.org>)

- 29 implemented projects with GEF funds (3 were co-funded by PASNAP), 2 additional PASNAP funds, 2 TICCA funds
  - 10 biocorridor projects
  - 7 linked projects
  - 3 transversal projects
  - 4 capacity building projects
  - 4 SGP scholarship fund projects
  - 1 UNICO scholarship fund project
  - 2 youth projects: RIMISP, InovAcción
  - 1 crowdfunding platform (GreenCrowdss)

The proposed strategies for OP6 were: strengthening the articulation between biocorridors and land management, multi - stakeholder and multi - level intervention, design and implementation of an innovative management model which is adequate for the consolidation of the implementation process.

It should be particularly underlined that Ecuador’s SGP has generated a collaborative alliance and cooperation actions with the National Ministry of Environment’s Support Program for the National Protected Areas System (PASNAP) that has been successful in terms of coordination, methodology exchange and actions implementation.

In addition, the GreenCrowds platform (available on <https://greencrowds.org/>) demonstrated to be an innovative initiative within OP6. It has achieved recognition and a successful position and enabled funding alternatives that involve new stakeholders in face of the budget restrictions. It also provides an opportunity to strengthen links between communities, the civil society and the private sector.

Ecuador’s SGP reviewed and refined the guiding approaches implemented during OP5: Ecological connectivity, Sustainable Productive Landscapes and Associativity.

Also, of importance is that OP6 has implemented a suitable systematization practice that became an important tool for critical collective deliberation and for actions in order to identify lessons learned for each phase of the Programme.

Also, an exhaustive supervision and monitoring work has been identified. SIMONAA system has been appropriate and innovative regarding technical support, which was fundamental in OP6.

Terminal Evaluation Methodology:

The TE has been undertaken under UNDP’s<sup>2</sup> and GEF’s Monitoring and Evaluation Policy’s guidelines, norms and procedures and the TE’s terms of reference. Moreover, a collaborative, participative, gender and Human Rights approach was also promoted during the evaluation.

Relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact criteria were considered. The TE involved key stakeholders such as: The National Government, Decentralized Autonomous Governments (GADs), UNDP Country Office (CO), SGP’s National Coordination, SGP’s National Steering Committee (NSC), Technical Assistance, Monitoring and Evaluation Teams (EQUIPATE), community organizations and other strategic allies and the UNDP/GEF Global Coordination for SGP upgraded county programmes<sup>3</sup>.

OP6’s achieved outcomes were analyzed and documented and conclusions and recommendations feedback were given to the SGP. This report seeks to provide tools and updated information, to

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<sup>2</sup> Norms for Evaluation in the UN System, UN, 2005. Available in: <http://www.unevaluation.org/unevaluation>

<sup>3</sup> UNDP GEF Global Coordination for the SGP Upgraded Country Programs.

contribute to political decision - making for public officers, UNDP/UNOPS/GEF's team and other stakeholders regarding the convenience of implementing this line of projects in the future and a possible design for the following operational phases.

The **field mission** was held between April 2<sup>nd</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> 2019 and included visits to various regions where projects were implemented<sup>4</sup>. Group interviews and meetings were held in order to assess the different aspects considered in this TE and on-site follow-up of the actions taken. Interviews were held with the projects' representatives, three EQUIPATES (ECOPAR, FIDES and Centro Lianas Foundation), the National Steering Committee, SGP's Coordination Team, GAD's and UNDP's authorities. Around 30 interviews were held in total (individual and collective).

During the evaluation it was verified that base line (PRODOC) and target indicators were achieved and, in some cases, exceeded, as show in detail in the present document (see Section 2.4).

#### Global Outcomes (outcome achievement):

The Final Evaluation has established a **Highly Successful (HS)** grading to the four outcomes set for OP6.

It is considered that OP6 was **Relevant (R)**, and **Highly Successful (HS)** regarding its efficiency and effectiveness. Sustainability has proven to be **Likely (L)**, and Impact is considered **Significant (S)**. Finally, outcomes were also considered **Highly Satisfactory (HS)**.

#### Conclusions, Lessons Learned and Recommendations:

This report includes in Section 6 a matrix with the fundamental "Conclusions, Lessons Learned and Recommendations", developed during the ET. This matrix has been designed according to the guiding approaches of OP6: *Ecological Connectivity, Productive Landscapes and Associativity*; operational strategies: *Innovation, Capacity Strengthening, Crosscutting Projects, Scholarship Funds, Communication and Systematization; and Monitoring*.

The main conclusions, lessons learned, and recommendations are mentioned hereunder. These are elaborated in Section 6 of this report.

#### Conclusions:

##### **Ecological Connectivity**

- SGP's OP6 has achieved the biocorridors' sustainable management through a strategy that articulates community and social management in land planning which is fully in line with national environmental and land planning policies at project's design phase. The specific management model designed for OP6 for biocorridors management has resulted suitable to achieve community participation and the supervision and monitoring in all the Program's levels.

##### **Sustainable Productive Landscapes:**

- SGP's OP6 has accomplished to implement a landscape approach, integrating the communities' projects in their management in direct correlation with biodiversity conservation practices and soil degradation mitigation. Emphasis has been made on projects assuring continuity and sustainability and the generation of local linkages for the product's marketing.

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<sup>4</sup> See detail in Annex 4 – Field Mission.

### **Associativity**

- The biocorridor approach as a land planning and management unit has accomplished to generate joint activities among organizations and associations, public and private institutions, that have been reflected in the Biocorridor Action Plan (ACBIO in Spanish) and contribute to the Land Development and Management Plans and other national government and GAD documents. The effects regarding empowerment on community level are remarkable. Positive assertion has led the work done and an adequate gender mainstreaming has been achieved.

### **Innovation**

- Innovation in OP6 is focused on the resilient socio ecological landscape's adaptive and collective management, as a strategy to achieve global and sustainable development benefits. This vision has enabled to improve practices, techniques, methods or systems, in order to support the achievement of collective objectives.

### **Capacities Strengthening**

- Organizational capacity building as a comprehensive part of the community strategic investment provided benefits and multiplied each project's impact on a territorial level.

### **Crosscutting projects**

- Products with Territorial Identity (PTIs) have gained a high level of visibility within biocorridors and territories and a proper communication strategy has been developed around them.
- ICCA project has been successfully developed and has strengthened the indigenous people's (IP) capacities.
- The generation of georeferenced maps made it possible to observe OP6's outcomes achievement regarding BCLW management on its three approaches.

### **Scholarship Funds**

- The scholarship fund has fulfilled its goal to bring university youth and rural reality close together and build a space where they can contribute to and enhance PTIs.

### **Communication**

- An appropriate communication strategy has been identified. This strategy allowed all the produced information and the implemented activities to be available in the digital platforms and official social media. GreenCrowds strategy, a crowdfunding platform has been particularly innovative.

### Lessons learned:

#### **Ecological Connectivity:**

- The Biocorridor based projects and their three approaches enabled a comprehensive convergence with a landscape approach (territory) that considers ecological conservation, amicable production and the community organization strengthening, through the development of PTIs.
- OP6's management model qualifies as a good practice that has enabled a joint work between communities and organizations with constant feedback and the correct identification of each other's strengths.

#### **Sustainable Productive Landscapes**

- The consolidation of land sustainable management practices has been evidenced in all the regions and show an adequate diversity in regard to: agroforestry systems, agro ecological production, artisanal fishing (black shellfish and mangrove crab), agroforestry farms with new aquaculture practices, recovering native species (cachama, *Piractus brachypomun*), agroforestry farms that incorporate bio digesters, alpaca breeding, agro-tourism.

### **Associativity**

- The articulation between SGP and the Ministry of Environment's Support Program for the National Protected Areas System (PASNAP) has resulted a successful strategy to enhance the implementation of joint actions on a territorial scale for the strengthening of productive chains and the marketing of PTIs.
- The multi stakeholder platforms (MTB in Spanish) have accomplished impacts regarding ecological connectivity at bio-corridors, sustainable productive landscapes (traditional crop recovery, ecological agriculture, local markets for ecological products, added value for raw agricultural products); associativity benefiting local communities and groups regarding income generation and food security, since they bring different organizations together to work jointly in the same project.

### **Innovation**

- Knowledge management for PTIs invigoration has been one of OP6 strengths. These innovation experiences have been documented and will contribute to the design and implementation of future projects. UNICO initiative, developed along with Espai Epicur through chef Mauricio Acuña, has demonstrated to be a successful experience that enable young people of rural communities' access to scholarships for training and bring cuisine and agriculture together.

### **Capacity Strengthening**

- Recovering agro ecology as a production approach in farms and the development of PTIs based on the sustainable use of local biodiversity elements are processes that have evolved successfully regarding community, social and cultural appreciation on behalf of some authorities on the different government levels.

### **Crosscutting projects**

- PTIs have demonstrated to be an opportunity for the enhancement of the biocorridor's ecosystems conservation, community work, commitment with the community and nature and the ancestral flavors and knowledge appreciation through added value and innovation fostered by the communities.
- TICCA initiative, as a project, linked indigenous communities as key stakeholders and made their conservation strategies visible.
- Georeferenced maps (along other crosscutting projects), have revealed the achieved outcomes in the project's three approaches.

### **Scholarship Funds**

- The close work of young people, universities and the EQUIPATEs and the communities established important lines of investigation and support for the projects.

### **Communication**

- The development of knowledge products and the result's dissemination through the social media done by each biocorridor constitutes a strategy that allows to expand coverage with low operational costs. GreenCrowds strategy has resulted innovative for projects funding.



### Recommendations:

#### **Ecological Connectivity**

- It is recommended to consider the political changes and the fiscal austerity the country is going through that may affect/ change national priorities.
- The creation of synergies during OP6 with other international cooperation stakeholders has been positive and it should be sustained and enhanced.
- Positive relations with GADs should be kept and reinforced with the new local authorities that will take office on May 2019.

#### **Productive Landscapes:**

- It is suggested for OP7 to continue with the agro diversity recovery approach in every territory and to make its contribution to food security and sovereignty explicit within the communities.
- It is also recommended that efforts on supporting normative and standardization processes on PTIs quality be continued.

#### **Associativity**

- It is considered substantial to keep and sustain the excellent formal relationship between the associations and the national and local governments.
- Additionally, a gender mainstreaming strategy should be kept. More efforts should be made in making the women's role in community initiatives' leadership and decision making visible.

#### **Innovation**

- It is suggested to strengthen marketing spaces in an associative manner, continuing and deepening strategies in fairs with the contribution of cuisine personalities that generate greater awareness over a broader number of actual and potential consumers.
- Continue to promote strategic alliances with universities and education institutions so rural young people can specialize and the academia incorporates in their syllabus and research areas topics that are related to the biocorridors alimentary heritage.

#### **Capacity Strengthening**

- It is recommended to design and develop strategies that enable to extend the obtained outcomes in this OP6 in time and to other regions, including Best practices Exchange, promoting or replicating South-South cooperation experiences that have been undertaken so far.

#### **Crosscutting projects**

- Even though marketing restrictions exceed SGPs control, it is suggested to maintain the support efforts to simplify regulations regarding PTI's marketing. The exchange of experiences with products that already have sanitary records should be promoted in order to identify best practices in other communities such as EL ENCANTO coffee, which has a registered trademark, sanitary records and packaging design.
- It is suggested to continue with the efforts to make the achievements of ICCAs regarding conservation by means of the sustainable use of natural resources visible.

- Dissemination of the important results achieved through the georeferenced maps at local and national level should be strengthened in order to enhance the utilization of this input.

#### **Scholarship Program**

- This program should be reinforced in order to strengthen academic knowledge pursuing conservation objectives and to maintain a proper participation from youth, which has demonstrated an important impact on the communities' social cohesion.

#### **Communication**

- It could be convenient to promote GreenCrowds platform on a global level with SGP's support in order to expand its objectives and enhance its positioning, its fund-raising capacity and visibility.

## 2. ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACBIO	Biocorridor Actions proposal
ART	UNDP Territorial Network Articulation for the Human Development Framework Programme
BD	Biodiversity Focal Area
CBO	Civil Base Organizations
CGB	Bio corridor management Committee
COOTAD	Organic Code for Land Organization, Autonomy and Decentralization
COPFP	Organic Code for Planning and Public Finances
CEMDES	Corporate Council for Ecuador's Sustainable Development
EQUIPATE	Technical Assistance, Monitoring and Evaluation Teams
OP5	5 <sup>TH</sup> Operational Phase
OP6	6 <sup>th</sup> Operational Phase
GAD	Decentralized Autonomous Governments
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GTA	SGP Technical Assistance Team
GTT	Regional Working Group
MAE	Ecuador Ministry of Environment
MBA	Agricultural Best Practices Manual
MIES	Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion
MINTUR	Ministry of Tourism
MSP	ministry OF Public Health
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
PAENB	National Strategy on Biodiversity Action Plan
PASNAP	Support Program for the National Protected Areas System
PDOT	Land Development and Organization Plan
PNBV	National Plan for Good Living
SENAGUA	National Water Secretariat
SGP	Small Grants Programme
SIMONAA	Monitoring, Technical Assistance System
SNAP	Protected Areas National System
ICCA	territories and areas conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Programme Services
UDLA	Las Américas University

### 3. INTRODUCTION

This document exposes Ecuador's SGP/GEF/UNDP Sixth Operational Phase **"Promoting Biocorridors for Living Well PIMS No. 5746 - ATLAS BU: ECU10 - Proposal No.:00085032** Final Evaluation's results which has been recommended to international consultant Sandra Cesilini.

#### 3.1. Terminal Evaluation's purpose and objective

The Terminal Evaluation (TE) was undertaken under the guidelines, norms and procedures established by the UNDP<sup>5</sup> and GEF's Monitoring and Evaluation Policy stated on UNDP's Evaluation Guide on GEF<sup>6</sup> funded projects and the TE's terms of reference. In addition, during the evaluation, a collaborative and participative approach was promoted. In this context, the present consultancy seeks to evaluate the Ecuador's GEF SGP OP6's objectives and outcomes achievement, regarding its work plan and the annual work plans approved by UNDP.

To this end, the outcomes achieved during the execution of Ecuador SGP OP6 were documented and analyzed, and impacts, sustainability and lessons learned were determined. Along with a conclusions and recommendations feedback for the action executers and beneficiaries, this report seeks to offer tools and updated information, contribute to contribute to political decision - making for public officers, UNDP/UNOPS/GEF's team and other stakeholders regarding the convenience of implementing this line of projects in the future and a possible design for the following operational phases.

GEF SGP OP6's terminal evaluation has focused un: i) evaluate the results for Ecuador SGP OP6 progress and potential effects, ii) identify and evaluate counterpart's strategic actions that substantially contributed to the project's objective achievement; iii) identify lessons that can improve Ecuador's SGP benefits sustainability; and iv) provide inputs that improve UNDP's overall programming. Additionally, as in all TEs, the following complementary purposes were considered:

- a) Promote accountability and transparency on evaluating and disclosing the achievement progress of SGP's outcomes.;
- b) Identify key lessons learned that can be disseminated among other relevant GEF projects and can improve eligibility, design and implementation in future UNDP/GEF initiatives; and
- c) Deliver feedback and observations regarding recurrent key aspects in the portfolio that require attention and on key issues improvement.

#### The evaluated portfolio was constituted by:

- 33 selected projects by the National Steering Committee (NSC)
- 29 GEF funds (3 were co-funded by PASNAP), 2 additional PASNAP funds, 2 TICCA funds
  - 10 projects for each biocorridor
  - 7 linked projects
  - 3 transversal projects
  - 4 capacity building projects
  - 4 SGP scholarship fund projects
  - 1 UNICO scholarship fund project
  - 2 youth projects: RIMISP, InovAcción
  - 1 crowdfunding platform (GreenCrowdss)

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<sup>5</sup> Norms for Evaluation in the UN System, UN, 2005. Available on: <http://www.unevaluation.org/unegnoms>

<sup>6</sup> Terminal Evaluation Guide for GEF funded UNDP projects

Ecuador's SGP OP6 pursued the development of crosscutting projects that addressed both "Conservation Indigenous Territories" (TICCA in Spanish) and "Products with Territorial Identity" (PTI) and georeferencing. These Crosscutting projects have a great importance of their own and have also strengthened the scope achieved by the projects developed in the ten Bio corridors. In this framework, those initiatives to boost PTIs through their positioning in the markets and through strategies for their commercial sustainability stand out. This was achieved by means of community bio entrepreneurship in the territories in order to generate income from PTI management, production and transformation. These PTIs could be handicrafts, food or services such as tourism. The bio-entrepreneurships pursued environmental and financial sustainable solutions based on community responsibility with nature. For its enhancement, an adaptation of OCTANTIS methodology to the community organization's context and the PTIs has been implemented.

PTI's management included an important sustainability strategy based on the development of communication material, expanding contact networking, adapting products and services to the market's demands, support to enhance empowerment, the creation of promotion and dissemination fairs, and a permanent assessment of results.

### 3.2. TE's scope and methodology

Following this TE's terms of reference (ToRs), the Program was evaluated under a multi methodology and the ToRs proposal. For this purpose document analysis, interviews and focal groups during the field mission and later analysis were undertaken. Interview's questionnaire and focal groups guides were developed according to UNDP's and GEF's guidelines during the assessment's different phases.

The methodological perspective was based on the following approaches:

➤ Participative approach: the evaluation identified the community's stakeholder's involvement during all the evaluation phases, but particularly during the findings and conclusions validation. During this process officers from different government levels, organizations leaders and beneficiaries participated according to different interlocution mechanisms that were jointly designed with UNDP/UNOPD office and GEF SGP OP6 coordination. Furthermore, the evaluator pursued different sources to ensure an equitable access to the participation scheme, so as to enable all key stakeholders to validate the project's design, implementation and results.

➤ Gender and Human Rights approach: the individual is the center of attention and the evaluation is guided considering the human capacities protection and the improvement of life quality. Individuals are considered as stakeholders in opposition to passive beneficiaries, and in this sense, the opinions gathered during interviews and focal groups and the analysis of the documents they produced were considered.

The different opportunities of men and women, the relationships between them and the different socially assigned roles were taken into account as well as the way these aspects influenced the results of this SGP OP6. Quantitative and qualitative information on gender, youth and indigenous peoples, as well as access gaps were included.

➤ Theory of change approached: the Programme's results chain analysis should be based on an orderly and sequential interpretation between assumptions and results that generate change. A critical reasoning is applied to the Programme's design, implementation and evaluation aimed to support changes in the context. The following elements were considered: initiative's context; project's expected long term changes and its beneficiaries; process/sequence of foreseen changes in order to achieve long term expected results; assumptions on how those

changes may occur, as a way to verify the activities and products adequacy in order to induce changes in the expected direction on that particular context.

- ***Knowledge management approach:*** the evaluation pursued the identification of experiences that promote lessons for GEF SGP and their associates in Ecuador's context as well as possible replicable lessons.

The Terminal Evaluation used the following key criteria for its analysis: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact.

#### **Evaluation criteria and scales applied<sup>7</sup>**

1. **Relevance:** How is the project related to GEF's main areas? And development and environmental priorities at local, regional and national levels?
2. **Effectiveness:** To which extent were the objectives accomplished?
3. **Efficiency:** Has the Project been implemented efficiently, in line with international and national norms and standards?
4. **Sustainability:** To which extent possible financial, socio economic and/or environmental risks for the achievement of the Programme's long term results exist?
5. **Impact:** Is there evidence that the Program has contributed to reducing environmental stress or improving the ecological status?

It is to be clarified that, even if UNDP's evaluation policy does not require rating as part of its performance standards, it has been agreed to rate the Program according to GEF's scales<sup>8</sup>.

**The general activities developed** during the TE are described based on output achievement:

1. ***Evidence based identification and review of the information sources:***

It included individual and group key stakeholders' parties, implemented experiences and reports developed during the preparation and implementation phases of Ecuador's GEF SGP OP6.

This first stage responds to a desk study phase, where a stakeholder map was established; all legal and institutional documents were analyzed under Ecuador's SGP framework so as to become acquainted with legal and institutional guidelines and framework. Moreover, meetings were held via Skype with GEF SGP and Ecuador's CO National Coordination in order to address the following issues:

- a) Accurately establish the consultancy's objective and become familiar with the institutional context in which it takes place, including information sources and access conditions, as well as identifying key informants for each project and region.
- b) Define the main questions and elaborate the proper techniques for information gathering.

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<sup>7</sup> UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects. 2012.

<http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/guidance/GEF/UNDP-GEF-TE-Guide.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Effectiveness, efficiency, M&E and A&E rating scales; 1: Highly satisfactory (HS): The Project had no shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives in terms of relevance, effectiveness, or efficiency. 2: Satisfactory (S): There were only minor shortcomings. 3: Moderately Satisfactory (MS): There were moderate shortcomings. 4: Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): The Project had significant shortcomings. 5: Unsatisfactory (U): There were major shortcomings in the achievement of Project objectives in terms of relevance, effectiveness, or efficiency. 6: Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): The Project had severe shortcomings. **Rating scale for Sustainability:** 4. Likely (L): Negligible risks to sustainability; 3. Moderately likely (ML): Moderate risks; 2. Moderately unlikely (UM): Significant risks; 1. Unlikely (U): Severe risks. **Rating scale for Relevance:** 2. Relevant (R); 1. Not Relevant (NR). **Rating scale for Impact:** 3. Significant (S); 2. Minimal (M); 1. Negligible (N). **Additional ratings when relevant:** Not applicable (N/A); Unable to assess (U/A).

- c) Adjust methodological instruments and tools for data gathering, as well as their feasibility for data recollection and processing. The availability of information regarding stakeholders identification (stakeholders map, workshops, compilation of experiences through civil society and academic institutions) was also assessed.
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Guideline questions for TE:

Analysis levels	Evaluation criteria	Questions
<b>Design</b>	<p><b>Pertinence and coherence</b></p> <p>To which extent are the objectives of a development intervention consistent with the beneficiaries and county's requirements, with global priorities and with the partners and donor's policies?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Is the Project aligned with national policies and international agreements signed by Ecuador?</li> <li>b) Is the Project aligned with UNDP's strategic plan?</li> <li>c) Is the Project aligned with any other broader plan that includes environmental issues?</li> <li>d) Does the Project clearly define the problem it attempts to solve?</li> <li>e) Are the Project's envisaged strategies and activities, consistent and adequate to achieve the Programs objectives and results?</li> <li>f) In your opinion, which is the Project's actual monitoring and evaluation system's quality?</li> <li>g) Which elements should be enhanced in order to generate the bases that enable the Project's impact evaluation in the future?</li> <li>h) Which practices, developed by one of the Program's activities, have or can contribute to enhance the others within the Project's framework?</li> <li>i) Which lessons are relevant for future similar initiatives?</li> </ul>
<b>Management</b>	<p><b>Efficiency</b></p> <p>Extent to which resources or inputs (funds, time, human resources) have translated into results.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Did the management model enable the achievement of the Project's results?</li> <li>b) Have the adequate coordination levels been undertaken for the achievement of the Program's results?</li> <li>c) Which was the progress of the project in financial terms?</li> <li>d) Which obstacles (barriers) were found? Were budget and resources management an opportunity for new lessons within the involved organizations and for beneficiaries?</li> <li>e) Were products and services delivered to beneficiaries in due course?</li> <li>f) Have the beneficiaries' contributions in the initiative's execution been quantified or made visible (unpaid work, venues, studies, reports, etc.)?</li> </ul>



Analysis levels	Evaluation criteria	Questions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>g) Are monitoring and report tools applied correctly to capture progress and results achievement? Work has been done under a framework of management based on results?</li> <li>h) Are interventions contemplated in UNDP CO work plan? Has the Project created synergies?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Process</b></p> <p>Parties' coordination, partnerships and participation</p>	<p><b>Ownership</b></p> <p>Process of adaptation, transformation or active reception of outputs and changes in the Program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) To what extent are stakeholders (government, entities, NGOs and beneficiaries) involved in the intervention's implementation and management</li> <li>b) What challenges have stakeholders faced to participate?</li> <li>c) How does stakeholders' participation contribute to the Project's sustainability and effectiveness?</li> <li>d) Have strategic partnerships been achieved between UNDP Ecuador and public institutions in order to enhance the Project's results?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Overall results</b></p> <p><b>Specific results</b></p>	<p><b>Effectiveness</b></p> <p>Effectiveness reflect to what extent the Project's specific objective has been achieved, considering the rate of achievements as well as the period of time for doing so. Effectiveness studies the expected results rate as an assimilation or as a product's outcome.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) To what extent have strategies and planned activities contributed to the achievement of results?</li> <li>b) Which have been the major results and their quality regarding to international standards?</li> <li>c) Which are the major barriers, risks, opportunities and challenges regarding the result's implementation for each component?</li> <li>d) Which instruments were implemented for the coordination of the different parties and stakeholder's work?</li> <li>e) Which were the intervention's partners comparative strengths and how were these developed during implementation?</li> <li>f) Does the intervention specifically consider gender equity, human rights and inter culturally approaches regarding the expected results?</li> <li>g) Which internal and external aspects have influenced the achievement or not of the results? Have other unforeseen effects been achieved?</li> </ul>

Analysis levels	Evaluation criteria	Questions
<b>Results</b>	<p><b>Sustainability</b></p> <p>Continuity of a development intervention's benefits on cooperation's termination. Probability of obtaining long term benefits.</p>	<p>a) Can result's continuity be expected after the intervention's implementation?</p> <p>b) Are the installed capacities supporting the conservation and the sustainable use of biodiversity'?</p> <p>c) Which new skills are required in that direction?</p> <p>d) To which extent has the project contributed to create communication mechanisms (sustainable once the intervention has concluded) among citizens, civil society, and government?</p> <p>e) Have results and outputs been owned?</p> <p>f) What measures related to the areas of the Project have been institutionalized to ensure sustainability of activities/ achievements?</p>

The TE was conducted under a participative approach that included the following stakeholders: the National Government, Decentralized Autonomous Governments (GADs), UNDP Country Office (CO), SGP's National Coordination, SGP's National Steering Committee (NSC), Technical Assistance, Monitoring and Evaluation Teams (EQUIPATE), community organizations and other strategic allies and the UNDP/GEF Global Coordination for SGP Upgraded County Programmes.

During the information gathering the following meetings with beneficiary institutions and individuals were undertaken:

INSTITUTIONS	INTERVIEWEES
<b>PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family and Rural Agriculture Sub secretary MAG representative</li> <li>Support Program for the National Protected Areas System – PASNAP</li> </ul>
<b>GAD</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pedro Moncayo Municipality</li> </ul>
<b>EQUIPATE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ECOPAR Corporation</li> <li>Centro Lianas Foundation,</li> <li>FIDES – Monitoring and Technical Assistance for Northern Highland, Coast and Amazon Team EQUIPATE</li> </ul>
<b>COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNOCIGS (González Suárez Indigenous Organizations and Communities Union), Urkukama Foundation, Sumak Pacha Association</li> <li>Cayambe-Coca Bio corridor management Committee</li> <li>RESAK (Regional Association for Kayambi Territory's Food Sovereignty), Kawsay Ancholag Foundation, Mushuc Women Group, Yuyay</li> <li>San Francisco Cooperative, La Segua wetland Eco touristic Association, Mangrove Youngsters Community Tourism Center, Isla Corazón Humanitarian Tourism Association</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Las Gilces Commune, Salt Producers Association – ASPROSAL, UDC Las Gilces youth group</li> <li>• San José Community</li> <li>• Santo Domingo Community</li> <li>• Waysayaku Community</li> <li>• Santa Rita Community</li> <li>• Wambula Community</li> <li>• Manduro Community</li> <li>• Pashimbi Community</li> <li>• Shandia Community</li> </ul>
<b>SGP/UNDP</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SGP Coordination</li> <li>• Members of SGP NSC</li> <li>• UNDP Environment and Energy Coordination</li> <li>• UNDP Resident Representative</li> <li>• Representatives for all crosscutting projects: georeferencing, PTI and TICCA.</li> </ul>
<b>OTHER STAKEHOLDERS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IMPAQTO</li> <li>• ALDEA</li> </ul>

## 2. Tool development: surveys and interview guidelines

The survey used for individual interviews and focal groups was included in the Inception Report. As previously stated, the questions included in the survey were designs according to the evaluation criteria.

## 3. Inception Report (Product 1)

The Inception Report included the suggested work methodology, a list of plausible interviewees (groups and individuals) and the documents that would be assessed during the TE (Annex 1: Document List). Additionally, an adjusted matrix for the consultancy was presented (following UNDP GEF's Terminal Evaluation Guide criteria and scales). The final design was approved by UNDP Ecuador's CO and GEF SGP National Team, as the final stage of the desk study phase.

## 4. Field Mission

The Field Mission Schedule agreed with GEF SGP Coordination and UNDP/UNOPS CO can be found in Annex II.

Field Mission was carried out between April 2nd and 11th. The following locations with implementing projects were visited:

- Northern Highlands: Pisque Mojanda San Pablo, Pedro Moncayo, Laguna de Mojanda, Otavalo, Ayora – Paquiestancia; Manta Bio corridor project, Estuario Rio Chone - La Segua Bio corridor project, Cayambe Coca Costa Bio corridor project, Río Chone Estuary - La Segua, Isla Corazón Bio corridor project, and Río Portoviejo Estuary Bio corridor project;
- Amazon: Yaku Samay, Archidona, Tena, Talag, Arosemena Tola, San José and Santa Rita Community, and Tsatsayaku Bio corridor projects.

Interviews and group meetings were held in order to answer the aspects within the scope of this TE, with PASNAP and Reunión ALDEA, crosscutting projects, strategic allies such as IMPAQTO (co-working), event summoned by Las Américas University –UDLA and SGP.

## 5. Contact, collaboration interviews and participation with key stakeholders and interest groups from Ecuador's GEF SGP according to UNDP/GEF M&E policy

Individual interviews and focal group discussions were undertaken. This scanning enabled the compilation of as much information possible regarding target groups and stakeholder's opinions and experiences during the SGP implementation process.

Interviews were also held with projects representatives, the three EQUIPATEs (ECOPAR, FIDES and Centro Lianas Foundation) y National Steering Committee, SGP Coordination Team, GAD and UNDP authorities.

In total, 4 individual interviews and 20 group meeting were held.

6. First findings presentation at field mission completion (Product 2); oral communication of preliminary results from interviews and focal groups

On Wednesday April 10<sup>th</sup>, as a field mission closure, a presentation was done on first findings and preliminary conclusions to the SGP and UNDP teams, that allowed to clarify some questions and validate some findings.

7. Background, stakeholders' interviews, stakeholders/beneficiaries group meetings analysis and systematization; answers follow up

8. Draft Report formulation and presentation (Product 3)

9. Revision and comments integration to the Final Report

10. Final Report and Executive Summary formulation (Product 4)

### 3.3. TE Final Report Structure

**The following key aspects have been assessed during the TE:** (i) Programme's conceptualization and design, (ii) stakeholder's participation in the formulation phase, (iii) implementation approach, (iv) monitoring and evaluation, (v) stakeholder's participation in the implementation phase and (vi) outcomes/objective achievement.

Each of these aspects was rated according to the mentioned scales and are elaborated in Section 3: general results.

The present report has been structures in four main Sections. The first Section is introductory and describes the purpose and scope of the TE and the methodology applied. The following Section constitutes a brief description of SGP and the projects it includes and its implementation context. The third Section on findings includes an analysis of the implementation and outcomes achievement through empiric evidence. The information was assessed in terms of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability. The last Section exposes the TE's conclusions and a summary of lessons learned. In this sense, the evaluation made focus on gathering experiences, best practices and specific knowledge produced during the SGP implementation, as inputs for an organizational learning process and to make the local communities' and other institutions' best practices more visible.

## **4. PROYECT DESCRIPTION AND CONTEXT**

### 4.1. Phase's starting date and duration

The OP6's period of implementation is 3 years long, starting on September 2016 and being the expected ending on September 2019.

### 4.2. Problems sought to address

OP6 intended to replicate, deepen and escalate previous operational phases best practices. The identification of problems to be solved has its base on previous experiences and assessments made

on pending challenges. In this sense, general threats to biodiversity in the Andean Paramo, Western dry forest, mangroves and amazon rainforest are their conversion to other uses, ecosystem fragmentation in the whole landscape and the extensive ecosystem degradation from unsustainable extraction of timber and non-timber forest resources, overgrazing and invasive exotic species.

Therefore, main threats have their origin en big scale commercial practices, decisions made on infrastructure development and on the lack of opportunities, incentives, knowledge and resources that communities must adopt and implement as strategies for more sustainable livelihoods.

On the other hand, OP6 Project Document makes an overview on Ecuador's socio environmental problems, and points out that:

- During the last decades, dry forests in Ecuador have disappeared in a growing rate; and a coverage reduction of 5% has been estimated for the last 20 years.
- Over 70% of coastal mangroves have been destroyed by logging and shrimp harvesting. Coastal communities eliminate mangroves for shrimp harvesting and overharvest mangrove's products, including Wood, timber, fish and crustaceans.
- Since the early 70's around 30% of the Ecuadorian Amazon has been deforested due to a poorly planned or controls colonization, often accelerated by the road building from the incursion of the petrol industry. In this region, small farmers practice slash and burn agriculture in decreasing rotations, which leads to permanent clearing and the loss of the ecosystem's optimal functions in broad areas, since farmlands turn into low grade pastures.
- Grassland burning, forestry operations and overgrazing represent the major threats to Paramo ecosystems, even in protected areas. In this area there are numerous human settlements and highways that cross the plateau, breaking up the Eco region. With the recent expansion of human activities, particularly agriculture and mining, these habitats are being altered and destroyed. The soils of the grasslands are fertile but highly susceptible to erosion, and rivers are sometimes contaminated by mining waste.
- With the loss of biodiversity and degradation of ecosystem services, the social and ecological resilience of these landscapes is increasingly compromised. With growing climate change and the weather and climate variability delivered by El Niño, communities must manage their landscapes to increase their resilience to climate and other shocks and pressures. Even if Ecuadorian law made progress in ecosystem's management and conservation, its reinforcement as well as effective policy making are still insufficient.

In response to this situation, there is a growing experience and interest on behalf of a variety of international cooperation stakeholders, including Ecuador's SGP, with successful activities that are compatible with conservation such as forest community management for timber and non-timber products, mangrove and wetland management for sustainable artisan fishing and aquaculture, ecotourism, agro forestry and the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices and systems aimed to preserve soil's productivity and the conservation of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

Central barriers identified by GEF SGP OP6:

- Communities lack the means and capacities to plan and coordinate among themselves and with other relevant interested parties towards an effective biocorridor governance.

- Communities lack the means and/or motivation to plan, manage or coordinate activities for biodiversity conservation, land sustainable management or the enhancement of ecosystem services.
- Communities lack the means and skills to increase the productivity of their farming systems while conserving habitats and resources important for ecological connectivity and biodiversity conservation. Communities lack the skills and means to reach new markets for their Products with Territorial Identity.

#### 4.3. UNDP GEF SGP OP6 Objectives

The SGP was aimed to creating the necessary conditions for Ecuadorian communities to manage BCLW, through collective actions considering landscape adaptation and socio ecologic resilience.

Taking OP5's outcomes, lessons, achievements and limitations, OP6 intended to consolidate SGP's proposal by enhancing, replicating, scaling and consolidation of OP5'S best practices and lessons learned. This operational phase is also aligned to Ecuador's National Constitution and is based on a new development paradigm based on "Good Living". SGP OP6 also accomplished to promote joint work between CBOs with NGO that have supported collective projects through the EQUIPATEs and a decentralized supervision.

#### 4.4. Base line and results indicators for SGP OP6

Base line indicators established in the PRODOC and target indicators for OP6 are presented in the following matrix, as well as the outcomes achieved at this TE (achievement rates are also included)

OBJECTIVE/OUTCOME	INDICATOR	TARGET (PRODOC)	ACHIEVED OUTCOME AT END OF PROJECT (TE)	ACHIEVEMENT RATING SCALE (TE)
<p><b>Overall project objective</b></p> <p>Resilient socio-ecological landscapes for sustainable development and global environmental protection.</p>	<p>Sustainably managed terrestrial and marine landscapes that integrate biodiversity conservation in the following ecosystems (hectares):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Andean Paramo</li> <li>- Montane rain forest</li> <li>- Mangrove</li> <li>- Coastal rainforest</li> <li>- Western dry forest</li> <li>- Tropical rainforest</li> </ul>	<p>At least 266 communities implement landscape management strategies and undertake activities on sustainably managed landscapes and seascapes (8.19% increase in the area covered in previous phase in 10 Biocorridor):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 15,920 has Andean Paramo</li> <li>- 12,495 has Montane rain forest</li> <li>- 897 has Mangrove</li> <li>- 1,240 has Western dry forest</li> <li>- 17,500 has Tropical rainforest</li> </ul>	<p>276 communities implement landscape management strategies and undertake activities on sustainably managed landscapes and seascapes as follows:</p> <p>Paramo: 36.260,9 ha</p> <p>Montane rainforest: 30,697 ha</p> <p>Mangrove: 1.200 ha</p> <p>Coastal dry forest: 1.767 ha</p> <p>Western dry forest: 11.839 ha</p> <p>Amazon tropical rainforest: 20.151 ha</p>	<p><b>Achieved/exceeded</b></p>
	<p>Connectivity growth in targeted areas</p>	<p>SGP will determine the proportions of the different land cover classes, land use and structural domains according to a globally accepted terminology (Land Cover Classification System- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) To determine the state of fragmentation and connectivity in the "Biocorridors" information of land use and land cover in "land management plans" and maps generated by the Ministry of Environment will be used.</p>	<p>Ecuador SGP and PASNAP determine the proportions of the different land cover classes, land use and structural domains of 10 Biocorridor.</p>	

OBJECTIVE/OUTCOME	INDICATOR	TARGET (PRODOC)	ACHIEVED OUTCOME AT END OF PROJECT (TE)	ACHIEVEMENT RATING SCALE (TE)
	Biological corridors with community strategies (conservation, regeneration, reforestation and protection) to prevent habitat fragmentation in landscapes composed of various natural ecosystems.	At least 10 geographically defined Biocorridors executing strategies for implementation at community level to reduce habitat fragmentation. Each Biocorridor will be executed through an integrated multi stakeholder platform.	10 geographically defined Biocorridors executing strategies for implementation at community level to reduce habitat fragmentation in the five target ecosystems.	<b>Achieved</b>
<p><b>Outcome 1.0:</b> Fully established multi-stakeholder partnerships develop, oversee and learn from the implementation of adaptive landscape management plans in 10 Biocorridors in key ecosystems of Ecuador:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Andean Paramo</li> <li>- Montane rainforest</li> <li>- Mangrove</li> <li>- Coastal Rainforest</li> <li>- Western dry forest</li> <li>- Tropical rainforest</li> </ul>	Number of governance platforms corresponding to the ten Biocorridors reactivated and strengthened.	10 multi stakeholder platforms - reactivated and strengthened.	10 multi stakeholder platforms - reactivated and strengthened	<b>Achieved</b>
	Number and quality of adaptive landscape management plans for 2016-2019.	<p>10 Biocorridors count one Action Plan for each Biocorridor (ACBIO).</p> <p>Biocorridors update ratify their adaptive landscape management plans including strategies for reducing habitat fragmentation, enhancing agro ecosystem sustainability, and other objectives.</p> <p>Quality of plans endorsed by Multi-stakeholder platforms, EQUIPATE, and SGP.</p>	Action Plans (ACBIO) and Landscape Adaptive management Plans, developed during OP5 for each corridor have been updated and ratified through multi stakeholders' platforms during OP6.	<b>Achieved</b>



OBJECTIVE/OUTCOME	INDICATDOR	TARGET (PRODOC)	ACHIEVED OUTCOME AT END OF PTOJECT (TE)	ACHIEVEMENT RATING SCALE (TE)
<b>Outcome 2.0:</b> Enhanced biodiversity conservation for ecological connectivity in the key ecosystems.	Number of multi stakeholder governance platform implementing Bio corridor communication strategies	10 Bio corridor multi stakeholder platforms implement communication products defined in the National communication strategy.	Ecuador SGP has designed a national communication strategy that considers multilevel communication products for 10 biocorridors. These communication platforms promote and disseminate biocorridor's activities and achievements through different tools such as local media, social media, websites, national media and written press.	<b>Achieved</b>
	Number of community agreements for conservation, regeneration and protection of habitat and biodiversity to prevent or mitigate landscape fragmentation.	23 community agreements ratified for conservation, regeneration and protection of key ecosystems and at least 15% additional new agreements	25 community agreements ratified for conservation, regeneration and protection of key ecosystems.	<b>Achieved</b>
	Number of hectares in the 10 Bio corridors managed: conserved, regenerate or restored	71,024 hectares in four key ecosystems are managed and continue to be conserved. An additional 10% will be integrated into conservation, reforestation and natural regeneration practices.	101.914 hectares in four key ecosystems are managed and continue to be conserved.	<b>Achieved/Exceeded</b>

OBJECTIVE/OUTCOME	INDICATDOR	TARGET (PRODOC)	ACHIEVED OUTCOME AT END OF PTOJECT (TE)	ACHIEVEMENT RATING SCALE (TE)
<b>Outcome 3.0:</b> Improved sustainability and productivity of agro ecosystems in the targeted Biocorridors.	Number of people, especially women and youth, involved in reforestation, restoration and conservation campaigns.	Additional 600 individuals, especially women and youth are involved in activities regarding ecological connectivity, reforestation, and natural regeneration through specific campaigns.	1.354 people (925 women and 429 men) have been involved in activities regarding ecological connectivity, reforestation, and natural regeneration through specific campaigns.	<b>Achieved/Exceeded</b>
	Number of Sustainable Land Management (SLM) practices implemented in the targeted landscapes	At least 7 sustainable land management practices consolidated and three additional practices based on vulnerability assessment are incorporated	38 sustainable land management practices consolidated.	<b>Achieved/Exceeded</b>
	Number of families with improved alternative livelihoods from products with territorial identity.	Improve the processing and quality of 20 products with territorial identity (out of the existing 52) and with 10% more families	24 new products have improved their processing and quality. 567 families have been involved in these processes.	<b>Achieved/Exceeded</b>

<b>Outcome 4.0:</b> Social solidarity and partnerships strengthened within and among stakeholder groups across the Biocorridors.	Number of marketing networks established for products with territorial identity.	11 products with territorial identity strengthened with diversified marketing options and an additional 6 identify regular commercialization channels.	13 products with territorial identity were strengthened with 15 options of regular marketing channels.  33 additional products have been strengthened with 56 regular marketing channels	<b>Achieved/Exceeded</b>
	Involvement of women in decision-making.	50% of the initiatives financed by the SGP coordinated by women.	52% of the initiatives financed by the SGP, from a total of 30, are coordinated by women.	<b>Achieved</b>
	Number of women benefiting from income-generating activities.	10% more women benefiting from income generating activities and production chains strengthened to promote the participation of women in decision-making.	54% additional women were strengthened. That is 815 women were benefited by income generating activities and their participation in decision making was enhanced.	<b>Achieved/Exceeded</b>
	Number of indigenous and farming associations strengthened through learning-by-doing in the management of Biocorridors following adaptive management learning methods.	Social solidarity partnerships strengthened with at least 9 farmers' organizations and 25 indigenous organizations leading projects linking at least 225 communities.	46 farmer organizations and 26 indigenous communities lead projects that involve a total of 276 communities.	<b>Achieved/Exceeded</b>
	Number of young men and women trained in socio-	Capacities are strengthened for an additional 10% of participants in socio-	1.516 people have participated in capacity	<b>Achieved/Exceeded</b>

	ecological landscape management.	environmental management and leadership of whom at least 1088 women.	building activities regarding environmental management and leadership. 1.183 are women.	
	Number of young entrepreneur associations supported.	Youth environmental networks strengthened and replicated through capacity development and experience exchange.	10 new youth environmental networks strengthened and replicated through capacity development and experience exchange. Approximately 150 young people are involved in youth networks.	<b>Achieved</b>

#### 4.5. Main stakeholders involved

Government and non-government stakeholders involved in SGP OP6. Among the government stakeholders, the Ministry of Environment (MAE), Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, Ministry of Agriculture (MAG), Ministry of Tourism (MINTUR) and Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion (MIES) stand out for their national and local offices. MAG is involved in the NSC and participates with institutional coordination actions. Joint actions have been undertaken which are this Ministry's complement and contribution.

MAE's participation, through PASNAP is also to be recognized. MAE/PASNAP and UNDP/SGP's agreement purpose was to jointly contribute with management guidelines for connectivity with a view towards MAE's conservation objectives through a financial and technical contribution to SGP for the implementation of the three selected projects in the target areas.

Among the civil society stakeholders, community organizations, CBO and indigenous people's associations that participated in local associations for the projects' implementation in the different biocorridors stand out. This also involved coordination and management with other stakeholders at different levels.

Management Committees (which are responsible for project execution in each Biocorridor and are formed by civil society and government institutions of different jurisdictional levels at a territorial scale) have coordinated with:

Local governments at different level: provincial, cantonal/municipal and parish, have development and land use plans that can legitimate and strengthen social, environmental and economic processes supported by Ecuador SGP.

From the governance point of view, the NSC has articulated with diverse key institutions such as CEDENMA, an environmental NGOs coordinator, which has been related to SGP since its foundation and has made valuable contributions, especially those regarding field work, and the Programme's approach and actions. The presence of women organization's representatives, especially indigenous women, within the NSC, ensured the sustainability analysis with a gender approach.

Universities played an important role preparing documents such as business plans and local products transformation manuals with the communities.

NGO such as Lianas Foundations, ECOPAR, Fides, Rural Development and Investigation Center (CEDIR), through the EQUIPATEs, have taken over technical assistance and field supervision, attending to the projects' development in the Bio corridors. The organizations that participated in the selected projects have assisted the different communities in managing, supervising and monitoring the projects and building capacities. Additionally, different NGO (Fundación Aldea, Fundación Interris, Corporación ECOPAR) were selected for their capacities to execute crosscutting projects (georeferencing, PTI and TICCA), expanding SGP's interventions scheme.

Private sector's involvement through GreenCrowdss innovative strategy is also to stand out, for their participation and commitment. They have signed an alliance that seeks to solve creativity and sustainability challenges. Some projects receive prizes and were placed on a platform where winners promoted their initiative and raised funds for the Project.

SGP made a particularly important collaboration through nonprofit advisory services based on the importance given to the programme for its efforts towards sustainable development.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Contributions were made through this channel by, Impaqto, Working up, Runa sapiens, CEMDES, Medialab uio, InovAcción, Ecuador Terra Incógnita, Buen trip and UDLA, among others.

#### 4.6. Expected outcomes

**Outcome 1:** Fully established multi-stakeholder partnerships develop, oversee and learn from the implementation of adaptive landscape management plans in 10 Biocorridors in key ecosystems of Ecuador: Andean Paramo, Montane rainforest, Mangrove, Coastal Rainforest, Western dry forest and Tropical rainforest

**Outcome 2:** Enhanced biodiversity conservation for ecological connectivity in the key ecosystems.

**Outcome 3:** Improved sustainability and productivity of agro ecosystems in the targeted Biocorridors.

**Outcome 4:** Social solidarity and partnerships strengthened within and among stakeholder groups across the Biocorridors.

### 5. FINDINGS

In order to complete the analysis, different stakeholders were interviewed, and their vision was included in the strengths and weaknesses analytic process, with the purpose of exploring OP6's operation from their point of view, and its impact in Ecuador.

This overview was recovered through interviews and workshops with government officers and the GADs, members of the EQUIPATEs, crosscutting project's executers, UNDP and community organizations' representatives.

The analysis was constructed by the triangulation of the data gathered from the interviewee's perspective and document analysis in order to achieve a pondered balance of all the information sources.

During the filed mission individual interviews were developed and communities' projects were visited on site. The field mission took place between April 2<sup>nd</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> 2019, and virtual (remote) interviews carried on during April 2019.

*This TE's specific objectives are:* i) understand stakeholder's vision on SGP, ii) inquire the Programme's pertinence and coherence, and particularly if it accomplishes the final objectives, iii) explore whether the designed mechanisms and instruments are efficient and effective regarding their purpose, the activities' effectiveness and efficiency, the benefits' quality and quantity and the expected impacts, iv) identify the Programme's strengths and weaknesses, v) investigate the Programme's best practices and lessons learned; vi) explore on the stakeholder's ownership; vii) become aware with the stakeholder's vision on the activities sustainability.

#### 5.1. Project design and formulation

##### a. *Project design*

Pertinence was assessed in the SGP design: actions' substantial definition and the pertinence and coherence between norms, objectives, measures and means that rule and guide them were considered. Moreover, the extent to which SGP OP6's objectives were coherent with the people's needs and interests, Ecuador's needs and GEF's objectives were assessed. Furthermore, OP6's relevance regarding national priorities and context was analyzed, along with the contributions from the implemented actions to the SGP's objectives.

In respect of design, it was found to be adequately founded in OP5's evaluation results and has followed a RBM approach present in SIMONAA.

SGP OP6 is aligned to the national political framework which promotes a "Good Living" based sustainable development planning.

It is also aligned to the National Plan for “Good Living” 2013-2017 and the National Strategy and Action Plan for Biodiversity; with the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Objectives, and the National Policy for Natural Heritage Governance.

SGP OP6 is also consistent with the target provinces’ Development and Land use Zoning Plans through a direct alignment with the Biocorridors Action Plans.

Regarding the stakeholder’s perspective, communities point out that the Programme reflects their views on Biocorridors and that both, objectives and targets and indicators have been appropriate. On the other hand, National government institutions mentioned that in some cases there are project components that have not been consulted sufficiently. Nevertheless, it is to be clarified that a change of government authorities during OP6 implementation and a high rotation of public officers, which can lead to a lack of historic vision in such perception.

As far as GADs are concerned, their representatives point out that the Programme has been relevant for their communities and that it has generated positive effects regarding community participation promotion and communities’ needs feedback which they directly relate to the Programmes design.

Key stakeholders recognize that the Participative Planning strategy has been adequate for establishing objectives, results and targets.

It is to note that Ecuador’s SGP approach is very specific and includes a new conceptual framework, such as Biocorridors for Living Well, which contributes to enhance MAE’s policy (particularly on ecologic connectivity), and to MAG’s Rural Family Farming, resulting in relevant contributions for national public policies.

Moreover, OP6 has been innovative in its design and management model. PTI’s strategy has been properly designed and has successfully included marketing, business building capacities, competitive capacity increase and business infrastructure improvement.

The incorporation of a crowdfunding strategy in OP6, through GreenCrowds, has been a suitable tool for generation alternative funding for the participating communities.

Based on the above, the Programme’s formulation and design are found to be pertinent and coherent with people’s needs and interests, Ecuador’s needs and GEF’s objectives.

*b. Logical Framework Analysis/ Results Framework (project’s logic/strategy; indicators)*

The project’s logical framework and its indicators were analyzed in order to grade the results achievement regarding coherence, pertinence and effectiveness.

Based on PIR 2018, 17 indicators were assessed: 3 for Objective, 3 for Outcome 1, 3 for Outcome 2, 3 for Outcome 3 and 5 for Outcome 4; as well as the established base line and targets for 2019.

OP6’s operational strategy is based on: a) articulation enhancement between Bio corridors and land planning, b) strengthening of multi-stakeholder and multi-level intervention, and c) design and implementation of and innovative and adequate management model.

The evaluation reviewed the information produced by SGP and NGOs, undertook a field mission that confirmed that the problematic was correctly identified and described as well as the proposed intervention strategy which is framed within OP6 managing model, which consistently led to the expected outcomes achievement. The mechanisms use for information gathering in order to supervise and verify targets have been correct, as well as the access to verification sources. OP6 adjusted the Monitoring, Technical Assistance System (SIMONAA), incorporating financial information and synthesizing the tool with an innovative monitoring and evaluation model that

involved communities in the report production, leaving installed capacities for future actions and providing the means for CBOs to make a social control over the programmes resources. This innovation enabled EQUIPATEs to assist all the community organizations and to accomplish with data gathering at all levels and account for territorial articulation.

OP6 has faced the challenge of ecosystem fragmentation due to an extractive logic both at corporate level (minerals, shrimp breeding pools, timber) and from land intensive use (monoculture, agro chemical use), and to the expansion of the agricultural border on behalf of rural communities as an unsustainable livelihood.

SGP's contribution is to promote the development of BCLW that restore ecosystems fostering ecologic connectivity through the conservation and/or restoration of fragile forests and native vegetation areas and the promotion of productive landscapes. It has been critical to rely on local communities' organizations that manage environmental protection and local economic development processes, putting an end to the conservation vs. productive development dichotomy. National and local government participation in planning and consolidating dialogue spaces on political incidence, management and governance has been also fundamental. Universities, NGOs and the private sector, come together for the construction of socio ecological resilience towards territories sustainability that are subject to various threats.

OP6 was based on three approaches: ecological connectivity, which seeks the biocorridors expansion and enhancement through conservation, restoration and fragile areas management practices, socio ecological resilience and its expected outcome being "threatened ecosystems (Andean Paramo, Dry forest, mangrove, montane rainforest and tropical rainforest) connectivity has been expanded and enhanced through the promotion of Bio corridors, contributing to socio ecological resilience and the recovery of genetic, species and ecosystem diversity, with the subsequent global and local environmental benefits". Priority activities (each Biocorridor has its own action plan – ACBIO that establishes priorities) are identified within a participative and coordinated space and a joint Project is designed that includes the co-financing institutions and the coordination and execution mechanism. The productive landscapes approach, which sought for the communities and their organizations to count on alternatives for the sustainable use of the natural resources, thus providing them of income sources or food security through innovative quality products with access to dynamic markets. Its outcome has been the enhancement of resilient productive landscapes, restoring and developing agricultural biodiversity, agro ecology and Products with Territorial Identity (with rural and indigenous peoples) in the coast, Northern and Central Highlands and the Amazon, as established in the project's documents. Finally, the associative approach set up an expansion and empowerment scenario for the organizations (generational renovation, women, management capacity). Through this approach territorial associative processes are strengthened among rural communities and articulation and incidence spaces are consolidated with national and local governments, NGOs, universities, private sector and others for a planning and the complementary implementation of projects and actions that are aimed at improving socio ecological adaptation and resilience. Indicators on the logic framework emanate from these approaches.

The Programme's portfolio comprehensively included capacity enhancement proposals for all territories: georeferencing, PTIs and ICCA.

As examples of these, the following projects stood out: geo-referenced maps on land coverage and use, vegetation coverage of biocorridors for the identification of the ecosystems' ecological connectivity, which has been considered as an appropriate strategy for indicators and expected outcomes verification and to improve the organizations knowledge on their territories. The PTI Project designed and implemented an *ad hoc* methodology in order to develop PTIs as entrepreneurs based on inclusive and fair marketing chains, access to new markets such as organic top-quality chocolates that reach foreign markets and comply with European strict quality regulations. Finally, selected TICCA within de BCLW framework, developed a strong strategy to



protect these Life Territories and reinforce indigenous peoples and nations rights as part of GCSI/UNDP's ICCA<sup>10</sup> international initiative that is also supported by German cooperation agencies.

As far as training is concerned, even if a considerable number of indicators on the addressed topics were developed, it would be useful to count on information on those that account for the impact of the creation of new capacities and its relation to the programme, even if short term quantification may be challenging.

Similarly, gender, ethnic and age disaggregated indicators provide valuable information that enable a detailed outcome analysis. If a long-term impact assessment should be carried out, this disaggregation could be applied.

### *c. Risks and assumptions*

The Project Document (2016) identifies five main risks at the Programme's start-up:

- 1- Development of socio-environmental conflicts in the Biocorridors as a result of extractive practices;
- 2- Vulnerability of Biocorridor projects facing extreme meteorological phenomena and other climate related risk, like the El Niño Phenomenon
- 3- Weak development of local products and structural obstacles in access to markets from state control and adverse public regulations
- 4- Electoral political processes prevent agreement in Regional Working Groups or multi-stakeholder platforms.
- 5- Associations and partnerships lose motivation in anticipation of an eventual economic crisis in the country.

Mitigation measures were assessed following the risk matrix for each of the above mentioned. This assessment determined that risk analysis and the mitigation measures proposed are adequate. It is to note that during the SGP OP6's implementation, the El Niño effects in 2018 had an impact, especially on the community projects on coastal areas. Additionally, Manabí province communities pointed out the effects of the earthquake that took place on April 2016, that had its epicenter in that province, which generated complications for the project's execution. In face of these situations, it has been noticed that OP6 responded generating cooperation synergies and taking proper corrective measures.

Regarding market access barriers risks, their existence and persistence has been verified. Mitigation measures are pertinent and have achieved to surpass some aspects. Still, some barriers exceed the Programme's competence and it is necessary to search for alternative mitigation measures in the future (such as adequate roads to reach fairs in bigger cities, sanitary certificates requirements for some packaged products such as preserves, etc.).

Regarding the rest of the identified risks, the evaluation concluded that the mitigation measures proposed were adequate.

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10 It is usual to find a close link between an indigenous community or a well-defined local community and a territory, area or group of specific natural resources. When this link is combined with effective local governance and nature's conservation, we speak of TICCA. TICCA is an abbreviation for "indigenous peoples and local communities' conserved territories and areas" or "territories of life" (see: <https://www.iccaconsortium.org/index.php/es/descubra/>). A list of worldwide TICCA's can be found in UNEP-WCMC (2016). Bases de Datos Globales para apoyar TICCA's: un Manual para los Pueblos Indígenas y Comunidades Locales 1.0. UNEP-WCMC: Cambridge, Reino Unido.

Risk analysis (PRODOC):

Identified risks	Potential consequence	Risk rating L: Likelihood I: Impact	Mitigation measures	Risk category
Development of socio-environmental conflicts in the Biocorridors as a result of extractive practices	Conflicts among Biocorridor stakeholders will reduce cooperation and synergies among projects, thus reducing the potential for sustainable landscape level outcomes including GEB	L: medium I: high	Strengthen joint projects across communities and landscapes with beneficial effects for all stakeholders. Strengthen agreements in RWGs and BWGs to legitimize projects with Local Governments Conflict avoidance, management and resolution training in communities.	Programmatic
Vulnerability of Biocorridor projects facing extreme meteorological phenomena and other climate related risk, like the El Niño Phenomenon	The planned activities regarding reforestation regeneration and agro-ecological farms could be affected because of unexpected weather conditions and natural disasters	L: medium I: medium	The adaptive landscape methodology applied by SGP considers this kind of risks and will incorporate the necessary measures to prevent impacts and in case these will occur it will also consider mitigation adjustments. M&E Ecuador SGP system – SIMONAA allows the program and technical teams to identify potential risks and take action. Multi-stakeholder landscape platforms will identify and incorporate necessary mitigation measures when required.	
Weak development of local products and structural obstacles in access to markets from state control and adverse public regulations	Products with low market appeal or unable to access markets will motivate producers to abandon new practices or systems	L: medium I: medium	Development of market research partnerships with universities. Technical assessment to improve and	Programmatic

Identified risks	Potential consequence	Risk rating L: Likelihood I: Impact	Mitigation measures	Risk category
	and will discourage adoption by new practitioners.		maintain quality processes in production. Inter-institutional dialogue, including in the RWG and BWGs, to ease the legal framework of the state.	
Electoral political processes prevent agreement in Regional Working Groups or multi-stakeholder platforms.	Partisan political representatives in multi-stakeholder groups may create conflicts during meetings around RWG or BWG priorities, especially if electoral advantage is perceived as possible	L: medium I: low	During electoral periods, SGP will focus efforts primarily on community organizational capacity building and implementing project and Biocorridor action plans Meetings of potentially problematic RWGs or BWGs will be avoided until the electoral period is past.	Contextual
Associations and partnerships lose motivation in anticipation of an eventual economic crisis in the country.	Community groups and partnerships may practice excessive risk avoidance if the perception of an approaching economic crisis is strong. This may result in low participation in BWG and declining interest in innovation.	L: low I: low	Training in risk assessment and management as part of project design and implementation Technical support to provide additional risk management Technical support to provide additional risk management	Contextual

*e. Lessons learned from other relevant projects*

Based on SGP's 25-year experience in Ecuador, that has specifically focused on working with NGOs and rural and indigenous communities, OP5's lessons learned on outcomes achievement have been considered for OP6's intervention strategy, presenting challenges for the initiatives' scaling.

Ecuador's GEF SGP OP5 was centered in biocorridors creation in four regions with priority ecosystems, and OP6 aimed at working with CBO groups in strategic alliances (social alliances), in opposition to individual CBOs, involving universities and GADs. These components have been crucial for the OP6's strategy formulation and enabled to include nature and nature's conservation

into the public agendas, along with sustainable production and income generating criteria for the most vulnerable groups in each corridor; issues that have been prioritized in the debate spaces.

On the other hand, SGP coordinated activities and shared tools, methodologies and lessons learned with the following projects:

- Ecuadorian amphibian's diversity conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources.
- National Biodiversity Plans to support CDB's Strategic Plan for 2011-2020 implementation in Ecuador.
- Agriculture biodiversity use integration and conservation in public policies through integrated strategies and on-site implementation in three provinces in the Andean Highlands.
- Financial sustainability for the National Protected Areas System (SNAP) and associated sub systems of private and community managed protected areas.

An alliance, based on the lessons learned in the landscape GEF projects implemented by MAE, was generated with Ecuador's SNAP to improve and increase global threatened wildlife's conservation.

Within this alliance, lessons from various environmental projects were integrated, concluding in the operationalization through co-financing and other actions at a national level. These proposal had the goal to restore, recover and connect Ecuador's fragile ecosystem's remnants, by means of ecosystem conservation or management actions and the development of sustainable productive landscapes that allow communities to count on an alternative livelihood that reduces pressure on the natural ecosystems and enables biological connectivity's recovery. To achieve this outcome, the PASNAP financed directly three biocorredor projects on three selected landscapes (Bosque Protector Cordillera Chongón Colonche, Estuario del Río Chone: Islas Corazón y Fragatas, La Segua y Biocorredor Cóndor Chuquiragua Cañar).

#### *f. Stakeholder's expected participation*

The Project adopted a participative planning strategy that is renowned by the communities. OP6 has been successful in including a participative strategy as an innovation regarding OP5. In this phase, community participation was enhanced in landscape planning and management through multi stakeholders' platforms (MTB). These platforms included community organizations, national and local public institutions representatives. Thus, communities' strategic participation and representation within the 10 biocorridors governance structure, was strengthened.

Most interviewees made emphasis on the communities and their member's commitment since the project's start and they remarked that the managing articulation has been correct and pertinent. At the same time, the relationship between communities and EQUIPATEs is to stand out.

Furthermore, MTBs stand out as crucial moments for key stakeholders' involvement, being the Inception, Experience Exchange and Closure Workshops, the most important spaces.

It has also been noticed that multi stakeholders' platforms performance has been fundamental for participants to reaffirm community agreements for conservation, generating an important contribution in terms of environment and Biocorridors consolidation.

Based on the evidence observed during the field mission and interviews, communication between National Coordination, partners at different levels, local CBOs, NGOs and other associated organizations is clear.

Biocorridors sustainable management has implemented a strategy to articulate community and social management and land planning. The biocorridor concept as a territorial planning and management unit is very interesting, and it has led to joint activities between organizations and associations, public and private institutions, in order to prioritize them in the Bio corridors Action Plans (ACBIO) and in local public policy.

Additionally, the creation of Scholarship Funds resulted in a recognized and appreciated tool within the communities to incentive youth participation and to achieve a technical approach on behalf of the communities. Both scholarship beneficiaries and other community stakeholders, perceive this support as a central issue for technical, managing, communication and participation improvement.

Ecuador's SGP has established a collaboration and action cooperation alliance with PASNAP, which has been very successful in terms of actions coordination, methodology exchange and implementation, considering lessons from both programs, leveraging funds from international cooperation (GEF/UNDP/UNOPS and German cooperation), and adapting management models to make compatible those from the various partners, compatible.

Likewise, GreenCrowds platform (available on: <https://greencrowds.org/>) has demonstrated to be an innovative initiative on OP6, which has acquired great recognition and a successful position and has enabled to identify funding alternative sources that involve new stakeholders in face of Budget restrictions. This strategy stands out for promoting the enhancement of liaisons among communities, civil society and the private sector, generating a funding expansion opportunity for initiatives with added value and innovation, and directly impact on the sustainability of those projects that have received SGP's seed funding.

Regarding women's involvement, the recollected data reveal it has been a key aspect in the design's and implementation's success, both regarding the number of involved women and the different types of activities undertaken. Discussing equal opportunities and gender equality in training spaces meant, for a lot of women, their first opportunity for autonomous development.

The Scholarship Fund strategy, which acted as a mechanism to involve young people in the biocorridors management and sustainability, increased the possibility of accessing specialized technicians for the communities' profit (for example, specific research on a lagoon that implied that new water intakes were possible and were postgraduate thesis 2 scholars that developed one year long on site investigation). ICCAs initiative, as a project, engaged indigenous communities as stakeholders and made their actual conservation strategies for their territories visible.

#### *g. Replication approach*

Ecuador's SGP OP6 has a successful replication and knowledge management strategy. Example of this is the role played by a group of young people that disseminated their skills among their communities so as other young people can be integrated into the process.

Its replication capacity has been consolidated, as well as knowledge management of successful and non-successful experiences. Experiences and lessons learned seminars have been positively valued activities and have contributed to this scheme.

Bio corridors projects have worked on a replication scheme and training from these organizations towards the rest of the biocorridors organizations, seeking to implement and enhance sustainable practices. PASNAP's role as a key ally, has been identified as crucial for replication at OP6 and as a learned lesson for future MAE landscape-based interventions.

Communities acknowledge that training and seminars promote a broader experience exchange and replication opportunities, through detailed seminars, courses and workshops plan. Especially meaningful were the ten experience exchange workshops implemented at projects' mid-term and closure.

Highlands communities were able to integrate SGP concepts in a better manner and beneficiaries presented more ownership of biocorridors' strategy and conservation itself, providing more replication opportunities among the communities. For this reason, it is important to reaffirm this aspect in other geographical areas.

The Programme's communication strategy has been also useful for replication, since plenty information on the projects processes and achievements has been produced and standardized, which allow them to be disseminated and replicated. In this respect, SIMONAA offers an information recollection tool so that projects can standardize qualitative and quantitative information on the 3 adopted approaches (ecological connectivity, sustainable productive landscapes and associativity).

This TE highlights the permanent efforts on standardizing experiences from the standardize territorial data), and from SGP National Office, that standardizes the whole OP6 process, considering also other knowledge management activities such as the communication strategy's design and implementation, GreenCrowds platform to promote and enhance innovative Bio corridors initiatives and other sustainable global initiatives, final outcomes from the Scholarship Funds, that contribute significantly with practical and technical inputs on territorial management, among others. Moreover, EQUIPATES role is to stand out, as well as the coordination between them, as an adequate mean to promote experiences replication between the different Bio corridors.

Efforts on standardization favors the project's achievement and best practices international dissemination through SGP's website. In this sense, global and regional workshops are positively valued, as a dissemination practice between counties. Particularly, on April 2018, Ecuador's SGP hosted a global workshop for SGP upgraded countries in Quito. This space offered opportunities to: 1) review lessons, challenges and successes from Upgraded Countries Programmes, provide strategic guiding for projects implementation and to analyse perspectives and arrangements for OP7; 2) share and disseminate knowledge and experiences of on-site successful experiences for their replication and the improvement of landscape community based planning and management approaches and practices; and 3) build staff's technical capacities through specialized training on community based landscape management and M&E practices. This workshop enabled Ecuador's SGP to share with its colleagues the progress made on Biocorridors for Living Well and the field visit to Pisque Mojanda's San Pablo Biocorridor was the scenario to show the implementation of the management model.

A variety of stakeholders involved in SGP, pointed out that Ecuador's SGP has been most innovative in implementing the landscape approach through Biocorridors for Living Well and its management model constitutes an example to be considered.

Private sector's support in the UNICO initiative has contributed to PTIs visibility, both through the use of its products and by training young people from the communities in the use of these products. This favors its replication among the communities, involving other young people that are interested in this initiative, and also promotes the creation of cooperatives and associations that provide catering services, that can associate to eco-tourism and boost their possibilities among public and private stakeholders that could include them in special events that give the PTIs visibility through press and key tourism agents.

Also, of importance were the Programme's visits to SGPs in Peru, Costa Rica and México. In this way, Ecuador's SGP, has enhanced South-South cooperation through technical exchange.

#### *h. UNDP/UNOPS comparative advantages*

UNDP plays an outstanding leading role and is recognized for providing valuable contributions on policies and knowledge transference to the country; and its image is favorable within the national government.

Its accountability and transparency on management are well known by the public opinion and it is recognized by its incidence capacity in various levels: the civil society and its organizations, the public and private sectors.

Also, the possibility that UNDP provides for an international projection of the developed experience under its scope and those acquired in projects in other countries (acting as a possible knowledge platform) are considered as an added value.

UNOPS experience as a country programs implementation service providing agency, enhances the administration and accountability capacity. UNOPS is responsible for SGP's financial management and delivers periodic reports to UNDP, although it implies higher costs for the upgraded country, doubling the administration fees, since both UNOPS and UNDP charge administration fees.

*i. Links between GEF SGP OP6 and other interventions within the sector*

Ecuador is a party of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which origin is in the UN Conference on Environment and Development held in Río de Janeiro in 1992. Ecuador ratified Kyoto's Protocol in 1999 as a country included in Annex 1 (SNAP), and the Ministry of Environment is the National authority for environmental management.

Ecuador's National Constitution (2008), recognizes nature's rights in its article 71, on the base of full respect for the existence, preservation and regeneration of the vital cycles, the structures, functions and evolutionary processes of nature. Ecuador also commits to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Objectives and 169 goals which, within the context of natural resources conservation, aim to protect the planet from degradation, through sustainable consumption and production, sustainable management of the natural resources and the adoption of urgent measures on climate change, to be able to satisfy the actual and future generation's needs.

In this framework, SGP OP6's management model has enabled an adequate bond among all the Bio corridors' stakeholders and the interaction between public institutions, GADs, community, rural and indigenous organizations. This element has been crucial to develop lessons, feedback and synergies with other interventions within the sector on behalf of other stakeholders.

OP6 has established agreements with GADs in different levels and for all Biocorridors, in order to promote and consolidate mid and long-term bonds. Thus, ACBIOs articulate with Land Use Plans (PDOTs in Spanish), linking Bio corridors' projects on site management, strategic alliances with public and civil society stakeholders and contributions from counterparts.

Ecuador's SGP has generated a collaboration and cooperation actions alliance with PASNAP in order to contribute management guidelines for connectivity with ends for conservation. OP6 sought to mitigate through this alliance the ecosystem fragmentation due to an extractive logic both at corporate level (minerals, shrimp breeding pools, timber) and from land intensive use (monoculture, agro chemical use), and to the expansion of the agricultural border on behalf of rural communities as an unsustainable livelihood as evidenced in the documents produced by both institutions. SGP's contribution is to strengthen the Bio corridors for Living Well development, so the restore the ecosystems fragmentation promoting ecologic connectivity through conservation and/or regeneration of fragile areas of forest and native vegetation and the advancement of sustainable productive landscapes. The local community organizations articulation that manage environmental protection and local economic development. There is also the national and local governments involvement in planning and dialogue spaces on political incidence, management and governance, as well as universities, NGOs and the private sector. SGP presents the projects' proposal for the National Steering Committee's, where MAE is part, consideration. Projects funded by PASNAP resources make emphasis on the ecological connectivity enhancement and the development of PTIs. During OP6, 33 projects selected by the NSC have been implemented (29 GEF funds of which 3 were co-financed by PASNAP; 2 additional PASNAP funds and 2 with TICCA funds)

The agreement between SGP and PASNAP/PASNAP has demonstrated to be fundamental to strengthen alliances at Bio corridors level, both at a national and a territorial scale: MEA, MAG, GAD, universities, NGO and private sector.

SGP and the ProAmazonia program have created a space for knowledge, methodology and best practices exchange. According to the revised information, MAE is interested in reassuring these agreements on OP7, for which it participated in its proposal formulation.

*j. Management arrangements*

Ecuador's SGP OP6 was implemented in ten Bio corridors and in four territories (coast, Northern and Central Highlands and Amazon). As a support strategy, Technical Assistance, Evaluation and Monitoring Teams (EQUIPATEs) and Biocorridors management committees were formed.

As a management strategy, joint work among the communities was promoted, expanding their perspectives and capacities to achieve projects for Bio corridors, which required to establish as center axis a management strategy on different levels. In this sense, the Programme promoted the creation and implementation of multi stakeholder platforms (MTB in Spanish), as coordination spaces and accountable for convoking the organizations to present their projects' proposals. These proposals had to include the articulation with government institutions, GADs, private sector and universities, in order to demonstrate their capacities of generating alliances that will cover the whole Bio corridor to design and implement their Bio corridor projects. These requirements were aimed at ensuring associativity, the biocorridor approach and the process' sustainability.

MTBs were also responsible for the implementation of the visibility and communication strategies and the legitimacy of agreements and commitments, derived from the stakeholder's dialogue and compromise.

A Management Committee has been established for each Biocorridor, which formulated and implemented the Bio corridor's Project and was also co responsible of maintaining the MTB active. It should be clarified that the project's execution was not exclusive of SGP funds, but of all the funds that, during OP6, the project could raise. The participation of CBO's leaders and members in the Management Committee has been an outstanding aspect and has contributed to the project's suitable management and monitoring.

In this respect, the Management Committee's meaningful role on coordinating meetings that call for other stakeholders in the territory, stands out. Its duties were:

- Call for MTB meetings for the participative and consensual management of the Bio corridor's project.
- Design the Bio corridor's project in a collaborative manner, for which it should:
  - Establish a base line.
  - Develop a brief inventory on best practices and investments made by SGP and other stakeholders during OP5, which will be enhanced during this phase.
  - Identify stakeholders and experiences that contribute to the Bio corridor's management and strategic approaches of SGP.
  - Establish alliances with Bio corridor coverage, identifying associative existing and functional schemes.
- Legally represent the organizations that form the alliance before UNDP SGP on signing the MOA through the formal legal status of one of its members.



- Manage the project's financial complementarity and obtain support from other organizations. This is imperative since the Bio corridor's project will only be partially funded by SGP, according to the financial capability of this Phase.
- Execute the project and manage its financial resources.
- Design and implement an incidence plan as part of capacities enhancement established in the project.
- Apply SGP's strategy to consolidate PTIS within the Bio corridor
- Define mechanisms to involve women and young people in the project's decision making.
- Standardize information and sustain a fluid communication with the EQUIPATE and Ecuador's SGP.

**GADs** acknowledge the **MTB's** meetings importance for disseminating information on the project's implementation, alternative stakeholders co-financing (local governments, NGO, others) and to promote an effective articulation.

**MAE** has contributed with technical assistance, and the communities acknowledge this role as a crucial input. **MAG's** role was not as visible, but communities recognize the importance of its presence and of reinforcing it in the future. OP6 management model has surpassed challenges identified in OP5, for example, through the inclusion of political spheres of articulation for the Bio corridor's governance and the contributions of public policies such as agro ecological fairs. Notwithstanding, not all the communities perceive the national ministries as key stakeholders within the MTBs and consider that their involvement should be strengthened.

As defined on OP6's strategy, EQUIPATEs have the following technical roles:

- Implement OP6's management models
- Organize, plan and facilitate process in Bio corridors and MTBs, for participative and consensual management of the Bio corridor
- Identify and build strategic alliances
- Research and define co financing for the Bio corridor's management
- Provide support, technical assistance and supervision
- Execute M&E
- Establish mechanisms for SGP's approaches incidence in the biocorridors.
- Strengthen PTI's development in the whole productive process and marketing
- Ensure youth and women's involvement in the Bio corridor
- Achieve visibility of the projects' outcomes
- Knowledge management of the Bio corridors projects' and of their territory

## 5.2. SGP OP6 implementation

This section includes the assessment of Ecuador's SGP OP6 aspects that have been crucial for its successful implementation and its objectives and outcomes achievement in the country's framework.

SGP's National Coordination developed the Project Document (PRODOC) and updated the Country Strategy considering the National Plan for Good Living (PNBV) 2013-2017 and other MAE documents regarding connectivity with a view to conservation and from the Ministry of Agriculture (MAG) regarding marketing networks. It also considered Satomaya Initiative's (COMDEKS) progress (connectivity indicators) and AICHI targets from the Biodiversity Plan. This framework was considered for developing the Bio corridors project's design guidelines.

The assessment undertaken on the implementing agencies management and Ecuador's SGP OP6 implementation is presented hereunder:

*a. Adaptive management (changes in the Programme's design and outcomes during its execution).*

SGP OP6 was implemented by UNOPS and UNDP as the accountable partner. In the programmes execution context, the NSC plays an important role as multi stakeholder manager and it is composed by civil society organizations and government representatives. PASNAP's fundamental role was previously described in the above sections.

To select the EQUIPATE (monitoring and evaluation team) a contest was held among NGOs with broad experience in the landscapes. The EQUIPATE were responsible for technical assistance and monitoring and they substantially contributed to the CBO's empowerment in a management and evaluation tools learning process.

Stakeholder's opinion and the evaluation observation concluded that the management arrangements and procedures have been efficient

Coordination among stakeholders is positively valued and the management mechanisms set for the Bio corridors are acknowledged as adequate. Communities recognize that being part of SGP provided them access to other international cooperation sources, creating a fundamental synergy for the project's development.

Regarding civil society organization strengthening, OP6 has implemented a strategy that privileges schemes that promote community groups and their organizations consolidation through a participative management model and a proper resource management.

Communities recognize associativity as a distinguished achievement which benefits their experiences, especially for their products marketing through agro ecological fairs within Living Well framework, and also for their organizational capacities' enhancement.

On the other hand, private sector's participation in Bio corridors has been boosted through GreenCrowdss collaborative funding platform. Currently, significant results and a broad contacts and alliances base, which could endure and increase in the future, was observed.

Ecuador's SGO OP6 sought the development of crosscutting projects that were beneficial for more than one association through replication and an appropriate knowledge management. Thus, the ten Bio corridors projects scope has been enhanced.

*b. Association arrangements (with relevant stakeholders in the country/region)*

This dimension evaluates the Programme's outputs adaptation and transformation. To this end, the stakeholder's involvement in implementation, and the outcomes sustainability and effectiveness were assessed, especially those from the local communities that design and implement projects with grants resources.

Ecuador's strategy sought for community organizations, that have had individual projects during previous operational phases in the target territories, associate in order to enhance the outcomes

on the territory. This strategy was effective on surpassing the lack of cooperation resources, which could have led to competition among the communities and organizations.

Associativity was a strategy addressed in OP5 and consolidated during OP6, as a corrective measure for the rural community's fragmentation evidenced during OP5.

Likewise, the Programme has promoted articulation between communities and GADs, creating trusting bonds among the territory communities. This strategy developed effective mechanisms so as MTBs work under a de facto institutionally, in order to overcome political and client list challenges.

Agreements made with GADs are an example of measures that provide sustainability to the Programme's achievements as well as the passing of regulations on water resources and land management with a conservation perspective. The strategy applied to PTIs and its outcomes conform an adaptation, transformation and sustainability mechanism within the territories, that has been included as a priority strategy on OP6.

Arrangements with GreenCrowdss and NGOs involved in the Octantis methodology for the PTIs development have been reaffirmed and could be enhanced during OP7.

*c. M&E feedback on activities for adaptive management.*

SGPs technical team adapted SIMONAA supervision and monitoring tool and trained EQUIPATEs and Bio corridor's project to implement it. Each EQUIPATE was responsible for SIMONAA implementation through field visits to different associations and intervention areas. These visits were rotational and included meetings with all the project's members. This role is greatly acknowledged by the communities, which perceive the activities' accompaniment and monitoring as appropriate.

EQUIPATEs were co-responsible for the MTB's hosting and coordination, as part of the working strategy designed for the Bio corridor's consolidation and the Management Committee's capacity enhancement

Semi-annual reports that consider SGP's different levels have proposed a progressive knowledge management scheme that has been effective for the Programme's M&E feedback. SIMONAA is presented as an important tool for SGP's knowledge management (reports to the headquarters, national counterparts, strategic allies and biocorridor project managers) and for accountability, final standardization, communication products design, among others. Nevertheless, a few problems aroused regarding this tool's implementation and simplification requirements should be reviewed.

According to the consulted documents, SIMONAA M&E system enabled the progress and project's performance supervision and has also included the participants and executer's opinion properly for feedback. The EQUIPATEs and Management Committees reports' scaling towards SGP CO have provided an appropriate feedback for the different activities' monitoring through the timely identification of problems and barriers for the projects' objectives, outcomes achievement, effects and impacts achievement. Therefore, it is considered that monitoring was suitable for making the required adjustments during the SGP OP6'S implementation.

*d. GEF SGP OP6 Financial Analysis*

The key financial aspects have been assessed, including the planned and executed co-financing scope, counterpart contributions, the Programme's costs, including yearly expenses, as well as variations between planned and executed expenses. Ecuador's GEF/UNDP SGP and UNOPS worked

coordinately, providing a quality and timely service, supporting CBOs and EQUIPATES to ensure an appropriate accountability. The innovative role of other grantees, such as PASNAP and GreenCrowds, was also assessed.

Ecuador's SGP supervised the beneficiaries' co-financing reports, and other funding sources such as government, civil society organizations and other organizations identified in the PRODOC. Management fees were like those of previous phases and no observations on the coordination expenses were raised by authorities or other related organizations. The additional resources mobilization has played a central role in OP6 and required considerable efforts on behalf of EQUIPATES and the National Coordination Office. These efforts to raise additional co financing required periodical applications to calls for projects for different funding sources. In this sense, it is to note the Equatorial Award received in 2017 by DECOIN Association in Intag Valley (Northern Highlands).

**GreenCrowds strategy** is considered innovative and with a great growing potential. Even if, to the present, it remains as a marginal co-financing source, it is recommended that UNDP/GEF SGP office promote GreenCrowds on other SGP countries as a UNDP/SGP corporate tool, considering the platform's potential and strategy.

Concerning **financial management**, it is to point out that the Programme undertakes an adequate monitoring on the community organizations regarding their resources' administration. Also, SIMONAA system is considered a useful tool for financial supervision and give proof of counterpart's contribution to the communities.

It is important to stand out the key actions to achieve an adequate financial resources management on behalf of the Bio corridor's projects: i) inception workshops, that included an introduction on managerial/financial topics (such as a thorough revision of the SGP Projects Financial Guidelines and practical exercises), ii) the Management Committee's involvement in the use of funds and financial/managerial decision-making, iii) monitoring and technical assistance on behalf of the National Coordination Office and EQUIPATES for each Bio corridor's project, linked projects, scholarship funds and crosscutting projects, iv) periodical reports (financial and SIMONAA reports) on the resources administration and the project's plan, v) accountability in spaces such as MTBs, and vi) funds' intern and external audits.

Budget and GEF allocation fees are synthesized in the following table (Source: PRODOC):

GEF Outcome/Atlas Activity	Responsible Party/ Implementing Agent	Fund ID	Donor Name	Atlas Budgetary Account Code	ATLAS Budget Description	Amount 2016 (USD)	Amount 2017 (USD)	Amount 2018 (USD)	Total (USD)
OUTCOME 1: Fully established multi-stakeholder partnerships develop, oversee and learn from the implementation of adaptive landscape management plans in 10 Bio corridors in key ecosystems of Ecuador:	UNOPS	62000	GEF	61100	Local consultants-Staff	30.528,00	30.528,00	30.528,00	91.584,00
				71400	Local consultants - Service Contract	8.099,46	8.099,46	8.099,46	24.298,38
				71600	Travel	2.385,00	2.544,00	2.544,00	7.473,00
				75700	Workshops	1.431,00	1.431,00	1.431,00	4.293,00
				72600	Grants	55.650,00	55.650,00	14.322,08	125.622,08
				<b>TOTAL OUTCOME 1</b>					<b>98.093,46</b>
OUTCOME 2: Enhanced biodiversity conservation for ecological connectivity in the key ecosystems.	UNOPS	62000	GEF	61100	Local consultants-Staff	81.408,00	81.408,00	81.408,00	244.224,00
				71400	Local consultants - Service Contract	21.598,56	21.598,56	21.598,56	64.795,68
				71600	Travel	3.816,00	3.816,00	3.816,00	11.448,00
				75700	Workshops	3.816,00	3.816,00	3.816,00	11.448,00
				72600	Grants	148.400,00	148.400,00	54.298,45	351.089,45
				<b>TOTAL OUTCOME 2</b>					<b>259.038,56</b>

GEF Outcome/Atlas Activity	Responsible Party/ Implementing Agent	Fund ID	Donor Name	Atlas Budgetary Account Code	ATLAS Budget Description	Amount 2016 (USD)	Amount 2017 (USD)	Amount 2018 (USD)	Total (USD)
OUTCOME 3: Improved sustainability and productivity of agro ecosystems in the targeted Biocorridors.	UNOPS	62000	GEF	61100	Local consultants-Staff	40.704,00	40.704,00	40.704,00	122.112,00
				71400	Local consultants - Service Contract	10.799,28	10.799,28	10.799,28	32.397,84
				71600	Travel	1.908,00	1.908,00	1.908,00	5.724,00
				75700	Workshops	1.908,00	1.908,00	1.908,00	5.724,00
				72600	Grants	74.200,00	74.200,00	19.096,12	167.496,11
				<b>TOTAL OUTCOME 3</b>					<b>129.519,28</b>
OUTCOME 4: Social solidarity and partnerships strengthened within and among stakeholder groups across the Biocorridors.	UNOPS	62000	GEF	61100	Local consultants-Staff	30.528,00	30.528,00	30.528,00	91.584,00
				71400	Local consultants - Service Contract	8.099,46	8.099,46	8.099,46	24.298,38
				71600	Travel	2.385,00	2.544,00	2.544,00	7.473,00
				75700	Workshops	1.431,00	2.544,00	2.544,00	6.519,00
				72600	Grants	55.650,00	55.650,00	14.322,08	125.622,08
				<b>TOTAL OUTCOME 4</b>					<b>98.093,46</b>
M&E and Technical Assistance	UNOPS	62000	GEF	61100	Local consultants-Staff	12.000,00	13.014,00	12.000,00	37.014,00
				71400	Local consultants - Service Contract		10.000,00	20.000,00	30.000,00

GEF Outcome/Atlas Activity	Responsible Party/ Implementing Agent	Fund ID	Donor Name	Atlas Budgetary Account Code	ATLAS Budget Description	Amount 2016 (USD)	Amount 2017 (USD)	Amount 2018 (USD)	Total (USD)
				71600	Travel	5.000,00	16.100,00	21.300,00	42.400,00
				75700	Workshops	9.800,00	8.000,00	8.000,00	25.800,00
					<b>Total Outcome M&amp;E/TA</b>	<b>26.800,00</b>	<b>47.114,00</b>	<b>61.300,00</b>	<b>135.214,00</b>
Project Management	UNOPS	62000	GEF	61100	Local consultants-Staff	17.152,00	17.152,00	17.152,00	51.156,00
				71400	Local consultants - Service Contract	10.799,28	10.799,28	10.799,28	32.397,84
				73100	Rent	16.960,00	16.960,00	19.0804,00	53.000,00
				72400	Communications	848,00	848,00	848,00	2.544,00
				72300	Material & Goods (Fuel for vehicle)	2.090,00	2.090,00	2.090,00	6.270,00
				73400	Vehicle Maintenance Service	1.696,00	1.696,00	1.696,00	5.088,00
				72500	Office Supplies	530,00	530,00	530,00	1.590,00
				71600	Travel	2.385,00	2.544,00	2.544,00	7.473,00
				74200	Audio Visual & Print Prod Costs			525,16	525,16

GEF Outcome/Atlas Activity	Responsible Party/ Implementing Agent	Fund ID	Donor Name	Atlas Budgetary Account Code	ATLAS Budget Description	Amount 2016 (USD)	Amount 2017 (USD)	Amount 2018 (USD)	Total (USD)
				74500	Miscellaneous	2.000,00	2.000,00	2.000,00	6.000,00
					<b>TOTAL Management</b>	<b>54.360,28</b>	<b>54.519,28</b>	<b>57.164,44</b>	<b>164.044,00</b>
					<b>PROJECT TOTAL</b>	<b>665,905.04</b>	<b>687,809.04</b>	<b>472,769.92</b>	<b>1,826,484.00</b>

Financing sources	Amount year 1 2016	Amount year 2 2017	Amount year 3 2018	TOTAL
<b>GEF</b>	665.995,04	687.809,04	472.769,92	1.826.484,00
<b>Ministry of Environment (grant)</b>	199.000,00	199.000,00	199.000,00	597.000,00
<b>Ministry of Environment (In kind)</b>	483.530,00	483.530,00	483.530,00	1.450.590,00
<b>UNDP</b>	80.000,00	80.000,00	80.000,00	240.000,00
<b>Civil society organizations (grantees), Local Governments (GAD), other international cooperation agencies (in kind)</b>	695.500,00	203.500,00	135.000,00	1.034.000,00
<b>Civil society organizations (grantees), Local Governments (GAD), other international cooperation agencies (grant)</b>	295.000,00	295.400,00	222.000,00	812.400,00
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.418.935,04</b>	<b>1.949.239,04</b>	<b>1.592.299,92</b>	<b>5.960.474,00</b>



**Executed budget OP6 - Source: SGP Ecuador:**

Executed budget (until April 16th 2019 – TE)		
	Foreseen in PRODOC	Executed
Project's total (GEF Funds in US\$D)	1,826,484.00	1,540,960.21
Execution percentage (%)	84.37%	

**OP6 Planned and actual co-financing - Source: SGP Ecuador**

CO-FINANCING TABLE – SGP Ecuador as per April 2019								
Co-financing	1. Government		2. UNDP		3. Other: Grantees, private sector, other multilateral and bilateral agencies (mill. US\$)		Total	
(type/source)	(mill. US\$)		(mill. US\$)		(mill. US\$)		(mill. US\$)	
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual
Grants	\$597.000,00	\$1.132.529,83	\$40.000,00	\$66.000,00	\$812.400,00	\$898.732,92	\$1.449.400,00	\$2.097.262,75
Loans/Concessions							-	-
In-kind support	\$1.450.590,00	\$150.000,00	\$200.000,00	\$40.000,00	\$1.034.000,00	\$1.594.670,12	\$2.684.590,00	\$1.784.670,12
Other							-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2.047.590,00</b>	<b>\$1.282.529,83</b>	<b>\$240.000,00</b>	<b>\$106.000,00</b>	<b>\$1.846.400,00</b>	<b>\$2.493.403,04</b>	<b>\$4.133.990,00</b>	<b>\$3.881.932,87</b>

The table above shows that the Government co-financing was under the expected amount, reaching only 62,63% of the planned amount. This government proposal (which finally did not reach the expected) constitutes a learned lesson on the flexibility designs must include in order to contemplate contingencies such as this and that, despite the government assumed commitments for the Programme's co-financing, it is important to keep Ecuador's SGP resource mobilization strategy in order to cope with contingencies and achieve the expected outcomes.

Civil society's financial sources commitment, on the contrary, exceeded the plans in the PRODOC, revealing a highly satisfactory resources mobilization.

It is to note that, in all the communities visited on the field mission, the investments made with SGPs grants are tangible (construction, materials, equipment, family food gardens, etc.).

*e. Monitoring and evaluation: design and implementation*

This section assesses the M&E system's quality and utility, analyzing the established mechanisms and tools to weigh the project's implementation outcomes. In Ecuador's case, as mentioned on Section C, SIMONAA system was applied and used to worked on the implementations adjustments in order to allow the project's improvement.

EQUIPATE for monitoring and supervision has been organized by bi-annual visits for SIMONAA application and technical assistance.

Concerning design, it was initially proposed that EQUIPATEs should be responsible for a permanent support of the community processes, and five meetings with the Bio corridor Project's Management Committee, three visits for SIMONAA application (one at the projects start-up, one at the end of the first year and one at the end of the second year), a total of 3 MTB meetings (since these have an informative and participative purpose, these meetings sought to involve the project's organizations and institutions and determine joint actions which enhanced the Biocorridor's project).

Projects included budgets for training activities, that were planned and approved in the project's design; and EQUIPATEs also played a project's technical assistance role. On the other hand, training activities on the stakeholder's specific topics of interest and demands, could be funded don the future by the counterparts.

As defined in the consulted documents, during OP6 implementation, the following activities took place:

- 51 SIMONAA applications in 10 Bio corridors, and 7 linked projects
- 65 financial reports developed by executers (projects: 3 crosscutting, 7 linked, 10 Bio corridors, 4 scholarship funds and Unico)
- 5 audits to 3 PASNAP projects and 2 SGP projects.
- 4 Experience Exchange workshops
- 30 MTBs per Biocorridor for 10 Bio corridors
- 4 Closure workshops

SIMONAA's monitoring strategy, which implied building the monitoring capacity on each community is considered suitable for the project's effectiveness. Nevertheless, it is important that this tool is assessed considering the communities perception on its accessibility, since a number of interviewees stated that they still didn't feel comfortable with its vocabulary and functioning.

*f. UNDP/UNOPS and partner's execution during implementation (concerning coordination and operational aspects)*

UNDP plays a distinguished role assisting and supporting civil society and has a 25-year experience in UNDP GEF SGP implementation. UNOPS' contribution is concerning administration, procurement and recruitment norms and has fiduciary responsibility in contract signing. UNDP and UNOPS have highly qualified staff and with skills to articulate with government, donors, civil society networks, promoting incidence in the addressed issues. This has been crucial to ensure the funded project's quality both concerning their design and formulation, as supervision and monitoring.

UNDP/UNOPS and GEF's capacity and provided technical assistance in procurement, recruitment, monitoring and evaluation, resource and knowledge management, promoting applicable international best practices identification, stand out as an added value.

### 5.3. Project's Outcomes

The expected outcomes and indicators were accomplished in most cases, and even exceeded in others.

The following list mentions the main project's achievements:

#### Ecologic connectivity:

- 276 communities involved in connectivity activities
- 101.914,9 conserves hectares
- 10 georeferenced OP6's achievement maps
- 16 georeferenced OP5's achievement maps
- 10 updated Action Plans
- 10 implemented Biocorridors
- 25 community agreements on ecosystem conservation, regeneration and protection signed and ratified
- 925 women and 429 young people involved in reforestation, restoration and conservation campaigns
- 150 workshops on conservation, reforestation and environment

#### Productive Landscapes:

- 38 consolidated soil sustainable management practices and 3 new ones included in this Phase
- 33 products with territorial identity (PTIs) have improved their productive process and quality
- 13 PTIs have achieved to enhance marketing and commerce options
- 297 women have increased their income by PTIs commerce
- The developed PTIs include: organic food, processed food, eco-tourism, crafts and clothes.

Agro ecological products	Food products with added value	Crafts and clothes	Touristic products
Agro ecological baskets (for all landscapes with diverse local products)	Quinoa and amaranth pasta (without gluten); coffee, chocolate, bakery (achira -Andean native root-bread, non-gluten oca –native Andean tuber-biscuit), mashua yoghurt, and wetland native species of chame.	Alpaca garments, gadua products (furniture and homes), and fibers from each landscape	Touristic services, restoration services, touristic trails, community tourism, agro tourism, bird watching and eco-tourism

Associativity:

- 52% of the projects are led by women
- 1.516 people have participated in capacity strengthening activities
- 1183 of the participants were women.
- 150 young people have received education and training on environmental education and leadership
- 10 new environmental youth networks were established
- A total of 1'797.598 were levied for co-financing Bio corridors management.
- 30 Multi stakeholder platforms (MTBs) were undertaken

Regarding, Outcome 3 (Improved sustainability and productivity of agro ecosystems in the targeted Biocorridors), the achieved outcomes exceed the expected ones. Particularly, community encouragement projects contributed to enhance sustainability of the production systems through the agro ecological and agro forestry, native fish's aquaculture practices and PTIs development, which also increased income generation. Twenty-one sustainable soil management practices have been consolidated and 3 new practices have been developed: soil recovery, bio digesters implantation in farms to promote sustainable energy sources and preserve crop genetic heritage.

The sustainable activities implemented during this period were: i) 3 Bio corridors in the coastal region, with 7 implemented practices that involved 108 communities: agro forestry systems, agro ecologic production, artisan fishing and aquaculture development; 1 Bio corridor in the Amazon region involved 18 communities that implemented 5 practices: agro forestry farms, new aquaculture practices and native species recovery, and iii) in the Andean region, 6 Bio corridor projects involving 144 communities that implemented 9 practices: agro forestry farms, bio digesters, alpaca breeding and agro tourism.

In the Amazon region, for example, Ecuador's landscape approach led to the Kichwa chakra system resurgence, with significant contributions for sustainable agriculture and for the local food security enhancement. This recovery has resulted in the indigenous knowledge restoration, an income increase, especially for women and indigenous communities, and has also contributed to the tropical rainforest conservation.

Likewise, the "Enhancement of Rio Chone-La Segua-cordillera del Bálsamo Bio corridor" project in the coast region involved community eco-tourism, cuisine and local crafts and achieved: i) a bird watching PTI that increased the beneficiaries income generation and reduced pressure on natural

resources through the creation of the “bird watching road” in the Bio corridor and the improvement of touristic infrastructure and equipment; and ii) make progress in the conservation of a target species, the mangrove crab (*Cardisoma crassum*) and the incorporation of two emblematic bird species to the conservation efforts: the Frigate bird (*Fregata magnificens*), of importance for the local biodiversity and its relation to the PTI; and the Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*), a migratory bird with conservation significance and a referent in the Bio corridor’s PTI. The executing CBO was “Cooperativa San Francisco”, where 1800 people (810 women and 990 men) were involved. The PTI’s massive dissemination was made through social and communication media.

Also, in the coast the project “Enhancement of the Chongón Colonche Biocorridor” was implemented through the gadua cane (*Gadua angustifolia*) sustainable management and the generation of alliances for the development of PTIs. This project responded to a Bio corridor’s critical problem, which consisted in the water basins’ degradation due to the dry and rainforest loss and degradation, reason why these ecosystems were selected as conservation targets (thick screen) and the water and gadua cane (thin screen), envisaging intervention for their appropriate management. In the biocorridor’s core areas (south of Machalilla National Park, Protective Forest and Vegetation Chongón Colonche and Plamar Mangrove), various fauna species’ connectivity was strengthened through 4 micro basins managed as connectivity corridors. This consisted in the implementation of agro forestry farms and the reforestation of the river banks. The executing NGO was “Asociación de pequeños productores agropecuarios Visión Integral”, where 2180 people were involved (1068 women and 1112 men). Its outcomes consisted in baskets with product from the agro forestry farms; honey, and sustainable gadua cane furniture and crafts.

In the Center Highlands, the “Enhancement of the bio Corridor Cóndor Chuquiragua Cañari” project included community actions for conservation, restoration and protection of the páramo ecosystem through community and individual conservation negotiations and agreements, agro forestry practices and protection of water sources. To this end, focus was made on a production activity such as alpaca breeding and the improvement of crafts for commercialization in order to improve the families’ income generation in the Cebadaloma, Colepao, Cubilán and Comuna Caguanapamba communities. A complete line of clothes and accessories was developed by capacity building activities and the identification of strategic selling points so families could sell their products in a continuous way.

Given that agro ecological activities are important in the Biocorridors buffer areas, alternative technologies for ecologic subsystem management (soil, water, crops, agro forestry and breeding) were developed and implemented following a diagnose made for each farm. These actions were linked through the promotion of community tourism, benefiting from the organization’s touristic sites and attractions (páramo and agro ecologic practices), and training their members on customer service, touristic guidance and gastronomy. The executing CBO was “Asociación de Trabajadores Agrícolas La Esmeralda, Chica, Cebada Loma” where 312 people were involved (105 women and 207 men). The outstanding PTIs were quinoa and amaranth pasta, alpaca fiber crafts, community tourism indicatives, agro ecological baskets, with added value and positive participation in local and regional fairs.

Concerning the families’ improved alternative livelihoods from PTIs, 24 new products quality and productive process improvement with the participation of 511 families. These new products were: Quinoa and amaranth pasta (without gluten); coffee; chocolate; bakery (achira -Andean native root-bread, non-gluten oca -native Andean tuber-biscuit); mashua yoghurt; chame- a wetland native species; crafts and clothes made up from alpaca fiber, gadua cane (furniture and houses); touristic products: touristic services, restaurant services, touristic routs, community tourism, agro tourism, bird watching and eco-tourism.

PTI's development empowered communities providing direct technical assistance and on-site training for the production improvement, effective business managements, adaptation to national regulations, marketing strategies design, new products promotion in markets and social media, and local and national diversification. Each organization was responsible for developing one PTI, and 10 technical assistance tutorials and 6 workshops were implemented.

Regarding marketing networks establishment for PTIs: 13 products were enhanced by at least 3 networks each (39 networks in total) with territorial identity and marketing options diversification. For agro ecological products, the involved communities now regularly sell their agro ecological products in 12 agro diversity fairs. These fairs are an achievement from the projects that are currently part of the local public policy. Food products with added value and crafts (coffee, jams, chocolate and cookies) are sold in fair trade stores and super stores, agro ecologic cooperatives and in some malls (Emprende Napo is a strategic partner that has a stand for Amazon products in the Iñaquito Mall CCI Quito) and supermarkets as regular commercialization channels. Touristic products are being promoted among local and regional touristic agencies.

*a. Global outcomes (objective achievement):*

Outcomes	Rate:
<p><b>Outcome 1:</b> Fully established multi-stakeholder partnerships develop, oversee and learn from the implementation of adaptive landscape management plans in 10 Biocorridors in key ecosystems of Ecuador:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Andean Paramo</li> <li>- Montane rainforest</li> <li>- Mangrove</li> <li>- Coastal Rainforest</li> <li>- Western dry forest</li> <li>- Tropical rainforest</li> </ul>	<p><b>Highly Satisfactory (HS)</b></p>
<p><b>Outcome 2:</b> Enhanced biodiversity conservation for ecological connectivity in the key ecosystems.</p>	<p><b>Highly Satisfactory (HS)</b></p>
<p><b>Outcome 3:</b> Improved sustainability and productivity of agro ecosystems in the targeted Biocorridors</p>	<p><b>Highly Satisfactory (HS)</b></p>
<p><b>Outcome 4:</b> Social solidarity and partnerships strengthened within and among stakeholder groups across the Biocorridors.</p>	<p><b>Highly Satisfactory (HS)</b></p>

*b. Relevance:*

The Programme is relevant concerning the country's objectives, the 2030 Agenda, community's objectives, interests and needs in a local level and GEF's intervention areas-

It contributes with the new concept of Bio corridors for Living Well, with its three approaches: ecological connectivity (conservation, restoration and remediation); sustainable productive landscapes (agro ecology and agro forestry); associativity (community organizations' capacity strengthening and PTI development), based on the UNDP ART initiative (Territorial Articulation for Human Sustainable

Development). This has been an important strategic step for the Country Programme, which is institutionally endorsed by Ecuador's Organic Code for Land Organization, Autonomy and Decentralization (COOTAD), which in 2010 restored to the local governments (provincial, municipal and parishes) land use planning and decision making on natural resources management. In this way, SGP's alignment with the Ecuadorian government's decentralized approach is evidenced.

ART methodology lands on the conformation of a Territorial Task Force (GTT in Spanish), formed by community, MAE, MAG, GAD, Municipalities, parishes, civil society organizations, NGOs and academic institution's representatives.

This methodology was deepened during OP6 so as to contribute on a long-term basis to the collective action and adaptive management on behalf of the community organizations for the prioritized landscapes in the four prioritized regions for social, ecological and economic resilience.

Through small grants to NGOs and community organizations, landscape management strategies have been developed and community projects implemented seeking strategic results on a landscape level concerning biodiversity conservation, land sustainable management, adaptation to climate change and the comprehensive management of the natural resources.

The Programme's OP6, with the objective of consolidating and enhancing the Bio corridors for Living Well, through the implementation of projects with emphasis on strengthening PTIs, is relevant and innovative regarding the implemented collective actions for the landscape's adaptive management for socio ecological resilience.

Also, the Programme is considered **Relevant (R)** according to the focal areas' objectives and GEF's priorities regarding context and local, regional and national development.

*c. Effectiveness and efficiency:*

The resources administration has been Highly Satisfactory (HS).

The Governments original compromise on co-financing through MAE was modified during the design phase, reducing it by more than a half<sup>11</sup>. In spite of this obstacle, the remaining counterpart funds were correctly and duly executed, complementing GEF's funds and transforming the crisis into an opportunity, going from associative projects to Bio corridor's projects that were successfully executed.

EQUIPATE's involvement in the project's implementations and supervision is considered appropriate by the parties, including its technical capacities and flexibility for problem solving.

The Programme's outcomes and outputs are visible in the Bio corridors and the effective execution of the community projects. The expected outcomes were achieved and, in some cases, exceeded. In this sense, the Programme's effectiveness is considered Highly Satisfactory (HS).

*d. Country's ownership:*

The Programme is consistent with national policies, agreements and plans, such as 2008 Constitution and other official documents, and is considered highly integrated to the government actions. Also, it is coherent and contributes to the UN Framework in Ecuador.

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<sup>11</sup> The compromised amount duplicated the actual funds allocated to SGP. This decision by the public sector could not be reverted, reason why the design had to be adapted. The technical team made an effort to achieve a similar geographical coverage, shifting from individual organizations enhancement to organization's networks. This strategy has strengthened social capital in each Bio corridor and was successful.

It is also consistent with the National Plan for “Good Living” 2013-2017 and with MAE’s documents on connectivity for conservation and MAGAP’s reports on Commercial Networks. In the same way, (connectivity indicators), and AICHI targets form the Biodiversity Plan and TICCA global initiative.

Its integration to the government actions and particularly to the territorial organizations was assessed. As mentioned above, the conservation perspective has been integrated to some regulations (ordinances) and agro ecological practices have disseminated over the Bio corridors.

Among the Programmes strengths, interviewees highlight the institutional work undertaken and the Management Committee’s work which is considered highly fruitful.

*e. Mainstreaming<sup>12</sup>:*

Mainstreaming ability of the Programme’s outcomes and its ownership, which is a key aspect for sustainability and impacts on the long term, has been also considered in this evaluation.

PTIs are recognized as articulating and crosscutting elements within the Bio corridors, with a positive impact and enabling to mainstream the project’s approach.

Additionally, georeferenced information with emphasis on spatial patterns of ecological connectivity, and the Sustainable Productive Landscapes and Associativity, stand out as a mainstreaming contribution for SGP OP6’s successful performance.

The Programme maintains a solid communication strategy aimed at the external, nevertheless, its implementation with an internal perspective is also. Some communities pointed out that they were not familiar with concepts used within the Programme and the need for a greater dissemination on the projects’ management. It is crucial for beneficiaries to own this information and for it to be installed permanently within the community to ensure its sustainability.

On the other hand, communicating actions on products dissemination are highly positive, since the gave place to the positioning and marketing strategies improvements (such as gender mainstreaming and youth participation applied during OP6).

*f. Sustainability:*

**The Programme’s sustainability was assessed as probable (P)** given the moderate financial risks and the low socio economic, institutional and environmental risks to maintain the Programme’s outcomes on a long term. Sustainability of each of the granted projects has not been thoroughly assessed on this ET.

Organizational sustainability is highly likely, since capacities have been built among community organizations and organizations networks on the different corridors, as well as MTB, Management Committees and an NSC.

Productive projects’ economic sustainability is highly likely based on the included technology improvements: natural compost, natural wind barriers, and other measures that had positive impacts on production.

Also concerning economic sustainability, the communities’ initiatives to complement SGP’s external grants through a community bank. This strategy was proposed by the farmers and indigenous organizations and aims to create a platform that allow its members to access bank credits to purchase inputs that ensure agricultural production and the families’ economic sustainability.

Nevertheless, economic sustainability in terms of additional income generation for self-sufficiency is not likely as long as small producers don’t achieve successful and sustainable marketing circuits, even

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<sup>12</sup> This paragraph follows The Mainstreaming Biodiversity In Practice, A Stap Advisory Document [http://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/publications/Mainstreaming-Biodiversity-LowRes\\_1.pdf](http://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/publications/Mainstreaming-Biodiversity-LowRes_1.pdf) (October 2013).



relying on MAG, MAE and Ecuador's SGP and other cooperation institutions technical assistance that act on a territorial level.

Small producers have increased their incomes only when cooperative or associative structures have achieved a significant scale (such as chocolate production). Even if food security has improved in some cases and the increase in the use of proteins and organic vegetables supposed a substantial improvement, there is still no evidence of a qualitative leap in their life quality.

Regarding institutional sustainability, even if Biocorridors have not been yet institutionalized, some alternatives are being implemented by GADs, SENAGUA (National Water Secretariat) and ACUS (areas for sustainable conservation).

Environmental sustainability is highly likely considering that environmental awareness has been improved and conservation and agro ecologic production concepts were expanded. Also, concepts like landscape and corridor act as comprehension tools.

Organic production, water sources protection, respect for products that have their origin in the ancestral culture, seem to be strongly anchored on the Programmes communities.

Youth participation and the capacity building among this group is a sustainability aspect that should be deeply analyzed, considering the rural population ageing and the challenge that demographic sustainability represents. Scholarship grants project and emphasis on youth leadership (as in education and training activities) is a relevant element to achieve such sustainability. Communication activities have also contributed to the outcome's dissemination and the community's participation, along with local and regional ownership and sustainability.

The scholarships project has also enabled to expand and enhance knowledge management and young people's participation in community work dynamics. These experiences have been important for the community's enhancement and the experiences' sustainability, generating the necessary technical resources in order to contribute to community organizations in general.

The Programme's financial sustainability is nearly achieved through the different cofunding sources that continue to support the undertaken activities. GEF's OP7 has been formally requested and is expected to continue with the current institutional partners.

UNDP's support translates in sustainability for the involved organizations by making their problems visible on an environmental and socioeconomic threats context such as the extension of certain agricultural and touristic initiatives that may undermine the Bio corridors' creation and continuance. Also, communities point out that public officers' rotation has been a great challenge for the projects technical team on reestablishing commitments, which has struck in processes that may affect sustainability.

The progress made on incorporating the project's outcomes and improve their sustainability has been assessed. This has been achieved through various activities such as the beneficiary organizations' training, articulation with experts, universities and some government institutions. This is a crucial element with great significance for the Programme's impacts and sustainability on the long term.

*g. Impact:*

Project's terminal evaluations rarely give account of the achieved impacts due to the lack of information, the processes complexity and the time framework required for impacts to be visible. These may be appreciable years after the project's completion.

Despite this, the TE has valued progress towards future impacts achievement. Particularly, the following aspects were considered: a) Adaptive Landscapes Management Plans implementation in 10 Bio corridors in key ecosystems, b) biodiversity conservation for ecological connectivity in the key

ecosystems, c) sustainability and agro ecosystem's productivity improvement in the selected Bio corridors and, d) associations' and communities' empowerment within the corridors.

The revised information and reports and surveys undertaken during the project's implementation and maps showing the project's different situations. SIMONAA made it possible to see how achievements will generate impacts, and along with the periodical reports undertaken during the project's implementation, constitute base line documents for the project's standardization. Most interviewees agree on the impact being significant and that Bio corridors being an adequate strategy for the socio ecological landscape's and environmental preservation associative consolidation.

During the interviews, stakeholders, almost unanimously, mentioned that positive impacts were related to social approach of the initiatives, such as: i) improvement of the organizational and associative capacities of the local communities and their organizations through PTIs, ii) PTIs marketing enhancement through short circuits and agro ecological fairs and arrangements with private entrepreneurs, and iii) promote generational rotation within organizations and a broader participation on behalf of young people.

Gender and opportunity equity have been thoroughly addressed in various spaces and communities affirm receiving training on such topics. There is a common understanding that women have more participation in the projects. Nevertheless, there are no signs of impacts that reveal democratization within the communities and families concerning decision making and gender impact in family responsibilities.

On the other hand, some territories have several associative projects that are executed by women organizations. Notwithstanding, all territories require greater efforts on awareness on this matter, especially among men, and to make women's work visible.

According to PIR 2018, 54% more women (additional 280), have benefited from income generating activities and have strengthened their participation in decision making. 52% of the projects are coordinated by women. 280 women from all the Bio corridors are developing and producing PTIs. Women have an 80% participation rate in the workshops.

Charts bellow present and summarize rates for each criterion assessed in this TE:

Criteria	Rate	Comments
Relevance	<b>R</b>	Programme is relevant for GEF's focal areas main objectives and for environmental and development priorities on a local, regional and national level.
Effectiveness	<b>HS</b>	Expected results and objectives have been accomplished in a highly satisfactory manner.
Efficiency	<b>HS</b>	Project's implementation has been highly satisfactory concerning international and national regulations and standards.
Sustainability	<b>L</b>	Sustainability is considered to be likely considering moderate financial risks and low socio economic, institutional, government and environmental risks to maintain the projects outcomes on the long term.
Impact	<b>S</b>	Impact is significant and there is evidence that the project has contributed to progress towards landscapes socio ecological resilience for sustainable development.

Criteria	Rate	Comments
Results	HS	The project had no shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives in terms of relevance, effectiveness, or efficiency
M&E	HS	--
I&E	HS	--

Evaluation rates			
1. Monitoring and Evaluation	Rate	2. IA& EA Execution	Rate
M&E Design at entry	HS	Quality of UNDP Implementation	HS
M&E Implementation	HS	Quality of Execution - Executing Agency	HS
<b>M&amp;E overall quality</b>	<b>HS</b>	<b>Overall quality of Implementation / Execution</b>	<b>HS</b>
3. Results assessment	Rate	4. Sustainability	Rate
Relevance	R	Financial resources	L
Effectiveness	HS	Socio-political	L
Efficiency	HS	Institutional framework and governance	L
Overall project outcome rating	HS	Environmental	L
<b>Overall likelihood of sustainability</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>Overall sustainability</b>	<b>L</b>

## 6. CONCLUSIONS, LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS	LESSONS LEARNED	RECOMENDATIONS
<b>GUIDELINE APPROACHES</b>		
<b>ECOLOGIC CONNECTIVITY</b>		
<p>C1. SGP OP6 has achieved a sustainable management of the Bio corridors through a strategy that articulated social and community management of land planning, which is in concordance with national environmental and land use policies at project's design.</p> <p>Considering the revised information during the field mission, communities point out that some public policy and government budgets priorities have been transformed during the project's last year due to government decisions and public officers' rotation. Nevertheless, it should be stressed that even if these changes are related to institutional and political national contexts, that are outside the Programme's control, SGP has handled them effectively and had no effect on OP6 activities.</p>	<p>LL1a. Bio corridor's projects and its three approaches provided a comprehensive approximation that should persist in the future, with a landscape approach (territory) that considers environmental conservation, sustainable production and community organization's strengthening through PTIs development.</p> <p>LL1b. UNDP is a key stakeholder to reinforce and strengthen OP6's impacts and for synergies' development.</p> <p>LL1c. Technical assistance along with a suitable community associative management has been a successful combination and has promoted PRODOC's target ecosystem conservation, productive practices in agro ecological systems, PTI developments and associative enhancement, among others.</p>	<p>R1a. At TE, it is found that the "Good living" approach is the main articulating perspective for SGP's proposal and a guiding concept in the National Constitution, where it has been central for national planning and decision making. Nevertheless, it should be considered that the country is undergoing a process marked by political changes and fiscal austerity that can modify its priorities. It is recommended that OP7 considers mitigation measures for these decisions in its design and planning.</p> <p>R1b. The development of synergies during OP6 with other international cooperation stakeholders has been positive and it is recommended to be preserved and enhanced.</p> <p>R1c. Relations with GADs and their involvement in OP6 have been positively valued. It is recommended that these are kept and strengthened with the new local authorities that will take over in May 2019, especially considering some communities' concern regarding institutional arrangements that could be affected with the authority's rotation.</p>
<p>C2. TE has determined that the Programme's design has correctly considered, within territorial integrity, environmental, economic, productive, political, institutional and social aspects,</p>	<p>LL2. Management Committees, as participative spaces, contribute to an efficient management of and within the Bio corridors. These mechanisms have been effective in ensuring</p>	<p>R2. It is recommended that OP7 uses an updated and experience-based diagnose on economic, productive, institutional and political aspects (especially regarding changes in the National</p>

CONCLUSIONS	LESSONS LEARNED	RECOMENDATIONS
<p>under a gender, intergeneration, sovereignty and social equity perspective. It has been observed that all the project documents, as well as trainings and institutional bonds created on the territory maintain this design's imprint.</p>	<p>that the Bio corridors for Living Well approach is correctly considered in all projects and to accomplish their social monitoring.</p>	<p>Government and GADs, and a period of economic recession and austerity policies that are being executed) that, as stated by the key stakeholders, have experienced changes that could impact in future projects.</p>
<p>C3. The TE has verified that most organizations that participated during OP5 were involved in OP6, which encouraged the Bio corridor perception to settle in and made processes more sustainable. This is an important advantage in face of OP7.</p>	<p>LL3a. OP6's management model constitutes a best practice that has enabled a close work with the organizations for a permanent feedback and a suitable identification of their strengths.</p> <p>LA3b. Agreements with GADs promote that technical assistance and additional funds' management is guided towards the sustainability of the outcomes.</p>	<p>R3a. Even if the organizations continuity is perceived as a strength, it is considered that strategies towards their autonomy should be considered in order to enhance the sustainability of the projects. Hence, the importance to reaffirm the strategies developed during OP6 (such as ACBIOs, articulation with territorial plans (PDOT), MTBs, strategic alliances, resources mobilization and counterpart funds), and to continue to work with strategic partners, including new partners from the private sector.</p> <p>R.3.b. Even if community's ownership of the "BCLW" concept is significant, assistance and training towards this end should continue in order to encourage local stakeholder's participation in the public policy and programs debate, especially considering the changes in the approaches that government rotation can lead to.</p> <p>R3c. It is suggested that training plans are reviewed with the communities for OP7 so as they can prioritize communities' needs and access to contents, particularly on behalf of the indigenous women.</p>
<p>C4. OP6's decision to continue to work with OP5's territories and</p>	<p>LL4. The scholarship funds contributions (applied research in</p>	<p>R4. It is suggested that for OP7 proposal, mechanisms are</p>

CONCLUSIONS	LESSONS LEARNED	RECOMENDATIONS
<p>Biocorridors geographical areas, is considered appropriate since it led to an enhancement of the progresses made by OP5 and reinforced the organizations and communities' role within the Bio corridors.</p>	<p>Bio corridors) contribute to ecological connectivity and constitutes a great opportunity for the sustainable use and profit of its ecosystem potential and to provide solutions for environmental problems. They also contributed to productive landscapes through PTIs. These positive conditions, successfully developed in previous SGP phases in the territories, will be crucial for OP7 and to strengthen the achieved outcomes.</p>	<p>analyzed in order to achieve a balanced execution quality, in spite of the geographical expansion, and to make progress in other aspects and challenges evidenced during OP6.</p>
<p>C5. The Bio corridors management model has been adequate to achieve community participation and monitoring and supervision at all the Programme's level. It is to note that OP6's management model has overcome all the OP5's shortcomings, by including political and technical articulation levels in MTBs, towards biocorridor's governance and its contribution on public policies. The Management Committee and MTB's structure ensured the participation of all stakeholders in the project's supervision and development.</p>	<p>LL5a. Ecuador's SGP, during its OP6, has been successful concerning the stakeholders' involvement during the design, development, implementation and monitoring. Planning and implementation have been excellent. To seek for the diverse type of stakeholder's participation and involvement (CBOs, local, regional and national NGOs, public and private institutions, academia) contribute to the project's execution effectiveness. Communities were directly involved in all the SGP stages.</p> <p>LL5b. The evolution from associative projects to one Bio corridor project demonstrated that these mechanisms can be useful both during project's selection and prioritization and in their social monitoring, as well as in the objectives and outcomes' impact.</p>	<p>R5a. During the data gathering for this TE, communities acknowledged OP6'S management model as adequate. Yet, they pointed out that MAE and MAG's participation wasn't permanent, assuming it was due to the staff and funds reduction in the public institutions.</p> <p>In this sense, it is suggested for OP7, to foresee actions towards reinforcing their participation in the management spaces with communities.</p> <p>R5b. It is recommended that partnerships with new academic and private sector stakeholders are enhanced for OP7. It should be stressed that, through the scholarship funds, an important working network was created, and it should be maintained including new academic stakeholders in the new selected territories for OP7. Regarding the private sector, GreenCrowds strategy should continue due to its success and since it could build new links for OP7.</p>
<p>C6. The evaluation has concluded that the EQUIPATE's role within the Biocorridors was a fundamental factor to</p>	<p>LL6a. Lessons learned on the EQUIPATEs role and their decentralized technical assistance model had an impact</p>	<p>R6. EQUIPATEs have broad functions in each territory that are defined in the ToRs and in the organizations' projects proposal.</p>

CONCLUSIONS	LESSONS LEARNED	RECOMENDATIONS
<p>consolidate the experience on working with the communities and territorial acquaintance, which encourages the establishment of trusting and commitment bonds among the stakeholders.</p>	<p>on CBO's guidance and coordination and on the Bio corridor's associations (and civil society organizations that compose them) monitoring, as well as the need to articulate with the public sector at local and regional levels for each Bio corridor.</p> <p>LL6b. The EQUIPATE's role in raising funds and other sustainability actions constitute best practices within the organizations.</p>	<p>Each EQUIPATE is committed to the outcome's achievement in its territory, considering the different contexts (opportunities, limitations, challenges and assumptions among others). It is recommended to keep the roles of EQUIPATES and assess the barriers that each context presented them.</p>
<p>C7. The evaluation confirmed that the biocorridors design has been an effective solution to achieve biodiversity conservation and for reverting soil degradation, since it exceeded the target for hectares under conservation. According to the revised documents, during OP6 101.914 hectares are under conservation strategies (conservation, reforestation and natural regeneration), through different strategies proposed during the project's design under the three approaches framework: ecological connectivity, sustainable productive landscapes and associativity. Management Committees have been fundamental for the 10 Bio corridors' projects execution.</p>	<p>LL7a. Ecuador's SGP has demonstrated a positive assertion for women and young people that were considered in all projects. 420 women and 180 young people have participated in reforestation, restoration and conservation campaigns.</p> <p>LL7b. Women and young people have strengthened their leadership capacities in environmental management through campaigns, scholarship funds and specific training on conservation, reforestation, water sources protection, native species propagation, sustainable cooking, touristic and hotel services, technical assistance on seedling production in community nurseries, as part of the Bio corridors' projects.</p>	<p>R7a. It is suggested that mechanisms for enhancing ecological connectivity, through restoration and conservation, which are linked to community sustainable productive activities are maintained, since they are highly successful.</p> <p>R7b. It is recommended that conservation strategies are made especially relevant during OP7, and that this successful experience may be shared during SGP international best practices exchange spaces.</p> <p>R7c. Efforts to address challenges such as alternative energies and climate change adaptation and the inclusion and development of appropriate technologies for resources' sustainable use should continue.</p>
<b>SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTIVE LANDSCAPES</b>		
<p>C8. SGP OP6 has accomplish to develop the landscape concept integrating the communities'</p>	<p>LL8a. The communities' discursive ownership of the fundamental concepts for Bio corridors</p>	<p>R8a. It is recommended for OP7 to continue with agro diversity's recovery in each territory and to</p>

CONCLUSIONS	LESSONS LEARNED	RECOMENDATIONS
<p>projects in its management and relation with biodiversity and soil degradation. Concerning sustainability and agro system productivity enhancement in the Biocorridors, the revised documents report 21 soil sustainable management practices and the inclusion of 3 new practices.</p>	<p>contributes to their sustainability through their dissemination within the territories.</p> <p>LL8b. Soil sustainable management practices has been verified throughout all regions and present a suitable diversity concerning: afro forestry systems, agro ecological production, artisan fishing (black shellfish and mangrove crab), agroforestry farms with new aquaculture practices, native species recovery (cachama, <i>Piractus brachypomun</i>), agroforestry farms that include bio digesters, alpaca breeding, agro tourism.</p>	<p>explicit its contribution to food sovereignty and food security within the communities.</p> <p>R8b. It is suggested that collaboration with other relevant conservation and alternative agriculture projects is strengthened during OP7.</p> <p>R8c. It is suggested to involve the private sector through a Programme's strategic mechanism, developing marketing strategies and other strategies to achieve economies of scale. Analyze the outcome's dissemination pertinence and to promote links with chambers of commerce and public and community agencies participation.</p> <p>R8d. Continue with OP6's efforts on strengthening sustainable community tourism initiatives by diversifying gastronomy options and promoting sites of cultural relevance.</p>
<p>C9. The evaluation verified that OP6 has made especial emphasis in projects that ensure sustainability, continuity and local concatenation for the product's commercialization. The reviewed documents account for 13 PTIs promotion through diversified marketing options with at least 3 networks for each product (a total of 39 networks).</p>	<p>LL9a. The creation of 12 agro diversity trade fairs as part of local public policies has demonstrated a coordination and incidence lesson that should be kept and replicated.</p> <p>LL9b. The strategy for touristic products' positioning constitutes an experience that should be enhanced.</p>	<p>R9a. OP6's projects' best practices on associative marketing should be disseminated in the experience exchange spaces.</p> <p>R9b. Efforts on supporting regulations and standards processes for the products quality should be maintained.</p> <p>R9c. Considering that trade fairs are important promotion mechanisms, greater efforts should be made on their dissemination in order to achieve a bigger costumer traffic.</p>
<b>ASOCIATIVITY</b>		
<p>C10. Alliances with universities and the inclusion of young people</p>	<p>LL10. Articulations with universities encourage research and innovation for projects'</p>	<p>R10. Strategic alliances with universities should be maintained and strengthened</p>



CONCLUSIONS	LESSONS LEARNED	RECOMENDATIONS
<p>for organizational renovation have been successful. Also, progress has been made on some quality standards development, added value incorporation, massive production in order to cope with demand, marketing, benchmarking, and permanent business operational plans.</p>	<p>enhancement, such as IKIAM university and the Public Amazon University.</p> <p>LL10. The crosscutting project developed by SGP and PASNAP has been a successful experience in implementing joint actions with territorial scope for enhancing PTI's productive chains and marketing. Experiences such as Boa Terra fair participation, Noble Gagua and Visión Integral Agua Blanca were especially meaningful.</p>	<p>during OP7, especially with those institutions with quality processes, marketing and commercialization programs and experience.</p>
<p>C11. This evaluation observed significant effects in terms of community empowerment. Gender mainstreaming has been accomplished in all activities: from the 33-project portfolio, 52% are led by women.</p>	<p>LL11. Women have improved their livelihoods within the projects by accessing productive best practices, improve the products presentation, develop new marketing abilities and by defining women's role in the supply chain, all of which translated into greater sales.</p>	<p>R11. Gender mainstreaming strategy should be continued during OP7, and the visibility of women's leadership in community initiatives should be enhanced.</p>
<p>C12. Bio corridors concept as territorial planning and management is considered appropriate since it achieved to generate joint actions among organizations, associations and public and private institutions which have been reflected in the ACBIOs and contribute with PDOTs and other national governments and GAD's documents.</p>	<p>LL12a. The communities' organizational and associative structure encouraged community agreements for conservation and links between BCLW and PDOTs.</p> <p>LL12b. Articulation and associativity with local governments contributes to the projects' implementation in the territories and the strategies' persistence.</p> <p>LL12c. The organization's negotiating abilities to include their demands in the proposals were remarkable and was made possible due to SGP's trust on the organizations.</p>	<p>R12a. It is suggested that links with local governments are enhanced for their greater involvement with local communities.</p> <p>R12b. It is suggested that an individual assessment is made for each community in order to identify participation and associative challenges for OP7, considering the institutional and political changes undertaken during OP6.</p> <p>R12b. The Biocorridors approach implied a negotiation process within the communities, and in some cases required conflict resolution. In this sense, it is recommended that EQUIPATE's training and assistance include topics on conflict resolution and management.</p>

CONCLUSIONS	LESSONS LEARNED	RECOMENDATIONS
<p>C13. The evaluation evidenced community's positive acknowledgement on EQUIPATE's role, which has been crucial to overcome the challenges that associative work arose.</p>	<p>LL13. Trust building between EQUIPATEs and communities is considered a key aspect for community agreements.</p>	<p>R13. It is suggested that communities' remarks on distance between communities and organizations, logistic costs and the existence of cultural management differences, which were perceived as barriers for associativity and for the Bio corridor's projects preparation in some areas, are analyzed with the EQUIPATEs.</p>
<p>C14. The evaluation verified that technical and economic resources have been allocated for the organization's enhancement and to improve the local project's success likelihood. It is clear that, effective capacity building will benefit the local communities and Bio corridors strengthening.</p>	<p>LL14a. Capacity building is one of SGP's greater achievements, which contributed to the benefits' sustainability of each territorial initiative.</p> <p>LL14b. Organizations accomplished a greater degree of understanding and ownership of the Bio corridor concept and practice and recognize its advantaged regarding political incidence.</p>	<p>R14. It is fundamental to continue with the excellent formal relations with national and governments institutions through agreements that ensure the project's permanence and the outcomes sustainability in spite of the political changes. ACBIOs are fundamental tools to canal this recommendation.</p>
	<p>LL15. Women and young people's participation have been an outstanding aspect of OP6. Nevertheless, it was noted that young people's involvement in the projects should include their particular interests, since there is a lack of interest on developing traditional activities such as agriculture and aquaculture on behalf of the communities' youth.</p>	<p>R15. OP7 should continue with the efforts to involve young people, women, indigenous people and communities.</p>
<p>C16. Articulation spaces between government, civil society and the private sector were possible through MTBs, significantly contributing on critical issues. This constitutes an opportunity to expand and consolidate alliances with other UN institutions and cooperation agencies focused on environment and sustainable development, profiting from resources and stimulating joint work among other funding sources and the UN System.</p>	<p>LL16. MTBs have accomplished impacts concerning Biocorridor's ecological connectivity, sustainable productive landscapes (traditional crops recovery, ecological agriculture, local markets for ecologic products, added value for raw agricultural products), associativity benefiting communities regarding income generation and food security, by bringing communities together for a joint project.</p>	<p>R16. EQUIPATEs and SIMONAA's mechanisms to supervise inter and intra community arrangements should continue in order to ensure their appropriate implementation within the Bio corridors in the future for the achievement of the expected outcomes.</p>
<p><b>OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES</b></p>		

CONCLUSIONS	LESSONS LEARNED	RECOMENDATIONS
<b>INNOVATION</b>		
<p>C17. Being implemented for over two decades, the Programme profited from its own experience on management and other experiences. OP6’s innovation is focused on socio ecological resilient landscapes’ adaptive and collective management as a strategy to achieve global and sustainable development benefits. This vision has contributed to introduce practical, technical, methodical or system improvements seeking the achievement of collective outcomes. Innovation is visible within the three approaches but has been especially applied for PTIs aiming to improve their commercialization and expansion opportunities.</p>	<p>LL17a. Knowledge management for PTs’ revitalization has been one of OP6’s strengths. These innovation experiences, which have been documented, will contribute to an improvement in future projects’ design and implementation.</p> <p>LL17b. UNICO Espai Epicur initiative, through chef Mauricio Acuña, has been a successful experience for young people from rural communities who could access scholarships that promote an agriculture-gastronomy articulation. This experience has been acknowledged on behalf of young people and communities, as a social transformation tool within the corridors.</p> <p>LLA17c. The “Flavors from Ecuador – Let Ecuador see you 2016” contest has made possible to identify, promote and recognize activities that value alimentary heritage, improve life quality and opportunities for the development of inclusive alternative economies and support rural families’ agriculture.</p> <p>LL17d. The alliance between Ecuador SGP, Runa Sapiens And Las Américas University) (UDLA) has been a successful tool to involve university students in supporting GreenCrowdss and develop their own crowdfunding campaigns and promote the use of agro ecologic products in the Ecuadorian gourmet cuisine.</p>	<p>R17a. Strengthening associative marketing spaces by maintaining and deepening strategies in trade fairs and together with cuisine personalities towards increasing awareness and target consumers is advisable.</p> <p>R.17b. Standardizing the experience in terms of best practices, so it can be considered in future initiatives.</p> <p>R.17c. It is advised that strategic alliances with universities and other education institutions are promoted so rural young people can specialize and that allows for the inclusion of topics on the Biocorridors alimentary heritage in the syllabus and research areas.</p> <p>R.17.d It is suggested for UNDP SGP Headquarters Office to promote GreenCrowdss among other SGP counties as a corporate tool for UNDP SGP.</p>
<b>CAPACITY BUILDING</b>		
<p>C18. Capacity building is one SGP’s most important work, which has been evidenced in OP6. Organizational capacities building</p>	<p>LL18a. Training spaces contribute to the community leaders’ strengthening, and thus to</p>	<p>R18. It is recommended to design and develop strategies that expand the achievements made during Ecuador’s OP6 to other</p>

CONCLUSIONS	LESSONS LEARNED	RECOMENDATIONS
<p>as a comprehensive component of the strategic community investment provides benefits and multiplies each project's impact on a territorial level. In this sense, it is important to mention experiences exchange with other SGPs from Peru, Costa Rica and México.</p>	<p>improve the project's management.</p> <p>LL18b. Benefitting from the institutions' capacities and improve their working synergies has led to efficient inter institutional working processes and to achieve better results.</p>	<p>regions, including best practice exchange, improving or replicating South-South cooperation experiences that have been implemented so far.</p>
CROSSCUTTING PROJECTS		
<p>C19. Concerning PTIs, it should be said that these are remarkably visible within the Bio corridors and territories and count with an adequate communication strategy. PTIs were particularly enhanced during this OP6 through positioning and commercial sustainability in the Bio corridors for Living Well framework. For this purpose, community bio entrepreneurship were developed, that contribute to income generation by biodiversity, agro biodiversity products management, production and transformation and service provision. The bio-entrepreneurships pursued environmental and financial sustainable solutions based on community responsibility with nature. For its enhancement, an adaptation of OCTANTIS methodology to the community organization's context and the PTIs has been implemented. Notwithstanding, commerce is currently facing some difficulties due to the rigid norms and regulations concerning sanitary controls. Still, various products achieved their Sanitary registration and their traffic-light categorization. The above-mentioned issues were addresses within the In Terris Foundation/TM project.</p>	<p>LL19a. Several productive practices have had a relevant impact on food sovereignty and communities' income diversification. This aspect should be recognized and standardized.</p> <p>LL19b. Agro ecology's recovery as a production approach on farms, and the development of PTIs based on local biodiversity sustainable management, are processes that were successfully developed regarding their community, social and cultural compression on behalf of some authorities in various government levels.</p> <p>LL19c. • PTIs have demonstrated to be an opportunity for the enhancement of the biocorridor's ecosystems conservation, community work, commitment with the community and nature and the ancestral flavors and knowledge appreciation through added value and innovation fostered by the communities.</p>	<p>R19a. • Even though marketing restrictions exceed SGPs control, it is suggested to maintain the support efforts to simplify regulations regarding PTI's marketing.</p> <p>R19b. The exchange of experiences with products that already have sanitary permits should be promoted in order to identify best practices in other communities such as EL ENCANTO coffee, which has a registered trademark, sanitary records and packaging design.</p> <p>R19c. It is suggested to involve the private sector through a Programme's strategic mechanism, developing marketing strategies and other strategies to achieve economies of scale. Analyze the outcome's dissemination pertinence and to promote links with chambers of commerce</p> <p>R19d. In those cases that achieved successful commercialization, some communities have declared to feel overwhelmed with the demands and schedules, being these different to those they were used to. It is important to stand out the PTI crosscutting project led by In Terris Foundation/ Talent Management</p>

CONCLUSIONS	LESSONS LEARNED	RECOMENDATIONS
		which enhanced 13 prioritized PTIs and has designed strategies (improvement plans) to be applied in order to continue the enhancement process. It is suggested that enhancement activities are continued to promptly respond to the markets' demand.
<p>C20. This evaluation has observed that TICCA project has strengthened the indigenous people's capacities through workshops on "Strategic support to indigenous peoples and local communities' territories and preserved areas" based on collective and nature's rights. The development has been beneficial for the experience exchange so people and communities present, reflect and know other TICCA in their territory.</p>	<p>LL20a. ICCA project brought indigenous communities together as stakeholders and made their own conservation strategies visible.</p> <p>LA20b. ICCAs have undertaken various acknowledgement processes for their territories such as: Community Protected Area, ACUS, etc.</p> <p>LL20c. This initiative allowed indigenous people to acknowledge the conservation efforts they undertake and the recognition they could achieve globally for their contribution to conservation and climate change mitigation through the ICCA Registration.</p>	<p>R20. It is recommended to expand the visibility of the TICCA achievements on conservation through the sustainable use of the natural resources (such as Community Protected Area, ACUS, etc.), demonstrating that conservation and population (especially indigenous) are compatible and that national park/protected area are not exclusive concepts.</p>
<p>C21 Georeferenced maps enable to observe OP6's achievements in the BCLW on its three approaches. An important accomplishment is to count with georeferenced maps and information for each of OP6's Bio corridors (one map for the base line and another for OP6 closure), as well as a national map including all BCLW.</p>	<p>LL21a. Georeferenced maps (along other crosscutting projects) have made possible to observe the achieved results on the three approaches, intervention, ecosystems, core areas and/or conserved species.</p> <p>LA.21b. Training spaces for EQUIPATEs and other stakeholders contribute to strengthen institutions and leave installed capacities for its sustainability after the project's completion.</p>	<p>R.21. It is suggested that dissemination on the georeferenced maps accomplishments is reinforced at territorial and national levels in order to fully profit from this input.</p>
<b>SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS</b>		
<p>C22. According to the information provided by SGP, the scholarship fund was created in 2006, with</p>	<p>LL22. Close work between young people, universities, EQUIPATEs and communities established</p>	<p>R22a. It is suggested that the Scholarship Fund is strengthened through alliances between</p>

CONCLUSIONS	LESSONS LEARNED	RECOMENDATIONS
<p>the objective of making the university students acquainted with rural reality and open a space to contribute and enhance PTIs. This space has been central during OP6, and these experiences have promoted important applied studies and to contribute to the communities' strengthening.</p>	<p>significant research lines and support for the projects.</p>	<p>universities and corporations in order to establish an improved design in the productive chains with especial emphasis on marketing.</p> <p>R22b. Scholarship Fund should be also strengthened so as to enhance academic knowledge towards the achievement of the conservation objectives and to maintain the young people's participation which has demonstrated a significant impact on the communities' social cohesion.</p>
<b>COMUNICACION</b>		
<p>C23. An appropriate communication strategy has been identified. This strategy allowed all the produced information and the implemented activities to be available in the digital platforms and official social media. Additionally, as part of the strategy to contribute to the Programme's portfolio visibility and collaborative funding, in 2015 GreenCrowds, a crowd funding platform, is created as part of the national communication strategy. Green Crowds' platform established links with the private sector, urban rural initiatives, entrepreneur community and new strategic alliances with private companies to create awareness on the projects' sustainable local efforts. GreenCrowdss platform stand out as an innovative proposal.</p>	<p>LL23a. The support given to the communities through training promotes the stakeholder's ownership of the importance of communication.</p> <p>LL23b. The generation of knowledge and outcomes dissemination products through social media for each corridor is a strategy that expands coverage on a low budget.</p> <p>LL23c. GreenCrowdss strategy has been innovative for the project's funding within OP6, in face of a significant budget cut.</p> <p>LL23d. The private sector's involvement enabled access to alternative funding sources for community projects' implementation. Collaboration of diverse companies was achieved.</p> <p>LL23e. Communities learned important concept son fund raising.</p>	<p>R23a. It is important to enhance the communication and social dissemination process with an inside communication strategy, and improvements concerning access to virtual platforms on behalf of the communities. Since several community's don't have internet access. Likewise, the coordination of communication actions between SGP and UNDP is seen as a best practice and should be maintained, since it achieved good results on visibility and internal communication management.</p> <p>R23b. It would be convenient to expand GreenCrowdss platform to an international level with the support of SGP headquarters so it can broaden its objectives and count on a greater positioning, raising capacity and visibility.</p>
<b>SISTEMATIZACION</b>		

CONCLUSIONS	LESSONS LEARNED	RECOMENDATIONS
<p>C24. This evaluation verified that systematization process has been adequate and has constituted a Programme strategy for critical collective deliberation and action to draw lessons learned. During OP6, SGP established the guidelines and coordinated, both with EQUIPATEs and community organizations, the standardization to draw lessons and replicate the projects' best practices.</p>	<p>LL24a. Outcome's quantification allows to identify impacts for different stakeholders and their dissemination through the undertaken standardization, strengthening knowledge management.</p> <p>LL24b. Efforts to calculate detailed data, such as SIMONAA's, has generated a learning process to pass information over to the CBOs.</p>	<p>R24. Projects and experiences' systematization's methodology should continue during OP7. Community organizations acknowledge the importance of documenting experiences.</p>
MONITORING		
<p>C25. Concerning monitoring, targets have been accomplished and a thorough supervision and monitoring work has been evidenced. SIMONAA system has been adequate and innovation regarding technical assistance should be noted, since it has been fundamental for OP6.</p>	<p>LL25. The inclusion of a monitoring system since the beginning of execution contributes to the achievement of the expected outcomes. SIMONAA system is recognized as a tool that enables a permanent monitoring throughout all the project's phases and in different levels.</p>	<p>R25a. It should be noted that some communities and EQUIPATEs have had difficulties with the monitoring system. These should be reviewed and resolved for OP7.</p> <p>R25b. It is advisable to Schedule an impact evaluation in order to verify efficiency concerning conservation objectives on behalf of the communities in a 5-year period.</p>

RECOMENTATIONS SUMMARY FOR OP7
<p><b><u>Ecological connectivity</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is recommended that OP7 considers mitigation actions in its design in face of a period of political changes and fiscal austerity that may affect national priorities.</li> <li>• It is recommended that OP7 uses an updated diagnose on economic, productive, institutional and political aspects that, according to the gathered information, have undertaken several changes that may affect the projects' proposals.</li> </ul>

- It is recommended that training plans are enriched with new contributions (from communities and stakeholders), in a way they can prioritize indigenous women, their needs and content accessibility.
- It is recommended that no new commitments are assumed regarding geographical expansion, in order to ensure the same execution quality and to make progress on other issues and challenges that were evidenced during OP6.
- It is encouraged to foresee actions aimed at strengthening the MAE and MAG participation in the management spaces directly with communities.
- Connections with new stakeholders from the academic and private sector should be reinforced for OP7, especially concerning PTIs.
- Gender mainstreaming strategy should be maintained and women's role in project's leadership should be made visible.
- It is suggested that OP7 makes special emphasis on conservation, and that this successful experience is shared in the best practices international SGP exchange spaces as in OP6 in a South-South cooperation framework.

**Sustainable Productive Landscapes:**

- Agro diversity recovery should continue and be enhanced for each territory and its contribution to food security and sovereignty should be made explicit within the communities.
- It is advisable to strengthen collaborations with other conservations and alternative agriculture projects.
- It is recommended to involve the private sector through a programme strategic mechanism, developing marketing strategies and strategies to reach economies of scale. Analyze the outcomes' dissemination pertinence and assess along with commerce chambers.
- It is suggested that community sustainable tourism initiatives are strengthened by diversifying the gastronomic offer and promoting sites with cultural relevance.
- Dissemination of these initiatives should be enhanced in order to achieve a greater tourists' affluence

**Associativity:**

- Strategic alliances with universities should be maintained and strengthened during OP7, especially with those institutions with quality processes, marketing and commercialization programs and experience.
- Gender mainstreaming strategy should be continued during OP7, and the visibility of women's leadership in community initiatives should be enhanced, reinforcing associativity among their community organizations.
- It is suggested that an individual assessment for each community is undertaken in order to identify particular challenges concerning participation and associativity, on account of the political and institutional changes produced during OP6.

**Innovation:**

- Continue to promote strategic alliances with universities and education institutions so rural young people can specialize and the academia incorporates in their syllabus and research areas topics that are related to the biocorridors alimentary heritage.



**Capacities enhancement:**

- It is suggested to design and develop strategies that allow to extend Ecuador's OP6 achieved outcomes in the future to other regions, including best practices exchange.

**Crosscutting projects:**

- The exchange of experiences with products that already have sanitary permits should be promoted in order to identify best practices in other communities such as EL ENCANTO coffee, which has a registered trademark, sanitary records and packaging design. It is suggested to involve the private sector through a Programme's strategic mechanism, developing marketing strategies and other strategies to achieve economies of scale. Analyze the outcome's dissemination pertinence and to promote links with chambers of commerce and public and community agencies participation.

**Scholarship funds:**

- Scholarship Fund should be also strengthened to enhance academic knowledge towards the achievement of the conservation objectives and to maintain the young people's participation which has demonstrated a significant impact on the communities' social cohesion.

**Communication:**

- It is important to enhance the communication and social dissemination process with an inside communication strategy, and improvements concerning access to virtual platforms on behalf of the communities. Since several community's don't have internet access. It could be convenient to promote GreenCrowds platform on a global level with SGP's support in order to expand its objectives

**Systematization:**

- It is recommended to continue with the experiences and projects systematization methodology during OP7 since it has proven to be successful. Community organizations acknowledge the importance of documenting experiences.

**Monitoring:**

- It should be noted that some communities and EQUIPATEs have had difficulties with the monitoring system. These should be reviewed and resolved for OP7 based on OP6's best practice framework, in EQUIPATEs' role, in the inception workshops that include this topic and technical assistance on behalf of the Programme's coordination office.

**7. ANNEXES**

*ANNEX 1: TE's terms of reference*

*ANNEX 2: Ecuador Field Mission Schedule and itinerary*

*ANNEX 3: List of interviewed people*

*ANNEX 4: Field Mission Summary*

*ANNEX 5: List Of revised documents*

*ANNEX 6: Evaluation questions matrix*

*ANNEX 7: Applied survey and results summary*

*ANNEX 8: Evaluation consultant Agreement Form*

*ANNEX 9: Report authorization Form*

*ANNEX 10: TE Audit trail.*