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UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

**Creating Biodiversity Conservation Landscapes in
Nepal's Lowland Terai and Eastern Himal Areas
(*Western Terai Landscape Complex Project*)**

ATLAS ID 41382 PIMS 1831



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Report of the Terminal Evaluation Mission

November 2012

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Acknowledgements

This is not really the work of the Terminal Evaluation Team but that of all the staff and people connected with the WTLC Project who gave freely of their time and ideas to make the evaluation process a success. There are far too many people to mention by name – and hopefully everyone who contributed is included in the lists of names annexed to this report – but special mention must be made of the Project’s Biodiversity Programme Specialist, Bijendra Basnyat, who gave unstintingly of his time in accompanying us during the field mission, and who provided, or coordinated the provision of, much of the information that we required, particularly after the end of the mission, and answered every question we asked and discussed the points we took every opportunity to raise. He was also responsible for either organising or coordinating all of the in-country logistics and thanks to him the whole evaluation process ran like clockwork.

Following completion of the Draft Report on 24th October 2012, review comments were received from the UNDP-CO, the PMU, the Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation, and other stakeholders on 19th November 2012. These comments have either been included into the revised text where these related to factual inaccuracies in the draft, or have been reproduced in full and unedited as footnotes or in Annex XI to the appropriate text to ensure a fair hearing to all parties. The Terminal Evaluation Team has made responses to some of the comments. We thank the reviewers sincerely for their efforts and insights which have undoubtedly improved this final report.

The views expressed in this report are intended to offer an overview of, and some of the lessons learned from, the WTLC Project as it comes to its conclusion. We have tried to balance our thoughts and to offer fair perspectives of what was observed and learned from people far more knowledgeable about the Project and its context than we will ever be. Furthermore, in a complex project where there are many parties, and where some views are counterposed, it is impossible to find a form of words that would be acceptable to all in all cases. Nonetheless, we offer our sincere apologies in advance if anyone should take anything written to be anything other than constructive criticism.

PE would like to express his sincere gratitude to Sushila Nepali and Arun Rijal for their perceptive thoughts and insights, and without whose linguistic skills none of this would have been possible. They represent the most capable team that I have had the privilege to work with in any country on any evaluation and I thank them both for their considerable inputs. Furthermore, they worked long and hard beyond their ToR and always with ready smiles to ensure that my welfare was taken care of, and their kindness and friendship have been much appreciated.

And finally, one of the delights of this sort of work remains that of visiting new and extremely welcoming countries and going home again having made new friends (and in this case renewing some old ones), seen new things, and witnessed with great admiration the dedication and enthusiasm that so many people bring to their work in conserving the important places of the world. I would like to thank them and wish them every success in their continuing endeavours.

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ACRONYMS AND TERMS

Currency of Nepal is the Rupee (NR). At the time of the final evaluation, US\$ 1 = NR 85.0.

| | |
|---------|--|
| BCDC | Biodiversity Conservation Development Committee |
| BNP | Bardia National Park |
| BZI | Buffer Zone Institution |
| c. | circa (about) |
| CBSP | Community Seed Bank Production |
| CFCC | Community Forest Coordination Committee |
| CFUG | Community Forest User Group |
| CPAP | Country Programme Action Plan |
| DBC | District Biodiversity Committees |
| DFCC | District Forest Coordination Committee |
| DFO | District Forest Office(r) |
| DFSCC | District Forest Sector Coordination Committee (new name for DFCC) |
| EIA | Environment Impact Assessment |
| FECOFUN | Federation of Community Forestry Users, Nepal |
| FM | Frequency modulation |
| GEF | Global Environment Facility |
| Ha | Hectare(s) |
| HH | Household(s) |
| IEE | Initial Environment Evaluation |
| LI-BIRD | Local Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research and Development |
| MCFCC | Mohana Community Forestry Coordination Committee |
| M&E | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| MFSC | Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation |
| MIS | Management Information System |
| MIST | Management Information SysTem |
| MoEST | Ministry of Environment Science and Technology |
| MTE | Mid-term Evaluation |
| NARC | Nepal Agricultural Research Council |
| NBI | National Biodiversity Institutions |
| NBS | National Biodiversity Strategy |
| NTFP | Non-timber Forest Product |
| PA | Protected Area |
| PDF-B | Project Development Facility – Block B |
| PEB | Project Executive Board |
| PIR | Project Implementation Report |
| PFMS | Participatory forest management system |
| PMU | Project Management Unit |
| POB | Project Outcome Board |
| PPB | Participatory plant breeding |
| PVS | Participatory variety selection |
| ROtI | Review of Outcomes to Impacts |
| SNV | Stichting Nederlandse Vrijwilligers (Netherlands Development Organisation) |
| SWR | Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve |
| TAL | Terai Arc Landscape |
| TE | Terminal Evaluation |
| TET | Terminal Evaluation Team |
| ToR | Terms of Reference |

| | |
|-------|---|
| TRAC | Target Resource Assignment for Care |
| UNDAF | UN Development Assistance Framework |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| US\$ | United States Dollar |
| VDC | Village Development Committee |
| WWF | World Wide Fund for Nature |
| WTLC | Western terai landscape complex |
| WTLCP | Western Terai Landscape Complex Project |

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

| Project Summary Table | | | | |
|--------------------------|--|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| Project Title: | Creating Biodiversity Conservation Landscapes in Nepal's Lowland Terai and Eastern Himal Areas | | | |
| GEF Project ID: | 37768 | | <i>at endorsement (US\$)</i> | <i>at completion (US\$)</i> |
| UNDP Project ID: | 1831 | GEF financing: | 3,312,278 | 3,312,278 |
| Country: | Nepal | IA/EA own: | 2,613,995 | 2,613,995 |
| Region: | Asia-Pacific | Government: | 2,613,995 | 2,613,995 |
| Focal Area: | Biodiversity | Other: | 7,182,560 | 6,353,582 |
| Operational Programme: | OP-3 (Forest Ecosystems) OP-13 (Agrobiodiversity) | Total co-financing: | 9,796,555 | 8,967,577 |
| Executing Agency: | Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation | Total Project Cost: | 13,108,833 | 12,279,855 |
| Other Partners involved: | SNV WWF LIBIRD Biodiversity International NARC | Prodoc Signature (date project began): | 23 rd Mar. 2005 ¹ | |
| | | (Operational) Closing Date: | Proposed: 31 st July. 2012 | Actual: 31 st Dec 2012 |

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Western terai of Nepal is an extensive block of intact landscape of exceptional global importance for biodiversity conservation. The area provides habitats for important populations of megafauna including tiger, Indian Rhinoceros, Asian elephant, gharial, blackbuck and swamp deer. The Project, consistent with the GEF Strategic Priority BD-2 (Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Production Landscapes and Sectors), was designed to address the problems of chronic forest loss and degradation from a number of causes associated with increasing human land and resource use. Over seven years (2006-2012) the Project built the basis for a landscape approach to conservation developing national policies, strengthening institutional mechanisms, improving management of conservation assets in three protected areas, and empowering communities to practice sustainable, biodiversity-friendly natural resource and land use management and pursue diversified livelihoods.

| Evaluation Rating Table | | |
|----------------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| Criterion | Comments | Rating |
| Monitoring and Evaluation | | |
| Overall quality of M&E | The design of M&E was of a standard a little in advance over that normal for the design period, but lacked adequate allocation of responsibilities and had no budget; implementation has been generally of a high standard, with excellent progress monitoring and strong internal activity monitoring, somewhat compromised by inadequate impact monitoring. Good responses have also been made to various reviews, especially to the mid-term review | Satisfactory |
| M&E design at project start up | As above. | Moderately Satisfactory |
| M&E Plan Implementation | As above | Satisfactory |

¹ **PMU comment:** The date of signing was in August, 2005, but exact date not known. Effective implementation date was mentioned from August 2005 to July 2012. Hence project considered as 31st August, 2012.

| IA & EA Execution: | | |
|---|---|-------------------------|
| Overall Quality of Project Implementation/Execution | The Project has had mixed management, responding only slowly to big problems bequeathed by the Project Document and logframe, bedevilled by too-frequent rotation of leadership but producing some high quality products. Strategic oversight has been inadequate and questions remain over the adequacy of the cross-sectoral commitment needed for a landscape approach. | Moderately Satisfactory |
| Implementing Agency Execution | Management has been mixed. There were serious problems over modalities and a poor logframe both bequeathed from poor project design, but these took a great deal of time to resolve. The Project was seriously hampered by the Government policy of regularly rotating staff. Some leadership was lacklustre while technical implementation was dynamic, innovative, and effective. | Moderately Satisfactory |
| Executing Agency Execution | UNDP have provided an adequate level of supervision and backstopping to the Project, and its performance has benefitted as a direct result. | Satisfactory |
| Outcomes | | |
| Overall Quality of Project Outcomes | Overall quality of products is very good, but the main outcome, that of developing a replicable landscape-level management model, has not been achieved. | Moderately Satisfactory |
| Relevance | The Project intervenes in a globally important landscape, is congruent with GEF and national priorities, and remains pertinent in the light of the current levels of threat | Relevant |
| Effectiveness | A review of outcomes to impacts (ROI) indicates that the overall likelihood of impacts being achieved is one case each of Highly Likely, Likely, Moderately Likely, and Highly Unlikely, hence the Project has achieved most of its major objectives, and yielded some excellent products, but is not expected to yield some of its global environment benefits | Moderately Satisfactory |
| Cost-effectiveness (Efficiency) | Although not over budget, project management costs accounted for 25% of the Project's spending and there were other moderate shortcomings such as unfocussed spending, | Moderately Satisfactory |
| Sustainability: | | |
| Overall likelihood of risks to Sustainability | Each risk dimension of sustainability is deemed to be critical, the overall rating for sustainability cannot be higher than the rating of the dimension with lowest rating | Moderately Unlikely |
| Financial resources | The long-term financial outlook appears fairly strong with continuing government support and new financial mechanisms being piloted. Local funds appear sound, and WWF is committed to continuing to work in the area. | Likely |
| Socio-economic | Solid – beneficiaries show increased awareness and changed behaviours which they show a willingness to continue because of the benefits conservation actions have brought. | Likely |

| | | |
|--|---|--------------------------------------|
| Institutional framework and governance | Mixed – DFSCCs appear to have worked and have been replicated country wide. Other institutions have been strengthened, but the future role of the Landscape Support Unit remains undecided and the position of the CFCCs is viewed as precarious by many. Lack of technical continuity resulting from Government’s staff rotation policy weakens continued implementation. The inability of the Project to have road-tested the system as a whole is its main drawback. | Moderately Unlikely |
| Environmental | Negligible risks evident. | Likely |
| Impact: | | |
| Environmental Status Improvement | Populations of globally-threatened mammals increasing; forest loss reversed. | Significant |
| Environmental Stress Reduction | Pressure removed from forest through three new Protected Forests, removal of encroachment, increased anti-poaching activities, new financial incentives for conservation by communities, increased coordination between communities and PA management, and increased awareness of the need and benefits of conservation amongst all parties. | Significant |
| Progress towards stress/status change | Generally very good – decreases in encroachment, illegal logging, hunting, pesticide use, plus improvements in protected area management capacity and economic benefits for local people through financial incentives and introduction of innovative livelihoods. | Significant |
| Overall Project Results | | Moderately Satisfactory ² |

KEY SUCCESSES

Development and endorsement by the MFSC of four important landscape-based policies – Integrated Landscape Planning Framework Guidelines, Payment for Ecosystem Service Guidelines, Corridor Management Guidelines (including piloting in the Mohana Corridor), and Agrobiodiversity Policy; establishment of the first three Protected Forests (totalling 130,565 ha) in Nepal; District Forest Sector Coordination Committee piloted and replicated throughout the country; Landscape Support Unit established within the MFSC; increase in the actual forest area of the Western Terai by 260 km² and in the Churia Hills by 48 km²; restoration of 914 ha of grassland within protected areas; restoration of 29 ha of 37 wetlands in, and outside of, protected areas; increases in the populations of tiger, swamp deer and blackbuck, and an increase in the diversity of birds found in the Mohana Corridor; Conservation Plans produced for two mammals (Asian elephant and blackbuck) and seven plants; conservation of 106 local varieties of crops; revision of 51 Community Forest User Group plans; development of income-generating activities for 3,616 forest-dependent families with net incomes from forest-based enterprises increased by 19% to NR 7,428/year (US\$ 87); increased awareness of conservation issues evident throughout the WTLC area, e.g. anti-poaching groups established, Community Forest Conservation Plans contain biodiversity activities (>35% of budget), and regular coordination meetings between protected area management and local communities; demonstration of solar pumps to maintain waterholes and of solar electric-fences to reduce human-wildlife conflict; 4,759 families involved in income-generating activities through seed grant support, with over 75% still active (of the total benefited households/individuals, 51.6 % were women, 13.1% were Dalit and 61.4% were Janajati); 23 forest based micro-enterprises were functional in the project area providing employment opportunities of 110 days per year per household; nearly 400 households cultivating medicinal and aromatic plants on 73.1 ha generated a total income of NRs 5.4 million (US\$ 63,529) in 2011; net annual household income of the forest dependent households increased by NRs 7,428 (US\$ 87.4) against the project target of NRs 3,887 (US\$ 45.7); collaboration

² **MFSC comment:** Long comment (marked General) – see Annex XI.

with the Landscape Support Unit and WWF to produce Encroachment Control and Management Strategy; and collaboration with SNV-supported Biodiversity Sector Support Programme in Siwalik Terai to produce Collaborative Forest Management Guidelines.

KEY PROBLEM AREAS

No real landscape approach capable of replication actually demonstrated; an effective loss of three years' implementation time³ resulting from poor project design; inability to form a common modality amongst partner organisations for implementation leading in a break-up of the original partnership between the Terai Arc Landscape Programme and this Project; frequent turnover of Government staff resulting in lack of continuity in vision and leadership; and no establishment of a link between agrobiodiversity conservation and the landscape approach⁴.

The Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the Project was conducted over a period of 25 days between 18th September and 23rd November 2012 by a team comprising one international and two national consultants. It was carried out according to schedule about three months ahead of the Project's scheduled closure and after most activities had been completed. The Evaluation's ToR is given in [Annex I](#), its itinerary in [Annex II](#) and the list of people interviewed in [Annex III](#). A list of indicators, their end of Project achievement level, together with performance rating is given in [Annex IV](#). After receipt of comments on 19th November 2012, which have either been added as footnotes to the main text or longer ones appended in [Annex XI](#), the report was finalised on 23rd November 2012.

KEY ISSUES

The poor design of the Project Document, particularly its inability to make unequivocal statements regarding the modalities and mechanisms for its implementation by the various partners, and its confused logframe, bequeathed a myriad of problems which took far too long to resolve and resulted in three years lost from its implementation. Frequent rotation of Government staff meant breaks in continuity of approach and changed levels of technical competence simply increasing the delays. This lost time was irrecoverable and left the management team unable to deliver the key product – a replicable landscape-level management model. That said, the Project has worked through these difficulties and those at field level posed by difficult security conditions early on and considerable political instability thereafter, as well as remote sites with difficult access, a large geographic area to cover, and challenging climatic conditions to produce a range of high quality products – policies, institutional mechanisms, conservation actions, livelihood developments, and agrobiodiversity activities – that forward the landscape approach towards biodiversity conservation becoming a reality in Nepal. The parts have been developed but the whole has not been tested and shown to work and the TET remains concerned that the implementation has been too MFSC-centric and not cross-sectoral enough to deliver a full landscape approach. However, the team has managed to deliver a series of interventions that have significantly reduced the threats to a suite of globally-threatened wildlife which appear to be responding with stable or increasing populations. In the process, the Project has demonstrated a number of innovative approaches, particularly through incentive schemes such as payments for environmental services and a performance-based grant system, which could be expanded or replicated elsewhere in the country. A range of livelihood options linked to conservation aims have been piloted with varying degrees of success. The agro-biodiversity interventions have been carried out extremely well, but since their inclusion was a political and design compromise, agrobiodiversity remained marginalised from the main thrust of the landscape-based approach. The evaluation of achievements against indicators (provided in [Annex IV](#)) shows that of the 40 indicators that it is possible to evaluate against⁵, 29 (72.5%) show successful achievement at the end of the Project and six (15%) show achievement nearly successful – a very good achievement.

Recommendations and Lessons Learned are listed on pages 53 et seq..

³ **UNDP-CO comment:** Long comment – see Annex XI.

⁴ **UNDP-CO comment:** Long comment – see Annex XI.

⁵ Two indicators cannot be evaluated because their design is too poor.

APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

1. The *Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects* issued by the Evaluation Office in 2012 states that:

“Evaluations for UNDP-supported GEF-financed projects have the following complementary purposes:

- *To promote accountability and transparency, and to assess and disclose the extent of project accomplishments.*
- *To synthesize lessons that can help to improve the selection, design and implementation of future GEF financed UNDP activities.*
- *To provide feedback on issues that are recurrent across the UNDP portfolio and need attention, and on improvements regarding previously identified issues.*
- *To contribute to the overall assessment of results in achieving GEF strategic objectives aimed at global environmental benefit.*
- *To gauge the extent of project convergence with other UN and UNDP priorities, including harmonization with other UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and UNDP Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) outcomes and outputs.”*

With this in mind, this Terminal Evaluation (TE), carried out by an independent team of consultants, was initiated by UNDP Nepal as the GEF Implementation Agency for the *Creating Biodiversity Conservation Landscapes in Nepal’s Lowland Terai and Eastern Himal Areas* Project (known to all throughout its implementation as the Western Terai Landscape Complex Project (WTLCP)) to measure the effectiveness and efficiency of Project activities in relation to the stated objectives, and to collate lessons learned.

2. The TE was conducted over a period of 25 days between 18th September and 23rd November 2012 by a team comprising one international and two national consultants. It was carried out according to schedule about three months ahead of the Project’s scheduled closure and after most activities had been completed. The approach was determined by the terms of reference ([Annex I](#)) which were closely followed, via the itinerary detailed in [Annex II](#). Full details of the objectives of the TE can be found in the TOR, but the evaluation has concentrated on assessing the concept and design of the Project; its implementation in terms of quality and timeliness of inputs, financial planning, and monitoring and evaluation; the efficiency and effectiveness of activities carried out and the objectives and outcomes achieved, as well as the likely sustainability of its results, and the involvement of stakeholders. The report was finalised on 23rd November 2012 after receipt of comments on 19th November. The text has been revised to correct factual inaccuracies in the draft or to include additional information, while other comments have been reproduced in full and unedited as footnotes to the appropriate text, or longer ones appended in [Annex XI](#), to ensure a fair hearing to all parties. The reader is urged to read the comments in Annex XI since many are general and cross-references through foot-notes have been impossible to make, but the comments provide further insights of considerable value to the evaluation process. The Terminal Evaluation Team (TET) has made responses to some of these comments.

3. The evaluation was conducted through the following participatory approach to provide it with sufficient evidence upon which to base conclusions:

- extensive face-to-face and Skype/telephone interviews with the project management and technical support staff, including some members of the project boards; group interviews with local stakeholders, particularly the beneficiaries, mainly in the villages;
- face-to-face interviews with relevant development institutions and individuals;
- a thorough review of project documents and other relevant texts, including the Project Document, revised logframe, Mid-term Evaluation (MTE), and monitoring reports, such as progress and financial reports prepared for UNDP and annual Project Implementation Reviews

(PIR) for GEF, minutes of Project Board meetings, technical reports and other activity reports, relevant correspondence, and other project-related material produced by the project staff or partners; and

- extensive field visits within the three districts – Bardia, Kailali, and Kanchanpur – that the Project worked in to view its interventions on-the-ground.

4. Interviews were not carried out using a set of interview guidelines which the lead evaluator finds too inflexible. Instead, interviews were carried out informally, often focussed on certain key points, thereby allowing the evaluator to pick up on certain issues and draw vital information out from what often starts as a seeming “throw-away” answer to a question. Long experience has proved the efficacy of this method. Preparation is not required by the interviewee and there are no “right” or “wrong” answers. It is people’s experiences, insights, reflections, and suggestions with or on the project that are important. Throughout the evaluation, particular attention was paid to explaining carefully the importance of listening to stakeholders’ views and in reassuring staff and stakeholders that the purpose of the evaluation was not to judge performance in order to apportion credit or blame but to measure the relative success of implementation and to determine learn lessons for the wider GEF context. The confidentiality of all interviews was stressed. Wherever possible, information collected was cross-checked between various sources to ascertain its veracity, but in some cases time limited this. An opportunity was always provided to all interviewees to ask questions of the evaluators. A full list of people interviewed is given in Annex III.

5. Wherever possible the TET has tried to evaluate issues according to the criteria listed in the *UNDP-GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy*, namely:

- Relevance – the extent to which the activity is suited to local and national development priorities and organisational policies, including changes over time, as well as the extent to which the project is in line with the GEF Operational Programmes or the strategic priorities under which the project was funded.
- Effectiveness – the extent to which an objective has been achieved or how likely it is to be achieved.
- Efficiency – the extent to which results have been delivered with the least costly resources possible.
- Results – the positive and negative, and foreseen and unforeseen, changes to and effects produced by a development intervention. In GEF terms, results include direct project outputs, short-to medium term outcomes, and longer-term impact including global environmental benefits, replication effects and other, local effects.
- Sustainability – the likely ability of an intervention to continue to deliver benefits for an extended period of time after completion. Projects need to be environmentally as well as financially and socially sustainable.

6. The original logframe in the Project Document was revised significantly during a full project review undertaken through a full participatory process conducted by an external international consultant and held in parallel with one for the *Conservation and Sustainable Use of Wetlands in Nepal* Project. The resulting logframe was further modified through a process facilitated by an external national consultant who was an expert in logframes rather than having technical expertise related to the Project. It is understood that both processes were highly beneficial and the new logframe, still comprising four Outcomes but now with 11 Outputs, and 42 indicators, has been used throughout as the basis for the this evaluation (see Annex IV), and the TET has evaluated the Project’s performance against these according to the current six-point evaluation criteria provided to it by the GEF. Table 1 reproduces both the old and new criteria for clarity, since in the lead evaluators view, the new criteria are too simple and subjective to have much meaning.

TABLE 1: CRITERIA USED TO EVALUATE THE PROJECT BY THE FINAL EVALUATION TEAM

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Highly Satisfactory (HS) | <u>Old:</u> Project is expected to achieve or exceed all its major global environmental objectives, and yield substantial global environmental benefits, without major shortcomings. The project can be presented as “good practice”. <u>New:</u> The project had no shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives in terms of relevance, effectiveness, or efficiency. |
| Satisfactory (S) | <u>Old:</u> Project is expected to achieve most of its major global environmental objectives, and yield satisfactory global environmental benefits, with only minor shortcomings. <u>New:</u> There were only minor shortcomings. |
| Moderately Satisfactory (MS) | <u>Old:</u> Project is expected to achieve most of its major relevant objectives but with either significant shortcomings or modest overall relevance. Project is expected not to achieve some of its major global environmental objectives or yield some of the expected global environment benefits. <u>New:</u> There were moderate shortcomings. |
| Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU) | <u>Old:</u> Project is expected to achieve some of its major global environmental objectives with major shortcomings or is expected to achieve only some of its major global environmental objectives. <u>New:</u> The project had significant shortcomings |
| Unsatisfactory (U) | <u>Old:</u> Project is expected not to achieve most of its major global environment objectives or to yield any satisfactory global environmental benefits. <u>New:</u> There were major shortcomings in the achievement of project objectives in terms of relevance, effectiveness, or efficiency |
| Highly Unsatisfactory (HU) | <u>Old:</u> The project has failed to achieve, and is not expected to achieve, any of its major global environment objectives with no worthwhile benefits. <u>New:</u> The project had severe shortcomings |

7. In addition, other scales have been used to cover sustainability (Table 2), relevance (Relevant/Not Relevant), and impacts (Significant/Minimal/Negligible) although the *Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported GEF-financed Projects 2012* does not provide any methodology for the latter. In order to try and overcome some of this deficiency, a Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROtI) has been included. Although not yet a UNDP requirement, the lead consultant has experience of undertaking this for UNEP-GEF projects and believes it to be a valuable indicator; and the 2011 UNDP publication states that “... *the GEF Evaluation Office is developing new guidance in 2012 that will likely require the introduction of a new section in the results analysis on “progress to impacts” for all full-sized projects*”. The method requires ratings to be made for outcomes achieved by the project and the progress made towards the ‘intermediate states’ at the time of the evaluation. The rating scale is given in Table 3 while Table 4 shows how the two letter ratings for “*achievement of outcomes*” and “*progress towards intermediate states*” translate into ratings for the “*overall likelihood of impact achievement*” on a six-point scale. A rating is given a ‘+’ notation if there is evidence of impacts accruing within the life of the project which moves the double letter rating up one space in the six-point scale.

TABLE 2: SCALE USED TO EVALUATE THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE PROJECT

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Likely (L) | There are no risks affecting this dimension of sustainability. |
| Moderately Likely (ML) | There are moderate risks that affect this dimension of sustainability. |
| Moderately Unlikely (MU) | There are significant risks that affect this dimension of sustainability. |
| Unlikely (U) | There are severe risks that affect this dimension of sustainability. |

TABLE 3: RATING SCALE FOR OUTCOMES AND PROGRESS TOWARDS “INTERMEDIATE STATES”

| Outcome Rating | Rating on progress toward Intermediate States |
|--|--|
| D: The project’s intended outcomes were not delivered | D: No measures taken to move towards intermediate states. |
| C: The project’s intended outcomes were delivered, but were not designed to feed into a continuing process after project funding | C: The measures designed to move towards intermediate states have started, but have not produced results. |
| B: The project’s intended outcomes were delivered, and were designed to feed into a continuing process, but with no prior allocation of responsibilities after project funding. | B: The measures designed to move towards intermediate states have started and have produced results, which give no indication that they can progress towards the intended long term impact. |
| A: The project’s intended outcomes were delivered, and were designed to feed into a continuing process, with specific allocation of responsibilities after project funding. | A: The measures designed to move towards intermediate states have started and have produced results, which clearly indicate that they can progress towards the intended long term impact. |

NOTE: If the outcomes above scored C or D, there is no need to continue forward to score intermediate stages given that achievement of such is then not possible.

TABLE 4: RATING SCALE FOR THE “OVERALL LIKELIHOOD OF IMPACT ACHIEVEMENT”.

| Highly Likely | Likely | Moderately Likely | Moderately Unlikely | Unlikely | Highly Unlikely |
|-----------------|------------|-------------------|---------------------|----------|-----------------|
| AA AB BA BB+ | BB AC+ BC+ | AC BC | AD+ BD+ | AD BD C | D |

8. The results of the evaluation were conveyed formally at a de-briefing attended by officials from the Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation (MFSC), UNDP, and other Project partners prior to the lead evaluator’s departure from Nepal (see [Annex V](#)). **Lessons learned** have been placed in boxes and cross-referenced with a number hyperlinked to the “*Lessons Learned*” section where further discussion can be found. They are numbered according to the order in which they occur in the “*Lessons Learned*” section, not in the order that they occur in the text.

CONSTRAINTS

9. One of the issues that has affected the Project detrimentally also posed constraints on the TE, that is the regular transfer of government staff between posts (see paragraph 33). Such a reorganisation was happening during the TE mission and many government officials were found to be only a few days or weeks in their new job and hence had negligible knowledge of the Project. While every effort was made by the TET to track down officials who had held relevant positions during the Project, this effectively was restricted to just the MFSC (and project staff and UNDP officers) and constrained any evaluation of the Project in a wider ministerial context.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

BACKGROUND AND DURATION

10. The Project appears to have been conceived by the MFSC to provide an incremental move from conservation in the core protected areas and their buffer zones into the wider productive landscape, building on initiatives already underway, notably the UNDP-GEF *Upper Mustang Biodiversity Conservation Project* and the UNDP-GEF Tiger-Rhino Conservation Project⁶. The Project was designed using a PDF-B grant from GEF after entry into the project pipeline on 4th May 2000. The

⁶ Official name – *Landscape-scale Conservation of the Endangered Tiger and Rhino Populations in and around Chitwan National Park Project*.

original Project Brief was approved by GEF Council in October 2002, but then there was the first of a number of delays and CEO approval was not given until 8th March 2004 as a Full-sized Project under Operational Programmes OP3: Forest Ecosystems and OP13: Agrobiodiversity as part of Strategic Objective Biodiversity #2 of the GEF Business Plan – Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Production Landscapes and Sectors. Further delays continued, possibly because of the instability in Nepal arising from the Maoist insurgency but also because of delays in finalising the GEF approvals and partner agreements, and the Project Document was not signed until 31st August 2005 with still another six months passing until the first disbursement was made on 1st March 2006. Project partners included the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), the Netherlands Development Organisation (SNV⁷), Biodiversity International, Local Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research and Development (LI-BIRD) and the Nepal Agricultural Research Council (NARC). WWF and SNV, having committed funds for a project commencement in 2004, could not afford the delays incurred, hence the Project was begun as the *Western Terai Landscape Building Programme* also known as the “*front-loading programme*” in February 2004. This set of preparatory activities lasted until March 2006 when GEF funding came on stream. The Mid-term Evaluation, delayed for one year because there were insufficient achievements to show in 2009, was undertaken in September 2010 with the final report completed in November 2010.

PROBLEMS ADDRESSED

11. The Project Document does not contain an explicit problem statement. Under its introduction to the threats analysis it states:

“The major threats to biodiversity in the Western Terai landscape are: a) agricultural encroachment and squatting in forestlands; b) high grazing pressures in the forests; c) overexploitation of biological resources from forests; and d) the replacement of traditional crop varieties and landraces with modern cultivars. The first three threats have collectively led to degradation and fragmentation of biodiversity-rich forests and habitat loss in the Western Terai. In the districts of Bardia, Kailali, and Kanchanpur, the forest area has decreased by 12%, 15%, and 24% between the time periods of 1978/79 and 1990/91. It is projected that all the forest in Terai would be cleared in 70 years assuming the trend of an annual deforestation rate of 1.3% per year (during the period from 1978 to 1991) continues. Forest degradation and fragmentation in turn have contributed to the loss of habitat connectivity for the flagship species that inhabit the Western Terai region. Habitat fragmentation has the effect of reducing previously extensive mammal populations into genetically isolated sub-populations, many of which now risk falling below the threshold of population viability. The fourth agricultural-related practice is resulting in the genetic erosion of agricultural biodiversity in the Western Terai’s agricultural landscape.”

EXPECTED RESULTS

12. The Development Objective is given as:

“To ensure the conservation and sustainable use of globally significant biodiversity in Nepal’s Western Terai landscape”

and the Immediate Objective as:

“To establish effective management systems and build capacity for the conservation and sustainable use of Nepal’s Western Terai landscape complex”

Since the Project was designed in 2000/01, there is no explicit statement of the expected global environmental benefits being realised by the Project, as there would be in a Project Identification Form which was introduced much later in 2008. However, some ideas can be gleaned from the global benefits described in the incremental cost matrix given in Table 5, and the indicators which are assessed in Annex IV.

⁷ Stichting Nederlandse Vrijwilligers (Foundation of Netherlands Volunteers) founded in 1965.

TABLE 5: SUMMARY OF EXPECTED GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS ARISING FROM THE PROJECT

| | |
|---|---|
| Outcome 1: National policy environment and legal framework enable integrated landscape planning in the Western Terai Landscape Complex | New policy prescriptions and policy/legal reforms will facilitate landscape management and create a foundation for sustaining globally significant biodiversity management over time. Integration of agrobiodiversity conservation components in agricultural policies will create enabling environment for <i>in situ</i> conservation of agricultural biodiversity. |
| Outcome 2: Institutional framework for integrated landscape management of biodiversity in the Western Terai Landscape Complex established | Institutional arrangements and participatory planning for integrated conservation and development will be strengthened from central to local levels. Systematic and strategic transboundary cooperation will be institutionalized. Adaptive management of global biodiversity values will be strengthened through improved tools for planning, information management, monitoring systems, and knowledge base of biodiversity indicators. DNPWC support in monitoring and information management and formulation of landscape-level planning tools will enhance institutional capacity and intersectoral coordination in biodiversity conservation. |
| Outcome 3: Biodiversity assets in government-managed lands are conserved and sustainably managed ⁸ | Scientific and participatory management of protected areas and buffer zones will be strengthened to enable adaptive management and secure long-term viability of biodiversity in protected areas. |
| Outcome 4: Local communities are empowered to practice sustainable, biodiversity-friendly natural resource and land use management and pursue diversified livelihoods. | Enhanced awareness and management of local crop diversity and agrobiodiversity methods among relevant stakeholders will safeguard the gene pool of globally important agricultural species and contribute to maintenance of overall ecosystem health in the surrounding biodiversity-rich, natural landscape. Conservation-oriented mindsets will reorient local livelihoods to biodiversity-friendly practices and enhance long-term viability of biodiversity. |

SOURCE: Project Document – incremental cost analysis

13. Because of the delays between the initial Project Brief and the start of the Project, baseline indicators were largely established at or just after Project Inception. Some, e.g numbers 25 and 26 (see [Annex IV](#)) were updated in 2008, while for others no comprehensive data were available.

PROJECT PREPARATION

CONCEPT AND DESIGN

14. The Project originated from the Government of Nepal’s desire to promote a landscape approach to conservation in general within the country. A number of initiatives were begun at the turn of the century and bore fruit through the early part of the 2000s, e.g. the Terai Arc Landscape Programme initiated in 2001, the UNDP-GEF Tiger-Rhino Conservation Project initiated in 2001, the WWF-supported Terai Arc Landscape Programme initiated in 2001, the SNV-supported *Biodiversity Sector Programme for Siwaliks and Terai* initiated in 2002, and the *Terai Arc Landscape Strategy 2004-2014* produced in 2004. WTLCP was one of these. Conceived in 1999 purely as a wildlife landscape conservation project, it was designed through 2000/01 but when the original Project Brief was submitted to the GEF Focal Point for Nepal, it was found that another project on Agrobiodiversity had been submitted at the same time. For unknown reasons, but likely because of quotas on the number of projects that could be submitted or for financial reasons, the GEF Focal Point requested that the two projects be combined. The result was WTLCP.

⁸ Altered in the revised logframe approved in 2009 to “*Biodiversity assets in Western Terai landscape are effectively conserved*”.

15. The Project is poorly-designed on a number of levels:

- At a technical level, the agrobiodiversity component has not been integrated into a landscape approach in any way – it appears simply to have been bolted on to the side of the main landscape framework as a measure of expediency, which it was. As a result, its implementation was carried out largely in isolation (see paragraph 22).
- At the stakeholder level, as a number of interviewees stated, “*There were too many partners involved*” both in the design and the implementation. The inability of the design team (or perhaps more accurately the partners themselves) to reach a common understanding on the modalities and mechanisms intended for implementation have had significant repercussions for the success of the Project (see paragraph 31).
- At the level of scale, the project was far too ambitious. Its geographic coverage is extremely large involving three districts plagued by poor communications while still requiring a strong presence in the capital of Kathmandu. Its scope is similarly large, involving interventions in policy, institutional strengthening, protected area and buffer zone management, and in the development of income-generating activities, all the while recognising the need to pioneer many concepts new, or fairly new, to Nepal, such as the landscape approach itself, sustainable financing including payments for ecological services, and corridor management.
- Given this scale and scope, at the financial level, the Project is under-budgeted for a proposed length of eight years with US\$ 9,067,288 cash and US\$ 3,759,995 in-kind equating to just about US\$ 1.13 million and US\$ 0.47 million respectively available each year.

Design Logic

16. The situation analysis in the Project Document highlighted the global importance of the biological diversity of the Western Terai landscape complex and especially its continuing function as a corridor because of the fact that:

“Large tracts of forest remain in the intervening productive landscape between SWR and BNP in spite of large-scale clearance of forests for agricultural development in the last three decades”.

However, it drew attention to the fact that:

“The WTLC is situated in the mid-western and far western development regions of Nepal, which are characterized by high levels of poverty, low human development, deep gender disparity, and low gender empowerment. The human development index (HDI) for the mid-western and far western development regions are lowest among the five administrative regions in Nepal ... These regions have traditionally been neglected and efforts have only recently been made to include them in the mainstream of the country’s modernization process. ... [The] districts are inhabited by over a million people ... Population growth rates in all three districts (with average annual growth rate of 3.5% ... far exceed the national average of 2.2%.”

As a result of which, agricultural encroachment and squatting in forestlands; high grazing pressures in the forests; and overexploitation of biological resources from forests;

“... have collectively led to degradation and fragmentation of biodiversity-rich forests and habitat loss in the Western Terai. In the districts of Bardia, Kailali, and Kanchanpur, the forest area has decreased by 12%, 15%, and 24% between the time periods of 1978/79 and 1990/91. It is projected that all the forest in the Terai would be cleared in 70 years assuming the trend of an annual deforestation rate of 1.3% per year ... continues.”

The resulting project design was to apply a landscape approach to provide an incremental move from a protected area core to the buffer zone and on to a wider productive landscape. Although not exclusively targeted at forests, the Project’s main interventions focussed on conserving the forests and reducing the pressure on them through a variety of approaches at a policy level, an institutional level and a community level. Bolted on to this was a component dealing with agrobiodiversity to address the issue of “*the replacement of traditional crop varieties and landraces with modern cultivars*”. The

absence of clear logic to this is obvious to all, brought about by an expedient decision of the GEF Focal Point at the time of the design (see paragraph 14).

17. Being designed in 2000/01, the WTLCP falls early in GEF-3 and hence too soon for many lessons to have been derived from previous GEF projects. While the designers were clearly aware of the need to document and communicate lessons learned, and the Project Document contains many references to this effect, there are no overt references to lessons learned from previous projects being included in the design of this one. However, it does state that:

“At project inception, best practices from relevant past and on-going projects will be identified for the proposed project’s interventions. Relevant project interventions which have been undertaken in other projects and have an accumulated body of experience include: formation of and technical support for user groups; reorienting local communities to sustainable land/resource use practices; capacity-building in agrobiodiversity management and conservation; conservation awareness-raising and education; and promoting alternative livelihoods development. Best practices will be drawn from experiences of projects such as UNDP/HMG’s Parks and People Programme, CARE-Nepal’s Bufferzone Development Project, UNDP-supported Capacity 21 programme, WWF-Bardia Integrated Conservation Project (BICP), KMTNC-Bardia Conservation Project (BCP), and IPGRI’s in-situ conservation of agricultural biodiversity. In addition, best practices will be drawn from community forestry projects supported by various donors across Nepal’s physiographic regions. Based on these lessons, project staff will develop a detailed operational plan for implementation of project interventions.”

Logical Framework and Revisions

18. Unfortunately, the resulting logframe was a mess. In 2008 an independent review⁹ was commissioned for WTLCP and for the *Conservation and Sustainable Use of Wetlands in Nepal* Project because, in the words of that review:

“Both teams have been frustrated with their logical frameworks and had started to consider changes prior to the review ... [although] it was noted that despite WTLCP being in its third year, no formal changes to the project logical framework had been proposed or endorsed to date. In both project teams there was evidence of confusion, not understanding and being overwhelmed by the logical frameworks they had been given. There was clearly lack of ownership and lack of use being made of the frameworks.”

The review points out that:

“WTLCP had no complete log frame; different parts of a log frame were contained in the 15-page Results Framework plus a 10-page Logical Framework Matrix. In the LF Matrix there were 40 Indicators (the majority were Output statements not Indicators) at the Objective or Outcome level, for just 4 Outcomes; there were no Output level objectives or Indicators, and no Targets”.

The review involved a restructuring of the logframe through a participatory process, and although the objectives and outcomes remained untouched, the outputs were re-worded and the activities simplified. Following on from that, another national consultant was hired who, although not a technical specialist, was a logframe expert and the logical links between activities, outputs and outcomes were further clarified. The resulting logframe, approved by the only Tri-partite Review held by the Project on 5th September 2008, contains four Outcomes, 11 Outputs and 42 indicators and has been used in this evaluation in order to assess the level of achievements (see [Annex IV](#)).

19. Unfortunately, the revised logframe still contains many weaknesses, mainly amongst the indicators which are not all SMART¹⁰. Two cannot be evaluated against:

⁹ Peter Hunnan, *Management Review of UNDP-GEF Biodiversity Projects in Nepal, Western Terai Landscape Complex Project (WTLCP) Conservation & Sustainable Use of Wetlands in Nepal (CSUWN)*, June 2008.

¹⁰ Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound.

- Indicator #21: *Globally significant forest biodiversity maintained* – target: *All forest types maintained 12 tree species under different threat levels conserved*. The lack of any definition makes this meaningless, since some minimum area for each forest type needs to be set within the target.
- Indicator #32: *At least 20% increase seed transaction (exchange, sale and market) of the products of grassroots breeding, PVS and PPB methods* – target: *20% increase from the base line data*. Yet the baseline was known to be zero hence a 20% increase is meaningless since 20% of zero is still zero.

while others are still remarkably weak, e.g.

- Indicator #1: *Vegetation cover maintained in Western Terai landscape complex* – target: *At least 90% vegetation cover maintained*. The term vegetation is meaningless since “vegetation” covers most of Nepal, not all of it of value. Forest or grassland would have been better and the TET arranged for the Project to supply these figures instead.
- Indicator #33: *Household level income of targeted community increased by at least 10% compared to the baseline of 2006* – target: *Average household income increased by 10%*. This has no timescale defined – is it over the lifetime of the Project, or each year? – and it should say “at a constant price” in order to remove the effects of inflation.

some of the targets appear perverse, e.g.

- Indicator #2: *Critical habitats in WTLC maintained* – target: *40% of critical habitats maintained*. If the habitats are regarded as critical, why is it acceptable for 60% of them to be lost within the Project period?

and some of the sites or measurements were not undertaken in a manner compatible with the baseline surveys, and/or the baseline data was erroneous e.g.:

- Indicator #3 where the baseline survey was not conducted in same areas as the priority sites of the Project and did not identify all varieties of crops present.
- Indicator #20 where errors in the baseline mean that no certainty can be attributed to whether the number of varieties represents 90% of true baseline.

UNDP Programming Context

20. The sustainable management and rational use of the natural resources has been considered by UNDP to be essential to its strategy to alleviate poverty. At the time of the Project’s design, the Project’s intended outcome was deemed congruent with the Country Results Framework, stated as:

“A comprehensive approach to environmentally sustainable development integrated in national development planning and linked to poverty reduction”

and the outcome indicator stated within the same framework was given as:

“Specific policy, legal, and regulatory measures taken related to biodiversity conservation”.

The TET has no further information from this time. Subsequently, the Project continued to fit with the United Nations’ priorities as elaborated in the *United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Nepal* (UNDAF 2008-2010) where under Priority C Sustainable Livelihoods, Outcome C.3 is listed as:

“Environment and energy mainstreamed into national and local development planning with a focus on gender, social inclusion, and post-conflict environmental rehabilitation”

And Output C.3.1 specifically mentions the landscape approach thus:

“Capacity of national and local government for landscape biodiversity conservation and equitable benefit sharing from forest, land, water resources and energy services enhanced”.

The WTLC Project was also complementary with UNDP’s *Country Programme Action Plan 2008-2010* (CPAP) where under paragraph 4.37 it states that:

“It is necessary to integrate economic policies with those of the management of natural resources and the environment. ... The Programme will also support the Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation (MoFSC) to develop a policy framework for landscape conservation in order to facilitate an integrated approach to the conservation of biodiversity and local livelihoods enhancement [sic].”

which translated into:

“Outcome 4.1: Environment and energy mainstreamed into national and local development planning ...” and

“Output 4.1.3: Policy frameworks developed for water governance, green accounting, and landscape conservation”.

while in the *Extended CPAP 2011-2012*, the Project itself was woven into the fabric of the results framework, thus:

“Output 4.1.2: Capacities at the national and local level enhanced for integrated landscape conservation planning”

with its indicators listed as

- “• # of landscape conservation-related policies drafted*
- # of forest-based micro-enterprises established and # of poor households benefiting from entrepreneurship training*
- % of dalits and janajatis in key decision making positions of user groups*
- # of forest dependent households of WTLCP involved in Participatory Forest management (PFM) system*
- % farmers groups adopting good practices of on-farming agro-biodiversity conservation”.*

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

PARTICIPATING AGENCIES

21. The Project has been executed in accordance with the standard rules and procedures of the UNDP National Execution Modality. The Project’s executing partner agency is the **Ministry of Finance** (MoF) which is the GEF National Focal Point in Nepal. The Project’s implementing partner has been the **Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation** (MFSC) and through this the Government has exercised financial management with the National Project Director acting as the approving officer and the National Project Coordinator as the certifying officer for payments; but it has not been involved in the flow of funds. The UNDP-CO has signed the quarterly budgets and annual workplans, provided an assurance role by always having a presence on any selection panel, and on occasion has made direct payments (thereby acting as a business agent to provide those services). UNDP has acted through the Project Document to empower the Project to enter into contractual arrangements with physical and legal persons on their behalf, and to manage project funds, including budget planning, monitoring, revisions, disbursements, record keeping, reporting and auditing that all observe UNDP rules.

Stakeholder Participation

22. In addition to the MFSC, the Project involved a wide range of organisations. Key co-financing partners have included SNV, UNDP, and WWF (the latter parallel financing) with in-kind contributions from Biodiversity International (BI), LI-BIRD and NARC. However, the partnership has been anything but simple or equal. Notwithstanding the difficulties that led to the effective separation of WTLCP into two parallel projects (see paragraph 31), the design flaw of including agro-biodiversity conservation into a landscape approach to biodiversity conservation effectively alienated Biodiversity International and LI-BIRD from the main implementation thrust. While Biodiversity

International and LI-BIRD enjoy a very close working relationship, once BI had moved their headquarters from Pokhara in Nepal to Delhi in India in January 2009, they became virtual ghosts in the Project, although they honoured all of their financial commitments in full¹¹. However, interviews with LI-BIRD and others suggest that LI-BIRD was always marginalised within the Project partnership since the agro-biodiversity part was seen by most parties as simply a component that did not fit within the overall Project framework¹². No attempt appears to ever have been made to try and forge links and to integrate these aspects better; as one interviewee recalls, “*there was a mental block which could not be overcome*”. This was particularly the case with the MFSC who saw LI-BIRD as impinging upon their resources and LI-BIRD could not convince the MFSC of the importance of the component. LI-BIRD’s budgets were always questioned, giving them too many things to do with too little money, an issue which certainly worked against LI-BIRD bringing in senior people to help¹³. This attitude was still apparent at the time of the TE when one senior official stated that “*Agro-biodiversity and forestry biodiversity were not linked*” and that “*Perhaps it was not good to partner with agro-biodiversity; the Government had to support LI-BIRD rather than the other way around*”. While the TET would agree that there was little common connection between agrobiodiversity and forest biodiversity in Project terms, a landscape approach to biodiversity conservation by definition needs to be cross-sectoral and the inability of the MFSC to manage this even at a project level does hint at problems to come on the bigger stage, something that should be of concern (see also paragraphs 34 and 92). The

23. It appears that SNV appreciated the partnership most, and certainly they were heavily involved up until the time of their sudden, and un-communicated, withdrawal¹⁴. Such lack of communication over it not extending its involvement and over the reallocation of funds to another project, while not exactly leaving a sour taste, has clearly perplexed other partners especially the MFSC. No-one in the MFSC could still supply an answer¹⁵. SNV worked mainly at the field level but expressed concern that the private sector was not involved adequately, and although one or two links were made (sadly not always successfully, see paragraph 81), more should have been done. The Project mobilised a huge number of local stakeholders to take part at the district and local levels and the social mobilisers and community motivators should take great credit for this. Their work with these groups really enabled most of the field-level interventions to take place. But it appears that it is not only the TET that has concerns about the plethora of the groups taking part. The sheer number (hundreds) of a huge range of different types of organisations including, community forest user groups, buffer zone user groups, community forest user committees buffer zone user committees, buffer zone management committee, village development committee, biodiversity conservation development committees, district forest sector coordination committees, is simply overwhelming. Several government officers from different agencies indicated that there were too many to deal with effectively and because there were so many, their general capacity was weak. As one such interviewee said, “*I only have X staff and can’t deal with all these user groups effectively*”. While the TET accepts that decentralisation and local control of affairs is generally a good thing, in this instance it appears to be going too far and the effective coordination and administration of so many groups is going to prove to be challenging once implementation of the landscape approach begins as a whole. The TET is convinced that had the Project reached the stage of this full-scale implementation, simplification of the institutional base would very rapidly shown itself to be necessary – see also paragraph 49¹⁶.

¹¹ **PMU comment:** *LIBIRD is invited on all PEB meetings and participating on most of the meetings as well. They have had always opportunity to raise concern on PEB meetings, however they often don’t do it. BI never participated on project related activities after Jan 2009. Likewise, financial commitment of BI is in questions since it has no involvement on project after Jan 2009.* **TET response:** The clarification is useful. The figures for BI showing full commitment were provided by the PMU and the TET queried them at the time. The inability to track in-kind contributions remains a serious weakness of the GEF financing system and leads to confusion or at least uncertainty, as here.

¹² **Udav Sharma ex NPDP comment:** long comment – see Annex XI.

¹³ **PMU comment:** Long comment – see Annex XI.

¹⁴ **SNV Livelihoods Advisor comment:** Long comment – see Annex XI.

¹⁵ **SNV Programme Coordinator comment:** Long comment – see Annex XI.

¹⁶ **PMU comment:** *WTLCP did not formed any new groups, we worked with the existing institutions only. Do WTLCP really created additional work load to govt stakeholders. We simply work for strengthening the capacity of these institutions and forming their networks. WTLCP in the earlier days used to work with the group (Buffer zone or community forestry) directly, however it worked with the committees in later stage, especially CFCC and buffer zone user committee.*

24. The Project reached a wider audience through good communication at many levels – an informative and high quality website with an extensive document repository (www.wtlcp.org.np) which was frequently updated; electronic and paper newsletters, a number of attractive brochures, pamphlets, and booklets; posters for local schools and village meeting centres; and a small number of gifts such as diaries which are always of dubious value since they appear to be distributed mainly amongst project members and others already “in-the-know”. The Project also produced a radio show (see paragraph 78). Much of this stemmed from a comprehensive *WTLCP Communication Strategy* produced in 2006 which identified target audiences, means and frequency of communication, and budgets. While quite a powerful framework, it crucially lacked the identification of a core and subsidiary messages, something akin to branding for a product that provides ready identification and understanding. The Lead Evaluator has found that those projects projecting such branding consistently have greater penetration amongst their target stakeholders than those, like here, that do not have such visibility. WWF know this only too well – and its logo was seen everywhere within the Project area, with even Government officers wearing WWF T-shirts! (see also paragraph 83). Disappointingly, the TET feels that although the Project has produced some good learning materials, e.g. *Leveraging the Landscapes*¹⁷ and *Sustainable Financing Mechanism for Landscape Conservation*¹⁸, it has made too little effort to capture knowledge and to disseminate it to a wider audience through international academic journals¹⁹, scientific press, or through publications that can be shared with donors and other projects (although a few informative policy briefs were published²⁰). In this, it seems the TET is not alone. One member of the MFSC noted that “*the Ministry wanted ideas, brain not brawn*”, and that “*learning from the Project had not been documented well-enough*”, while another interviewee noted that the knowledge LI-BIRD gained was not really shared as Project knowledge but mostly as “*LI-BIRD knowledge*” but that this was probably a result of the marginalisation of LI-BIRD within the Project as a whole (see paragraph 22). One exception to this lack of knowledge capture appears to be a *Lessons Learned Document* produced for the Project by an independent consultancy. The draft, seen by the TET, appears to contain some good information although it still requires a lot of work²¹.

The Project has worked closely with a large number of stakeholders throughout and the active engagement of stakeholders has been vital to fulfilling its achievements, hence stakeholder participation is evaluated as **Highly Satisfactory**²².

Gender

Gender Equity and Social Inclusion

25. Gender equity and social inclusion has been given a high priority in the Project’s design. The Project Document notes the high level of poverty, low human development, and deep gender disparity in the terai:

“...the mid-western and far western development regions of Nepal, ... are characterized by high levels of poverty, low human development, deep gender disparity, and low gender empowerment. The human development index (HDI) for [these] regions are lowest among the five administrative regions in Nepal, achieving only 86% and 83% respectively of the national HDI of 0.47.”

¹⁷ Acharya, K.P., Tripathi, D.M., Joshi, J., and Gurung, U.M. (eds.). 2011. *Leveraging the Landscapes: Conservation Beyond the Boundaries in Nepal*. Nepal Foresters Association. Kathmandu.

¹⁸ MFSC. 2012. *Sustainable Financing Mechanism for Landscape Conservation: Existing Practices and Future Prospects*. MFSC. Kathmandu.

¹⁹ **MFSC comment:** Long comment – see Annex XI.

²⁰ **PMU comment:** Two publications on national peer reviewed journal and one oral presentation on IUFRO landscape ecology conference about “Integrated landscape planning” has been done.

²¹ **PMU comment:** PMU is working with consultant for finalization of the document. Likewise, it is publishing lessons learned document of the project as well as piloting exercise by 15 Dec 2012 and will be shared with all stakeholders.

²² **SNV Livelihoods Advisor comment:** Long comment – see Annex XI.

and the fact that this results in the low empowerment of women and ethnic minorities and disparities towards access to resources and decision-making. It also notes that the intention of Outcome 4 is that:

“Local communities are empowered to practice sustainable, biodiversity-friendly natural resource and land use management and pursue diversified livelihoods. For this community empowerment will be pursued and sustainable livelihoods enabled for biodiversity conservation in the WTLC through: sustainable land and natural resource management practices that reduce pressures on wild biodiversity assets; agrobiodiversity-oriented management of agricultural lands to maintain traditional crops and landraces; strategies for diversified livelihoods; and mainstreaming biodiversity conservation values”.

A two-day inception workshop held on 19th-20th October 2005 to come up with action plans for WTLCP also emphasised the need to practice social inclusiveness through decentralization, devolution, and inclusive approach:

“Ensuring social inclusion and being gender responsive needs to be carefully intervened to make sure the deprived groups could have access to the resources”

However, achievement of these aims was slow²³. In 2010, the Project carried out an independent review and assessment on how successful gender equality and social inclusion was being within the Project and amongst its partners. This noted that there were still no women representatives on the Buffer Zone Management Committees and recommended amendment of the buffer zone management guidelines; that women were underrepresented on the DFCCs; and it recommended that special provision should be made to enable at least 33- 50% of representatives on both committees and other coordination bodies to be women. The report notes that:

“The project has incorporated many components of inclusion even in its outputs but that needs to be translated as strategy and approach with clear understanding at all level”.

26. By the time of the TE, things had improved, and the Project’s contribution to promoting skills (human capital), institutions (social capital), natural resource base (environmental capital) and funds of various types (financial capital) has provided a strong foundation on which economic growth can be built in order for all groups to participate fully in conservation activities. This has encouraged full participation among the user groups. Within the Project, beneficiaries have received three main types of support for income and employment generation namely training, materials and financial support, separately or in combination. Some of the major activities included have been:

- office management, leadership development, agro-biodiversity farming practice, conservation practices, income generation and institutional setup trainings were provided to the community based organizations and community groups for their involvement in biodiversity conservation and livelihood improvement;
- around 470 training events on various programmes were conducted to ensure that women, poor, marginalized, and Janajatis were involved in the participation and decision-making process of the Project’s activities; and
- forming, strengthening and institutionalising community groups and forestry user groups to include women and socially excluded groups for participatory forest management and conservation of biodiversity resources;

and results have included:

- the participation of women has increased in the capacity-building programmes, especially those for entrepreneur skill development, NTFPs, and agro-biodiversity but within these men largely remained in the majority (see [Annex IX](#)).
- women and socially excluded groups organised themselves to form their own women’s community forestry and mixed groups to participate actively in forest management and

²³ **SNV Livelihoods Advisor comment:** Long comment – see Annex XI.

biodiversity conservation activities, and these groups were benefiting directly from the forest resources; and

- pro-poor target programmes were initiated through leasehold-farming practices for agrobiodiversity promotion involving 29 poor households in Patharaiya and Masuriya VDC of Kailali and Kachanpur Districts respectively.

After the gender and livelihood capacity-building, other activities and results that were improved included:

- the Project adopted GESI disaggregated data in its reporting and even the communities' reporting used this approach in line with UNDP's Gender and Social Inclusion Responsive Monitoring Information System;
- the Project and community-based organisations pursued equal representation for women and other groups when forming groups for participation in training events;
- the Project and community-based organisations conducted well-being ranking to ensure support to the poor and other vulnerable groups;
- communities practiced gender-responsive budget preparation, e.g. the benefits received from the payment for environmental services scheme and the performance-based financial mechanism supported women and poor groups for income generation activities;
- community forest user groups in each community have allocated a budget of 35% to support women and poor groups in each community;
- poor and marginalised groups have been supported through seed grants and revolving funds to be part of the overall programme;
- women's groups participated in site level planning while developing the 2012 Annual Work Plan; and
- the Project hired a GESI and Livelihoods specialist for the Terminal Evaluation to ensure these issues were examined.

27. Although the Project work has worked to implement GESI in its activities, it has not specified what gender strategies will be used to achieve landscape level outcomes. The revised logframe still lacked the guidelines on how GESI and livelihoods strategies could be implemented effectively. Staff should have been trained in GESI and equipped with tools and techniques to respond to stakeholders'²⁴ needs and demands. Regular technical back-up should have been provided for moral support and motivation. When the Project was designed it appears not to have looked into the main issues with respect to domains of change, namely²⁵:

- *Access to assets and services* (i.e. health, education and employment opportunities), which almost all of the Project interventions sought to increase. It also should have tried to address how Project interventions need to make sure that access is open to excluded groups, and how this can be tracked.
- *Voice and influence* which relates to how groups are formed, the depth of the social-mobilisation process, and the level of effort to include people from excluded groups and give them genuine voice and influence over the group processes. This constitutes another area where good design and careful implementation and monitoring could have made a major difference.
- *Changing policies, institutional structures and norms* (i.e. the 'rules of the game'), when intentionally or unintentionally these work against the interest of excluded groups, e.g. the Project may have contributed to uplifting the poor and women but they are still unable to voice their wants and to influence policy matters. This has restricted women from participating in the big meetings and from visiting the District Forest Office for the renewal of their community forests.

²⁴ **PMU comment:** Staff were trained on GESI. Social mobilizers/community motivators were trained about GESI immediately after recruitment. They are also trained on 2009 & 2010. Apart from this, GESI training to all officers and associate staffs was carried out on 2011 by PMU and by UNDP on 2010. Hence, it is not the case that project did not provided any GESI training to the staff.

²⁵ **PMU and MFSC comments:** Long comments – see Annex XI.

If the Project had intervened addressing these domain of change, then the outcomes would have been more fruitful.

IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

Project Oversight

28. Operational oversight of the Project has been undertaken at the strategic level by two structures, a Project Steering Committee which was changed to a **Project Outcome Board** (POB), and a Project Management Committee which was changed to a **Project Executive Board** (PEB). As the MTE notes, such terminology does not match with other similarly-funded projects and “*created some confusion among the board members*”. A persusal of the lists of members given in Annex VI shows some overlap of personnel. Key amongst the objectives of the POB is provision of strategic guidance and facilitation of intersectoral/inter-agency coordination and the institutionalisation of the multi-sectoral approaches. The TET finds that there is no evidence that it ever did this. The POB was supposed to meet once a year, an inadequate frequency even if it had been adhered to which it was not. The MTE shows that the POB met once a year from 2005 to 2008 and a second meeting was held in July 2008 was called a “Partners Meeting” to endorse changes to the logframe. However, the MTE notes that “*A full POB meeting (with approximately 18 members) has yet to be held*” and made a recommendation to increase the frequency of its meetings to twice a year. Although UNDP convened a meeting with the Secretary of the MFSC, nothing appears to have happened, and indeed subsequently, the minutes show that the POB met just one more time on 4th May 2011, again with only 18 of 20 members present, and for only 90 minutes. Given the importance of cross-sectoral involvement in a Project trying to establish a landscape based model for conservation, and the MFSC-centric approach to implementation, the POB should have played a crucial role in involving strategic matters – for example, was creation of a DFSCC actually the best apex institutional mechanism for coordination and planning of landscape conservation or would a more cross-cutting body placed under the National Planning Commission have been better (see paragraph 34)??. That the POB did not play such a role is at the very least, disappointing. The PEB on the other hand has met regularly four times per year and provided full oversight of progress, work plans and budgets in line with its terms of reference.

Project Management

29. The Project’s implementation has closely followed the logframe throughout. Its organisational structure has been led by government-deputed staff with the Joint Secretary of Planning and Resource Division being the **National Project Director**, (a part-time role funded by the MFSC) and the Under Secretary/Joint Secretary Technical Division being the **National Project Coordinator** (a full-time role funded fully by WWF). The regular rotation of Government level staff has led to these posts being held thus:

National Project Director:

- Dr. Mohan Wagle – 29th Dec 2005 to 17th Jun 2007
- Dr. Udaya Sharma – 18th Jun 2007 to 7th Nov 2007
- Dr. Krishna Poudel – 8th Nov 2007 to 18th Nov 2008
- Dr. Annapurna Das – 19th Nov 2008 to 16 July 2011
- Mr. Harihar Sigdel – 17th Jul 2011 to 3rd October 2012

National Project Coordinator:

- Mr. Lokendra Dhakal – 29th Dec 2005 to 3rd Nov 2006
- Mr. Ram Poudel – 9th Nov 2006 to 13th May 2008
- Mr. Bikram Tuladhar – 13th May 2008 to 28th Oct 2009
- Mr. Jagannath Koirala – 28th Nov 2009 to date

All other key management and implementation roles have been played by staff recruited by the Project, although some of the junior office and support staff have been seconded from WWF. There

has been no Project Manager²⁶. Technical leadership of the Project has been handled by a Biodiversity Programme Specialist, a position held by:

- Mr. Dinesh Karki – 11th Jun 2006 to 6th Feb 2011; and
- Mr. Bijendra Basnyat – 2nd May 2011 to date.

Note that the position was vacant for three months in 2011. Other staff based in an MFSC-housed Project Office in Kathmandu have included a Communication and Documentation Officer and an Administrative and Finance Officer, a Programme Assistant, plus secretary, messengers and drivers.

30. At the field level, the original Project organisation involved duplication and following recommendations made by the MTE it was simplified to a main Field Office based in Dhangadhi, a Field Office based in Bardia National Park and a Satellite Office based in Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve with a Landscape Manager in Dhangadhi in charge of them all. The main Field Office also housed a Community Empowerment and Development Officer (seconded from WWF), and a Monitoring and Evaluation Officer who reported directly to the NPC. A maximum of four Social Mobilisers and a maximum of 12 Community Motivators provided the Project's main interface with the communities and beneficiaries. Prior to December 2011, there was a Field Officer and an Administrative Assistant in Bardia and a Community Empowerment and Development Officer in Suklaphanta together with messengers in both offices, but these staff were reduced as part of the Project's exit strategy endorsed by the PEB.

31. The Project's implementation faced massive problems from the start. The initial delays in finalising the GEF financing came at an inopportune time for the Dutch Government which had already committed funds to the Project, which led to initial activities being implemented and managed by WWF using an early logframe through the *Western Terai Landscape Building Programme* (see paragraph 10). Once GEF funding came on-stream, serious differences emerged between UNDP and WWF over implementation modalities and concepts. It is probably not politic to rake over the details of disputes here, but for one area lessons can be learned. WWF maintain that WTLCP was to have been implemented within the Terai Arc Landscape (TAL) Programme; UNDP that this was not possible because TAL is a programme with different modalities and mechanisms to a project. To be fair, the Project Document does imply WWF's version in a number of places, e.g. that:

"The existing TAL project offices (in the Regional Director's Office in Dhangadhi and Bardia National Park headquarter) set up by [the Government] and WWF will be used as WTLCP offices as TAL is long-term programme of [the Government]".

However, the Project Document also has contradictory statements supporting UNDP's view that WTLCP was to become the leading player, e.g. that:

"... TAL-funded activities will be reoriented to be complementary and synergistic with interventions in the broader context of GEF Alternative."

and makes mention of the fact that some modalities remained to be agreed in the inception phase. Nonetheless, WWF's role was one of parallel financing, not that of a donor agency, and they indicated that they began to feel an unequal partner. As a result, it was eventually decided largely to divide the project along geographic lines to avoid duplication. The key here is not who was right or wrong, but the fact that given the Project Document had been put together by all parties, such fundamental differences in basic concepts and understanding of the modalities necessary for implementation were still extant. One MFSC interviewee captured it particularly well:

"The different modalities of different partners, the flexibility, were seen as a strength. It wasn't. A uniform modality was necessary to bring about a uniform landscape approach. One can put all the bits in a garage but it needs the same overall vision to make it run."

Even simple issues such as which calendar was to be used had not been agreed (UNDP uses the Gregorian calendar; WWF the Nepali one). It is to all parties' considerable credit that they did not want to break the partnership and that they worked long and hard to find a resolution to these

²⁶ **PMU comment:** National Project Coordinator performs the role of project manager with biodiversity programme specialist assisting as deputy coordinator. This was decided during TPR meeting of 5 Sept, 2008.

problems. But that is the critical point – not only were many opportunities missed as a result of the division (e.g. GEF cannot spend money on infrastructure, WWF can) and there was little collaboration at the programme level – the time it took to reach an acceptable resolution was lost forever from the Project. The irony of poor coordination amongst partners on a project working to coordinate stakeholders on a broader stage is not lost on the TET. Even when Project partners were working closely together, restrictions on things like what funding could or could not be used for had repercussions for implementation, e.g. money was given to CFCCs for revolving funds early on but as lessons were learned that CFCCs were not financial organisations and recourse to law was poor should moves be necessary to recover monies, cooperatives became the favoured vehicles and UNDP replaced revolving funds with seed grants since it was easier to track exactly where the money was going. However, SNV had a restriction that it could give money only to revolving funds because once money had gone to cooperatives there was no control over it being focussed on the poor because the cooperatives operate under a different set of legal instruments. The result was that the Project had to continue to use mixed models.

32. This problem, was exacerbated by those arising from an incomprehensible logframe (see paragraph 18 *et seq.*), and in turn were followed by the development of the UNDP-CO's new CPAP for Nepal. This required the resolution of many issues relating to alignment of the new CPAP's annual work plan with the annual work plan requirements for GEF Projects in ATLAS. The Project's AWP had to be reformulated to fit with the new CPAP, but this conflicted with internal requirements for tracking resource budgeting and expenditure for UNDP GEF projects and resolution of this required what the 2008 PIR terms "*an inordinate amount of time in the first half of 2008*" and led to a temporary interruption in the release of GEF funds. All of this meant that almost no meaningful work was undertaken until 2007 (see paragraph 42) with further delays encountered in 2008 and then a major revision and consolidation of work followed the revised logframe in late 2008. As one interviewee noted, "*there was little or no policy or institutional activity carried out until 2009*". The Project, therefore, lost three irrecoverable years which even a six-month extension could not adequately compensate. This was an avoidable tragedy – the design allowed eight years for the project to devise policy, institutionalise it, and to pilot the complete model over a significant period of time in order to refine it. The Project Document makes explicit that:

"Ultimately, the project aims to develop replicable landscape-level management models to safeguard the biological wealth and vital ecological functions in Nepal."

This critical loss of time has meant the replicable landscape-level model has not yet been fully developed – the parts have been produced and in some cases piloted, but the whole model remains untested.

33. As if the above problems were not enough, as shown in paragraph 29) the regular rotation of Government level staff has led to key posts being held by numerous people – five National Project Directors, four National Project Coordinators. But the Government is not the only culprit; LI-BIRD deployed six Project Coordinators! This has exacerbated the delays in the Project through there being frequent changes in direction as new senior staff have introduced new ideas or disagreed with old ones, a lack of technical continuity and competence, and additional delays encountered while new roles are learned. The TET understands that UNDP actually requested the Government to provide a stable platform for the Project but that this was turned down. While the TET understands the basic reasoning for such rotation, the costs of the policy do not appear to be taken into account and it is believed that if the policy could be suspended for Government personnel involved in management of long-term, internationally-funded projects where transparency and accountability are high, management of the projects would benefit.

34. Management of the Project itself has been mixed. Given the problems just described, it is surprising that the Project has managed to achieve as much as it has. This is attributed to the skills and considerable efforts of a coherent and well-integrated, high quality implementation team which has exhibited a real drive to ensure their targets were met, a demand for high quality in all that they did, and a desire to communicate their knowledge to others. Leadership of the team, however, has not been quite as exemplary. Notwithstanding the frequent rotation of senior project staff, the view of many partners was that some senior management was lacklustre. Vertical communication within the

project team has been good through regular telephone calls and e-mail contact, complemented by regular supervisory, technical and monitoring visits. However, horizontal communication between partners has remained poor throughout with numerous anecdotes passed to the TET regarding poor coordination, e.g. a visit of senior UNDP staff and WWF staff to the same site on the same day with neither knowing that the other was going to be present. The TET also notes with some concern the very MFSC-centric approach²⁷ to a project whose core need is for a multi-sectoral approach. It notes that some project partners raised the need for better linkages between sectors (especially forestry and agriculture) to make it truly landscape project at a meeting in 2010, yet the TET can find little if any evidence that key ministries such as the Ministry of Agriculture or the Ministry of Local Development have been involved in the Project outside of the two Project Boards²⁸. This is exemplified by the fact that all of the institutional coordination mechanisms that have been established by the Project are all MFSC agencies – DFSCC, Landscape Coordination Committee²⁹, Landscape Support Unit – and while the DFSCC is currently chaired by the Local Development Officer (in the absence of an elected Chair of the DDC), the name is still likely to create much misperception amongst other stakeholders. Why could it not have been called a District Landscape Coordination Committee, or even more usefully been created as a true cross-sectoral body under the auspices of the National Planning Commission? One senior official of the MFSC agreed, noting that “*the DFCC is thematic*” and that “*it would have been better to have had a technical consortium within the DDC to improve technical coordination on everything – like a Field Technical Group is to a VDC*”.

Adaptive Management

35. The Project’s adaptive management has been generally good throughout, tempered by the time it took to make some key decisions. It has operated effectively at both the strategic level and the tactical level. Five examples of the former:

- The divisions that became apparent at the start of the Project through misunderstandings or different interpretations of the Project Document were resolved as successfully as they could be while maintaining the partnership.
- The logframe was revised eventually when it was found that the original was confusing, was difficult to interpret in a Nepali context, and that as a result little use was being made of it. As a result, the Project was streamlined.
- The Project was granted an extension from July to December 2012 to provide some compensation for time lost at the beginning.
- The independent *Livelihood Support Assessment* undertaken in 2010 recommended a move from providing income generating activities to encouraging an entrepreneurial approach and this formed the catalyst for the Project to change strategies which ended up more group-focussed to strengthen enterprise development and with a stronger emphasis on markets and business culture.
- The Project responded very positively to the MTE, itself delayed from 2009 to 2010 to enable it to be more relevant, The MTE made 19 recommendations, and the Management Response shows that all were acted upon, including a restructuring of the Project’s offices; increasing efforts in the policy and institutional areas; updating a Communication Plan; and improving a number of staff-related issues. It also re-formulated the overall strategy so that field activities became more focussed, more relevant to the landscape approach, and more coordinated and consolidated geographically.

At a tactical level, adaptation included agreement of the annual workplans during which there would be extensive reviews of what was working and what was not, and adjustments made to fit accordingly,

²⁷ **Ekraj Sigdel, ex-WTLC Landscape Manager comment:** Long comment – see Annex XI.

²⁸ **PMU comment:** *WTLC has been regularly inviting both of these institutions along with National Planning Commission, Ministry of Finance on every board meetings. However they did not turned up in most of the cases. As a result of this, their participation on meeting is poor, which is often beyond control of management. This might be because of no incentives to board members for participating in these meetings or less priority on other sectoral ministries work.*

²⁹ **PMU comment:** *This is problem in project document, which did not see LCC as multi-stakeholder committee. PMU followed project document, and involved Regional Office of NARC in LCC, which is one of the active members as well.*

along with the appropriate annual budget revisions. Notwithstanding this adaptive management, the TET finds that the formality of using the monitoring of indicators to provide a basis for adaptive management is effectively absent; but then again would argue that most of the issues that the Project has had to adapt to would not have been covered in any way by the monitoring of those indicators (see also paragraph 53).

Technical Management

36. The technical management of the Project has also been mixed. The work undertaken on the various policy documents appears to be of a very high standard, and this has been matched by the work carried out on agro-biodiversity issues by LI-BIRD and NARC, despite their marginalisation from the main thrust of the Project. Work on the ground has also been fairly good thanks to a team of committed social mobilisers and community motivators, but some of the actual interventions leave something to be desired, e.g. the quality of the menthe distillation plants and some biogas units was not particularly good. More worryingly, some of the technical interventions themselves had not been fully thought through, particularly at the start of the Project when they were not sufficiently focussed, probably a direct result of not working to the dysfunctional logframe. While these faults were largely rectified first by the logframe revision and then by the MTE, some issues persist – see paragraph 80). Training, although extensive, does not appear to have been of a sufficient level or intensity to have had the desired effects, and many (but not all) of the local user group institutions still showed weak capacity.

The Project has had mixed management, responding only slowly to big problems bequeathed by the Project Document and logframe, bedevilled by too-frequent rotation of leadership but producing some high quality products. Strategic oversight has been inadequate and questions remain over the adequacy of the cross-sectoral commitment needed for a landscape approach. Hence the implementation approach has been evaluated as **Moderately Satisfactory**.

UNDP supervision and backstopping

37. UNDP-GEF supervision was accomplished by standard procedures and undertaken competently. Unusually, the TET received no complaints from interviewees about excessive UNDP-GEF bureaucracy or delays in procurement. Key aspects of supervision were made through UNDP's involvement in the meetings of the two Project boards and through the annual PIRs, but there was also frequent contact between the CO and the PMU. Members of the Energy and Environment Cluster were heavily involved in regular issues such as the review and approval of workplans and budgets, review of progress and performance against such workplans, and completion of the tracking tools. It appears that the CO was helpful and supportive throughout the implementation period, responding adequately to provide good guidance, honest and constructive criticism, and help to overcome particular problems as necessary, even intervening at the local level to resolve conflicts.

UNDP have provided an adequate level of supervision and backstopping to the Project, and its performance has benefitted as a direct result, hence UNDP's supervision and backstopping role is evaluated as **Satisfactory**³⁰.

FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT

38. On the financial front, the Project was generally acknowledged to have been under-budgeted during its design for a project lasting eight years. Table 6 shows the budgeted contributions and the actual spend to date from the various partners. It is clear that for all but SNV and UNDP, the actual spend is effectively on track to fulfil the budget by the end of the Project in December 2012. It is particularly commendable that WWF, although distancing themselves from the implementation, have

³⁰ **UNDP-CO comment:** *UNDP's supervisory and backstopping roles have been evaluated as "Satisfactory". UNDP-CO's support has been acknowledged but the reasons behind evaluation of the roles as "satisfactory" as opposed to "highly satisfactory" are not mentioned. The report does not elaborate what prevented the evaluation to have better scores. **TET response:** No it does not. There is a 50-page limit on a TE Report which this one has already exceeded. Justification of the rating given is all that is necessary, not justification for all the other ratings it did not give.*

continued to provide their full financial contribution to the Project, including paying the salaries of the NPC and several members of staff.

TABLE 6: SOURCES OF ACTUAL FINANCING TO 30TH SEPTEMBER 2012 (US\$)

| Cash financing | Budget* | Actual | % |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| GEF | 3,312,278 | 3,211,120 | 96.9 |
| SNV | 2,471,881 | 2,020,556 | 81.7 |
| WWF (parallel financing) | 1,551,390 | 1,435,416 | 92.5 |
| UNDP | 1,731,739 | 1,290,275 | 74.5 |
| In-kind financing | | | |
| Government of Nepal | 2,613,995 | 2,520,638 | 96.4 |
| Biodiversity International | 1,081,000 | 1,042,393 | 96.4 |
| NARC | 50,000 | 48,214 | 96.4 |
| LI-BIRD | 15,000 | 14,464 | 96.4 |
| Total | 12,827,283 | 11,583,076 | 90.3 |

SOURCE: PMU.

* as per 2006 budget revision.

NOTE: it is outside the scope of the TE to verify independently the financial figures contained in any of the tables and figures presented here through an audit.

39. SNV's part of the Project was due for completion in 2009, but an extension of one-year was granted. During that year, SNV's headquarters formulated a new policy to focus on just three thematic areas, namely i) water/hygiene/sanitation; ii) renewable energy; and iii) agriculture. With the budget significantly under-spent part way through the year, the PMU approached UNDP with a request to defer some of its and GEF's funding and to use the excess SNV funds in place of these, the idea being to subsequently use UNDP and GEF funds for those delayed activities to have been funded by SNV, thereafter making budgetary re-allocations to show that funds had been used for the purposes committed. UNDP declined. The TET makes no comment on the rights or wrongs of the approach or the answer, having insufficient knowledge about the rules and accounting practices surrounding a project, but it notes that as a result (originally of the under-spend, but also as a result of accounting inflexibility), SNV transferred US\$ 451,325 of its WTLCPSNV budget to its *Biodiversity Sector Programme for Siwaliks and Terai*. The MTE notes that it "could not find documentation on this being approved by the Project Outcome Board or GEF" and SNV appears to agree that it simply made no communication over this decision with its partners – another example of the poor communication between partners that has plagued the Project (see paragraph 23)³¹.

40. If Project spending can be taken as a crude measure of the progress of implementation, then the Project has achieved most of the progress originally envisaged, since the sum disbursed to date represents 90.3% of the budget projected in the 2006 budget revision at a temporal point 96.4% through the Project. Table 7 shows the breakdown of donor funding by Outcome and reveals a number of points:

- Project management costs were funded from across all donors but primarily by GEF (67.3%) with SNV (16.9%), WWF (11.3%) and UNDP (4.5%). This varied from the budget with GEF contributing 114% of its budgeted amount but with UNDP contributing only 35.5% of its budgeted amount. Overall, project management costs have run to date at only 94.7% of those projected, but given that the project is 96.4% of its way through, this means that it is just within budget – cost-effective but not especially so;
- Project management costs comprised 26.8% of the total spend, a rather poor performance when compared to other projects in the region³², e.g. UNDP-GEF CALM Project³³ in Cambodia was

³¹ **SNV Programme Coordinator and SNV Livelihoods Advisor comments:** Long comments – see Annex XI.

³² **PMU comment:** Long comment – see Annex XI.

³³ *Establishing Conservation Areas through Landscape Management (CALM) in the Northern Plains of Cambodia* ATLAS ID 47478 PIMS 2177.

13.1%, UNEP-GEF Siberian Crane Wetlands Project³⁴ was 13.8%, that for the UNDP-GEF HHRB Project³⁵ in China was 11.25% at its mid-term, but much less than that for the UNDP-GEF Altai Sayan Project³⁶ in Mongolia which came in at a whopping 33.8%.

- The final GEF : cash co-finance ratio in terms of monies spent to date is 1:1.48 (US\$ 3,211,120 to US\$ 4,746,247), a good result but much less than the 1:1.74 in the 2006 revised budget on account of the reduced contributions from SNV and UNDP;
- Spending on Outcome 1 (policy) (US\$ 259,625) was 160% of the original budget, yet still accounted for only 3.3% of the total spend, a surprisingly low level for a component that has produced some very good new policies and guidelines;
- Spending on Outcome 2 (institutions) (US\$ 1,181,009) was only 52.2% of the budget and hence represents only 14.8% of the total spend, which perhaps explains why this component contains some of the weakest outputs;
- Outcome 3 (biodiversity assets) (US\$ 2,205,965) and Outcome 4 (livelihoods) (US\$ 2,179,350) were both effectively on budget and represented 27.7% and 27.4% respectively of the total spend.
- GEF funding was heavily re-allocated in favour of Outcome 1 and partly in favour of Outcome 3 at the expense of Outcome 2, that of UNDP similarly so, that of SNV heavily re-allocated to Outcome 4 again at the expense of Outcome 2 and Outcome 3, while WWF's funding remains closest to the intended budget with a small reallocation from Outcome 1.

TABLE 7: TOTAL DISBURSEMENT OF CASH FUNDS (US\$) TO 30TH SEPTEMBER 2012 BY SOURCE AND COMPONENT AGAINST REVISED BUDGET (2006) TO 31ST DECEMBER 2012

| | GEF | | | UNDP | | | SNV | | | WWF* | | | Total | | |
|--------------|------------------|------------------|-------------|------------------|------------------|-------------|------------------|------------------|-------------|------------------|------------------|-------------|------------------|------------------|-------------|
| | Budget | Actual | % | Budget | Actual | % | Budget | Actual | % | Budget | Actual | % | Budget | Actual | % |
| Outcome 1 | 53,429 | 101,649 | 190.3 | 36,710 | 49,558 | 135.0 | 0 | 54,352 | - | 72,088 | 54,066 | 75.0 | 162,227 | 259,625 | 160.0 |
| Outcome 2 | 843,195 | 342,182 | 40.6 | 391,991 | 210,268 | 53.6 | 806,042 | 443,862 | 55.1 | 222,624 | 184,698 | 83.0 | 2,263,852 | 1,181,009 | 52.2 |
| Outcome 3 | 664,724 | 829,017 | 124.7 | 335,296 | 415,859 | 124.0 | 770,351 | 478,529 | 62.1 | 485,533 | 482,559 | 99.4 | 2,255,905 | 2,205,965 | 97.8 |
| Outcome 4 | 493,300 | 504,513 | 102.3 | 698,664 | 519,060 | 74.3 | 450,549 | 682,603 | 151.5 | 491,894 | 473,174 | 96.2 | 2,134,407 | 2,179,350 | 102.1 |
| Proj Mgt† | 1,257,630 | 1,433,760 | 114.0 | 269,078 | 95,530 | 35.5 | 444,939 | 361,210 | 81.2 | 279,250 | 240,919 | 86.3 | 2,250,897 | 2,131,419 | 94.7 |
| TOTAL | 3,312,278 | 3,211,120 | 96.9 | 1,731,739 | 1,290,275 | 74.5 | 2,471,881 | 2,020,556 | 81.7 | 1,551,390 | 1,435,416 | 92.5 | 9,067,288 | 7,957,367 | 87.8 |

SOURCE: PMU.

* Reported actual expenditure of WWF Nepal presented is as on 31st December 2011 plus tentative expenditure for 2012 to 30th September.

† Project management cost of GEF and UNDP includes monitoring, evaluation, communication and security expenditure.

41. Table 8 shows the breakdown of in-kind funding by Outcome but no analysis is possible because although the Project has attempted to keep track of such funding, it is clear that it has simply apportioned the appropriate proportion of funds to each component every month. This is not surprising since in-kind contributions are almost impossible to track effectively – a major deficiency of such financing.

³⁴ *Development of a Wetland Site and Flyway Network for Conservation of the Siberian Crane and Other Migratory Waterbirds in Asia* IMIS: GF/2328-2712-4627 and 4630; PMS: GF/6030-03.

³⁵ *Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity in the Headwaters of the Huaihe River Basin* ATLAS ID 59594 PIMS 3934.

³⁶ *Community-based Conservation of Biological Diversity in the Mountain Landscapes of Mongolia's Altai Sayan Eco-region* ATLAS ID 39250 PIMS 1929.

TABLE 8: TOTAL DISBURSEMENT OF IN-KIND FUNDS (US\$) TO 30TH SEPTEMBER 2012 BY SOURCE AND COMPONENT AGAINST REVISED BUDGET (2006) TO 31ST DECEMBER 2012

| | GOVT NEPAL | | | BI ³⁷ | | | NARC | | | LI-BIRD | | | Total | | |
|--------------|------------------|------------------|-------------|------------------|------------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|------------------|------------------|-------------|
| | Budget | Actual | % | Budget | Actual | % | Budget | Actual | % | Budget | Actual | % | Budget | Actual | % |
| Outcome 1 | 90,197 | 86,976 | 96.4 | 540,000 | 520,714 | 96.4 | 4,833 | 4,660 | 96.4 | 500 | 482 | 96.4 | 635,530 | 612,833 | 96.4 |
| Outcome 2 | 444,833 | 428,946 | 96.4 | 102,000 | 98,357 | 96.4 | 9,716 | 9,369 | 96.4 | 1,000 | 964 | 96.4 | 557,549 | 537,637 | 96.4 |
| Outcome 3 | 566,951 | 546,703 | 96.4 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 | 566,951 | 546,703 | 96.4 |
| Outcome 4 | 1,512,014 | 1,458,014 | 96.4 | 439,000 | 423,321 | 96.4 | 35,451 | 34,185 | 96.4 | 13,500 | 13,018 | 96.4 | 1,999,965 | 1,928,538 | 96.4 |
| TOTAL | 2,613,995 | 2,520,638 | 96.4 | 1,081,000 | 1,042,393 | 96.4 | 50,000 | 48,214 | 96.4 | 15,000 | 14,464 | 96.4 | 3,759,995 | 3,625,709 | 96.4 |

SOURCE: PMU.

42. Table 9 shows the disbursement of GEF funds by component over time and these are graphed cumulatively in Figure 1. These illustrate a number of factors:

- the typical slow start to the actual activities with a maximum of 60% of the expected budget being spent in 2006 on Outcome 1 and all other Outcomes at less than 10% of budget;
- a large increase in spending in 2007, especially on the income-generating activities of Outcome 4 (livelihoods);
- the contraction of work in 2008 as the logframe was revised and consolidation thereafter; and
- the limited spending on Outcome 2 (institutions) throughout, with the maximum spend being only 72.5% of budget (2007); and
- the increasing focus on Outcome 1 (policy) as the Project progressed.

TABLE 9: TOTAL DISBURSEMENT OF GEF FUNDS (US\$) BY OUTPUT BY YEAR AGAINST REVISED BUDGET (2006) TO 31ST DECEMBER 2012

| | 2006 | | | 2007 | | | 2008 | | |
|--------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|
| | Budget | Actual | % | Budget | Actual | % | Budget | Actual | % |
| Outcome 1 | 11,390 | 6,890 | 60.5 | 6,801 | 9,081 | 133.52 | 8,028 | 3,514 | 43.8 |
| Outcome 2 | 117,749 | 9,565 | 8.1 | 169,299 | 122,710 | 72.5 | 140,792 | 14,646 | 10.4 |
| Outcome 3 | 5,238 | 0 | 0 | 124,415 | 115,466 | 92.8 | 129,474 | 135,388 | 104.6 |
| Outcome 4 | 34,243 | 1,479 | 4.3 | 56,187 | 143,305 | 255.1 | 218,833 | 114,028 | 52.1 |
| Proj. Man. | 220,598 | 128,708 | 58.4 | 200,341 | 242,230 | 120.9 | 186,070 | 179,726 | 96.6 |
| Total | 389,218 | 146,642 | 37.6 | 557,043 | 632,792 | 113.6 | 683,197 | 447,302 | 65.5 |

SOURCE: PMU.

TABLE 9: CONT.

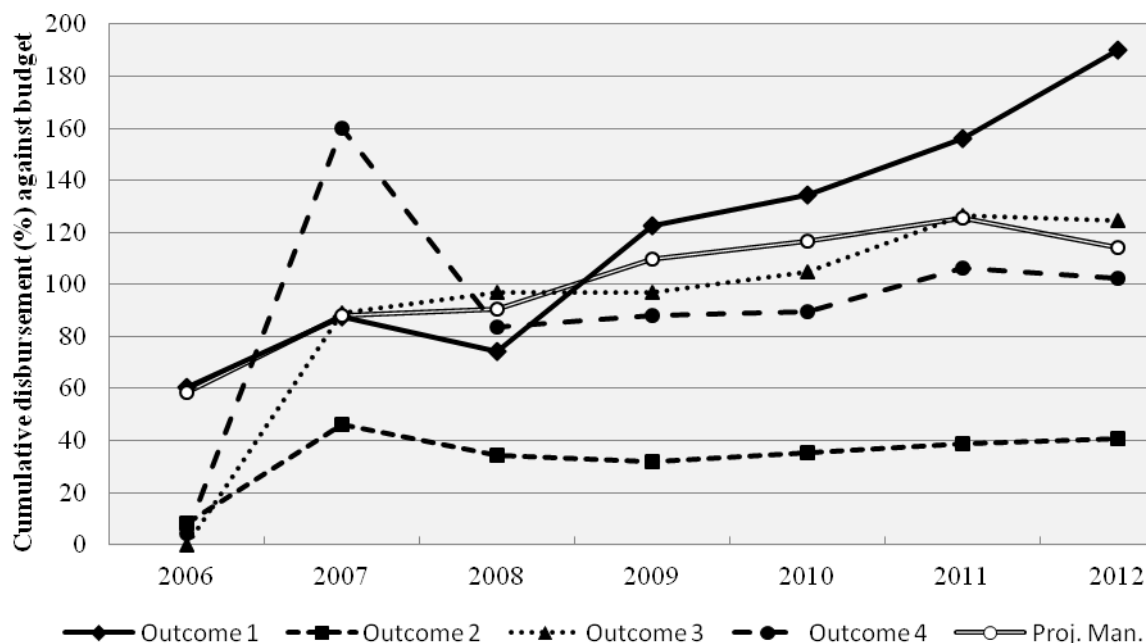
| | 2009 | | | 2010 | | | 2011 | | | 2012* | | |
|--------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|
| | Budget | Actual | % | Budget | Actual | % | Budget | Actual | % | Budget | Actual | % |
| Outcome 1 | 5,122 | 18,866 | 368.3 | 4,424 | 9,656 | 218.3 | 15,551 | 32,035 | 206.0 | 2,113 | 21,607 | 1,022.5 |
| Outcome 2 | 145,956 | 35,861 | 24.6 | 128,798 | 67,228 | 52.2 | 77,707 | 50,753 | 65.3 | 62,894 | 41,418 | 65.9 |
| Outcome 3 | 188,159 | 181,829 | 96.6 | 103,572 | 145,980 | 141.0 | 62,566 | 196,472 | 314.0 | 51,300 | 53,883 | 105.0 |
| Outcome 4 | 61,561 | 68,559 | 111.4 | 55,733 | 55,552 | 99.7 | 41,145 | 113,904 | 276.8 | 25,598 | 7,686 | 30.0 |
| Proj. Man. | 65,399 | 188,296 | 287.9 | 170,144 | 244,535 | 143.7 | 152,929 | 265,812 | 173.8 | 262,120 | 184,423 | 70.3 |
| Total | 466,197 | 493,411 | 105.8 | 462,671 | 522,951 | 113.0 | 349,898 | 658,976 | 188.3 | 404,025 | 309,017 | 76.5 |

SOURCE: PMU.

* Actual expenditure of 2012 is up to 30th September taken from the Financial Report and Combined Delivery Report (CDR)

³⁷ **PMU comment:** There was no involvement of BI involvement after Jan 2009. However, their in-kind contribution was accounted. This should be highlighted on terminal report. We are not saying this is right or wrong, but how can the in-kind contribution can be justified without any involvement on project activities. **TET response:** The TET agrees. Perhaps the in-kind contribution should not have been accounted for after January 2009 to provide a better representation of the situation.

FIGURE 1: CUMULATIVE DISBURSEMENT OF GEF FUNDS (US\$) BY COMPONENT BY YEAR AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL BUDGET IN PROJECT DOCUMENT



43. Throughout, the Project has exhibited excellent financial planning and management skills in dealing with the Project both in terms of the array of activities undertaken and the large number of donors involved. At all times, the PEB has been kept abreast of the Project’s progress through good reporting and this has allowed the necessary budget revisions to be made on a sound basis. Similarly, the link between the Project and the UNDP-CO has been efficient in ensuring that budget replenishments have been timely and there have been no inherent procedural delays.

Financial planning and management has been extremely effective throughout and the Project has displayed great ability in obtaining additional co-financing to that originally pledged. Accounting and reporting has been thorough and of the highest order, enabling sound decision-making to be made, hence financial planning has been evaluated as **Highly Satisfactory**.

Cost-effectiveness

44. The *UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported GEF-financed Projects* (2011) eventually defines the criteria of “efficiency” in Box 3 as:

“The extent to which results have been delivered with the least costly resources possible; also called cost effectiveness or efficacy.”

Since the term “efficiency” is rather ambiguous and could apply to efficiency in terms of time, energy-use or even carbon footprint, it has been replaced in this evaluation with the precise term “cost-effectiveness” to which it actually relates, as per Box 3.

45. Overall, the Project appears to have been limited in its cost-effectiveness. Although it has managed to meet many of its planned deliverables and has done so with reduced co-funding, a number of issues could have been carried out more cost-effectively, for example:

- there was significant duplication of management at the start of the Project which was resolved through changes following the MTE;
- a scattergun approach to the livelihoods component that spent US\$ 362,138 in two years (2007–2008) with limited results, that is one-ninth of all GEF funds spent and 71.8% of all GEF funds spent on Outcome 4;

- misguided savings, notably the inadequate salaries paid to social mobilisers and community motivators, reduced their effectiveness through low morale³⁸ – again rectified after the MTE;
- project management costs that, while within budget, account for over a quarter of the total Project spend, and which are significantly above those of many projects in the region (see paragraph 40); and
- the Project has spent US\$ 1,036,281 so far on Output 4.2 of which US\$ 451,807 was spent on institutional support, market linkages, and various forms of business training and counselling. The results show 13 out of 44 micro-enterprises still survive and aromatic plant cultivation being carried out in ten localities. Having 23 enterprises remaining from US\$ 451,807 does not appear to cost-effective (equivalent to US\$ 19,643 per successful enterprise).

It is interesting to compare this Project, effectively government implemented, with others in other countries implemented through NGOs. The examples above show that value-for-money was not necessarily a priority in this Project whereas for international NGOs cost-effectiveness is a way of life because obtaining money from donors is hard work and requires considerable resource input, therefore spending it has to be done in such a way as to maximise its effect on-the-ground. For governments, money is generally obtained more easily. The TET believes it to be no coincidence that the other project with high project management costs listed in paragraph 40, i.e. Mongolia, was also nationally executed.

46. Without a doubt, the Project has fulfilled the concept of incremental cost since without it there would have been neither the framework nor the funds available for a landscape-scale intervention to have been undertaken in the Western Terai. While the Project has undoubtedly had problems in its early stages which have meant that the landscape approach has not been able to be tested as a whole and refined, leading to a replicable model being in place, all the building blocks have been produced and some individually piloted and some even replicated. As a result, it has produced much good work which the Government should be able to take forward and develop into a meaningful model for wider-scale conservation.

Although not over budget, project management costs accounted for 25% of the Project's spending and other moderate shortcomings such as unfocussed spending, mean that the overall cost-effectiveness of the Project has been evaluated as **Moderately Satisfactory**.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The design of M&E was of a standard a little in advance over that normal for the design period, but lacked adequate allocation of responsibilities and had no budget; implementation has been generally of a high standard, with excellent progress monitoring and strong internal activity monitoring, somewhat compromised by inadequate impact monitoring. Good responses have also been made to various reviews, especially to the mid-term review, hence the overall rating for monitoring and evaluation has been evaluated as **Satisfactory**.

M&E Design

47. The Project Document notes that:

“The project has been designed to integrate M&E into the fabric of project implementation. M&E is a crucial part of the project activities and supports project's knowledge management and adaptive management approach.”

and the design contained a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan of sorts as Annex 1.8. Importantly, this included provision for a dedicated Monitoring and Evaluation Officer to be hired full-time within the PMU; an unusual and laudable step. Although the plan was also more advanced than many other GEF-3 projects, the claim within it that:

“A comprehensive monitoring and evaluation program has been included in WTLCP's overall design.”

³⁸ **PMU and MFSC comments:** Long comments – see Annex XI.

is not born out by its content, since it largely comprises a list of the main M&E steps necessary for any project along with some loosely defined responsibilities, but too much of it is left to be determined during the inception phase, and crucially there is no dedicated M&E budget provided. Furthermore, many of the indicators within the logframe were not SMART³⁹ or results-oriented. A *Monitoring and Evaluation Framework Document* was produced in August 2007 which did indeed provide the conceptual framework for M&E in relation to the Project, but it does not constitute a plan – there are no statements of what will be done, when, by whom, or what methods will be used. No costings are included⁴⁰. Following a recommendation in the MTE in November 2010, to:

- “● *integrate information systems with government operation and*
- *introduce new landscape monitoring functions”*

the M&E system was revised and significantly improved through a new document published in June 2011.

The design of M&E was of a standard a little in advance over that normal for the design period, but lacked adequate allocation of responsibilities and had no budget; hence monitoring and evaluation design has been evaluated as **Moderately Satisfactory**.

M&E Implementation

48. Monitoring and evaluation of Project activities have been undertaken in varying detail at three levels:

- i. Progress monitoring
- ii. Internal activity monitoring
- iii. Impact monitoring

49. Progress monitoring has been good and has been made through quarterly and annual reports to the UNDP-CO. It was noted that WWF reports were always significantly late, mainly because they continued to use the Nepali calendar while the Project was based on the Gregorian. This meant that although WWF fulfilled its financial commitments, its contribution had limited effectiveness, not least because there could be no joint development of workplans. The Project developed its annual work plans at the end of each year in a fully participatory way following the 14-step process in accordance with the Local Government Act (1999). It is claimed that it was the only Project in Nepal to do this, but the TET has no means to verify this. Unfortunately, this “*grassroots planning process resulted in a shopping list*” according to one interviewee, but the “*results were sustainable and conveyed ownership*”. This grassroots approach may in part have been responsible for the uncoordinated approach to field activities in 2007/08, and may in part underlie the failure of the project to deal with the greater vision needed for the landscape approach. As one Project partner stated, “*We remain unconvinced that the field-based interventions were really on a landscape approach. ... They were not really different from a traditional integrated conservation and development project*”. From 2009, non-essential items were removed with adequate explanations fed back to the local communities. After inputs from Project staff and the UNDP-CO, the annual workplans were then submitted for endorsement by the PEB, and subsequently sent to UNDP for formal approval. The PMU has also been largely in daily communication with the UNDP-CO regarding progress, the work plan, and its implementation. The PMU has also ensured that the UNDP-CO received quarterly progress reports providing updates on the status of planned activities, the status of the overall project schedule, the products completed, and an outline of the activities planned for the following quarter. These report formats contained quantitative estimates of project progress based on financial disbursements. The UNDP-CO generated its own quarterly financial reports from Atlas from the data supplied, and these expenditure records, together with Atlas disbursement records of any direct payments, served as a

³⁹ Specific; Measurable; Achievable and attributable; Relevant and realistic; Time-bound, timely, trackable and targeted.

⁴⁰ **PMU comment:** *Monitoring and evaluation budget is estimated following the annual work plan of the project depending nature of monitoring and evaluation work to be performed. The project has made expense of US\$ 454,707 for monitoring and evaluation. TET response:* Indeed. The point being made is not criticism of the Project’s M&E or of its annual budget allocation for this – the implementation of M&E is evaluated as Satisfactory – but of the design of the M&E in the Project Document, which is an evaluation category required by GEF.

basis for expenditure monitoring and budget revisions, the latter taking place bi-annually following the disbursement progress and changes in the operational work plan, and also on an *ad hoc* basis depending upon the rate of delivery. The UNDP-CO has also required delivery projections along with work plans that are updated quarterly by the PMU, and these have served as an additional monitoring tool, especially for quantitative estimates of the project progress.

50. From the quarterly reports, the UNDP-CO has prepared Quarterly Operational Reports (150-word fixed-format) which have been forwarded to UNDP/GEF Regional Coordination Unit in Bangkok, and in turn submitted to UNDP HQ and to GEF. The major findings and observations of all these reports have been given in an annual Project Implementation Review (PIR) covering the period July to June, which is also submitted by the PMU and the UNDP-CO to the UNDP Regional Coordination Unit, and UNDP HQ for review and official comments, followed by final submission to GEF. All key reports were presented to PEB members ahead of their relevant meetings and through this means, the key national ministries and national government have been kept abreast of the Project's implementation progress. Annual Project Reports (APR) covering calendar years (Jan-Dec) were also prepared as part of the annual work plan monitoring tools as required by UNDP's regulations, while annual and semi-annual progress reports were also produced to a different format to meet Government requirements. A third type of annual progress report was also produced for the project partners. However, the assessments in the PIRs appear to be overly optimistic and to the TET's mind provide a somewhat misleading view, e.g. in 2008, the PIR states that:

“Project implementation has progressed as planned from July till December 2007 and has been slightly delayed from January to April 2008 due complications in fund release at UNDP CO level. However, general project performance is on track.”

It is difficult to reconcile this view with the information obtained for the TE which indicates that very little of use was done prior to 2009. A tracked-changes version of the same logframe reveals interesting comments from the RTA such as *“Suggest you delete last sentence as poor reflection on project”* and negative but truthful comments such as *“Intersectoral planning and coordination mechanism not developed”* against an indicator have been deleted and replaced with a question asking *“Any steps taken to develop this?”*. These indicate that for some reason the RTA of the time believed it necessary to sweeten the PIR for the GEF Secretariat. This is not the first time that the Lead Evaluator has come across PIRs over-reporting achievements – a practice that the GEF Secretariat should move to stamp out since it means that such projects cannot receive the help they may need in a timely fashion.

51. The PMU and the UNDP-CO have maintained a close working relationship, with Project staff members meeting, or talking with, CO staff on an almost daily basis to discuss implementation issues and problems. The PIRs available to the TET appear incomplete in places, but the UNDP-CO appears to have monitored the Project through one to three field visits per year, sometimes accompanied by the Regional Technical Advisor (RTA) from Bangkok. This indicates a good level of supervision. The CO has also participated in all Project Board meetings. The Project has been subject to annual audit with nothing of significance found wanting. It is said that the risk assessment log has been updated regularly from 2009, but the logs seen by the TET do not completely bear this out. Certainly it has been filled in annually but this is supposed to be done quarterly, and no information is provided for the date the risk was first identified, nor for updates. Furthermore, the risk logs for 2011 and 2012 are identical – not a good sign. A Mid-term Evaluation (MTE) was undertaken between in September 2010 with a final report submitted in November. The report contains no formal ratings for any of the elements usually rated. Although indicating that it had made good progress in some areas, the report expressed concern that the Project had:

“been mostly site activity-driven rather than led by clear outcomes for “establishing integrated planning and management systems” for landscape conservation units as a whole.”

and made a series of insightful recommendations to rectify the problems. In addition, and beforehand in 2010, four independent reviews were conducted to provide feedback on certain issues, and were used for issue identification and setting annual priority and milestone of the Project as well as by the MTE to draw lessons. They were:

- Biodiversity Assessment of the Mohana Kailali Corridor;
- Assessment of Agro-biodiversity Intervention;
- Assessment of Livelihoods Intervention in Western Terai Landscape Complex Project Area; and
- Gender and Social Audit Report of Western Terai Landscape Complex Project.

52. Internal activity monitoring undertaken by the Project's management appears to have been good comprising a range of mechanisms to keep abreast of the situation and to respond quickly and effectively to any areas of concern. These comprised many of the methods used to track progress, and implementation has been heavily guided by the Annual Work Plan and the quarterly plans submitted to release funds. Generally the Project has been small enough not to require formalised communication or monitoring procedures; members being in almost daily contact. At the field level, there were formal monthly staff meetings to coordinate work plans, and share progress, needs and opportunities. The Project employed a full-time M&E Officer who was located in the Landscape Office in Dhangadhi but who reported directly to the NPC. This system provided an excellent means of assessing the progress of activities towards achieving results, ensuring stakeholder involvement, and disseminating results and corrective actions. However, this was viewed by staff as a mixed experience, on the one hand providing a good system for management control but on the other creating problems with two people reporting independently from the same office to the NPC. One M&E Officer could not understand the conflict of interest inherent in him being used as a Deputy Landscape Manager and when he was repeatedly refused the role on those grounds, he resigned for "personal" reasons⁴¹. Where external contracts were issued, these were mainly on a lump-sum basis payable according to milestones defined by time and quality – failure to achieve either resulting in forfeiture of some part of the payment. By and large, this provided enough incentive for sound delivery⁴².

53. Impact monitoring⁴³, as usual, has been the least well-developed type of monitoring, and while an M&E Officer was employed, much of that work appears to have been concentrated on ticking boxes, i.e. verifying that activities have been completed, instead of delivering the type of information that a good project needs in order to enable its adaptive management to respond to changing circumstances. It is of note that the 2007 version of the Project's *Monitoring and Evaluation Framework Document* states that:

"... impact monitoring is conducted to collect information on the social, economic or environmental changes, due to product interventions undertaken to bring about institutional and behavioural changes. This type of monitoring ... is new in the Nepalese context."

There is little evidence that the Project undertook its own impact monitoring, relying instead on external systems for feedback on the indicators in the logframe, e.g. satellite data on vegetation cover, DNPWC data on wildlife surveys. At the large scale, this is understandable and right – duplicating large scale monitoring systems is wasteful and unnecessary – but unfortunately there was little formal attempt to determine the impact of the Project's own activities, e.g. no before-and-after questionnaires to determine the efficacy of its extensive training programme. One major exception to this is the performance-based grant system which inherently requires the measurement of impact to determine the appropriate level of grant reward. Also, monitoring was undertaken of certain field-based trainings, e.g. the community motivators checked those trained in account-keeping every 15 days for 2-3 months after training. That said, as is most often the case, the adaptive management of the Project has been influenced to a much greater extent by external variables and overcoming the problems that these have presented than by responding to internal monitoring.

M&E implementation has been generally of a high standard, with excellent progress monitoring and strong internal activity monitoring, somewhat compromised by inadequate impact monitoring. Good responses have also been made to various reviews, especially to the mid-term review, hence the

⁴¹ **PMU comment:** Long comment – see Annex XI.

⁴² **UNDP-CO comment:** *The examples and the explanation on "Sound Delivery" needs better elaboration and better linkage with the "Internal Activity Monitoring".* **TET response:** The point being made is simply that milestone-based contracts tend to produce better results than time-based contracts.

⁴³ **Ekraj Sigdel, ex-WTLCP Landscape Manager comment:** Long comment – see Annex XI.

implementation of monitoring and evaluation has been evaluated as **Satisfactory**.

PROJECT RESULTS

ATTAINMENT OF OBJECTIVES

54. A Summary of the Project's achievements is given directly below, followed by an outline of the attainment of objectives. This is followed by a Review of Outcomes to Impacts in Table 10 and a brief discussion on the verifiable impacts. A summary evaluation of Project Output is given in Table 11 followed by a more detailed description. A detailed evaluation of the level of achievements made against the indicators of success contained in the logframe is given in Annex IV.

Summary of Achievements

55. The WTLCP has produced a range of high quality products – policies, institutional mechanisms, conservation actions, livelihood developments, and agrobiodiversity activities – that forward the landscape approach towards biodiversity conservation. Unfortunately, because of partnership misunderstandings and a weak logframe, both originating from poor project design, effectively three years were lost at the beginning of the Project while things were sorted out. That time has been irrecoverable and has meant that the Project's stated aim of developing “*replicable landscape-level management models*” has not been achieved – the parts have been developed but the whole has not been tested and shown to work. Apart from the internal problems, in the field the Project has had to deal with difficult security conditions early on and considerable political instability thereafter, as well as remote sites with difficult access, a large geographic area to cover, and challenging climatic conditions – high temperatures, high humidity, high rainfall. It has worked hard through all of this and the team has managed to deliver a series of interventions that have significantly reduced the threats to a suite of globally-threatened wildlife which appear to be responding with stable or increasing populations. In the process, the Project has demonstrated a number of innovative approaches, particularly through incentive schemes such as payments for ecological services and a performance-based grant system, which could be expanded or replicated elsewhere in the country. A range of livelihood options linked to conservation aims have been piloted with varying degrees of success. The agro-biodiversity interventions have been carried out extremely well, but since their inclusion was a political and design compromise, agrobiodiversity remained marginalised from the main thrust of the landscape-based approach. The evaluation of achievements against indicators (provided in Annex IV) shows that of the 40 indicators that it is possible to evaluate against⁴⁴, 29 (72.5%) show successful achievement at the end of the Project and six (15%) show achievement nearly successful – a very good achievement. Unfortunately, despite this, ultimately the lost time has proved very costly to the Project. Presciently, the MTE noted that:

“After five years of implementation, the landscape conservation concept for western Terai as envisioned in the project design is not yet fully defined and operational. The WTLCP may well end as a collection of predominantly successful, small scale site activities that have little systemic impact at the institutional and policy level.”

Despite the ensuing shift in the implementation strategy, this largely remains true, with even the new policies and institutions remaining a collection of parts that remain to be tested as a systematic whole.

Overall, the Project has achieved most of its major relevant objectives but it has a moderate shortcoming in not fulfilling its ultimate aim and hence its attainment of objectives and results is evaluated as **Moderately Satisfactory**⁴⁵.

56. Key Project achievements include:

- Development and endorsement by the MFSC of four important landscape-based policies – *Integrated Landscape Planning Framework Guidelines, Payment for Ecosystem Service*

⁴⁴ Two indicators cannot be evaluated because their design is too poor.

⁴⁵ **MFSC comment:** Long comment – see Annex XI.

Guidelines, Corridor Management Guidelines (including piloting in the Mohana Corridor), and *Agrobiodiversity Policy*;

- Establishment of the first three Protected Forests (totalling 130,565 ha) in Nepal;
- District Forest Sector Coordination Committee piloted and replicated throughout the country;
- Landscape Support Unit established within the MFSC;
- Increase in the actual forest area of the Western Terai by 260 km² and in the Churia Hills by 48 km²;
- Restoration of 914 ha of grassland within protected areas;
- Restoration of 29 ha of 37 wetlands in, and outside of, protected areas;
- Increases in the populations of tiger, swamp deer and blackbuck, and an increase in the diversity of birds found in the Mohana Corridor;
- Conservation Plans produced for two mammals (Asian elephant and blackbuck) and seven plants;
- Conservation of 106 local varieties of crops;
- Revision of 51 Community Forest User Group plans;
- Development of income-generating activities for 3,616 forest-dependent families with net incomes from forest-based enterprises increased by 19% to NR 7,428/year (US\$ 87);
- Increased awareness of conservation issues evident throughout the WTLC area, e.g. anti-poaching groups established, Community Forest Conservation Plans contain biodiversity activities (>35% of budget), and regular coordination meetings between protected area management and local communities;
- Demonstration of solar pumps to maintain waterholes and of solar electric-fences to reduce human-wildlife conflict;
- 4,759 families involved in income-generating activities through seed grant support, with over 75% still active (of the total benefited households/individuals, 51.6 % were women, 13.1% were Dalit and 61.4% were Janajati);
- 23 forest based micro-enterprises were functional in the project area providing employment opportunities of 110 days per year per household;
- Nearly 400 households cultivating medicinal and aromatic plants on 73.1 ha generated a total income of NRs 5.4 million (US\$ 63,529) in 2011; and
- Net annual household income of the forest dependent households increased by NRs 7,428 (US\$ 87.4) against the project target of NRs 3,887 (US\$ 45.7);

and

- Collaboration with the Landscape Support Unit and WWF to produce *Encroachment Control and Management Strategy*; and
- Collaboration with SNV-supported Biodiversity Sector Support Programme in Siwalik Terai to produce *Collaborative Forest Management Guidelines*.

57. The main problem areas identified by the TET are:

- No real landscape approach capable of replication actually demonstrated;
- An effective loss of three years' implementation time resulting from poor project design;
- Inability to form a common modality amongst partner organisations for implementation leading in a break-up of the original partnership between the Terai Arc Landscape Programme and this Project; and
- Frequent turnover of Government staff resulting in lack of continuity in vision and leadership;
- No establishment of a link between agrobiodiversity conservation and the landscape approach.

Immediate Objective Indicators

58. Development objectives, those things that the project will *contribute towards*, are best assessed independently of the project and at portfolio level. However, the Immediate Objective is something that the project is trying to achieve *in its lifetime* or shortly thereafter, and is a key element in the M&E framework because it defines the project's target. In the case of the WTLC, the revised logframe contains four indicators for the "Immediate Objective" of which three have been achieved in general terms, and a fourth only partially (see Annex IV)⁴⁶.

- At least 90% vegetation cover maintained
 - Satellite image analysis shows that the area of forest within the WTLC has increased by 260ha between 2001 and 2010 while grassland has decreased by 20.6 ha .

The shortcomings of the term "vegetation" in this indicator have been discussed earlier (see paragraph 19), but by concentrating on the two most important wildlife habitats in the area – forest and grassland – it is clear that this indicator has been achieved. Despite significant amounts of grassland restoration within the protected areas, the overall area of grassland has decreased, almost certainly as a result of natural succession (see also Table 16, paragraph 70).

- 40% of critical habitats maintained
 - A total of 37 (46.8%) wetlands covering 29.2 ha conserved by augmenting water level, manual removal of water weeds (eutrophication).

This is another poor indicator (see paragraph 19). Critical habitats have been defined by the Project as wetlands, and within this parameter 37 of the original 79 wetlands have been conserved or restored.

- 90% of existing varieties of globally significant crops maintained
 - 106 local crop varieties conserved through community seed banks. The area under cultivation of local varieties increased from 35.5 ha (2006) to 56.7 ha in 2012. Number of households involved in conservation of local varieties reached 715 against 488 in baseline.
 - Six community seed banks have been actively mobilizing local farmers for conservation of local varieties through diversity block and cultivation on farmers' fields.

This appears to have been achieved successfully, although since the baseline survey was not conducted in same areas as the sites prioritised by the Project and did not identify all the varieties present, the results are less conclusive than they might have been

- National Biodiversity Institutions in place and functional
 - NBIs not yet fully functioning at landscape level. Policy Dialogue Group established within MFSC for inter-Ministerial coordination and collaboration but this has not yet met. Landscape Support Unit has been operational within MFSC only, taking lead role in inclusion of landscape conservation within MFSC policy and programmes. MFSC has approved integrated landscape planning guidelines and instructed all its institutions (Department, Regional and District Office) to adopt these when formulating plans and programmes.

This is one of the aspects of the Project that has suffered from the loss of time in the early part of the Project and from slow progress associated with Government institutional change. Nonetheless, significant progress has been made even though the indicator has been only partially achieved.

⁴⁶ **MFSC comment:** Long comment – see Annex XI.

Effectiveness

Review of Outcomes to Impacts

59. Table 10 provides a review of the likelihood of outcomes being translated into intended impacts using the recently-introduced methodology described in paragraph 7 and Tables 3 and 4.

TABLE 10: REVIEW OF OUTCOMES TO IMPACTS AT THE END OF PROJECT SITUATION

| Component | Findings | Review of Outcomes to Impacts |
|---|---|-------------------------------|
| Site Level Outcomes | | |
| Outcome 1: The national policy environment and legal framework enable integrated landscape planning in the Western Terai Landscape Complex | Three important policy documents have been produced, one of which has been endorsed, one of which awaits endorsement, and one of which is being piloted ahead of endorsement. Integrated Landscape Planning Framework Guidelines have also been adopted by the MFSC but not adopted by its institutions. Three Protected Forests have been established with staff and some funding. Thus the intended outcome was delivered with specific allocation of responsibilities, and the measures designed to move towards intermediate states have started but have not yet produced results. | AC: Moderately Likely |
| Outcome 2: The institutional framework for integrated landscape management of biodiversity in Western Terai is established and strengthened | Institutions have been strengthened, and several new ones established or developed, but while some of these appear to have been working well and have been replicated e.g. DFSCCs, the long-term relevance of others e.g. CFCCs, or the continued existence or function of the Landscape Support Unit are more doubtful. Significant amounts of training have been given to those involved with a wide range of institutions, although no measure of its impact has taken place therefore it is hard to determine its effect. The management information system in the MFSC is still not functional and the TET does not feel its design is fit for purpose. Therefore, the project's intended overall outcome was not delivered. | D: Highly Unlikely |
| Outcome 3: Biodiversity assets in Western Terai landscape are effectively conserved | The Project has provided significant support to, and addressed many of the threats faced by, the PAs. Species specific and general management has been planned and implemented. Wildlife populations of key species appear to be responding. Improvements have been made to watershed management, and local agrobiodiversity has been conserved. In all cases, the intended outcomes were delivered, and were designed to feed into a continuing process, with specific allocation of responsibilities after project funding. Furthermore, these measures started to produced results, which clearly indicate that they can progress towards the intended long term impact. | AA: Highly Likely |
| Outcome 4: Local communities are empowered to practice sustainable, biodiversity-friendly natural resource and land use management and pursue diversified livelihoods. | Local communities have been empowered to address conservation issues through strengthening existing institutions and the creation of new ones. A wide variety of alternative livelihoods have been piloted and demonstrated, all linked directly to biodiversity conservation goals. Awareness levels of biodiversity conservation have been raised. Therefore, the project's intended outcomes were delivered, and were designed to feed into a continuing process, but with no prior allocation of responsibilities after project funding, and although the measures designed to move towards intermediate states have started and have produced results, there remains uncertainty that they can progress towards the intended long term impact. | BB: Likely |

As a result of the review of outcomes to impacts (ROtI), the overall likelihood of impacts being achieved is one case each of Highly Likely, Likely, Moderately Likely, and Highly Unlikely, hence the Project has achieved most of its major objectives, and yielded some excellent products, but is not expected to yield some of its global environment benefits, hence it is evaluated as **Moderately Satisfactory**.

Impact

60. Although not within the capability of the TET to verify independently, the monitoring data collected by the Project shows verifiable improvements in the ecological status of the area. This is most effectively highlighted by the increase in the populations of certain species of globally threatened wildlife – see Figures 2 (paragraph 70) and 3 and Table 17 (paragraph 71). Reduced environmental stress is demonstrated by the fact that deforestation appears to have been halted. Quantitative forest cover analysis from satellite imagery shows that the area of forest in the Western Terai has increased by 260 km² in the ten years to 2010, while grassland has decreased by 20.6 km², in part it is believed due to natural succession (Table 16 (paragraph 70)). Even allowing for this, the net gain in forest area is 240 km². This may not be a large area amounting to around about a 6% increase, but when set against the rates of loss reported in the Project Document of 12%, 15%, and 24% in Bardia, Kailali, and Kanchanpur Districts respectively between the time periods of 1978/79 and 1990/91, such a reversal amounts to a significant success. Other measures of reductions in stress include a reduction of encroachment and the evacuation of squatters from a total of 7,112 ha of forest, and anecdotal but consistent opinions from those involved in anti-poaching activities (government staff and villagers) to indicate that illegal activities are declining. Reductions in human-wildlife conflict achieved by the Project also help to improve local people’s attitudes towards wildlife, as do benefits arising from eco-tourism, all of which helps to lessen stress. In addition, an independent review *Biodiversity Assessment of the Mohana Kailali Corridor* was undertaken by the NARMA consultancy using an index developed by WWF International as a monitoring tool to determine the degree to which management has succeeded in reducing the threats to conservation at a particular site. Based on the supposition that biological indicators are both insufficiently sensitive over short time frames relevant to a project and the data required are relatively difficult and expensive to collect, it uses a participatory process to score 15 threats such as forest fire, poaching, and unsustainable harvesting, on three criteria namely area, intensity, and urgency. The scores taken before an intervention are then added together and this total compared to that for the scores made after it. The NARMA study notes that:

“Of 15 threats related to biodiversity or conservation, intensity or severity of impact of 7 threats has been reduced or decreased after project intervention, while it remains similar for three threats.”

Unfortunately, the Project has totalled the scores from the 15 indices and undertaken a computation that suggests there has been a 7% reduction in the biodiversity threat index. This is false; such computations on indices flout the fundamental laws of mathematics as taught in every undergraduate basic statistics course, i.e. mathematical functions such as addition can be performed only on ratio scale data, not on scores as here which are ordinal scale data. It is the equivalent of adding two apples and two oranges – meaningless⁴⁷.

⁴⁷ **UNDP-CO comment:** *This section essentially concludes that the project impact cannot be stated confidently on the basis of the previous reviews and indicators. So, does that mean that the impacts are not visibly measurable or that the indices developed and changes documented in the earlier reviews are not quantifiable ones? In the case of such assertion, the impact section does not provide a positive impression about the project.* **TET response:** Impacts are always difficult to discern at the end of a project, largely because time is necessary for them to become apparent. The section concludes that most of the indicators measured appear to show positive impacts; but much care has to be taken when using indices to resist over-using them to draw quantitative conclusions that cannot be supported by the data.

ACHIEVEMENT OF PROJECT OUTPUTS

61. This section provides an overview of the main achievements of the Project. It is not intended to be a comprehensive account.

TABLE 11: EVALUATION OF THE END OF PROJECT SITUATION AS PER THE REVISED LOGFRAME

| Outputs | | Evaluation* | | | | | |
|--------------------|--|-------------|---|----|----|---|----|
| | | HS | S | MS | MU | U | HU |
| Output 1.1: | MFSC and MoAC supported to revise and formulate landscape level bio-diversity conservation policies. | | | | | | |
| Output 1.2: | MFSC supported to develop and introduce integrated land use planning framework for WTLC | | | | | | |
| Output 2.1: | Central, District and Local level Institutions established for integrated management of biodiversity in targeted landscape | | | | | | |
| Output 2.2: | Capacity of partners strengthened for the conservation of both productive and protected landscapes. | | | | | | |
| Output 2.3: | Comprehensive information, planning and monitoring system to facilitate landscape management established | | | | | | |
| Output 3.1: | DFO, PAs and government line agencies are supported to restore and conserve biodiversity assets in WTLC | | | | | | |
| Output 3.2: | Critical watershed in WTLC conserved and managed | | | | | | |
| Output 3.3: | Agro-biodiversity conservation outside protected area improved | | | | | | |
| Output 4.1: | Community user's groups (buffer zone and community forest), local NGOs, CBOs and others engaged in effective management of biodiversity in WTLC. | | | | | | |
| Output 4.2: | Local communities involved in diversified livelihoods thereby, reducing pressures on biodiversity assets. | | | | | | |
| Output 4.3: | Awareness level on biodiversity conservation and alternate livelihood increased at the local level. | | | | | | |

* Note: HS = Highly satisfactory; S = Satisfactory; MS = Marginally satisfactory; MU= Marginally unsatisfactory; U = Unsatisfactory; HU = Highly unsatisfactory. Components are hyperlinked to relevant section.

The Project has developed a number of key policies, some of which have been piloted individually; has strengthened institutional mechanisms and developed some pertinent to landscape level management; has improved the conservation and management of three PAs and agro-biodiversity; and introduced innovative livelihoods linked to conservation. Project outputs are ranked individually from Highly Satisfactory to Unsatisfactory and the median being satisfactory, hence overall the achievement of outputs and activities is evaluated as **Satisfactory**.

Outcome 1: The national policy environment and legal framework enable integrated landscape planning in the Western Terai Landscape Complex

Output 1.1: MFSC and MoAC supported to revise and formulate landscape level bio-diversity conservation policies

62. Many important actions were undertaken by the Project to remedy the absence of policies related to landscape level biodiversity conservation within Nepal and to raise the awareness of policy- and decision-makers within the MFSC of issues related to landscape conservation. The Project developed three important landscape-based policies, namely the *Corridor Management Policy*; the *Payment for Environment Services Guidelines*; and the *Agro-biodiversity Policy*. The latter were endorsed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Development in 2007, while it is expected that the *Corridor Management Policy* will be endorsed by the MFSC in November 2012. The Project also arranged 12 field visits for senior officials of MFSC including Ministers, State Ministers, Secretary, Joint Secretaries, and Director Generals to sensitise them on the issues and challenges related to landscape conservation. This process has helped to resolve several management problems and has improved coordination between Project staff and senior MFSC officials, including facilitating the endorsement of policies. The work within the policies appears to be of very high quality and it is clear that they constitute excellent building material for implementing a landscape-based approach to

biodiversity conservation across the country. Nonetheless, in Project terms, despite these achievements, the work has been undertaken much too late to test⁴⁸ the appropriateness and effectiveness of the provisions within these policy documents on the ground, and this is perhaps the greatest failing of the Project – see paragraph 32).

63. The Project also catalysed the MFSC to declare Protected Forests within all three corridors within the Project area and to designate them with a special status of management. This is the first time that this category of protection has been used within Nepal. The MFSC also prepared and approved management plans for all three forests, as well as appointing a full-time Protected Forest Manager and a number of Rangers plus other temporary staff to each with an allocation of NR 5 million (US\$ 58,823) for the implementation of each management plan. More than 80% of WTLCPC activities will now continue to be implemented through these plans and demonstrates the Government's commitment to the corridor conservation approach.

64. The sustainability of biodiversity conservation initiatives depends on the availability of regular funding to cover the recurrent costs. However, there are no sustainable financial mechanisms for either protected areas or for forests outside of protected areas. The Project addressed this problem by developing a knowledge document *Sustainable Financing Mechanism for Landscape Conservation: Existing Practices and Future Prospects*, and also undertook an economic valuation of Bardia National Park. These documents were distributed among a wide range of stakeholders to help them to understand the values of protected areas and biodiversity conservation. While such documents help to illustrate and communicate the various options available for sustainable funding, no conservation financing mechanisms have yet been approved. The MFSC tried to develop the *Forest Development Fund Establishment, Operation Procedure Directive 2007* which contained a provision for levying NR 5 (US 6 cents) per cubic feet of timber for commercial sale (i.e. no tax for sale to Forest User Group Members), but since the Constitution of Nepal bars the collection of any taxes which are not specified in an Act, and neither the *Forest Act* nor the *Financial Act* had any such provision to levy taxes on the sale of forest products, the collection of revenue was withheld because of a Supreme Court ban. However, the Project has started to pilot a Performance-based Grant System aimed at providing financial incentives to forest user groups to encourage accountability and effectiveness towards conservation. It involves an annual assessment against two sets of pre-determined criteria and indicators – minimum conditions and performance measures – based around four functional areas – forests and biodiversity; sustainable livelihoods; governance; and financial management. The system has completed one year, and the TET encountered one group who had received one of the higher level grants and indicated that they were encouraged to continue their activities to maintain such level of payment. The only problem that the TET sees is that if the pool of grant money remains constant but the number of forest user groups performing well increases, then the rewards will get smaller over time and the incentive will diminish. The MFSC may have to consider increasing the grant pool every few years^{49,50}.

This output has achieved many of its major objectives, and yielded some excellent products, but displays a significant shortcoming in that it has produced them too late to be tested and therefore has not achieved some of its major global environmental objectives or yielded some of the expected global environment benefits, hence it is evaluated as **Moderately Satisfactory**.

⁴⁸ **UNDP-CO comment:** *The language in the Output section clearly states – “revise and formulate” and does mention “testify” or “implementation” of the policies. However, seemingly evaluation metrics includes testifying or implementing elements as well to the policies; in which case the evaluation provides lower score to the output 1.1. TET response:* Agreed, the language of the Output is limited to “revise and formulate”, but as the document makes clear throughout “Ultimately, the project aims to develop replicable landscape-level management models...” and in order to do that there has to be a degree of testing through implementation. The CO is correct that the inability of the Project to do this has lowered this output's rating to Moderately Satisfactory.

⁴⁹ **PMU comment:** Long comment – see Annex XI.

⁵⁰ **MFSC comment:** Long comment – see Annex XI.

Output 1.2: MFSC supported to develop and introduce integrated land use planning framework for WTLC.

65. In Nepal, there was no framework to guide an approach to the various cross-cutting issues needed to provide a landscape-based conservation. The Project produced *Integrated Landscape Planning Framework Guidelines* which the MFSC approved in May 2012 and instructed all its institutions (Divisions, Departments, Regional and District Offices) to adopt these when formulating plans and programmes. However, the district line agencies proved unable to implement these because of coordination problems, so instead, they were piloted in the Mohana Corridor. The Mohana Community Forestry Coordination Committee (MCFCC) was mobilised to facilitate planning and implementation of the integrated plan. As part of the planning exercise, MCFCC assessed activities of different organisations working in their area and, based on this, they prioritised actions and communicated with the Government and other organisations working in the Mohana Corridor to include these prioritised actions in their plans and programmes.

This output has achieved most of its major objectives and yielded satisfactory benefits with only minor shortcomings, hence is evaluated as **Satisfactory**.

Outcome 2: The institutional framework for integrated landscape management of biodiversity in Western Terai is established and strengthened

Output 2.1: Central, district and local level institutions established for integrated management of biodiversity in targeted landscape

66. Weak national biodiversity institutions and a lack of implementing institutions at the district and local levels constrained biodiversity conservation in Nepal. The Project helped to establish a Landscape Support Unit within the MFSC. In addition, the capacity of national biodiversity institutions such as the Department of Forest, the Department of Soil Conservation and Watershed Management, the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation, the Regional Directorate of Forests, and relevant district level and local level Institutions were strengthened for integrated management of biodiversity in the Project area. Prior to 2006, there were no District Forest Coordination Committees (DFCC) or District Biodiversity Committees (DBC). The Project contributed to the establishment and strengthening of three DFCCs which bring together representatives from elected bodies and District level Government officers to act as the apex institution for implementing a landscape approach at the district level, dealing with such issues as control of encroachment, illegal hunting and poaching, and strengthening good governance practices among the forest user groups, for example the Kanchanpur DFCC helped in the relocation of squatters from nearly 2,000 ha of forests. Although hampered by the absence of elected members due to the current political instability, local political representation is made via most of the political parties and the DFCC is currently chaired by the Local Development Officer (in the absence of an elected Chair of the DDC). The result has been deemed to be successful and, in a two-stage process, DFCCs have now been replicated in 74 of the country's 75 Districts⁵¹. The TET maintains some reservations about the DFCCs, particularly the fact that, although they have been renamed District Forest Sector Coordination Committees (DFSCC) to reflect their wider remit, nonetheless they remain focussed on a single sector – forests – which fails to reflect the need for an inter-sectoral approach to landscape-based conservation. However, the chairmanship by the Local Development Officer (rather than say the District Forest Officer (and in time by the Chair of the DDC)) does introduce some cross-sectoral fertilization. The MTE also raised some concerns, thus⁵²:

“The institutional relationships between District Forest Coordination Committees (DFCCs) and with District Development Councils (DCCs) (including mainstreaming with District development planning), and the functional sustainability of DFCCs and CFCCs

⁵¹ Upper Mustang District falls entirely with the Annapurna Conservation Area and hence has a different administrative set-up.

⁵² **PMU comment:** DFSCC is multi-sectoral committee with representation of different agencies working at the district level. It has representation of both political parties and sectoral agencies, with LDO as chair and DFO as member-secretary. This is something misleading of DFSCC here. **TET response:** The TET does not understand the point attempting to be made here but includes it for completeness.

remain to be resolved. The commitment of the government agencies to using DFCCs as apex bodies for coordination and planning of landscape conservation also remains unclear”.

While the TET had little time to examine the complexities of these relationships, the replication of DFSCCs country-wide certainly demonstrates the Government’s commitment and belief that they provide the correct leadership for the coordination and planning of landscape conservation and that the institutional relationships between them and the DDCs has either been, or can be, worked out. A Landscape Coordination Committee has also been formed to coordinate the landscape approach at the regional level (see [Annex VII](#)), and although it is supposed to meet twice a year, the TET could find little evidence of it having had any effect. Similarly, the Landscape Support Unit has been functional only within the MFSC and there remain conflicting ideas within the MFSC as to its future – either disbandment or conversion into a Landscape Support Programme. The latter appears to have wider support, and indeed a Policy Dialogue Group has been established to determine the means of implementation, but this has not yet met. The TET has seen an Approach Paper that will be discussed by the National Development Council as the next step in the process. Therefore, while the Government’s Tenth (Interim) Plan endorsed the landscape management approach for the first time in a government plan, the mechanics have still yet to be worked out.

This output has achieved many of its major objectives, and yielded some excellent products, but displays significant shortcomings and has not yielded some of the expected global environment benefits, hence it is evaluated as **Moderately Satisfactory**.

Output 2.2: Capacity of partners strengthened for the conservation of both productive and protected landscapes.

67. The Project undertook a total of 475 training events for 10,375 people over the period 2006-2012. Training was conducted in the areas of:

- a) biodiversity conservation/sustainable forest management;
- b) livelihoods improvement/entrepreneurship development;
- c) institutional strengthening/ forestry governance; and
- d) agro-biodiversity conservation.

Of the 10,375 people who participated, 9% were Dalit (occupational castes), 36% Janajati (indigenous people) and 43% women. A training needs assessment of staff in the MFSC field offices and of the local communities was not conducted by the Project until 2007/08, by which time 85 training events (17.7%) catering to 1,829 people (17.6%) had already taken place – see Table 12. Training focussed on two main groups – the local community where skill development was focussed on increasing the benefit from forest-based value-added products and NTFPs that can support conservation practices while providing economic benefits; and government and coordination committees (DFSCCs, CCFCs, and local resource persons) where the technical capacity was enhanced to enable them to participate fully in conservation activities and decision-making processes and to make inputs in planning and monitoring of conservation activities. This capacity enhancement supported preparation and implementation of forest plans for various forest types (e.g. Community Forests, National Forest, and Protected Forests) in the field. The most effective of all the training interventions appears to have been in agro-biodiversity, forest-based enterprise development, and income generation activities such as dairy and livestock support, vegetable farming and menthe farming. These all had strong implications for people’s livelihoods. Basic account-keeping and management skills training focused mainly on community forest user group and CFCC treasurers, who maintained that financial records and record keeping system had improved as a result. However, no impact monitoring of the trainings or measurement of increased capacity has been conducted. Furthermore, community groups and committees needed training on policy information, management and action plan preparation, forest inventory methods⁵³, and development of financial strategies, but this does not appear to have been provided, and community institutions are facing problems and financial losses as a result. A lack of training in marketing and market-related issues has also seriously undermined some of the livelihood

⁵³ **PMU comment:** *These trainings were provided under community forest management.*

interventions – see paragraph 81⁵⁴). It is also notable from Table 12 that training in landscape level conservation and in organisational development including cooperatives did not take place until the final year of the Project which, the TET would venture, is much too late to have had the effect expected by the project design. There is no record on how many people benefited from the trainings in 2012. The Project also provided technical support to revise 51 Operational Plans of the CFUGs to incorporate biodiversity conservation provisions such as rotational grass cutting, leaving dead trees, harvesting within sustainable limits, and grazing control. Partner organisations contributed to the revision of another 80 operational plans, but see also paragraph 80.

TABLE 12: CAPACITY BUILDING FOR THE GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS, CBOs AND COMMUNITY USER GROUPS FROM YEAR 2006-2011

| Name of Training | 2006 | | 2007 | | 2008 | | 2009 | | 2010 | | 2011 | | 2012 | | Total | |
|--|----------|------------|-----------|--------------|------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|------------|---------------|------------|
| | E | B | E | B | E | B | E | B | E | B | E | B | E | B | B | E |
| NTPF Management | 2 | 46 | 15 | 670 | 12 | 350 | 2 | 324 | 2 | 216 | 5 | 378 | 3 | 75 | 2,059 | 41 |
| Basic Account Keeping | 2 | 41 | | | | | 1 | 240 | 105 | 813 | 7 | 144 | | | 1,238 | 115 |
| Capacity Enhancement | | | 27 | 454 | 34 | 930 | 1 | 26 | | | 8 | 175 | | | 1,585 | 70 |
| Entrepreneurship Development | 3 | 53 | 13 | 290 | 9 | 162 | 22 | 402 | 26 | 456 | | | | | 1,363 | 73 |
| Forest Management | | | 23 | 275 | 32 | 688 | 2 | 57 | 5 | 96 | 6 | 141 | 2 | 50 | 1,307 | 70 |
| Agriculture and Livestock Management | | | | | 6 | 350 | 8 | 186 | | | 8 | 249 | | | 785 | 22 |
| Skill Enhancement Training | | | | | 16 | 330 | | | 6 | 112 | 4 | 131 | | | 573 | 26 |
| Natural Resource Management Governance | | | | | | | 12 | 290 | 12 | 288 | | | | | 578 | 24 |
| Agrobiodiversity | | | | | | | 6 | 103 | | | | | | | 103 | 6 |
| GPS and IEE | | | | | | | 1 | 26 | | | | | | | 26 | 1 |
| Biodiversity Conservation | | | | | | | 13 | 309 | | | | | 1 | 25 | 334 | 14 |
| Food and Beverage | | | | | | | | | 1 | 36 | | | | | 36 | 1 |
| HNPV | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 21 | | | 21 | 1 |
| Stress Tolerance Rice Technology | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | 42 | | | 42 | 2 |
| Integrated Landscape Level Conservation and Planning | | | | | | | | | | | | | 7 | 175 | 175 | 7 |
| Organisation Development inc. Cooperative | | | | | | | | | | | | | 6 | 150 | 150 | 6 |
| Total | 7 | 140 | 78 | 1,689 | 109 | 2,810 | 68 | 1,963 | 157 | 2,017 | 41 | 1,281 | 19 | 475 | 10,375 | 479 |

This output has achieved many of its major objectives, and yielded some excellent products, but displays significant shortcomings and has not yielded some of the expected global environment benefits, hence it is evaluated as **Moderately Satisfactory**.

Output 2.3: Comprehensive information, planning and monitoring system to facilitate landscape management established.

68. The Project, along with others, has assisted financially with the establishment of a Management Information System (MIS) within MFSC. The Project provided NRs 451,000 towards a total establishment cost of NRs 2,153,500 (US\$ 25,335) in 2009, and around NRs 200,000 (US\$ 2,353) annually from 2010 onwards towards making the MIS operational. In 2012 it provided NRs 250,000 (US\$ 2,941) out of a total operational budget of NRs 2 million (US\$ 23,529). One national and five regional consultative workshops were carried out on MIS, and field testing was completed. While the relevant hardware and software has been purchased and installed, the system is not yet functional, and at the time of the TE, data collection and entry was in progress by thematic area. Data entry and retrieval is very slow because of the limited number of staff and lack of trained manpower within the MFSC. Since the MIS is not fully functional within the MFSC, it has not been rolled out in the three districts covered by the Project. The TET also has significant concerns over the value of the current system, as displayed to it in the Ministry. There appear to be no analytical functions available, the data outputs simply being direct regurgitations of the data input. There is an export function, allowing

⁵⁴ **PMU comment:** Marketing training is provided under output 4.2, hence not included here. Project made expense of 8.7% of livelihoods outcomes related training.

simple statistical analysis through other programmes such as Excel spreadsheets, but nothing more. Crucially, it lacks any linkage to a Geographic Information System thereby greatly diminishing its use for planning and management.

69. The TET also expresses further concern about the MFSC's ability to understand and coordinate its IT functions. The TET requested simple management data from the District Forest Office in Kanchanpur relating to the frequency and type of wildlife crimes which, after a great deal of searching, was eventually retrieved from paper files and transcribed by hand. Questions of the same office also showed that ranger patrols were not recorded by geographic positioning systems (GPS) and their routes were decided on an *ad hoc* basis. While this was initially put down to there being an absence of GPS equipment available to the DFO, it transpired that the Office used GPS for inventory work – only. No knowledge was available to the DFO about the use of computerised GPS/GIS systems for management and anti-poaching operations. Yet when the TET visited the adjacent Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve, it found that the management and rangers there were fully cognizant of the open access Management Information System (MIST) developed by the Uganda Wildlife Service and were using it to route patrols and collect a range of management-related data. If a landscape approach is to be truly adopted by the MFSC, let alone across all Government ministries, a greater understanding and coordination of the tools available and necessary to assist in its application needs to be applied.

This output has not achieved most of its major objectives and failed to yield any satisfactory benefits, hence it is evaluated as **Unsatisfactory**.

Outcome 3: Biodiversity assets in Western Terai landscape are effectively conserved

Output 3.1: DFO, PAs and government line agencies are supported to restore and conserve biodiversity assets in WTLC

70. This is one of the most successful outputs in the Project with contributions to a wide range of activities directly benefiting wildlife populations.

- **Encroachment:** The Project and its partner organisation (WWF) provided support to Department of Forests, protected areas, and government line agencies to evacuate encroached forest land, and to restore and conserve biodiversity components in the Project areas. A total of 7,112 ha of encroached forest areas within the three corridors covered by the Project (Mohana⁵⁵, Basanta and Khata – see map [Annex VIII](#)) has been evacuated of which the Project (using non-GEF funds) supported the evacuation of 4,123 ha of forest land within the Mohana Corridor. The evacuated areas were planted with tree saplings and handed over to local communities as Community Forests for long-term management.
- **Poaching:** In the buffer zones of Bardia National Park and Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve, the Project increased the awareness of unemployed youths, identified as one of the main groups involved in wildlife poaching, and encouraged them to form community-based anti-poaching organisations to assist the rangers both inside and outside of the Protected Areas. The Project also supported trans-boundary meetings to address poaching problems in India and Nepal and to improve coordination between the two to combat the wildlife trade. After these activities, poaching appears to have been reduced, although figures from Kanchanpur are ambiguous regarding illegal cutting and collection – the increase 2010/11 may be a result of increased vigilance rather than a real increase in events (see Table 13).

⁵⁵ Previously called Laljhadi.

TABLE 13: ILLEGAL FOREST ACTIVITIES IN KANCHANPUR DISTRICT

| Year | Illegal Cutting/Collection of Forest Products | Encroachment | Poaching |
|--------------|---|--------------|----------|
| 2006 | 16 | 4 | 1 |
| 2007 | 16 | 4 | 1 |
| 2008 | 29 | 5 | 0 |
| 2009 | 8 | 1 | 0 |
| 2010 | 33 | 1 | 0 |
| 2011 | 32 | 0 | 1 |
| 2012 | 10 | 4 | 0 |
| Total | 144 | 19 | 3 |

SOURCE: Kanchanpur District Forest Office

- **Habitat restoration:** The Project contributed to the conservation of 37 wetlands, excluding the efforts made in parallel by WWF (see Table 14). In Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve it drilled a well and provided a solar pump to maintain a year-round water supply to grassland animals. The technology has many

TABLE 14: AREA OF WETLAND RESTORED

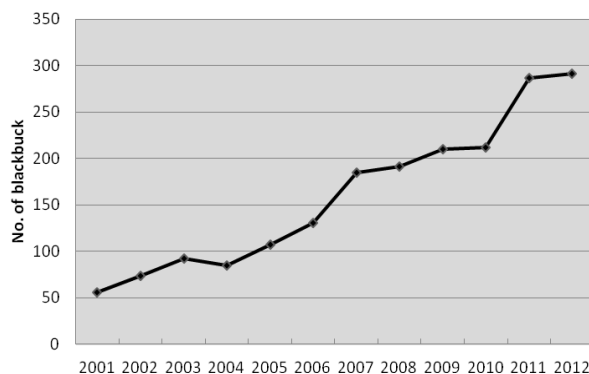
| District | Number of Wetlands restored | | | Area of Wetlands restored* (ha) | | |
|--------------|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|---------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| | In PA | Corridor | Total | In PA | Corridor | Total |
| Bardia | 11 | 2 | 13 | 4.1 | 1.0 | 5.1 |
| Kailali | 0 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 3.4 | 3.4 |
| Kanchanpur | 10 | 10 | 20 | 7.5 | 13.3 | 20.8 |
| Total | 21 | 16 | 37 | 11.6 | 17.6 | 29.2 |

NOTE: *Area includes waterbodies only.

- benefits (cheap, renewable energy; no noise; continuous delivery of cold water preferred by the animals (cf. intermittent supply of water by diesel pumps that then warms in the sun) and has been found to be successful enough for WWF to replicate in an other area of SWR. Outside of the protected areas, the Project also restored a total of 16 wetlands. The TET viewed a wetland complex at Baijanath in the Churia Hills where the Project mobilised local communities in removing alien invasive species (*Ipomea fistula*), constructing a sluice to control water levels in the lakes, and constructing channels to provide water to the fields for irrigation. The local communities were made aware of the benefits of wetland restoration and watershed conservation to maintain adequate supplies, and they have now taken responsibility for maintaining the wetlands. Between 2006 and 2012, the Project has also supported the protected areas in managing and restoring a total of 914 ha of grassland (400 ha in Bardia National Park and 514 ha in Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve), important for animals such as Indian rhinoceros, Asian elephant and swamp deer.
- **General planning and management:** The Project developed a number of important plans, most notably the *Integrated Management Plan of Churia in Western Terai Landscape*, an *Eco-Tourism Plan of Western Terai Landscape Complex*, and *District Forestry Sector Plans* of Kailali and Kanchanpur Districts. It has also improved roads with the protected areas, built or repaired bridges, and improved the management of fire-breaks thereby improving access for rangers (and tourists) for patrolling and management work.
- **Species management:** The Project also made a number of interventions to promote the management of certain species:

- **Blackbuck:** The *Blackbuck Conservation Action Plan* was produced and a management plan for the Blackbuck Conservation Area is under preparation. The Project also undertook habitat improvements and institutional strengthening in the Blackbuck Conservation Area and raised awareness and reduced human-wildlife conflict in the buffer zone, the latter primarily by fencing (not a project activity and the TET fails to be able to resolve the inherent conflict between fencing and

FIGURE 2: BLACKBUCK POPULATION



enhancement of corridor functions) and through planting of menthe as a cash crop. Continued squatting to the north and east of the reserve has obstructed completion of these activities and remains the cause of a number of problems noted in the MTE, notably over-grazing by cattle, and depredation of blackbuck by men and dogs. The Conservation Area remains short of resources, but the community institutions, although still weak, appear to have been made more aware of the importance of the Area since the time of the MTE. Certainly the population of blackbuck continues to grow (Figure 2) and resolution of the problems with the squatters would probably result in further increases. Some blackbucks were translocated to the Hirapur area in the buffer zone of Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve to help to protect the species from accidental extinction in Nepal through disease or other calamities – foot-and-mouth disease was transmitted to the main herd from livestock in 2009⁵⁶.

- **Elephant:** The Project prepared the Elephant Conservation Plan which was endorsed by the MFSC in 2009. Activities such as the installation of solar-powered electric fences to minimise human-wildlife conflict have been undertaken along with increases in the number of watchtowers, and supporting farmers from areas close to the forest with livelihood improvement activities such as planting menthe and chamomile. The human casualty data from Bardia National Park and Shuklaphanta Wildlife Reserve (Table 15 and Annex IV) shows a decrease but the baseline data of 2008 is confusing since it does not match the numbers reported in the DNPWC’s annual report. There are no new data for elephant populations, but experts’ and villagers’ observations suggest an increase.

TABLE 15: DAMAGE FROM WILDLIFE IN TWO PROTECTED AREAS.

| | SWR | | BNP | | Total | |
|-------|-----|---|-----|----|-------|----|
| | C | I | C | I | C | I |
| 2008 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 20 | 2 | 24 |
| 2009 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 9 | 3 | 11 |
| 2010 | 0 | - | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| 2011 | 0 | - | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| 2012* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

* To September
C = casualties; I = injuries.

- **Gharial:** The Project paid for a new pool at Bardia National Park to house an increased population of gharials for its captive-breeding programme.
- **Bijaya Sal:** The project area includes seven different forest types and it has contributed to maintaining all of them (see Table 16). The Project has helped with the *in-situ* conservation of bijaya sal (*Pterocarpus marsupium*), a commercially-threatened tree species. Awareness has been raised amongst local communities who have also been helped in conservation work in 25 ha of different community forests (plantation, natural regeneration protection, mother tree protection) in Kanchanpur District. The TET visited one 3 ha area where the local community had been mobilised to control grazing in the forest and to establish a fenced plantation. At the time of the TET’s visit, the bijaya sal trees had already attained height of 4-5m. Once the trees are safe from wildlife damage,

⁵⁶ **PMU comment:** Management zoning of area has been carried out to avoid potential conflict between local cattle herders and black buck. It is also being effectively patrolled. WTLC is now supporting for preparation of management plan of the area. Likewise, vaccinations against FMD has been carried out to avoid transmission of such diseases.

the community intends to remove fence to facilitate wildlife movement. In addition, conservation action plans are under preparation for six other plant species categorised as under varying levels of national threat categories – four trees khayar (*Acacia catechu*), sati sal (*Dalbergia latifolia*), amala (*Phyllanthus emblica*), and bel (*Aegle marmelos*); and two herbs sarpagandha (*Rauwolfia serpentina*) and kurilo (*Asparagus racemosus*). These plans are expected to be completed by the end of November 2012. The TET notes that, as with so much of this Project, the value of these plans could have been so much greater had they been prepared earlier in the Project enabling implementation of their actions during the Project’s lifetime using Project resources.

TABLE 16: FOREST AREA MAINTAINED IN THE WTLCP WORKING AREA.

| Districts | Total land area* | 2001 (sq km)* | | 2010 (sq km) † | | Area change (2001-2010) (sq km) | |
|--------------|------------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|---------------------------------|---------------|
| | (sq km) | Forests | Grassland | Forests | Grassland | Forests | Grassland |
| | 2,003.2 | 1,111.6 | 77.7 | 1,207.9 | 68.6 | 96.3 | (9.1) |
| Kailali | 3,285.5 | 2,059.4 | 20.5 | 2160.4 | 18.6 | 101.0 | (1.9) |
| Kanchanpur | 1,619.3 | 762.0 | 115.3 | 831.4 | 105.7 | 69.4 | (9.6) |
| Total | 6,908.0 | 3,939.2 | 213.5 | 4,199.7 | 192.9 | 260.5 | (20.6) |

* DoF. 2005. *Forest Cover Change analysis of Terai Districts*. Department of Forests (DoF), Kathmandu Nepal

† WTLCP 2011. *Vegetation cover change assessment in Western Terai*. Western Terai Landscape Complex Project

71. Populations of key animal species appear to be stable or rising, believed in part as a response to Project interventions. In addition to the figures for Blackbuck shown in Figure 2, the population of swamp deer in Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve are also rising steadily (see Figure 3). However, for other key species, population censuses have not been conducted on regular basis, nor have they always used the same methodologies. Tiger censuses have been carried out in 1999 and 2005 using the method of studying pug marks, while those in 2010 and 2012 have used camera traps (Table 17). Unfortunately, there was no overlap of methodologies so there is no basis for correlation between the two methods, thus the figures from 2010 onwards cannot be compared with earlier counts. Hence, although the figures for later censuses show smaller numbers than in 1999 and 2005, this is likely to be an artefact. What is important is that the number of tigers appears to have increased substantially between 2010 and 2012. The population of Indian rhinoceros appears to fluctuate but be generally stable (Table 17). With increased anti-poaching activities and cross-border cooperation, hopes are that it will also start to show an increase.

FIGURE 3: POPULATION OF SWAMP DEER IN SUKLAPHANTA WILDLIFE RESERVE

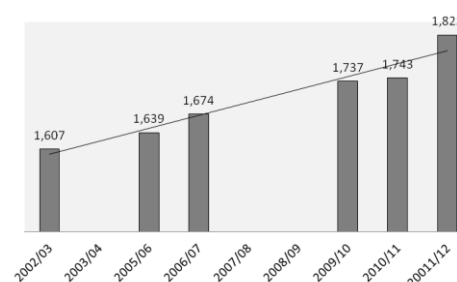


TABLE 17: POPULATIONS OF TIGER AND INDIAN RHINOCEROS IN BARDIA NATIONAL PARK AND SUKLAPHANTA WILDLIFE RESERVE

| Tiger | | Rhinoceros | |
|-------|---------------------|------------|--------------------|
| 1999 | 48-63 | 2005 | 32 |
| 2005 | 48-63 | 2007 | 37 |
| 2010 | 26 (18 BNP, 8 SWR) | 2008 | 27 (22 BNP, 5 SWR) |
| 2012 | 47 (37 BNP, 10 SWR) | 2011 | 31 (24 BNP, 7 SWR) |

This output has achieved all its major objectives, and yielded substantial global environmental benefits, without major shortcomings. The output can be presented as “good practice”, hence it is evaluated as **Highly Satisfactory**.

Output 3.2: Critical watershed in WTLC conserved and managed

72. The Churia Hills are geologically very young and hence very fragile. They are also very important for their rich biodiversity and water catchment functions. The Project prepared the Churia Conservation Plan in 2008 but this has not yet been endorsed by the Government. Nonetheless, the

Project implemented 41 different conservation activities from the Plan in all five VDCs that falls within Project area, including bio-engineering to control river bank erosion, grazing control, tree plantation, fire control, and wetland restoration. A total of 639 ha of land was restored which besides conserving wildlife also provided benefits to 8,660 people belonging to 2,339 households. Table 18 shows that between 2001 and 2010, forest cover increased in each of the three Districts covered by the Churia Hills, in part due to the Project's efforts.

TABLE 18: FOREST AREA IN THE CHURIA HILLS

| Districts | Total Churia land area* | Forests* (2001) | | Forests† (2010) | |
|--------------|-------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| | (sq km) | Area (sq km) | Percent of land area | Area (sq km) | Percent of land area |
| Bardia | 613.9 | 555.5 | 90.5 | 587.5 | 95.7 |
| Kailali | 1,331.4 | 1,191.6 | 89.5 | 1,208.9 | 90.8 |
| Kanchanpur | 204.3 | 194.4 | 95.2 | 192.9 | 94.4 |
| Total | 2,149.6 | 1,941.5 | 90.3 | 1,989.3 | 92.5 |

* DoF. 2005. *Forest Cover Change analysis of Terai Districts*. Department of Forests (DoF), Kathmandu Nepal

† WTLCP 2011. *Vegetation cover change assessment in Western Terai*. Western Terai Landscape Complex Project

This output has achieved all its major objectives, and yielded substantial global environmental benefits, without major shortcomings. The output can be presented as “good practice”, hence it is evaluated as **Highly Satisfactory**.

Output 3.3: Agro-biodiversity conservation outside protected area improved.

73. Besides the conservation of wild species, the Project also helped to conserve several local varieties of crops, vegetables and fruit. This work was largely carried out by one of the Project's partners – LI-BIRD – through farmers groups grouped into Biodiversity Conservation and Development Committees (BCDC). A total of six BCDCs were formed in each of the six VDCs covered by this component of the Project but the 103 farmers groups representing 2,292 household were in seven working VDCs. Within this total, a minimum of 18 (in 2008) and a maximum of 53 (in 2011) community-based seed production groups comprising 306 farmers were established in the three districts covered by the Project. Six community seed banks were established and are now operational. These seed banks are storing and maintaining germination capacity of seeds through cultivation in diversity blocks and through home gardens. They are also providing community biodiversity funds as incentives for conservation of local varieties. In 2012, 29.8 tonnes of seeds of paddy and wheat were collected and sold in the market, a 372% increase from the 2008 baseline of 8 tonnes. A total of 1,849 households are involved in the production of seed for sale, with each household generating a net income of NR 1,200 (US\$ 14). A large number of traditional local varieties of crops, vegetables and fruit are currently being conserved in this way including 58 varieties of rice, 10 of Taro, 6 of bottle gourds (Lauka), 9 of sponge gourd (Ghiraula), 22 of cowpea (Bodi), 21 of bean (Simi), 7 of rice bean (Masyang), 3 of pumpkins and 28 of local Mango (76 accessions out of 252). The area under cultivation of local varieties has increased from 35.5 ha (2006) to 56.7 ha in 2012. According to baseline data there were only 488 households involved in the conservation of local crop varieties in 2006 while in 2012 this number had increased to 715. Conservation management funds have also been established in some localities. These provide loans to farmers for income-generating activities, but since the objective of these funds is to strengthen on-farm agrobiodiversity conservation, there is a condition that each member taking a loan from the fund must grow the seeds (from the seed bank) of at least one of the rare or endangered traditional crop varieties. The priority for such loans was given to resource-poor or economically marginalised farmers who did not have to put up collateral and received an interest rate of 1-2%. The Nepal Agricultural Research Council also provided inputs to this component through research into the biological control of pod borer virus as an additional tool for integrated pest management and developing genotypes resistant to stem rust and black rust⁵⁷ thereby in both cases reducing pesticide use; the improvement of degraded land by cultivating pigeon pea, and

⁵⁷ Black rust is not yet in Nepal but is constantly moving closer.

the demonstration of a zero-till drill which is easier to use, reduces soil erosion and promotes microbiological activity in the soil.

74. Traditional varieties of crops have become scarce because of the spread of modern cultivars which provide higher yields and which are more resistant to diseases. Although local varieties will neither increase productivity nor provide increases in incomes since the profit margin of these varieties is very small, they continue to play an important role in local culture (especially traditional festivals) and many of those involved in their cultivation said it was important that future generations have the opportunity to see the varieties that their ancestors were using. While conservation of these local varieties is seen as important for maintaining the gene bank and thereby providing access to make improvements for improved disease resistance, improved taste, or increased resistance to changing climatic situations, there appears to have been no links made between this component and the landscape approach to conservation, and as such it remains very much a hostage to its design – see paragraph 15.

This output has achieved most of its major objectives and yielded satisfactory benefits with only minor shortcomings, hence is evaluated as Satisfactory.

Outcome 4: Local communities are empowered to practice sustainable biodiversity friendly natural resource and land use management and pursue diversified livelihoods

Output 4.1: Local communities are empowered to practice sustainable biodiversity friendly natural resource and land use management and pursue diversified livelihoods

75. The Project has worked hard with the local communities and supported them to undertake conservation activities. Within the Project area 73,612 forest-dependent households are now involved in participatory forest management systems through 387 CFUGs which represents an increase in household participation of 112%. It has worked mainly through 26 buffer zone institutions (24 Buffer Zone User Committees and two Buffer Zone Management Councils) and 7 CFCCs assisting them to mobilise their own financial resources and those of interested partners for biodiversity-friendly initiatives. As a result, these local organisations mobilised NR 9,754,085 (US\$ 114,753) of their own resources and a total of NR 5,482,170 (US\$ 64,496) from other partners – NR 1,942,500 (US\$ 22,852) from local bodies such as DDCs and VDCs; NR 811,000 (US\$ 9,541) from Government line agencies; NR 1,265,000 (US\$ 14,882) from international and local NGOs; and NR 1,463,670 (US\$ 17,219) from other conservation partners. The Project also helped to build the institutional capacity of these organisations through such things as annual general assemblies where public hearings and an audit of the affairs and shared and communicated to the wider communities, thereby ensuring transparency and good governance. In some cases, these practices are very strong, e.g. Krishnapur CFCC indicated that they will not wait for a general assembly to inform local people about the Project activities and expenditure, but will do so as soon as the Project is over. Unfortunately, there are neither data nor records on the general assemblies held, nor on the public hearings and audits, so the TET could not ascertain how effective these practices were or what issues were discussed besides the reporting of programmes and budgets. The Project also concentrated on ensuring the inclusion of women and socially-disadvantaged groups into the decision-making bodies of the local institutions and managed to raise the proportion of these groups in the key decision-making positions (chair, vice-chair, secretary, vice-secretary and treasurer) – women increasing from 44.6% to 46.5%, Janajaatis from 25.7% to 36.8%, and Dalits from 7.7% to 17.7%.

This output has achieved most of its major objectives and yielded satisfactory benefits with only minor shortcomings, hence is evaluated as Satisfactory.

Output 4.2: Local communities involved in diversified livelihoods thereby reducing pressure on biodiversity assets

76. The Project invested considerable resources into livelihood development, refining its strategy as it went. Initially, during 2006-8 it adopted something of a scattergun approach providing seed grant money for a large variety of livelihoods over a wide geographic area. This followed on directly from

the SNV-funded *Western Terai Landscape Building Programme* but was gradually modified to the provision of material support and after the MTE it became focussed more on agriculture and forests and finally on just forests, the support becoming group-focussed to strengthen enterprise development with a strong emphasis on markets and business culture.

The Project promoted 44 different types of forest-based, value-added, micro-enterprise such as bamboo products, turmeric cultivation, furniture-making, pickle-making, and introduced new agricultural products such as menthe and chamomile for their aromatic oils. These crops also had an advantage in not being palatable to wild animals, thereby helping to avoid human-wildlife conflicts. However, the cultivation of aromatic plants for oils has had mixed fortunes (see paragraph 81). Importantly, all livelihood interventions were linked to reducing pressure on forests or other natural habitats.

For example, a pickle-making group employing 21 women supplying hotels and restaurants in Dhangadi and earning each woman around NR 80,000 (US\$ 941) per year, indicated that they used to collect fruit, fodder and other NTFPs from the forest and now, largely, they do not, and if they do collect fruit they have learned to pick the fruits instead of lopping off the branches. Of the 44 enterprises supported, 13 are still functioning which indicates a rather high failure rate (70%). Nonetheless, these 13 and opportunities from seed grants and from the cultivation of aromatic plants provides employment for 4,759 households/individuals. Incomes for forest-dependent households appear to be rising since a survey of forest-dependent households in 2011 showed that income generated from forest-based enterprises had increased by NRs 7,428 (US\$ 87) (19%) to NR 46,284 (US\$ 544) per household per year, although this still represents only US\$ 1.5 per household per day. The Project also supported a revival of eco-tourism to Bardia National Park and Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve which had contracted sharply as a result of the ten-year conflict. Tourist numbers grew by over eight times over the 2006 baseline of 1,191, thereby benefitting both the protected areas and the enterprises and communities around them, although numbers in Suklaphanta show variation and Bardia maybe capturing some of its market since access to it is easier and the number of flagship species, particularly tiger, is higher (Table 19). Revenue generated from tourism to the protected area is shared equally between the protected area and the buffer zone user committees for community development and conservation activities, while private enterprises benefit directly from home-stay, guiding, etc..

TABLE 19: NUMBER OF TOURISTS

| | SWR | BNP | Total | % 2006 |
|------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| 2007 | 1,420 | 4,476 | 5,896 | 495 |
| 2008 | 144 | 5,056 | 5,200 | 437 |
| 2009 | 498 | 6,743 | 7,241 | 608 |
| 2010 | 312 | 8,025 | 8,337 | 700 |
| 2011 | 540 | 9,253 | 9,793 | 822 |

77. Although the Project had no strategy for gender equality and social inclusion, care has been taken to ensure the inclusion of women and marginalised groups into livelihood development, for example loans to poor families (frequently Dalit or Janajati) have been at interest rates of 1-2% without need for collateral cf. 6-8% for others. Of the 878 households benefiting from forest-based micro-enterprises or from medicinal and aromatic plant cultivation, 56.9% are headed by women and 81% are Janajati, but Dalits comprise just 3.4%. Similarly, of the 4,759 households or individuals to benefit from any of the livelihood interventions, 51.6% are women, 13.1% are Dalit, and 61.4% are Janajatis. The overall attempt to support and improve the empowerment of these groups appears to have fulfilled its desired objectives since they have been empowered to practice, and be part of, the conservation activities. Access to resources has definitely increased among these vulnerable groups and livelihoods have changed from exchanging labour for food to cultivation (including agro-biodiversity) on leased land. While control of resources remains the domain of male and elites, communities are increasingly practicing benefit sharing.

Output 4.3: Awareness level on biodiversity conservation

78. Awareness of the need for biodiversity conservation within the three districts has been increased first by the Project and then promoted by the community itself. The Project, in partnership with community institutions, central level stakeholders, and district line agencies, has organised 396 conservation events attracting 18,737 people (see [Annex X](#) for a breakdown of these). One of the most successful methods appears to have been a radio show that the Project produced, that was broadcast to 52 VDCs on nine local FM stations and comprised 196 episodes of conservation and livelihood programmes between 2006 and September 2012 when it finally ended. An assessment shows that while very few local people listened regularly, more than two-thirds of respondents listened

to at least a few episodes each a year, but importantly community leaders had listened regularly. A radio listeners’ survey conducted estimated that each episode reached around 70-80 thousands listeners, and evidence from the field garnered by the TET suggested that the programme was popular.

STRATEGIC ISSUES

79. As can be seen from the foregoing part of the evaluation, the TET believes that to a large extent this has been a well-implemented project that has achieved many of its stated aims. The aim of this section is to concentrate on some key cross-cutting issues.

PROJECT-SPECIFIC ISSUES

Perverse incentives

80. A large number of CFUGs are having problems in registering their forest or renewing their plans at the District Forest Office because it is reputed to cost them more than NR 50,000 (US\$ 588). This cost includes the preparation of a management plan and of conducting a forest inventory. The TET suggests that the MFSC helps to register these community forests by providing support to prepare management plan, conduct inventory and assist in registry in DFO. There is also a mandatory provision by the Ministry of Environment Science and Technology (MoEST) for an Initial Environment Evaluation (IEE) for any actions involving over 200 ha of forest and for an Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) for any actions involving over 500 ha of forest. While such provisions are designed to minimise detrimental impacts to forests and to reduce their loss, when they are applied to community forests their intentions become perverse. Since districts lack specialists to conduct these assessments, the CFUGs are forced to hire expertise from Kathmandu at a cost to them of more than NR 200,000 (US\$ 2,353) for an IEE and more than NR 500,000 (US\$ 5,882) for an EIA. Since most CFUGs cannot afford such costs, they avoid them by registering forests of only below 200 ha or by splitting larger ones into areas below 200 ha. This has resulted in a fragmented approach to forest management planning which is the antithesis of the landscape approach, and in some cases, community forest has not been able to be established in all the area available leaving the remaining forest vulnerable to encroachment. The TET understands that the MFSC has already made a proposal to the Ministry of Environment (MoE) (whose requirement IEE and EIA is) to increase the minimum area for community forests requiring IEE and EIA to 750ha, but that this has not yet been approved by the MoE⁵⁸. The TET recommends that the Project makes it a priority to assist the MFSC in getting this approval from the MoEST, if possible before its closure. A removal of the application of the provisions from community forests in their entirety would be better still. Such an attainment would be a true measure of how far the Government has become committed to a landscape approach to conservation.

The TET recommends that the Project, with UNDP support, assists the MFSC in getting the provisions relating to IEE and EIA removed from community forests, or at least get the MoE to agree to raise the minimum area to which they apply for community forests.

| <i>Responsibility</i> | <i>Task</i> | <i>Time frame</i> | <i>Deliverable</i> |
|-----------------------|---|----------------------|----------------------|
| PMU/UNDP-CO/MFSC | Negotiate an agreement with the MoE to remove the perverse incentive to community forests accruing from the need for IEE and EIA. | As soon as possible. | Revised regulations. |

Contra-conservation activities

81. There are a number of interventions that have been made by the Project that have not had the intended effects. Chief amongst these are the introduction of aromatic cash crops, namely menthe and chamomile. The latter was hailed as a triumph shortly after its introduction, e.g. the August 2009 UNDP Newsletter states:

“The Sundevi User committee, comprising of 49 members in Suklaphanata Wildlife Reserve, Jhalari village of Kanchanpur district has been cultivating Camomile

⁵⁸ **MFSC comment:** Long comment – see Annex XI.

(*Matricaria chamomilla*)— a herbal plant to extract oil. ... The prospects are very promising for the biodiversity of the area and local incomes. ... Ms. Chandani Sawad, resident of Jhalari-6, Kanchanpur says, “our life took a new turn when WTLCP provided us with training and the seed money along with the oil processing plant. Now we have cash in our hands. We feel empowered”.”

Unfortunately, a number of issues were not thought through fully. At the time of its introduction, the oil derived from chamomile had a market price of around NR 40,000 (US\$ 470) per litre although some interviewees claimed that the Project had quoted them higher figures. Initial pilots were successful and with prices such as these, it is unsurprising that there was a very large and widespread take-up in the immediate vicinity. For example, at Jhalari, adjacent to Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve, the Project worked initially with 25 buffer zone user members to promote mint in a small area, which grew subsequently to 100 ha. As farmers learned of the benefits from mint, more became attracted and the small-scale distillation plant installed by the Project could not cope. Another product, chamomile, was then introduced which gave higher prices than the mint, and a private company Jain (an Indian company working in Nepal) invested in two distillation units and an on-site technical presence to ensure that the oil that it bought met the high standards needed for selling to the European market, in return for a 10% discount over the market price. In many instances the schemes failed, especially targeting the chamomile oil. The world market price of chamomile, which is always fluctuating, fell to levels as low as NR 13,000 (US\$ 153) per litre and the many in the local communities, who had not been provided with enough knowledge and training about dealing with the open market and strategies to minimise risk, refused to sell at such low prices, misguidedly hoarding the oil in the hope that prices would rise again. The oil degrades and became unsellable. Many who had made significant investments went bankrupt; those who did sell at lower prices broke even but are short of cash for buying fresh seeds of aromatics and food crops. Distillation of aromatic oils is an energy intensive process requiring the plants to be boiled in water from which the oils can then be separated. The energy is provided by fuelwood ... and the demand rose significantly. At the time of the TET's visit to Jhalari, the three distillation plants (one installed by the Project and two by Jain) were idle because there was insufficient wood from local sources to fuel them. The local community was talking about trying to get them converted to diesel or electricity. Those growing menthe had had fewer problems since the price was more stable, but the demand for fuelwood remained an issue for many. Only the plant at Khairapur had a secure fuel source – waste from an adjacent plywood factory. At the time of the TE, more than 400 households were cultivating aromatic plants on 73.1 ha in 10 different places (menthe 35 ha; chamomile 38.1 ha), producing 1,753 litres of oil.

82. Similarly, the introduction of biogas requires sufficient organic waste to feed the units. This is generally achieved through keeping water buffaloes or cattle and using their dung. Such animals require large amounts of fodder which is most easily supplied by grazing. As a result, grazing pressure on forests and wild grasslands could be rapidly increased by the introduction of biogas units resulting in reduced forest regeneration – exactly the opposite effect than was intended⁵⁹. The Project recognised this one fairly early on and introduced the concept of stall-feeding to those families who took up the offer of biogas installation, providing training in both techniques.

GEF identity

83. The Project Document states that:

“Apart from the UNDP logo, a GEF logo will also be included on all relevant GEF project publications, including among others, project hardware and vehicles purchased with GEF funds. Any citation on publications regarding projects funded by GEF will also accord proper acknowledgment to GEF.”

It was not. There were no GEF logos on vehicles⁶⁰; there was nothing on show at any of the offices; and it was missing from some publications, e.g. *Leveraging the Landscapes*⁶¹. While the TET has a

⁵⁹ **SNV Livelihoods Advisor comment:** Long comment – see Annex XI.

⁶⁰ **PMU comment:** *There is no logo of any funding agencies on project vehicles, except that of project name, WTLCP. TET response:* What happens re other agencies' logos is not of concern. The Project Document (which is a legal contract between GEF and the Government) states clearly that: “a GEF logo will also be included on all relevant GEF project publications, including among others, project hardware and vehicles purchased with GEF funds” (Para. 5, page 17).

great deal of empathy with the Government’s position of cutting back on the use of logos by international organisations, the identity of GEF was effectively invisible in this project, particularly on the ground⁶². When local people were asked who was behind the Project, most said they did not know; some said “*a foreign organisation*”; a few said “*UNDP*”. This lack of identity as a GEF project is much more than a point about flag-waving for GEF. GEF projects are special in that the international community is funding the incremental costs associated with the extra efforts needed to manage and conserve globally-important biodiversity. The TET finds no evidence that the beneficiaries or other stakeholders showed any understanding of this global dimension of the wildlife around them, and it is unclear whether Project staff had ever raised it with them. Indeed, one group of beneficiaries noted that “*The overall aim of the Project is livelihoods improvement with a focus on the poor*”. In the view of the TET, this represents a major missed opportunity. Organisations such as RARE⁶³ work from the point of view of stressing the global importance of species or habitats in an area and instilling pride in the local communities (villagers, schools, businesses) that they have these species present through focussed Pride campaigns, and then building social development around this necessary to support the long-term conservation. While still more needs to be made of this approach in the design of GEF projects in general, a point the Lead Evaluator has been making for years, it is disappointing to find that while the basics of the need for GEF branding are incorporated into the project documents, that this aspect is simply being ignored by the project teams implementing the activities.

District landscape advisory unit

84. One of the problems that this Project has faced has been the regular rotation of senior Government staff. This practice occurs at all levels, including District. While the practice brings some benefits, the costs include loss of continuity – see paragraph 33. The problem will not improve once political stability returns to local government since although government staff such as the Local Development Officer will no longer chair the DFSCCs, these positions will be filled through local elections. For a landscape approach to conservation to really work, continuity of approach through consistent, locally-based, technical knowledge is a major help. Under the current institutional arrangements, such consistency is, and will remain, lacking. The TET recommends, in the face of hostility to the idea from some quarters of the MFSC, that District Landscape Advisory Units be established that report to the Landscape Support Unit or to its successor, and which provide a long-term advisory function to the DFSCCs. Since the unit (or person) would be advisory only and not have any decision-making capacity, the post(s) should be established to be free of the Government’s requirement for staff rotation.

| The TET recommends that the MFSC establishes District Landscape Advisory Units to provide continuity of approach and consistent technical advice to the DFSCCs ⁶⁴ . | | | |
|---|---|----------------------|---|
| <i>Responsibility</i> | <i>Task</i> | <i>Time frame</i> | <i>Deliverable</i> |
| MFSC | Trial District Landscape Advisory Units in the three districts of the Western Terai | As soon as possible. | District Landscape Advisory Units in 3 districts. |

Field staff

85. In this Project, as with many others seen by the Lead Evaluator, much of the success at the field level depends on the commitment, hard work and skill of the social mobilisers/community motivators. Without them, nothing could be achieved. They cover vast areas, with insufficient resources, are underpaid, given little training and even less back-stopping support but still deal with the complexities inherent in local power structures and community relationships. Yet, because they fall on the lowest rung of the implementation team, they appear under-valued – here and in other countries. In this Project this is evidenced by the fact that the MTE recognised that they were underpaid and made a

⁶¹ **PMU comment:** Long comment – see Annex XI.

⁶² **MFSC comment:** Long comment – see Annex XI.

⁶³ <http://www.rareconservation.org/>

⁶⁴ **MFSC and Ekraj Sigdel, ex-WTLC Landscape Manager comments:** Long comments – see Annex XI.

recommendation that their salaries be brought into line with basic Government scales⁶⁵. Furthermore, at the end of any project they are simply discarded. This is not only a waste of all the experience these people have accumulated over the preceding years, it is also very de-motivating for them. On the other hand, drivers and office staff are maintained on a UNDP roster of experienced staff which provides them with an opportunity (but no guarantee) of work on other projects – but there is no such mechanism for social mobilisers/community motivators. This is wasteful. The TET recommends that UNDP creates a roster for social mobilisers/community motivators who have proved themselves on a project to provide a resource base of experienced personnel for future projects.

The TET recommends that a roster be created for social mobilisers/community motivators to provide a resource base of experienced personnel for future projects.

| <i>Responsibility</i> | <i>Task</i> | <i>Time frame</i> | <i>Deliverable</i> |
|-----------------------|--|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| UNDP-CO | Create a roster for social mobilisers/community motivators equivalent to that operated for drivers and office staff. | As soon as possible | Roster for experienced staff. |

RELEVANCE

86. A discussion of the relevance of the WTLC Project towards the national development priorities covers three distinct but overlapping issues – relevance to biodiversity conservation and GEF priorities; relevance to national policy; and relevance to the current context on-the-ground.

87. Biodiversity conservation and GEF priorities: The most significant measure of relevance has to be that whether the Project addresses the conservation of globally threatened biodiversity. For the Western Terai of Nepal this is overwhelmingly the case since the area supports some of the most important populations of endangered megafauna in the world – tiger, Indian rhinoceros, Asian elephant, gharial, blackbuck, swamp deer, to name but a few. With regard to GEF priorities, the Project was designed under GEF-3, so the priorities under this are relevant. The Programme Objective for OP-3 Forest Ecosystems at that time was:

“(a) Conservation or in-situ protection, will be sought through protection of primary/old growth and ecologically mature secondary forest ecosystems, by establishing and strengthening systems of conservation areas, focusing primarily on tropical and temperate ecosystems in areas at risk; and

(b) Sustainable use forest management will be sought by combining production, socio-economic, and biodiversity goals. The Operational Strategy calls for a range of uses from strict protection on reserves through various forms of multiple use with conservation easements to full scale use.”

and a successful outcome was defined as:

“one where globally important biodiversity has been conserved or sustainably used in a specific forest ecosystem”.

Amongst the 16 activities listed as being “consistent with the incremental cost approach” that GEF could pay for are:

“(a) integration of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use objectives in land use and natural resource use management plans;

(b) integrated pilot projects providing alternative livelihoods to local and indigenous communities residing in buffer zones of globally important biological areas;

(c) integrated conservation and development projects around protected forests;

(d) participatory management of natural resources, and alternative livelihoods;

(e) tenure reform and land titling in the buffer zones around important protected forests;”

⁶⁵ **PMU comment:** MTE suggested for salary revision only, but project decided to made at par with government salary. It was at that instance only when salary of staff was lowered than that of government staff.

It should be clear from the descriptions of activities included under the foregoing section *Achievement of Project Outputs* (paragraphs 62-78) that the Project has fulfilled these aims and approaches. Furthermore, the Project remains in line with GEF-5 priorities, since under *Objective Two: Mainstream biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into production landscapes/seascapes and sectors*, the rationale states:

“The incorporation of biodiversity conservation, sustainable use, and benefit-sharing into broader policy, legal, and regulatory frameworks is not taking place in many GEF-eligible countries because of a number of factors. These factors include poor governance, weak capacity, conflicting policies (e.g., tenure regimes biased against “idle” lands), and the lack of scientific knowledge and incentives.”

and that:

“GEF will support the development and implementation of policy and regulatory frameworks that provide incentives for private actors to align their practices and behaviour with the principles of sustainable use and management.”

88. National priorities: The Project document notes that the Project’s objectives, strategies, and activities are consistent with key national policies. The *National Biodiversity Strategy (2002)* emphasises the importance of conserving the Terai ecosystems and recognises the need for a comprehensive approach.

“To this end, the NBS has adopted the landscape planning approach to protect and manage biodiversity on a sustainable, long-term basis. Declaring buffer zones around national parks and reserves in view of developing compatible land use patterns adjacent to PAs to simultaneously address the growing needs of the people and the rapidly decreasing natural cover is an effective initiative in landscape conservation. Efforts will be made to link PAs with wildlife-friendly corridors.”

Similarly, the *National Biodiversity and Implementation Plan (2005)* makes several references to the landscape approach, e.g. the first of the objectives it lists under section 1.6.2 states:

“Conserve biodiversity of Nepal within and outside the protected areas and at the landscape level through public participation, institutional strengthening, ensuring sustainable funding mechanism, consolidating inventory and database systems, developing Sui generis legislation, and transboundary cooperation.”

and under a list of priority projects in Table 4 it lists the highest priority one as “*Forests Biodiversity Conservation through Community’s Participation (outside Protected Areas)*” and the eighth as “*Landscape Level Biodiversity Conservation*”.

The *Revised Forestry Sector Policy (2002)* also leans towards the landscape approach implicitly:

“High priority is given to biodiversity conservation while ensuring both sustainable livelihoods for peoples and a landscape planning approach to manage biodiversity on an ecological basis. Due emphasis has been given for sustainable utilization of forest resources and community participation in decision making as well as equitable sharing of benefits. Principle of multiple use of land in a holistic way will be taken up by blending forestry management with biodiversity conservation and community development activities.”

The importance of the Terai landscape was highlighted through the *Terai Arc Landscape Strategy 2004-2014* which provides the guiding strategies to ensure achievement of the TAL vision endorsed by the Government in April 2001. The TAL vision is:

“A globally unique landscape where biodiversity is conserved, ecological integrity is safeguarded and sustainable livelihoods of its people are secured.”

Subsequently, national policies produced during the Project’s lifetime have continued to emphasise the relevance of the Project’s approach. The *Three Year Interim Plan 2007/08-2009/10* notes under Chapter 12 Forests and Soil Conservation that one of the Challenges is;

“To reduce human pressure in national forests of the Terai, Chure and Bhawar areas through the optimal use of forest products”

and amongst the Opportunities that:

“Effective and sustainable achievements have been made in community forestry, soil and watershed conservation, protected area, buffer zone area protection, and leasehold forests and landscape conservation programs through public participation. Special focus has been assigned for participation, income generation and livelihood of the poor and deprived groups of the society in these programs.”

The unofficial translation of the Three Year Plan of Nepal, 2010/12-2012/13 notes that it:

“... recognises integrated landscape planning, sustainable financing, and corridor management as one of the best and most effective practices of landscape level conservation and intends to mainstream it by developing appropriate policies, strategies, programmes and actions. Likewise, it envisions strengthening the Landscape Support Unit for creating policy and the institutional environment conducive to the implementation of the landscape level programme of the country”.

Strategy 3 of this Plan is related directly to landscape level conservation, and envisions

"adoption of landscape level management approaches for conservation and management of forests and natural resources"

Through a five point working policy which includes:

“(a) Plan and implement landscape level conservation programme in different physiographic regions of the country while focusing on biodiversity conservation, water conservation, sustainable livelihoods, ...

(c) Organise trans-boundary cooperation meetings for controlling wildlife related crimes including establishment of international green corridors and generate sustainable finance through selling of environmental services, especially carbon finance;

(d) Continue implementation of TAL strategic plan; design and implement conservation friendly plan and programmes in other priority conservation landscapes of the country; and

(e) Mainstream best practices of landscape level conservation initiatives in national policy and programme such as integrated landscape planning, sustainable financing mechanism and biological corridor management”

89. Current context: As the Project comes to an end, its relevance remains high since the Western Terai remains under considerable threat. Political instability, a growing human population, high numbers of landless people, and restricted Government resources means that forests remain under threat and the existing protected areas are under-resourced. The Project has increased awareness of the need for biodiversity conservation through much of the three districts in which it has worked and has introduced a number of important initiatives such as performance-based grant systems in the forest corridors, payments for ecological services, a range of alternative livelihoods, as well as developing key institutional mechanisms for coordinating conservation work between the protected and productive landscapes. These, along with the improved policy framework developed by the Project, have provided the building blocks to adopt a real landscape approach to combating the threats. While it is regretful that the Project found itself unable to demonstrate the veracity of the landscape approach through the coordinated piloting of all the elements together, nonetheless the relevance of the approach remains unquestionable. It is now in the hands of the Government to prove this.

The Project intervenes in a globally important landscape, is congruent with GEF and national priorities, and remains pertinent in the light of the current levels of threat; hence it is evaluated as Relevant.

SUSTAINABILITY

90. Financial: The outlook for the long-term financial sustainability of the Project appears fairly strong. There is a clear commitment from the MFSC to continue funding the protected areas, and while this is not really sufficient to secure the level of conservation activities required, recent increases in the entry fees will go some way to helping the situation. Budgets have also been provided for the three new Protected Forests, although these also appear to be insufficient, and problems remain over funding requirements for new (or renewing) operational plans for Community Forests (see paragraph 80). That aside, Ministry funding is also provided to maintain the Landscape Support Unit and the DFSCCs. The Project has also worked hard to develop sustainable financing mechanisms, and while the MFSC's attempt to levy a tax on commercial timber was deemed unconstitutional by the Supreme Court, it has provided the pool of money from which the performance based grant system is being operated from, and is pursuing various initiatives for payments for ecological services. At the local level, while some of the Project's ideas proved not to be viable economically, almost half have. These, and many of the agricultural interventions, are self-sustaining and/or growing. Most of the revolving funds operated by the CFCCs or the cooperatives are increasing since interest payments more than cover the costs of administration and defaulters. The seed banks created also appear to be self-sustaining since the buildings have been provided by the Project, and the small profits being made from selling local varieties of seeds will continue to cover their negligible overheads after cessation of the Project. Furthermore, the Government and WWF (and to some extent LI-BIRD) remain committed to working in the area through the TAL Programme, hence a degree of funding is likely to continue for some of the Project's achievements. Given that the risks that affect this dimension are negligible, and more in degree of scale than absolute, the financial sustainability of the Project is considered to be **Likely**.

91. Socio-economic: The Project has been implemented through participatory processes with a wide range of stakeholders. Most of those people interviewed by the TET at the District and local levels expressed support for the Project's aims and a willingness to continue conservation actions because of the benefits that they brought. Two examples – one: members of the Bajjanath Community Forest User Group indicated that restoration of two forest wetlands had improved their farmland since they now have access to irrigation water, and re-growth of their forest was enabling a watershed function providing them with water via the wetlands all year round. Two: the Godawari Cooperative has a pickle-making group which earns each of its 21 women approximately US\$25 per month, and the resulting removal of pressure from the forest and improved management of the forest by other members has resulted in the cooperative receiving a performance-based payment of NR 33,198 (US\$ 390) in 2010/11. As a result of the direct links built between conservation actions and local people's economic well-being (rather than economic development in isolation), the Project's approach enjoys a very wide support base which is likely not only to be helpful in the sustainability of Project actions, but in replicating the schemes in other villages. As a result, the socio-economic sustainability is adjudged to be **Likely**.

92. Institutional and Governance: The institutional sustainability of the Project appears mixed. Those agencies directly involved appear strongly committed towards its aims and the impacts that it has had, and clearly the decision to implement the activities directly through Government institutions has paid dividends in this respect. Many of these have been significantly strengthened at several levels and are now able to play stronger technical and administrative roles in future landscape-based conservation initiatives. However, there remain some concerns. Although the Project has undertaken some work at the institutional level, a brief perusal of the financial investments shows this to have been the least funded-aspect of the project in terms of the proportion of actual funds spent against budget (see Table 7 (paragraph 40)). The lack of road-testing of how the institutions will fair in attempting to implement the new policies and sustainable financing mechanisms, and specifically how MFSC-centric institutions will be able to address the major cross-sectoral planning issues that a landscape approach demands is a major concern. The future role of the Landscape Support Unit within the MFSC still appears to be undecided between those who see it as a redundant Project structure which will be closed down upon Project termination, and those who wish to expand its role as a Government Programme. Similarly, while the DFSCCs are generally acknowledged to have been a successful initiative at the District level, there is debate about the value of the CFCCs at the local

level. Introduced by the Project mainly because WWF and the TAL Programme have been using them to help coordinate their activities, concerns over their relevance and sustainability were raised to the TET by many sources, particularly over their positioning outside of government structures (i.e. they are registered as NGOs with the District Administration Office while their members' main links are naturally with the District Forest Office), their weak representation with the DFSCCs (CFCCs are represented through one or more seats as NGOs), the lack of recourse to legal action compared to cooperatives should funds be mis-managed or misappropriated, and the apparent lack of support for them from the Federation of Community Forestry Users, Nepal (FECOFUN). Many saw their continued existence to be precarious in the absence of the Project. Furthermore, despite extensive strengthening, the capacity of many of these grassroots community organisations remains weak, particularly over the technical implementation of many activities. Furthermore, overriding all of this, the Government's policy of frequently rotating staff which has bedevilled implementation of this Project (see paragraph 33) will continue to unwittingly obstruct implementation of the landscape approach post-Project at central and district levels for exactly the same reasons – lack of technical continuity and competence, confusion arising from changing ideas and priorities, delays encountered while new roles are learned. The inability of the Project to road-test the institutional arrangements for the landscape approach to conservation is not only its greatest disappointment, it is also the source of the greatest remaining uncertainties. Therefore, the TET adjudges there to be significant risks associated with this dimension of sustainability, and the institutional sustainability is considered to be **Moderately Unlikely**.

93. Environmental: Risks associated with this dimension of sustainability are only very slight, for example recent floods damaged some of the bio-engineering works along river banks before they had had a chance to mature, but largely the environmental sustainability is deemed to be **Likely**.

Since UNDP-GEF deems each risk dimension of sustainability to be critical, the overall rating for sustainability cannot be higher than the rating of the dimension with lowest rating, and as such the overall sustainability of the Project has to be ranked as **Moderately Unlikely**.

CATALYTIC ROLE AND REPLICATION

94. Discussion of replication in relation to the WTLC Project has to be undertaken at two levels – the macro-level of replicating it as a landscape-scale model, and the micro-level with regard to replication of its products and site-based interventions. While clearly it is too early for there to have been shown any level of replication at the macro-level, nonetheless this is the key issue regarding the Project. The summary of the Project Document stated that:

“Ultimately, the project aims to develop replicable landscape-level management models to safeguard the biological wealth and vital ecological functions in Nepal.”

Unfortunately because of the three years lost from the beginning of the Project, it has not been able to achieve this and this remains the over-riding problem. While it has developed a number of high quality products, and even piloted some of these in isolation, the full institutional and policy fabric required to demonstrate a cohesive landscape-based model is not yet in place. As an analogy, the Project has built all the components to produce a top quality car, but it has not assembled them into that car, nor test driven it. At the end of the Project, it is still unknown whether all the pieces can be assembled into a fully-functioning landscape model that can be replicated for other landscapes in Nepal. This is disappointing.

95. At the micro-level, the catalytic role has been better. At the top-most level, the development and successful piloting of the DFSCCs has been scaled up and become a nationally-required District-level institution, boding well for future landscape approaches elsewhere. At the replication level, some small innovations have already been picked up by others, e.g. the solar pump demonstrated at Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve has been replicated by WWF in Bardia National Park, and SNV have been replicating some of the models of payments for ecological services developed in WTLC in Bhutan. There is also a strong belief that LI-BIRD will be able to replicate some activities through other donor-funded projects; while efforts have been made over the last two years to train one person

from each BCDC as a voluntary local resource person to facilitate the replication of good practices from farmer to farmer and VDC to VDC. But the main catalytic role has come at the demonstration level where a wide range of innovative approaches have been piloted successfully, encompassing income-generating activities for individuals; larger group-based enterprise developments and cooperatives; methods to conserve agro-biodiversity such as seed banks and diversity plots; methods to restore habitats such as wetlands and grasslands; establishment of Protected Forests; and perhaps most importantly sustainable financing mechanisms such as payment for environmental services, and performance based grant systems, both of which could change the face of biodiversity conservation in the productive landscapes of Nepal. Although the Project got off to a seriously slow start, and those involved were always playing catch-up, they should take credit for developing such a wide range innovative tools and mechanisms and for demonstrating them successfully in the time remaining to them.

COUNTRY OWNERSHIP

96. The TET takes great pleasure in being able to report that the Government of Nepal has taken considerable ownership of this Project. This may appear to be obvious, given that the Project was nationally executed through the MFSC, but sadly ownership does not always accompany such execution. In this case, however, the MFSC specifically, and the Government more generally, has taken the landscape approach to heart, including it by name for the first time within the most recent Three Year Plan., In many ways the Project's inability to have delivered a fully-demonstrated, replicable landscape-level management model is not only its single greatest failure, but also a real squandered opportunity given the Government's receptiveness to the ideas and its palpable hunger to make progress. As one senior government officer said, "*the Government expected a one-time solution, not repeated needs for projects*". Nonetheless, the key building blocks are in place, again due in no small part to the Government's willingness to endorse many of the policy documents drafted by the Project and to run with its many innovative practices, e.g. the payment for environmental services and the performance-based grant system pilot schemes. Government ownership is also manifest in its interest in replicating those aspects of the Project that it deems have already been successful. Key amongst these are the DFCCs, now re-named as the DFSCCs to have a broader remit, established in all districts of the country.

RECOMMENDATIONS

97. The recommendations herewith cannot help with the WTLC Project which will end shortly but may help to establish its legacy.

- The Project, with UNDP support, should assist the MFSC in getting the provisions relating to IEE and EIA removed from community forests, or at least get the MoE to agree to raise the minimum area to which they apply for community forests (see paragraph 80).
- The MFSC should establish District Landscape Advisory Units to provide continuity of approach and consistent technical advice to the DFSCCs (see paragraph 84).
- The UNDP-CO should create a roster for social mobilisers/community motivators to provide a resource base of experienced personnel for future projects (see paragraph 85).

LESSONS LEARNED

98. Lessons learned have been arranged under project-related headings, and cross-referenced back to the paragraph where they appear if relevant. Further discussion and key points for future projects have been added in this section.

STRATEGIC

#1 The landscape approach is more than the WTLC

The Project has developed a suite of tools, policies, institutional improvements, and field level demonstrations that will together provide a strong basis for implementing a landscape level approach

to conservation management in Nepal. It is a pity that it could not have tested the whole system together and demonstrated the efficacy of the method to all parties' satisfaction – but sometimes unforeseen delays occur. What is important is that the MFSC now takes the building blocks created by the WTLCP and undertakes the pilot implementation of the whole itself. In doing this, it will need to deal with more than the WTLCP and develop a common understanding of the results from the *Conservation and Sustainable Use of Wetlands in Nepal* Project and those arising from the TAL Programme.

#2 *Direct payments make excellent incentives to achieve conservation goals*

The Project has piloted two separate incentive schemes in which villagers or communities can participate, exchanging certain agreed behaviours for financial reward. What is remarkable is that in each case, the financial rewards for those involved are linked directly to the conservation outcome, not through some indirect pathway; if the outcome (maintenance of the habitat through reduced clearance or reduced grazing, or reduced poaching of key species through increased vigilance) is not achieved, then no payments are made. Too frequently, such schemes are indirect either involving a third party or situation, e.g. promises of increased economic benefits through provision of goods for the tourist trade over which locals do not have control (e.g. through a protected area), or payments through a water company for watershed protection of which they may see part. In this case, because those involved have direct control over the service valued (habitat protection, species conservation), are rewarded financially directly for provision of that service, and continuing provision is linked directly to a healthy conservation status, the results have been promising. This effect was also seen for the same reasons in the *Establishing Conservation Areas through Landscape Management (CALM) in the Northern Plains of Cambodia* Project and suggests that the direct payment approach is particularly appropriate to landscape level conservation.

Key points for future projects:

- a) *Wherever possible, when designing incentive schemes (for mainstreaming projects) or economically beneficial schemes for local people, direct links between the reward and the desired conservation outcome should be as direct as possible. This can best be achieved if local people can be provided with direct control over the continued provision of the good/service under consideration and receive a payment/financial (or other) reward directly for providing it in the way that is desired.*

DESIGN

#3 *Implementation arrangements are as important as the technical design of a project*

This is the single most-important lesson learned from the WTLC Project and is applicable to all GEF projects involving complex partnerships. Designers need to ensure that the implementation modalities and management mechanisms are unambiguously included in the Project Document. Nothing should be left to the inception period. If possible, a memorandum of understanding or similar document should be drafted and signed by all parties involved covering financial modalities, management responsibilities, office arrangements, and the relationships and hierarchies relating to any existing projects or programmes of which the project will be a part of or of which will be part of the project.

Key points for future projects:

- a) *Wherever possible, all implementation arrangements should be detailed and agreed in the Project Document.*
- b) *No such details should be left to be worked out in the inception period.*
- c) *Where complex partnerships are in play, a signed memorandum of understanding or similar should accompany the Project Document.*

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

#4 Regular rotation of government staff hinders the implementation of nationally executed projects

Regular rotation of government staff is a standard practice to help ensure good governance. However, for long-term projects, say six years and over, it brings significant disruption through lack of technical continuity and competence, confusion arising from changing ideas and priorities, and delays while new roles are learned.

Key points for future projects:

- a) *For long-term projects, UNDP-GEF should negotiate a suspension of the rotation policy for any government staff filling the posts of National Project Director, National Project Manager, and/or National Project Coordinator.*

#5 Not all livelihood interventions bring conservation benefits

The WTLC Project's introduction of a wide range of innovative livelihood interventions has brought some real benefits to local communities and provided demonstration opportunities for others to learn. Unfortunately not all of the interventions were beneficial to conservation as even superficial screening would have suggested. The high energy demand for aromatic oil distillation in areas where the only energy available is firewood was clearly going to increase pressure on forests locally – the opposite of what was intended. Similarly, the introduction of biogas required additional measures such as stall feeding of the domestic animals if grazing pressure was not to be increased.

Key points for future projects:

- a) *All project interventions should undergo a simple screening process to ensure that the factors involved in their introduction do not result in contra-conservation effects.*

#6 Training on marketing and issues related to market behaviour should be an integral part of livelihood interventions

One of the biggest failures of the project has been the management of the introduction of aromatic oils. This failure is not really one of the intervention itself, although the issue of limited energy supply was always going to be a problem, but rather one of omission. Aromatic oils are a cash crop destined for a world market. For almost all of those involved in growing these crops, the only market that they will have been exposed to is a local one where food, seeds and animals are traded; fluctuations in price are generally small; and the people have intimate knowledge and experience of value and worth. This understanding vanishes when they move to a larger market where the processes, scale of fluctuations and their reasons, and the players are markedly different. It is all well and good to train local people in growing a new crop but with it comes a responsibility to train them and support them in dealing with the market – to manage their expectations; to teach them about risk and the ways to minimise it; to impart an understanding of commitment to the required quality of the product; and how to deal and negotiate with the private sector. Despite a later move to become focussed on group and enterprise development and an emphasis on markets and business culture, which has paid dividends for those involved in turmeric cultivation, bamboo crafts, and pickle-making, none of this happened for those growing aromatic oil crops and the omission is mainly responsible for the problems encountered, not the fall in the world market price of the product.

Key points for future projects:

- a) *It is essential to provide adequate training in all aspects of the market and risk management when introducing people to cash-cropping for the first time.*
- b) *Projects should also allow sufficient human and financial resources to provide adequate back-stopping and continued advice to such interventions.*

ANNEX I: TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR END-TERM EVALUATION

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) and Global Environment Facility (GEF) Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) policies and procedures, all full and medium-sized UNDP support GEF financed projects are required to undergo a terminal evaluation upon completion of implementation. These terms of reference (TOR) sets out the expectations for a Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the Creating Biodiversity Conservation Landscapes in Nepal's Lowland Terai and Eastern Himal Areas (PIMS 1831)

The essentials of the project to be evaluated are as follows:

PROJECT SUMMARY TABLE

| Project Title | | <i>Creating Biodiversity Conservation Landscapes in Nepal's Lowland Terai and Eastern Himal Areas</i> | | |
|--------------------------|--|---|--|---|
| GEF Project ID: | PIMS 1831 | | <i>at endorsement</i> <i>(Million US\$)</i> | <i>at completion</i> <i>(Million US\$)</i> |
| UNDP Project ID: | 00037768 | GEF financing: | 3.31 | 3.31 |
| Country: | Nepal | IA/EA own: | 2.61 | 2.61 |
| Region: | Asia and Pacific | Government: | 2.61 | 2.61 |
| Focal Area: | Biodiversity | Other: | 7.18 | 6.38 |
| FA Objectives, (OP/SP): | Forest Ecosystem Agrobiodiversity | Total co-financing: | 9.79 | 8.99 |
| Executing Agency: | MFSC | Total Project Cost: | 13.1 | 12.3 |
| Other Partners involved: | SNV WWF LIBIRD Bioersity International NARC | ProDoc Signature (date project began): | | 23 March 2005 |
| | | (Operational) Closing Date: | Proposed: 31 August 2012 | Actual: 31 December 2012 |

OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

The project is designed to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the western part of Nepal's Terai Arc Landscape by establishing effective management systems and building capacity for the conservation and sustainable use of the Western Terai landscape complex (WTLC). The project strategy is based on the premise that the long-term viability of globally significant biodiversity hinges on the ability to manage an overall system of habitats in a wide ecological landscape that goes beyond the confines of protected areas. The project's landscape approach will reorient Nepal's policy and legal framework and institutional arrangements towards integrated ecosystem management to achieve multiple objectives in conservation, sustainable natural resource management, and poverty alleviation, the project aims to develop replicable landscape-level management models to safeguard the long-term biological wealth and vital ecological functions in Nepal. The project also addresses major biodiversity threats of agriculture encroachment and squatting in forestlands; high grazing pressure in the forests; overexploitation of forest resources; and the replacement of traditional agricultural crop varieties and landraces with modern cultivars.

The overall goal of WTLC is to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of globally significant biodiversity in Nepal's Western Terai Landscape Complex. The project aims to establish effective management systems and build capacity for the conservation and sustainable use of Nepal's Western Terai Landscape Complex.

The project intends to achieve the following Outcomes:

- The national policy environment and legal framework for integrated landscape planning in the Western Terai Landscape Complex enabled;
- The institutional framework for integrated landscape management of biodiversity in the Western Terai Landscape Complex established;
- Biodiversity assets in government managed lands are conserved and sustainably managed; and
- Local communities empowered to practice sustainable, biodiversity friendly natural resource and land use management and pursue diversified livelihoods.

Evaluation should cover direct funding of the project from GEF and TRAC/UNDP. Though evaluation will exclude other parallel funding program/activities under the WTLCP, especially of WWF-Nepal, Bioersity International, NARC and LIBIRD, but will look into complementarities to achieve outcomes. Evaluation will be conducted according to the guidance, rules and procedures established by UNDP and GEF as reflected in the UNDP Evaluation Guidance for GEF Financed Projects.

The objectives of the evaluation are to assess the achievement of project results, and to draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming. Specific objectives include:

- Assess extent of achievements of projects outputs and results including extent of implementation of Mid-Term Evaluation recommendations
- Examine current level of impact and sustainability of results, including the contribution to institutional strengthening, biodiversity conservation and conservation friendly livelihood promotion, and the achievement of global and national environmental goals
- Identify and document lessons learned and make recommendations that will maximize the impact of the project and also to provide evidences to improve design and implementation of similar projects in near future

EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHOD

An overall approach and method⁶⁶ for conducting project terminal evaluations of UNDP supported GEF financed projects have developed over time. The evaluator is expected to frame the evaluation effort using the criteria of **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact**, as defined and explained in the UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects.

A set of questions covering each of these criteria have been drafted and are included with this TOR (**Annex 2**) The evaluator is expected to amend, complete and submit this matrix as part of an evaluation inception report, and shall include it as an annex to the final report.

The evaluation must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The evaluator is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with government counterparts, in particular the GEF operational focal point, UNDP Country Office, project team, UNDP GEF Technical Adviser based in the region and key stakeholders. The evaluator is expected to conduct a field mission to Nepal, including the following project sites in Bardia, Kailali an Kanchanpur districts, especially on productive and protective landscape of western terai. Interviews will be held with the following organizations and individuals at a minimum: (UNDP, Ministry of Forests an Soil Conservation, World Wildlife Fund, Netherlands Development cooperation (SNV), Department of Forests (DoF), Department of National Park and Wildlife Conservation, Department of Soil Conservation, National Agriculture Research Council , Local Development Officer/District Development Committee, District Forest Coordination Committee (DFCC) members, Protected area officials, protected forests managers, Regional Directorate of Forests, District Forest Officials, Community people and project staff).

⁶⁶ For additional information on methods, see the [Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results](#), Chapter 7, pg. 163.

The evaluator will review all relevant sources of information, such as the project document, project reports – including Annual APR/PIR, project budget revisions, midterm review, progress reports, GEF focal area tracking tools, project files, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the evaluator considers useful for this evidence-based assessment. A list of documents that the project team will provide to the evaluator for review is included in

EVALUATION CRITERIA & RATINGS

An assessment of project performance will be carried out, based against expectations set out in the Project Logical Framework/Results Framework, which provides performance and impact indicators for project implementation along with their corresponding means of verification. The evaluation will at a minimum cover the criteria of: **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact**. Ratings must be provided on the following performance criteria. The completed table must be included in the evaluation executive summary. The obligatory rating scales are included in *Annex 4*.

| Evaluation Ratings: | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|---|---------------|
| 1. Monitoring and Evaluation | <i>rating</i> | 2. IA & EA Execution | <i>rating</i> |
| M&E design at entry | | Quality of UNDP Implementation | |
| M&E Plan Implementation | | Quality of Execution - Executing Agency | |
| Overall quality of M&E | | Overall quality of Implementation / Execution | |
| 3. Assessment of Outcomes | <i>rating</i> | 4. Sustainability | <i>rating</i> |
| Relevance | | Financial resources: | |
| Effectiveness | | Socio-political: | |
| Efficiency | | Institutional framework and governance: | |
| Overall Project Outcome Rating | | Environmental : | |
| | | Overall likelihood of sustainability: | |

PROJECT FINANCE / CO FINANCE

The Evaluation will assess the key financial aspects of the project, including the extent of co-financing planned and realized. Project cost and funding data will be required, including annual expenditures. Variances between planned and actual expenditures will need to be assessed and explained. Results from recent financial audits, as available, should be taken into consideration. The evaluator(s) will receive assistance from the Country Office (CO) and Project Team to obtain financial data in order to complete the co-financing table below, which will be included in the terminal evaluation report.

| Co-financing (type/source) | UNDP own financing (million US\$) | | Government (million US\$) | | Partner Agency (million US\$) | | Total (million US\$) | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------|---------------------------|--------|-------------------------------|--------|----------------------|--------|
| | Planned | Actual | Planned | Actual | Planned | Actual | Actual | Actual |
| Grants | | | | | | | | |
| Loans/Concessions | | | | | | | | |
| • In-kind support | | | | | | | | |
| • Other | | | | | | | | |
| Totals | | | | | | | | |

MAINSTREAMING

UNDP supported GEF financed projects are key components in UNDP country programming, as well as regional and global programmes. The evaluation will assess the extent to which the project was successfully mainstreamed with other UNDP priorities, including poverty alleviation, improved governance, the prevention and recovery from natural disasters, and gender.

IMPACT

The evaluators will assess the extent to which the project is achieving impacts or progressing towards the achievement of impacts. Key findings that should be brought out in the evaluations include whether the project has demonstrated: a) verifiable improvements in ecological status, b) verifiable reductions in stress on ecological systems, and/or c) demonstrated progress towards these impact achievements.⁶⁷

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS & LESSONS

The evaluation report must include a chapter providing a set of **conclusions, recommendations and lessons**.

IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

The principal responsibility for managing this evaluation resides with the UNDP CO in *Nepal*. The UNDP CO will contract the evaluators and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements within the country for the evaluation team.

The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the Evaluators team to set up stakeholder interviews, arrange field visits, coordinate with the Government etc.

EVALUATION TIMEFRAME

The total duration of the evaluation will be 25 working days according to the following plan:

| Activity | Timing | Completion Date |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| Preparation | 2 days | 20 September, 2012 |
| Evaluation Mission | 15 days (6 field days) | 7 October, 2012 |
| Draft Evaluation Report | 7 days | 16 October, 2012 |
| Final Report | 1 days | 10 November, 2012 |

EVALUATION DELIVERABLES

The evaluation team is expected to deliver the following:

For International Consultant

| Deliverable | Content | Timing | Responsibilities |
|---------------------------|--|--|--|
| Inception Report | Evaluator provides clarifications on timing and method | No later than 2 weeks before the evaluation mission. | Evaluator submits to UNDP CO |
| Presentation | Initial Findings | End of evaluation mission | To project management, UNDP CO |
| Draft Final Report | Full report, (per annexed template) with annexes | Within 3 weeks of the evaluation mission | Sent to CO, reviewed by RTA, PCU, GEF OFPs |
| Final Report* | Revised report | Within 1 week of receiving UNDP comments on draft | Sent to CO for uploading to UNDP ERC. |

*When submitting the final evaluation report, the evaluator is required also to provide an 'audit trail', detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final evaluation report. *Annex 6* presents tentative outline of evaluation report.

For National Consultant

Landscape Conservation Specialist

- An assessment of effectiveness of landscape conservation approach promoted by WTLCP
- An assessment of national capacity built to implement landscape conservation approach in Nepal

⁶⁷ A useful tool for gauging progress to impact is the Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROtI) method developed by the GEF Evaluation Office: [ROtI Handbook 2009](#)

Livelihood, Social and Gender Specialist

- An analysis of environment friendly and sustainable livelihood opportunities produced by WTLC
- An analysis of approaches undertaken by WTLC for making landscape conservation gender responsive and inclusive

TEAM COMPOSITION

The evaluation team will be composed of (1 international and 2 national evaluators). International evaluator will lead the team and will be responsible for ensuring overall quality and finalizing the report. The evaluators shall have prior experience in evaluating similar projects. Experience with GEF financed projects is an advantage. The evaluators selected should not have participated in the project preparation and/or implementation and should not have conflict of interest with project related activities.

The team is required to combine international calibre evaluation expertise, the latest thinking in landscape conservation and sustainable-use, and knowledge of the regional context. The consultant will be hired by UNDP directly, following UNDP rules and procedures.

International Consultant/Team leader should have following qualification:

- At-least Master degree in natural resource management or relevant subjects
- Minimum 10 years of relevant professional experience with strong technical background and proven competency in landscape level biodiversity conservation, protected areas management, or related areas of natural resource management, including demonstrable expertise in project formulation, implementation and evaluation
- Knowledge of UNDP and GEF
- Demonstrated ability to work with developing country government agencies and NGOs. Previous work experience in South Asia, working experience in Nepal would be an asset
- Previous experience with results-based monitoring and evaluation methodologies;
- Familiarity with GEF programming and procedures, as well as its evaluation policies and guidelines, will be a useful asset
- Previous work experience with United Nations or other multilateral/bilateral development assistance agencies is a useful asset.
- Experience leading multi-disciplinary, multi-national teams in high stress. Ability to meet short deadlines

Two national evaluators, a Landscape Conservation Specialist and a Livelihoods (Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist) will be hired to support the international expert/Team leader. The Team members must present the following qualifications:

- At-least Master degree in natural resource management, social sciences or relevant subjects
- Minimum 10 years of relevant professional experience in relevant field
- Previous experience with results-based monitoring and evaluation methodologies;
- Familiarity with GEF programming and procedures, as well as its evaluation policies and guidelines, will be a useful asset
- Technical knowledge and competences in the targeted focal area(s)
- Demonstrated analytical skills, ability to assess complex situations, to succinctly and clearly distill critical issues, and to draw practical conclusions

The evaluation team shall conduct a debriefing at the end of evaluation mission. The international consultant shall lead the presentation on a draft review of the findings and recommendations with the national level stakeholders, planned at the end of the evaluation mission. Likewise, s/he should lead drafting and finalization of the terminal evaluation. The allocation of tasks in the execution of this TOR shall be decided mutually between the International and National consultants. Table below presents tentative person days of involvement of national and international evaluators.

| Activity | Team leader (International evaluator) | Landscape conservation Specialist (National Evaluator) | Livelihoods & Gender and social inclusion Specialist (National evaluator) |
|--------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Preparation | 2 days | 2 days | 2 days |
| Evaluation Mission | 15 days including 6 days for field visit | 15 days including 6 days for field visit | 15 days including 6 days for field visit |
| Draft Evaluation Report | 7 days | 3 days | 3 days |
| Final Report | 1 days | 1 days | 1 days |
| Total | 25 days | 21 days | 21 days |
| Home based input | 10 days | | |
| Evaluation mission | 15 days | | |

EVALUATOR ETHICS

Evaluation consultants will be held to the highest ethical standards and are required to sign a Code of Conduct () upon acceptance of the assignment. UNDP evaluations are conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the [UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations'](#)

ANNEX II : ITINERARY OF ACTIVITIES OF THE FINAL EVALUATION MISSION

| Date | | Activities |
|------|------------------------|--|
| Thu | 18 th Sept. | All day: Document review. |
| Fri | 19 th Sept. | All day: Document review. |
| Fri | 21 st Sept. | Lead evaluator travels to Nepal. |
| Sat | 22 nd Sept. | Lead evaluator arrives in Nepal |
| Sun | 23 rd Sept. | am: 1. Initial team meeting. 2. Meeting with, and presentations by, Project team – National Project Coordinator (Mr. Jagannath Koirala), Biodiversity Programme Specialist (Mr. Bijendra Basnyat), Administration and Finance Officer (Mr. Shreedhar Adhikari), Communication and Documentation Officer (Mr. Prakash Shrestha), Database Consultant (Mr. Sushil Khadka) and Project Assistant (Mr. Randhir Singh). pm: 1. Meeting with Secretary of Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation (Dr. Krishna Paudel). 2. Meeting with ex-Chief Foreign Aid Coordination Division and Landscape Support Unit (Mr. Ram Lamsal). 3. Data gathering and document review. |
| Mon | 24 th Sept. | am: 1. Meeting with WTLCP Biodiversity Programme Specialist (Mr. Bijendra Basnyat) to clarify logframe indicators. pm: 1. Meeting with WTLCP Project Director and Joint Secretary of Planning and Human Resource Division, MFSC (Mr. Harihar Sigdel). 2. Meeting with Deputy Director General, Department of Forests, MFSC (Mr. Yambahadur Thapa). 3. Second meeting with Biodiversity Programme Specialist (Mr. Bijendra Basnyat) to clarify logframe indicators. |
| Tue | 25 th Sept. | am: 1. Second meeting with Deputy Director General, Department of Forests, MFSC (Mr. Yambahadur Thapa). 2. Final meeting with Biodiversity Programme Specialist (Mr. Bijendra Basnyat) to clarify logframe indicators. 3. Meeting with Assistant Country Director, UNDP (Vijaya Singh). pm: 1. Data gathering and document review. 2. Meeting (skype) with Regional Technical Adviser, UNDP-GEF, Bangkok (Mr. Doley Tshering). |
| Wed | 26 th Sept. | am: 1. Meeting with Biodiversity Programme Coordinator, LI-BIRD (Mr. Sajal Sthapit). 2. Meeting with Director General, Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation, MFSC (Mr. Megh Pandey) and Focal Point for WTLCP, Under Secretary DNPWC (Mr. Barma Thapa). 3. Meeting with Director General Department of Soil Conservation and Watershed Management, MFSC (Mr. Bharat Pudasaini). pm: 1. Meeting with Under Secretary M&E Division, MFSC (Mr. Chevan Guragain) and IT Consultant, Yomari Inc. Pvt. Ltd. (Mr. Shekhar Phuyal). 2. Meeting with Production, Income & Employment Programme Coordinator, SNV (Dr. Surendra Joshi). |
| Thu | 27 th Sept. | am: 1. Meeting with Deputy Director Terai Arc Landscape Programme, WWF (Mr. Shiv Bhatta). 2. Meeting with Country Representative, WWF (Mr. Anil Manandhar). 3. Meeting with Member Secretary, Nepal Trust for Nature Conservation (Mr. Juddha Gurung) and Executive Officer, NTNC (Mr. Ganga Thapa). pm: 1. Travel to Nepalgunj. |
| Fri | 28 th Sept. | am: 1. Meeting with Acting Regional Director, National Agricultural Research Council (Mr. Krishna Mishra) and Technical Officer (Mr. Netra Ginire). 2. Travel to Blackbuck Conservation Area. 3a. (PE & AR) Meeting with Warden, Blackbuck Conservation Area (Mr. Manoj Shah) and Ranger, Blackbuck Conservation Area (Mr. Uttam Chaudhary). 3b. (SN) Meeting with Blackbuck Buffer Zone Conservation Area Management Committee (23 people – see Annex III). 4a. (PE & AR) Meeting with Acting District Forest Officer, Bardia District (Mr. Khil Tamang), Assistant Forest Officer (Mr. Shyam Lopchen), and Ranger (Mr. Drona Sharma). pm: 1. Visit to mentha distillation plant at Khairapur. 2. Travel to Bardia National |

| Date | | Activities |
|------|------------------------|--|
| | | Park. 3a (PE & SN) Meeting with Buffer Zone User Committee chairmen (7 people – see Annex III). 3b (AR). Meeting with Acting Warden, Bardia National Park (Mr. Ramesh Thapa). 4. Meeting with Thakurbaba Buffer Zone User Committee(4 People – see Annex III). |
| Sat | 29 th Sept. | am: (PE) Free – birding in Bardia NP. 1. (AR & SN) Visit to Thakurbaba Dairy Cooperative and meeting with Chairman (Mr. Govinda Bhandari) and staff member (Mr. Lal Khadka). 2. Meeting with Shivabandrahawa Community Forest Group (25 people – see Annex III). pm: 1. Travel to Shiva Cooperative. 2. Meeting with members of Shiva Cooperative (25 people – see Annex III). 3. Meeting with Dalla Post Anti-poaching Operation (5 people – see Annex III). 4. Meeting with Modella Eco-club (6 people – see Annex III). 5. Elephant ride to observe grassland restoration in Bardia NP. |
| Sun | 30 th Sept. | am: 1a. (PE) Meeting with WTLCP Social Mobiliser (Bardia) (Mr. Sunil Acharya) and Community Motivator (Ms. Anita Khadka). 1b. (AR & SN) Travel to Bhurigaun. 2b. Meeting with Shreeramnagar User Committee (4 people – see Annex III). 3. Travel to Pathraiya, Kailali. 4. Meeting with Pathraiya Biodiversity Conservation Development Committee (8 people – see Annex III). 5. Visit to seed bank, agrobiodiversity plots, and home garden. 6. Travel to Masuriya. pm: 1. Meeting with Masuria Biodiversity Conservation Development Committee (8 people – see Annex III). 2. Visit to seed bank. 3. Meeting with Kalyankari Women’s Farmer Group (21 people – see Annex III). 4. Travel to Attariya. 5. Meeting with Aishwarya Women Community Forest User Group (38 people – see Annex III). 6. Travel to Dhangadhi. |
| Mon | 1 st Oct. | am: 1a. (PE) Meeting with, WTLCP Landscape Manager (Mr. Gopal Ghimire). 1b. (AR & SN) Travel to Dhangadhi. 2a. (PE) Meeting with Senior Programme Manager, LI-BIRD (Mr. Giridhar Amataya) and Senior Technical Assistant (Mr. Ashoka Gurung). 2b. (AR & SN) Visit to observe forest restoration, bio-engineering, and NTFPs (broom grass, pipla, and turmeric). 3a. (PE) Regional Director, MFSC, Far Western Development Region (Mr. Bissu Timari). 3b. (AR & SN) Meeting with Jyan Jyoti, Adarsha and Pragatishil Community Forest User Groups (38 people – see Annex III). 4a. (PE) Meeting with Local Development Officer, Kailali District (Mr. Kedar Bogati). 4b. (AR & SN) Meeting with Chetana Community Forest User Groups (30 people – see Annex III). 5b (AR &SN) Visit to observe bio-engineering. pm: 1a. (PE) Meeting with Project Manager, Terai Arc Landscape Programme (Mr. Prakash Lamsal). 1b. (AR & SN) Meeting with Mohana Kailali Community Forest Coordination Committee (6 people – see Annex III). 2a. (PE) Meeting with Deputy District Forest Officer, Kailali District (Mr. Shyam Mohan). 2b. (AR & SN) Godavari, Geta, and Dhangadhi Community Forest User Groups (23 people – see Annex III). 3a. (PE) WTLCP Community Empowerment and Development Officer (Mr. Pankaj Kayastha). 4. Meeting with WTLCP Biodiversity Programme Specialist (Mr. Bijendra Basnyat). |
| Tue | 2 nd Oct. | am: 1. Travel to Bani Llaka Forest Office, Kanchanpur. 2. Meeting with Laljhadi Mohana Protected Forest Council (17 people – see Annex III). 3. Meeting with Krishnapur Community Forest Conservation Committee (17 people – see Annex III). 4. Visit to observe Bijaya Sal plantation and meet with Dipendra Smriti Community Forest User Group (32 people – see Annex III). 5. Travel to Mahendranagar. pm: 1. Meeting with Acting District Forest Officer, Kanchanpur District (Mr. Anup Chalise). 2. Travel to Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve. 3. Meeting with Assistant Warden, Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve (Mr. Gopal Ghimire). 3a. (PE) continuation of meeting and data collection. 3b. (AR & SN) Meeting with Suklaphanta Buffer Zone Management Council (12 people – see Annex III). 4. Visit to view solar pump and restored waterhole in Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve. |
| Wed | 3 rd Oct. | am: 1a. (PE & AR) Travel to Baijanath. 1b. (SN) Travel to Bhramhadev. 2a. (PE & AR) Visit to observe restored forest wetlands. 2b. (SN) Meeting with Siddhanath Community Forest User Group and Siddhanath Irrigation User Group (9 people – see Annex III). 3a. (PE & AR) Meeting with Baijanath Community Forest User Group (26 people – see Annex III). 3b. (SN) Travel to Mahendranagar. 4a. (PE |

| Date | | Activities |
|------|----------------------|---|
| | | <p>& AR) Meeting with Community Motivators, Kailali and Kanchanpur Districts (Mr. Dharamananda Bhatta, Ms. Radna Kadayat, and Mr. Tek Bk). 5. Travel to Mahendranagar.</p> <p>pm: 1. Travel to Jhallari. 2. Meeting with Sundevi Buffer Zone User Committee (41 people – see Annex III). 3. Travel to Budhitola. 4. Meeting with Pickle-making Group of Godawari Cooperative (41 people – see Annex III). 5. Travel to Dhangadhi.</p> |
| Thu | 4 th Oct. | <p>am: 1a. (PE & SN) Meeting with District Forest Officer, Kailali District (Mr. Rajendra Bhandari). 1b. (AR) Document review. 2. Travel to Kathmandu.</p> <p>pm: 1. Consolidation of material. 2. Meeting with former Biodiversity Programme Specialist, and former Programme Officer, UNDP (Mr. Dinesh Karki).</p> |
| Fri | 5 th Oct. | <p>am: 1. Document review and presentation preparation.</p> <p>pm: 1. De-briefing meeting with 24 participants (see Annex V).</p> |
| Sat | 6 th Oct. | <p>am: 1a (PE) Meeting with former-Programme Officer, UNDP (Ms. Dibya Gurung). 2. Document review and report preparation.</p> <p>pm: 1. Document review and report preparation.</p> |
| Sun | 7 th Oct. | am: Lead evaluator departs Kathmandu. |

ANNEX III : PERSONS INTERVIEWED

(S) = skype interview. Alphabetic order.

UNDP / GEF

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Dibya Gurung | Former Programme Officer, UNDP Nepal |
| Doley Tshering | Regional Technical Advisor, UNDP-GEF (S) |
| Vijaya Singh | Assistant Country Director, UNDP Nepal |

Project Staff

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Anita Khadka | Community Motivator, Bardia District |
| Bijendra Basnyat | Biodiversity Programme Specialist |
| Dharamananda Bhatta | Community Motivators, Kailali District |
| Dinesh Karki | Former Biodiversity Programme Specialist, and former UNDP Programme Officer |
| Gopal Ghimire | Landscape Manager |
| Jagannath Koirala | National Project Coordinator and Joint Secretary of Planning and Human Resource Division, MFSC |
| Pankaj Kayastha | Community Empowerment and Development Officer |
| Prakash Shrestha | Communication and Documentation Officer |
| Radna Kadayat | Community Motivators, Kailali District |
| Ram Lamsal | ex-Chief Foreign Aid Coordination Division and Landscape Support Unit |
| Randhir Singh | Project Assistant |
| Shreedhar Adhikari | Administration and Finance Officer |
| Sunil Acharya | Social Mobiliser, Bardia District |
| Sushil Khadka | Database Consultant |
| Tek B.K. | Community Motivators, Kanchanpur District |

Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Barna Thapa | Focal Point for WTLCP, Under Secretary DNPWC |
| Bharat Pudasaini | Director General Department of Soil Conservation and Watershed Management |
| Chevan Guragain | Under Secretary M&E Division |
| Harihar Sigdel | Project Director |
| Megh Pandey | Director General, Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation |
| Prakash Lamsal | Project Manager, Terai Arc Landscape Programme |
| Yam Vahadur Thapa | Deputy Director General, Department of Forests |

Project Partners

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Anil Manandhar | Country Representative, WWF |
| Ashoka Gurung | Senior Technical Assistant, LI-BIRD |
| Giridhar Amataya | Senior Programme Manager, LI-BIRD |
| Krishna Mishra | Acting Regional Director, National Agricultural Research Council |
| Netra Ginire | Technical Officer, National Agricultural Research Council |
| Sajal Sthapit | Biodiversity Programme Coordinator, LI-BIRD |
| Shiv Bhatta | Deputy Director Terai Arc Landscape Programme, WWF |
| Surendra Joshi | Production, Income & Employment Programme Coordinator, SNV |

Protected Area Staff

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Gopal Ghimire | Assistant Warden, Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve |
| Manoj Shah | Warden, Krishnasar Conservation Area |
| Ramesh Thapa | Acting Warden, Bardia National Park |
| Uttam Chaudhary | Ranger, Krishnasar Conservation Area |

Regional and District Government Officials

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Anup Chalise | Acting District Forest Officer, Kanchanpur District |
| Bissubabu Tiwari | Regional Director, MFSC, Far Western Development Region |
| Drona Sharma | Forest Ranger, Bardia District |
| Kedar Bogati | Local Development Officer, Kailali District |
| Khil Tamang | Acting District Forest Officer, Bardia District |
| Rajendra Bhandari | District Forest Officer, Kailali District |
| Shyam Lopchen | Assistant Forest Officer, Bardia District |
| Shyam Mohan | Assistant District Forest Officer, Kailali District |

Community Stakeholders and Beneficiaries

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Govinda Bhandari | Chairman, Thakurbaba Dairy Cooperative |
| Lal Khadka | Staff member, Thakurbaba Dairy Cooperative |

Krishnasar Conservation Area Buffer Zone Management Committee

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Arun kumar Yadav | Member |
| Bheshraj Bhusal | BZMC Chairman |
| Bishownath Khairaha | Member |
| Gulab Yadav | Member |
| Gyanmati Khairaha | Member |
| Harilal Khairaha | Member |
| Jhallu Khairaha | Member |
| Kabita Khairaha | Member |
| Krishna Shrestha | Member |
| Mamata Yadav | Member |
| Mina Khairaha | Member |
| Mulchandra Yadav | Member |
| Munna Yadav | Member |
| Munni Khairaha | Member |
| Nakani Khairaha | Member |
| Palavi Khairaha | Member |
| Phulkesari Yadav | Member |
| Prem kumara Ripal | Member |
| Rajje Khairaha | Member |
| Rambachi Yadav | Member |
| Sabitri Khairaha | Secretary |
| Sakuntala Yadav | Fish pond chairmen |
| Tanka Adhikari | Member |

Bardia National Park Buffer Zone Committee Chairmen

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Alok Tharu | Patabhar UC |
| Devi Devkota | Buffer Zone Management Committee Chairman |
| Ganesh Thapa | Neulapur Cooperative Staff |
| Kamal Raut | Patabhar UC Member |
| Nawaraj Neupane | Shreeram Nagar UC Chairman |
| Ram Chaudhary | Bindra UC |
| Tek Chaudhary | Asaregaudi UC – Chairman |

Thakurbaba User Committee

| | |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| Gita Chudhary | User Committee member |
| Kapur Adhikari | User Committee member |
| Netraraj Acharya | User Committee Chairman |
| Sita Chaudhary | User Committee member |

Shivabandrahawa Cooperative, Suryapatuwa VDC, Bardia District

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Aitbari Chaudhary | Member |
| Badan K.C | Cooperative Staff |
| Bamlu Tharu | Member |
| Basanti Swanr | Member |
| Bhim Chaudhary | Member |
| Bikram Tharu | Member |
| Brij Tharu | Member |
| Chandra Swanr | Member |
| Laxiram Tharu | Member |
| Mahangu Chaudhary | Member |
| Man Tharu | Member |
| Mannu Chaudhary | Member |
| Maya Regmi | Member |
| Nagatram Tharu | Member |
| Pradeep Regmi | Member |
| Ram Thapa | UC Chairman |
| Ramcharan Tharu | Mentha Group |
| Ramkrishna Tharu | Member |
| Sanju Tharu | Member |
| Sapana Chaudhary | Member |
| Sarada Acharya | Member |
| Shankar Yogi | Member |
| Tara Thapa | Member |
| Urmila Chaudhary | Womens Group |
| Yagya Thapa | Member |

Dalla Post Community Based Anti-poaching Operation Group, Bardia District

| | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Buddhiram Tharu | Manau VDC |
| Hariram Tharu | Patabhar VDC |
| Nirmal Chaudhary | Gola VDC |
| Pardesu Chaudhary | Bindra VDC |
| Ram Krishna Chaudhary | Suryapatuwa VDC |

Madella Ecoclub, Thakurbaba, Bardia District

| | |
|----------------|------------------|
| Aliza Mukhiya | Member |
| Basu Bhattarai | Teacher |
| Chetana Rijal | Member |
| Darsana Rokaya | Member |
| Jagat Bhandari | Member |
| Kabita Upadhya | Member |
| Pradip Rijal | Eco-club Teacher |
| Purna Pokhrel | Member |

Shreeramnagar User Committee, Bhurigaon, Bardia District

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Ganesh Thapa | Cooperative Staff |
| Laxmiram Kathayat | User Committee Member |
| Nawaraj Neupane | User Committee Chairman |
| Phiru Chaudhary | Cooperative Chairman |

Biodiversity Conservation Development Committee, Pathraiya, Kailali District

| | |
|------------------|---------------|
| Dhanraj Devkota | Member |
| Dil Raut | Member |
| Indira Dangi | Member |
| Jhanka Bista | Member |
| Kashi Dutta | Vice Chairman |
| Khem Chand | Chairman |
| Sabitri Katharia | Member |
| Santa Chaudhary | Member |

Biodiversity Conservation Development Committee, Masuria, Kailali District

| | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| Chudamani Poudel | Member |
| Dhan Bahadur Saut | Member |
| Goma Bhandari | Chairperson |
| Man Bahadur Yogi | Member |
| Meena Devi B.Ka. | Member |
| Pabitra Sapkota | Member |
| Ram Awatar | Member |
| Ramadevi Raji | Member |

Kalyankari Women's Agriculture Group, Masuria, Kailali District

| | |
|----------------------|--------|
| Sita Chaudhary | Member |
| Surat Devi Chaudhary | Member |
| Sitrani Chaudhary | Member |
| Garmamati Chaudhary | Member |
| Sundari Chaudhary | Member |
| Rupa Chaudhary | Member |
| Saraswati Chaudhary | Member |
| Ramauti Chaudhary | Member |
| Phoolmati Chaudhary | Member |
| Sabitri Chaudhary | Member |
| Mantukaria Chaudhary | Member |
| Manisha Chaudhary | Member |
| Ramkrishni Chaudhary | Member |
| Dhaniya Chaudhary | Member |
| Ramita Chaudhary | Member |
| Saradha Chaudhary | Member |
| Jayanti Chaudhary | Member |
| Nirmala Karna | Member |
| Bharati Karna | Member |
| Malati Karna | Member |
| Deshi Chaudhary | Member |

Shree Jyan Jyoti Women, Adarsha and Pragatishil Community Forest User Group, Dhangadhi, Kailali District

| | |
|---------------------|------------------------------|
| Ashtuni Chaudhary | Pragatishil CFUG Secretary |
| Bishanu Magrati | Adarsh CFCC Member |
| Chinta Mani Dhungel | Pragatishil CFUG Chairman |
| Dashni Chaudhary | Jyan jyoti Women CFUG Member |
| Devika Karki | Jyan jyoti Women CFUG Member |
| Dhana Shrestha | Pragatishil CFUG Member |
| Firiya Chaudhary | Jyan jyoti Women CFUG Member |
| Fulvasya Chaudhary | Jyan jyoti Women CFUG Member |
| Hira Chaudhary | Jyan jyoti Women CFUG Member |
| Jaymati Chaudhary | Jyan jyoti Women CFUG Member |

| | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Jit Bahadur B.K. | Adarsh CFCC Forest Watch |
| Kalpna Chaudhary | Jyan jyoti Women CFUG Member |
| Krishna Shrimal | Adarsh CFCC Member |
| Kumari Chaudhary | Jyan jyoti Women CFUG Member |
| Laxmi Shahi | Pragatishil CFUG Member |
| Lila Prasad Dhungel | Jyan jyoti Women CFUG Forest Watch |
| Matri Chaudhary | Jyan jyoti Women CFUG Member |
| Nabraj Gautam | Jyan jyoti Women CFUG Member |
| Nilam K.C. | Jyan jyoti Women CFUG Member |
| Nirmal khadka | Adarsh CFCC Member |
| Parvati Pandey] | Pragatishil CFUG Member |
| Pratiksha Rijal | Adarsh CFCC Member |
| Rabi lal Acharya | Adarsh CFCC Member |
| Radha B.K. | Adarsh CFCC Member |
| Radha Thapa | Jyan jyoti Women CFUG Member |
| Raj Bahadur Yer | Adarsh CFCC Chairman |
| Ramchandra Dhuingana | Pragatishil CFUG Member |
| Ramlal Magrati | Adarsh CFCC Acting Secretary |
| Ranmaya Paudel | Pragatishil CFUG Member |
| Sarita Chaudhari | Jyan jyoti Women CFUG Member |
| Shanti Chaudhary | Jyan jyoti Women CFUG Member |
| Sher Bahadur Kadariya | Pragatishil CFUG Member |
| Sita Chaudhary | Jyan jyoti Women CFUG Member |
| Sita Khadka | Adarsh CFCC Member |
| Sunita Chaudhary | Jyan jyoti Women CFUG Treasurer |
| Sushila Dahalali | Jyan jyoti Women CFUG Chairman |
| Tika Lamichhane | Adarsh CFCC Member |
| Tulsi Neopali | Pragatishil CFUG Member |

Shree Chetana Women Community Forest User Group, Geta-3, Atariya, Kailali District

| | |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Ankali Chaudhary | Member |
| Ankalya Chaudhary | Member |
| Astuni Chaudhary | Chairman |
| Bisna Bhatta | Member |
| Bisna Deupa | Member |
| Budhanidevi Chaudhary | Member |
| Champha Chaudhary | Member |
| Champha Saud | Acting Chairman |
| Chulya Chaudhary | Member |
| Ganga Saud | Member |
| Gauri Joshi | Member |
| Gita Chaudhary | Member |
| Hema Bhandari | Member |
| K. Bedhni CHaudhary | Member |
| Kangali Devi Chaudhary | Member |
| Kavita Devi Chaudhary | Treasurer |
| Kumari Chaudhary K. | Member |
| Kumari Chaudhary Kha | Member |
| Kumari Chaudhary | Member |
| Naru Yer | Member |
| Padam Dhami | Member |
| Pakuli Chaudhary | Member |
| Ratan Bahadur Yer | Member |
| Rekh Chaudhary | Member |
| Siat CHaudhari | Secretary |

| | |
|------------------|--------|
| Sita Chaudhary | Member |
| Somari Chaudhary | Member |
| Sukani Chaudhary | Member |
| Sunita Chaudhary | Member |
| Tulsi Chaudhary | Member |

Mohana Kailali Community Forest Coordination Committee, Bishal Nagar-3, Dhangadi, Kailali District

| | |
|----------------|-----------|
| Dahn B.K. | Member |
| Dan Bishta | Secretary |
| Devika Karki | Member |
| Kalawati Rawal | Member |
| Kannar Rana | Member |
| Raj Yer | Chairman |

Godavari, Geta, and Dhangadhi Community Forest User Groups, Dhangadi, Kailali District

| | |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| Bali Sawad | Shid Bhagwati CFUG |
| Bhimsen Rana | Janki CFUG Chairman |
| Bhuwneshwari Joshi | Basant Ban Vatika Secretary |
| Chetraj | Geta CFUG Chairman |
| Chintamani Dhungel | Pragatishil CFUG Chairman |
| Dev B.K. | Dhaiya Belani CFUG Chairman |
| Dhan B.K. | dhaiya Salani CFUG Chairman |
| Dhan Dbr. B.K. | Chauki Dada Women CFUG Chairman |
| Dharma Ojha | Tilketal CFUG Chairman |
| Durga Tiwari | Gowari CFUG Chairman |
| Harka Shahi | Janki Women CFUG |
| Jyannu Sunar | Badimalika Women CFUG Chairman |
| Kalawati Subedi | Nawjyoti Women CFUG Treasurer |
| Karna Sawad | Bhagwati CFUG Secretary |
| Nand Yeri | Dilasaini Shiv Women CFUG Chairman |
| Parvati Yami | Ban Devi Women CFUG Chairman |
| Rabilal Acharya | Adarshar CFUG Member |
| Raj Yer | Aadarsh CFUG Chairman |
| Sabitri Saud | Mohana Ban Vatika, CFUG Chairman |
| Sher Khatri | Seti CFUG Chairman |
| Sushila Dahal | Jyan Jyoti Women CFUG Chairman |
| Trilok B.K. | Gwasi Mankamna CFUG |
| Yogendra Khadka | Gwasi Samaichi CFUG Chairman |

Laljhadi Mohana Protected Forest Council, Kanchanpur District

| | |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| Bhim Bohara | Treasurer |
| Dhirgha Koirala | Joint-secretary |
| Dundi Bhandari | Secretary |
| Ganesh Bhatta | Forester |
| Jung Budha | Chairmen |
| Laxman Karki | Treasurer |
| Mahesh Joshi | Chairmen |
| Munna Ghale | Manager |
| Padam Mahata | Member |
| Rambhadur Yeer | Jamdhar |
| Ramesh Joshi | Secretary, Goyasi C.F. |
| Rattan Mahat | Vice-chairmen |
| Sagar Bhandari | Chairmen |

| | |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| Shankar Bhatta | Member |
| Shankar Joshi | Chairmen |
| Sher Singh | Member, Gyalabari C.F. |
| Tulashi Chaudhari | Chairmen |

Krishnapur Community Forest Coordination Committee, Kanchanpur District

| | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| Mahesh Datta Joshi | Chairmen |
| Purna ram Chaudhari | Member |
| Asha ram chaudhari | Member |
| Ramesh Joshi | Treasurer secretary |
| Jung B.Budha | Chairmen |
| Gupat Singh Rana | Member |
| Ram lal Rana | Member |
| Dundi Raj Bhandari | Member |
| Shankar datta Joshi | Chairmen |
| Lila devi Chaudhari | Treasurer |
| Soniya Chaudhari | Member |
| Kumara Chaudhari | Member |
| Basanti Rana | Chairmen |
| Padham B.Mahata | Member |
| Shivadatta Panta | J.secretary |
| Sher bahadur rawot | Chairmen |
| Madhan Raj Bhatta | Secretary |

Dipendra Smriti Community Forest User Group, Kanchanpur District

| | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| Dependra Bom | Krishnapur |
| Indra Soud | Krishnapur |
| Jay Bhan Soud | Krishnapur |
| Harilal Bista | Krishnapur-2 |
| Nava raj bhatta | Krishnapur-1 |
| Dhan bahadur Soud | Krishnapur-1 |
| Karna B.chand | Krishnapur-2 |
| Nar B.Chand | Krishnapur-2 |
| Hari Chand | Krishnapur-1 |
| Binod Bika | Krishnapur-1 |
| Sher Sngh Mahara | Krishnapur-1 |
| Man B.Bom | Krishnapur-1 |
| Chandra Devi Dhama | Krishnapur-2 |
| Parbati Mahera | Krishnapur-2 |
| Devaki Mahera | Krishnapur-2 |
| Basanti Dhama | Krishnapur-2 |
| Parbati Bhatta | Krishnapur-2 |
| Sita Bom | Krishnapur-1 |
| Nanda karki | Krishnapur-1 |
| Lilabati Wasti | Krishnapur-1 |
| Kalasi Bista | Krishnapur-1 |
| Mana Bista | Krishnapur-1 |
| Bhagirathi Mahara | Krishnapur-1 |
| Brinda Devi Bista | Krishnapur-1 |
| Bhana Devi Bista | Krishnapur-1 |
| Sajja Mahara | Krishnapur-1 |
| Laxmi Bhatta | Krishnapur-1 |
| Bimala Mahara | Krishnapur-1 |
| Lalmati Sharki | Krishnapur-1 |
| Parbati Bhatta | Krishnapur-1 |

| | |
|--------------|--------------|
| Birma Bistta | Krishnapur-1 |
| Bisna Bista | Krishnapur-2 |

Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve Buffer Zone Management Committee – Kanchanpur District

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Dev Bista | Chairman, Shuklaphata patchadani |
| Devaki Pandey | Program manager, BZMC kanchanpur |
| Dhansara Chand | Chairman, Mamapuri sa.ba chadani |
| Harihar Pandey | Secretary, Shuklaphata patchadani |
| Karna Kuwor | Program manager, BZMC,kanchanpur |
| Lok Chand | Chairman, Himalaya,patchadani |
| Lov Bista | Chairman, BZMC,kanchanpur |
| Maniram Chaudhari | Office Assistant, BZMC |
| Nayan Thaguna | Manager, Shrijana cooperative |
| Saroj Chand | Member, Himalaya patchadani |
| Shivraj Adhikari | Chairman, Bageshwori,patchadani |
| Shukh Dhami | Member, |

Sidhanath Community Forest User Group, Bramhadev, Kanchanpur District

| | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|
| Bahadur Bista | Forest |
| Gopiram Bhol | Joint-secretary |
| Harisidhi Nayek | Member |
| Jay bahadur chand | Irrigation comittee chairmen |
| Kamalapati Joshi | Irrigation vice chairmen |
| Keshev bahadur chand | |
| Moti Singh Mahara | Chairmen |
| Prakash datta Joshi | Secretary |
| Ramesh raj Joshi | Secretary |

Baijanath Community Forest User Group, Rautela, Kanchanpur District

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Bal Bista | |
| Bir Saoud | |
| Chakra Bista | |
| Chandra Joshi | |
| Gagan Karki | |
| Haridatta Joshi | |
| Harka Bhandari | |
| Jairaj Dhami | |
| Jay Bista | |
| Kalawati Bista | |
| Karan Bohera | |
| Karna Bista | |
| Karna Bista | |
| Keshev datta Joshi | |
| Keshev Joshi | |
| Log Bista | |
| Manju Kadayet | |
| Mina Bista | |
| Padam Joshi | |
| Pashupati Thapa | |
| Purna Kuwor | |
| Purna Thapa | |
| Purnya kuwor | |
| Rabindra Kuwor | |
| Ramesh Tiruwa | |

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Suresh Bista | |
|--------------|--|

Sundevi User Group, Jhalari, Kanchanpur District

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Bahadur Bhat | |
| Balram Ghimire | |
| Bhavani Bhatta | |
| Chakra Saud | |
| Dabal Kunwar | |
| Dal Bista | |
| Damodhar Joshi | |
| Dan Dhami | |
| Dan Saud | |
| Daye Yeer | |
| Gopal Dhami | |
| Hari Bhatta | |
| Hari Joshi | |
| Harilal Dhami | |
| Indra Bista | |
| Jaher Bhatta | |
| Jay Dhami | |
| Kaile Dhami | |
| Keshv Joshi | |
| Khadga Tiwari | |
| Lal Dhami | |
| Man Dhami | |
| Man Yeer | |
| Mandir Dhami | |
| Mansal Thagunna | |
| Mohan Bhandari | |
| Mukesh Singh | |
| Narendra Thagunna | |
| Navaraj Patti | |
| Om Bhandari | |
| Pratap Dhami | |
| Pratap Thagunna | |
| Prem Ghasuk | |
| Prem Thagunna | |
| Pushkar Dhami | |
| Rattan Saud | |
| Rosan Mahara | |
| Sher Bohara | |
| Suresh Thagunna | |
| Tara Wasti | |
| Tikaram Bista | |

Godawari Cooperative and Pickle Group, Budhitola-8, Kailali District

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Dan Khanal | Seti CFUG, Treasurer |
| Dewu Tamang | Srijanshil Achar Group, Member |
| Dhansari Nepali | Seti CFUG, Member |
| Ganga Magar | Seti CFUG, Member |
| Harimay Khanal | Srijanshil Achar Group, Member |
| Jagat Sawad | Budhitola Multipurpose Cooperative, Member |
| Jamuna Budha | Seti CFUG, Secretary |
| Kalpana Khatri | Budhitola Multipurpose Cooperative, Member |
| Karna Magar | Seti CFUG, Member |

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Laxman Bhattarai | Seti CFUG, Member |
| Laxman Kadayat | Budhitola Multipurpose Cooperative, Chairman |
| Laxmi Khanal | Seti CFUG, Member |
| Mandhuri Magar | Srijanshil Achar Group, Member |
| Mutak Adhikari | Seti CFUG, Member |
| Pabisara Rai | Srijanshil Achar Samuh, Chairman |
| Raghunath Bhattarai | Budhitola Multipurpose Cooperative, Member |
| Sanjita Khatri | Srijanshil Achar Group, Chairman |
| Sarda Shrestha | Srijanshil Achar Group, Member |
| Sher Ghartimagar | Budhitola Multipurpose Cooperative, Member |
| Sher Khatri | Seti CFUG, Chairman |
| Shila Gharti Magar | Srijanshil Achar Group, Member |
| Tilak Bhattarai | Budhitola Multipurpose Cooperative, Member |
| Yum Lamichhane | Budhitola Multipurpose Cooperative, |

Miscellaneous

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Ganga Thapa | Executive Officer, Nepal Trust for Nature Conservation |
| Juddha Gurung | Member Secretary, Nepal Trust for Nature Conservation |
| Shekhar Phuyal | IT Consultant, Yomari Inc. Pvt. Ltd. |

ANNEX IV : SUMMARY EVALUATION OF PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS BY OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

The Project logframe in the Project Document was revised in after a thorough review and endorsed by the Project Output Board in 2008. The present evaluation matrix uses this version. The delivery status herein is taken from the most recent information available from the WTLCP PMU.

KEY:

GREEN = Indicators show achievement successful at the end of the Project.

YELLOW = Indicators show achievement nearly successful at the end of the Project.

RED = Indicators not achieved at the end of Project

HATCHED COLOUR = estimate; situation either unclear or indicator inadequate to make a firm assessment against.

Development Objective: To ensure the conservation and sustainable use of globally significant biodiversity in Nepal's Terai landscape.

| # | Objectives | Performance Indicator | Baseline | End of Project Target | Delivery Status at Final evaluation | Comments | HS | S | MS | MU | U | HU |
|---|---|---|---|--|---|--|----|---|----|----|---|----|
| 1 | Immediate Objective: To establish effective and efficient integrated landscape planning and management systems for the conservation and sustainable use of Nepal's Western Terai Landscape complex | Vegetation cover maintained in Western Terai landscape complex (WTLC) | Vegetation cover of WTLC is 3,93,292 Ha (2001) | At least 90% vegetation cover maintained | Satellite image analysis shows that the area of forest within the WTLC has increased by 260 km ² between 2001 and 2010 while grassland has decreased by 20.6 km ² . | The term "vegetation cover" in the indicator is meaningless. The decrease in grassland is believed to be as a result of its natural succession to forest. | | | | | | |
| 2 | | Critical habitats in WTLC maintained | 79 wetlands and other critical habitats (2006) | 40% of critical habitats maintained | A total of 37 (46.8%) wetlands covering 29.2 ha conserved by augmenting water level, manual removal of water weeds (eutrophication). | This result does not include efforts made by WWF in parallel-funded areas. | | | | | | |
| 3 | | Globally significant agro-biodiversity assets maintained | Traditional landrace diversity of globally significant crops grown (Baseline survey 2007) | 90% of existing varieties of globally significant crops maintained | 106 local crop varieties conserved through community seed banks. The area under cultivation of local varieties increased from 35.5 ha (2006) to 56.7 ha in 2012. Number of households involved in conservation of local varieties reached 715 against 488 in baseline. Six community seed banks have been actively mobilizing local farmers for conservation of local varieties through diversity block and cultivation on farmers' fields. | Baseline survey not conducted in same areas as priority sites of Project and did not identify all varieties present. 106 varieties represent a greater number than identified in the survey. | | | | | | |
| 4 | | Institutional framework for | National Biodiversity | NBIs in place and functional | NBIs not yet fully functioning at landscape level. Policy Dialogue Group established within MFSC for | District Forest Coordination Committee is operational in | | | | | | |

| # | Objectives | Performance Indicator | Baseline | End of Project Target | Delivery Status at Final evaluation | Comments | HS | S | MS | MU | U | HU |
|---|---|---|---|--|--|---|----|---|----|----|---|----|
| | | landscape conservation in place and functional. | Institutions (NBIs) not fully operational at the landscape level (2006) | | inter-Ministerial coordination and collaboration but this has not yet met. Landscape Support Unit has been operational within MFSC only, taking lead role in inclusion of landscape conservation within MFSC policy and programmes. MFSC has approved <i>Integrated Landscape Planning Guidelines</i> and instructed all its institutions (Department, Regional and District Office) to adopt these when formulating plans and programmes. | three districts, which is working effectively on addressing contemporary issues of forests and biodiversity, such as encroachment evacuation, control of illegal hunting and poaching, strengthening good governance practices among the forest user groups; but again this is purely within remit of MFSC. | | | | | | |
| 5 | Outcome 1: The national policy environment and legal framework enable integrated landscape planning in the Western Terai Landscape Complex | Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation (MFSC) practiced landscape approach for biodiversity conservation | No landscape approach in practice | Landscape approach practice functional | MFSC has approved integrated landscape planning guidelines and instructed all its institutions (Department, Regional and District Office) to adopt these when formulating plans and programmes. Work is continuing to have these adopted by other Ministries. MFSC has declared the three corridors (Mohana (Laljhadi), Basanta, and Khata) within the Project as protected forests and designated special status of management. It has prepared and approved management plans for all three; allocated NRS 5 million (US\$ 58,823) for implementation of each plan; and appointed a full-time Protected Forest Manager and rangers plus other temporary staff in each. | While these Guidelines represent a significant step forwards, they were adopted very late in the Project and would have been much more effective had work started on them earlier. More than 80% of WTLC activities will continue to be implemented through these plans. | | | | | | |
| 6 | | Ministerial level mechanism for intersectoral planning and coordination for WTLC functioning | No such mechanism in place | Intersectoral planning and coordination mechanism functional | Inter-ministerial mechanisms not in place to provide a functional mechanism for planning and coordination at a landscape level. | See indicator #4. Progress made only within MFSC. | | | | | | |

| # | Objectives | Performance Indicator | Baseline | End of Project Target | Delivery Status at Final evaluation | Comments | HS | S | MS | MU | U | HU |
|---|--|--|--|--|---|--|----|---|----|----|---|----|
| 7 | Output 1.1: MFSC and MoAC supported to revise and formulate landscape level biodiversity conservation policies. | At least 3 policies ⁶⁸ drafted and forwarded for endorsement | No specific landscape related policies to support and implement NBS and TAL strategy | Policy approved | The <i>Agro-biodiversity Policy</i> was endorsed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Development in 2007 for <i>in-situ</i> and <i>ex-situ</i> conservation of agro-biodiversity. <i>Corridor Management Policy</i> drafted, task force is working to finalise this and it is expected that the policy will be endorsed by end of November 2012. <i>Guidelines on Payment for Environmental Services</i> and associated processes have been developed based on lessons learned from pilots undertaken by the WTLC. See also indicator #4. | TET assumes that the expected endorsement by MFSC will actually occur. Earlier endorsement of all three would have helped their implementation within project timescale. | | | | | | |
| 8 | | Policy makers and other stakeholders sensitized on addressing landscape management issues. | New policy makers are not sensitized on landscape | 10 field visits and stakeholder interaction conducted | 12 field visits of senior officers of MFSC including Ministers, State Ministers, Secretary, Joint Secretaries, and Director Generals conducted for sensitisation on landscape management issues and challenges. Members of National Planning Commissions have also attended. | These have supported addressing management problems through improved coordination and policy formulation. | | | | | | |
| 9 | | Sustainable Financing Mechanisms for protected and productive areas in place. | No financial mechanism in place | Conservation financing mechanism approved and functional in 3 WTLC districts | Conservation financing mechanisms not yet approved and functioning in three districts. However, in June 2012 the Government increased the entry fee to all protected areas and other tourism related activities and service by 300%, in part as a result of WTLC actions, thereby significantly increasing the income of protected areas. An economic valuation study of Bardia National Park was carried out to sensitise stakeholders about the benefits associated with the management of this protected area. A mechanism for collection of conservation finances at the central level and their dissemination and spending at District level was developed and | MFSC formulated <i>Forest Development Fund Establishment, Operation Procedure Directive, 2007</i> and levied Rs 5 per ft ³ of all timber sold commercially. This Fund was collected at the district level, which was expected to use it for restoration and plantation programmes. However, collection of revenue was withheld because of a Supreme Court ban on the collection of such a fee. The Constitution of Nepal bars | | | | | | |

⁶⁸ Corridor management, payment of environmental services, and agro-biodiversity working policy.

| # | Objectives | Performance Indicator | Baseline | End of Project Target | Delivery Status at Final evaluation | Comments | HS | S | MS | MU | U | HU |
|----|---|--|--|--|---|--|----|---|----|----|---|----|
| | | | | | disseminated through a wide range of stakeholders, but as a result of a challenge in the Supreme Court (see under "Comments") this was deemed unconstitutional and rescinded. The knowledge document on "Sustainable Financing Mechanism for Landscape Conservation; Existing Practice and Future Prospect" has been published. | collection any taxes which are not specified in an Act. Neither the <i>Forest Act</i> nor the <i>Financial Act</i> has any such provision to levy taxes on the sale of forest products. | | | | | | |
| 10 | Output 1.2: MFSC supported to develop and introduce integrated land use planning framework for WTLC | Integrated land use planning framework in place and incorporated sectoral plans. | No integrated land use planning framework in place | Integrated land use planning framework implemented by district line agencies | An integrated land use planning framework has not been able to be implemented by district line agencies. Instead, an integrated landscape planning framework has been piloted in the Mohana corridor. The Mohana Community Forestry Coordination Committee (MCFCC) has been mobilised to facilitate landscape conservation. The MCFCC has assessed various line agencies' programmes active within the corridor which have hindered or facilitated conservation. Based on this, the MCFCC has developed a priority action matrix for the wise-use of corridor resources. Based on this, the MCFCC is advocating with Government line agencies and local bodies to include priority actions in their plans and programmes. Conservation awareness and access to local government funds has increased as a result of piloting. | Such a framework requires strong central level institutions to guide sectoral bodies. This has been absent for most of the Project. No elected local government bodies were present to make those sectoral institutions accountable. Alternative measures were sought by the WTLC within these external constraints. | | | | | | |
| 11 | Outcome 2: The institutional framework for integrated landscape management of biodiversity in Western Terai is established and strengthened. | National Biodiversity Institutions (NBIs) under National Biodiversity Strategy (NBS) involved in planning, implementing and monitoring of landscape level activities in TAL. | NBIs not active in landscape level biodiversity conservation | NBI involved in annual planning and outcome monitoring in TAL area | NBIs not yet fully functioning at landscape level. | See indicator #s 4 and 6. | | | | | | |

| # | Objectives | Performance Indicator | Baseline | End of Project Target | Delivery Status at Final evaluation | Comments | HS | S | MS | MU | U | HU |
|----|--|---|--|--|--|---|----|---|----|----|---|----|
| 12 | | Landscape conservation related database system maintained at central (MFSC) and district levels (DFCCs, DFOs and PAs). | No functional database system in place | Database system functional | Management Information System (MIS) is being established within MFSC but is not yet functional. The relevant hardware and software has been purchased and installed with support from different projects including WTLC. Data collection and entry by thematic area is in progress. One national and five regional consultative workshops were carried out on MIS. Field testing of MIS was completed. | The system itself has very limited functionality with limited analysis tools and no GIS capability (see paragraph 68). | | | | | | |
| 13 | Output 2.1: Central, District and Local level Institutions established for integrated management of biodiversity in targeted landscape. | National Biodiversity Institution (NBI) as recommended by NBS strengthened. | Weak NBI | National biodiversity institutions functional | NBIs not yet fully functioning at landscape level. | See indicator #s 4 and 6. | | | | | | |
| 14 | | Three District Biodiversity Committees (DBC) /District Forest Coordination Committee (DFCC) established and strengthened. | No DBC and DFCCs established (2006) | DBC and DFCC structures fully functional | DFCCs have been established, strengthened and are fully functional in three Districts (Bardia, Kanchanpur, and Kailali). | DFCCs are taking the lead on monitoring of forest programmes and working effectively to address contemporary issues of forests and biodiversity. They have been shown to be so effective that they have been replicated nationwide. | | | | | | |
| 15 | | Biodiversity conservation provisions included in all approved forest operational plans in WTLC. | No biodiversity conservation provisions in operation plan of Community Forestry User Groups (2006) | Biodiversity conservation provisions incorporated into 50 OPs of CFUGs | 51 Operational Plans of the CFUGs were revised to incorporate biodiversity conservation provisions, e.g. a) rotational grass cutting, b) leaving dead trees, c) harvesting within sustainable limits, d) grazing control. Of 131 operational plan revised, WTLC provided support for revision of 51 operational plan of CFUGs. | WWF helped to revise another 80 Operational Plans in other corridors. | | | | | | |
| 16 | Output 2.2: Capacity of partners strengthened for the conservation of both | Advisory and support services on landscape conservation | No training needs assessment report | Training need assessment report in use and at least 300 | Training needs assessment undertaken in 2007 of MFSC field office staff and local communities (finalised in 2008). 470 training events conducted in the areas of a) biodiversity conservation/sustainable | | | | | | | |

| # | Objectives | Performance Indicator | Baseline | End of Project Target | Delivery Status at Final evaluation | Comments | HS | S | MS | MU | U | HU |
|----|--|--|---|---|---|--|----|---|----|----|---|----|
| | productive and protected landscapes. | available and used by CBOs. | | trainings provided | forest management, b) livelihoods improvement/entrepreneurship development, c) institutional strengthening/ forestry governance, and d) agro-biodiversity conservation. Nearly ten thousand people (9,900) participated of which 9% were Dalit and 36% were Janajati and 43% were women. | | | | | | | |
| 17 | Output 2.3: Comprehensive information, planning and monitoring system to facilitate landscape management established. | Central level MIS for landscape biodiversity conservation established at MFSC. | No central level data base management system in place. | Central level MIS of MFSC functional | WTLC supported MFSC in establishment and testing of central level of MIS. However, progress of data entry and retrieval is very slow because of limited number of staff within the Ministry. Ministry also lacks trained human resources to operate the system. The budget allocation for monitoring is inadequate for making system fully operational while support provided from WTLC is very modest to make system fully functional. | Project target outside of Project's ability to reach. MIS covers six thematic areas and has national coverage and requires standardisation of variables to be collected and entered. WTLC is contributing to this. Total budget need for 2012 is NRs 2 million (US\$ 23,529) of which WTLC is providing NRs 250,000 (US\$ 2,941). See also paragraph 68. | | | | | | |
| 18 | | DFOs, PAs and DFCCs offices maintained database for biodiversity conservation planning and monitoring in WTLC. | | MIS of 3 WTLC districts institutionalized | MIS of 3 WTLC districts are yet to be institutionalized since it is not fully functional within the MFSC. Inadequate human resources and budget constraints further hinder for installation at district level. | See # 17 – largely outside of the Project's control, yet perhaps MFSC could have given it a higher priority. | | | | | | |
| 19 | Outcome 3: Biodiversity assets in Western Terai landscape are effectively conserved. | Number of flagship species (tiger, rhino and elephants) maintained. | Tiger 48- 63 (1999-2000) Rhino 37 (2007) Elephant 98-103 (2005) | Number of flagship species maintained | There is no regular counting of population of flagship species. Available data is given in the table. Note – the methodology of counting tigers changed in 2010 from pug marks to camera traps so the data between the two are not comparable. Tiger populations appear to be increasing. Despite apparent fluctuations, the rhino population is | Populations of Blackbuck in the Blackbuck Conservation Area, and Swamp Deer in Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve are also increasing. | | | | | | |

| # | Objectives | Performance Indicator | Baseline | End of Project Target | Delivery Status at Final evaluation | Comments | HS | S | MS | MU | U | HU | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|------------|--|--|---|--|--|------|--------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|--------------------|------|---------------------|-------|------|----|------|----|------|--------------------|------|--------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | <p>considered stable. There is no new data for elephant.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Year</th> <th>Number</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td rowspan="4">Tiger</td> <td>1999</td> <td>48-63</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2005</td> <td>48-63</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2010</td> <td>26 (18 BNP, 8 SWR)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012</td> <td>47 (37 BNP, 10 SWR)</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="4">Rhino</td> <td>2005</td> <td>32</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2007</td> <td>37</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2008</td> <td>27 (22 BNP, 5 SWR)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011</td> <td>31 (24 BNP, 7 SWR)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | | Year | Number | Tiger | 1999 | 48-63 | 2005 | 48-63 | 2010 | 26 (18 BNP, 8 SWR) | 2012 | 47 (37 BNP, 10 SWR) | Rhino | 2005 | 32 | 2007 | 37 | 2008 | 27 (22 BNP, 5 SWR) | 2011 | 31 (24 BNP, 7 SWR) | | | | | | |
| | Year | Number | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Tiger | 1999 | 48-63 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 2005 | 48-63 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 2010 | 26 (18 BNP, 8 SWR) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 2012 | 47 (37 BNP, 10 SWR) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Rhino | 2005 | 32 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 2007 | 37 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 2008 | 27 (22 BNP, 5 SWR) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 2011 | 31 (24 BNP, 7 SWR) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 20 | | 90 % of traditional rice, taro, gourds(Sponge gourd, bottle gourd, pumpkin), grain legume (cow pea, beans, rice beans) and mango varieties maintained in the sites of on-farm conservation | 21 rice, 5 taro, 10 gourds, 6 mango and 10 grain legumes varieties (CBR, 2007) | 19 rice, 4 taro, 9 gourds, 5 mango and 9 grain legumes varieties maintained | <p>56 varieties of rice, 10 of Taro , 6 of bottle gourds (Lauka), 9 of sponge gourd (Ghiraula), 14 of cowpea (Bodi), 21 of bean (Simi), 7 of rice bean (Masyam) and 3 of pumpkins and 28 of local Mango (inc. 76 accessions⁶⁹ out of 252) conserved and maintained through community seed banks</p> <p>The area under cultivation of local varieties increased from 35.5 ha (2006) to 56.7 ha in 2012. In 2012, 715 households were involved in the conservation of local varieties cf. 488 in 2006 baseline.</p> <p>Six community seed banks have been actively mobilizing local farmers for conservation of local varieties through seed collection/distribution system and diversity blocks and cultivation on farmers' field.</p> | Figures at end of Project suggest that baseline numbers were erroneous. Target appears to have been achieved yet no certainty can be attributed to whether numbers represent 90% of true baseline. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 21 | | Globally significant forest biodiversity | 7 forest types and 455 plant species identified | All forest types maintained 12 tree species | It is not possible to evaluate against this indicator since the lack of any definition makes it meaningless. Some minimum area for each forest type needs to | The logframe was changed in 2008 but the baseline figures were not revised. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

⁶⁹ An accession in a genebank is like a book in a library, with a title (species, population, parental line), editor (collector or breeder) and brief summary (phenotypic information, date of collection, etc) available in a database.

| # | Objectives | Performance Indicator | Baseline | End of Project Target | Delivery Status at Final evaluation | Comments | HS | S | MS | MU | U | HU |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|---|----|----|---|----|
| | | maintained. | including 96 trees species (2006) | under different threat levels conserved | be set within the target. The Project claims that all 7 forests type have been maintained and the TET saw evidence of <i>in-situ</i> conservation of one tree species <i>Pterocarpus marsupium</i> (bijay sal) carried out through plantation, grazing control, and fencing. Conservation plans for six other plant species identified as being under national threat are being prepared and will be finalized by end of November 2012 – four trees (<i>Acacia catechu</i> (Khayer), <i>Dalbergia latifolia</i> (Sati sal), <i>Phyllanthus emblica</i> (Amala), <i>Aegle marmelos</i> (Bel)) and two herbs (<i>Rauvolfia serpentina</i> (Sarpagandha), and <i>Asparagus racemosus</i> (Kurilo)). | In 2011 during the semi-annual review, it was realised that certain species were under commercial threat, so these species were prioritised for the development of conservation plans; but there is no indication as to why this was not realised earlier | | | | | | |
| 22 | | Major wetlands of WTLC and associated biodiversity conserved | 79 wetlands in WTLC including Ghodaghodi lake (2006) | 20 % of major wetlands maintained | Total of 37 (46.8%) wetlands conserved by augmenting water level, manual removal of water weeds (eutrophication). | Same indicator as #2. | | | | | | |
| 23 | Output 3.1: DFO, PAs and government line agencies are supported to restore and conserve biodiversity assets in WTLC. | Forest area encroached in WTLCP Basanta, Khata and Laljhadi corridors restored and maintained. | 4,078 ha forest area encroached in 3 WTLC corridors ⁷⁰ | Maintained and restored | Again the target is meaningless. However, 7,112 ha of encroached forest in 3 WTLC corridors have been evacuated, of which WTLCP supported evacuation of 4,123 ha. However, since this exceeds the baseline, this can be evaluated as having been achieved. Restoration plantation and handing over of forests to local communities is being carried out. | 4,123 ha evacuated through WTLCP in Mohana Corridor and 2,989 ha by WWF in Basanta and Khata Corridors. | | | | | | |
| 24 | | Action plans for <i>in situ</i> conservation of bijay sal, elephant, blackbuck and other key plant and wildlife species developed and | Action plan of Tiger developed | Action plan of blackbuck, elephant and bijay sal under implementation | Priority activities of blackbuck conservation action plan, e.g. habitat improvement, management plan preparation, livelihoods diversification, institutional strengthening, are being implemented by WTLCP. <i>In-situ</i> conservation of bijay sal is being carried out through grazing control, plantation and awareness and wise use promotion by WTLCP. Elephant conservation plan (supported by WTLCP) | | | | | | | |

⁷⁰ Khata: 49 ha, Basanta: 336 ha and Laljhadi: 3,693 ha

| # | Objectives | Performance Indicator | Baseline | End of Project Target | Delivery Status at Final evaluation | Comments | HS | S | MS | MU | U | HU | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|---|--|--|-----------------------------------|---|---|-----|---|-----|----|-------|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|---|---|----|---|----|------|---|---|---|---|---|----|------|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|---|---|---|---|---|-------|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | implemented | | | endorsed by MFSC in 2009. WTLC is implementing those activities assigned to it, i.e. minimising human-elephant conflict and livelihood-related activities. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 25 | | Poaching incidents of endangered species declined. | 25 incidents of poaching (DNPWC 2008) | 40% poaching incidents reduced | The figure for 2008 appears to be erroneous. The actual number reported in the DNPWC Annual report for incidents in Bardia NP and Suklaphanta WR was 3 in each locality. In 2009 this peaked at 6 and 4 respectively. In 2011, it had fallen to 2 and 1 respectively and to date in 2012, no incidents have been reported. | The target of 40% is not defined, but the extremely low levels of poaching now reported is an indication that this indicator has been achieved. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 26 | | Number of human casualties by wildlife decreased. | 2 killed and 24 injured (DNPWC 2008) | 30% of human casualties decreased | Number of human injuries is declining but casualties have been higher in all but the first nine months of 2012. Figures for buffer zones are: <table border="1" style="margin: 10px auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2"></th> <th colspan="2">SWR</th> <th colspan="2">BNP</th> <th colspan="2">Total</th> </tr> <tr> <th>C</th> <th>I</th> <th>C</th> <th>I</th> <th>C</th> <th>I</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2008</td> <td>0</td> <td>4</td> <td>2</td> <td>20</td> <td>2</td> <td>24</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2009</td> <td>0</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>9</td> <td>3</td> <td>11</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2010</td> <td>0</td> <td>-</td> <td>3</td> <td>3</td> <td>3</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011</td> <td>0</td> <td>-</td> <td>3</td> <td>0</td> <td>3</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012*</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>C = casualties; I = injury. * 2012 to date.</p> | | SWR | | BNP | | Total | | C | I | C | I | C | I | 2008 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 20 | 2 | 24 | 2009 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 9 | 3 | 11 | 2010 | 0 | - | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2011 | 0 | - | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 2012* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Again the wording of the indicator renders it meaningless. Even assuming it means a 30% reduction in human casualties, with the baseline of 2 surely a 50% target would have been more meaningful? | | | | | |
| | SWR | | BNP | | Total | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | C | I | C | I | C | I | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2008 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 20 | 2 | 24 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2009 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 9 | 3 | 11 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2010 | 0 | - | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2011 | 0 | - | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2012* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 27 | Output 3.2: Critical watershed in WTLC conserved and managed | Effective implementation of integrated Churia plan conducted in Churia range/foot hills. | No Churia plan prepared | 80% VDCs implemented the plan | Churia Conservation Plan prepared in 2008 but not yet endorsed. Priority activities from this, e.g. bio-engineering, grazing control, plantation, forest fire control, are being implemented in all five VDCs (100%) of Churia where WTLC is working. 41 different events of the Conservation Plan have been implemented and 639 ha of land restored. 2,339 households and 8,660 people benefited from the Churia Conservation Plan. | Note – “event” is one activity in one location so the same activity in five locations equals five events. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 28 | | Forest cover in Churia maintained | 91.9% of 2,132 Km ² Churia area | 90% forest cover in Churia | Forest cover has increased within the Churia Hills by 48ha so that it now covers 92.5% of the total land | Baseline is from 1996. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| # | Objectives | Performance Indicator | Baseline | End of Project Target | Delivery Status at Final evaluation | Comments | HS | S | MS | MU | U | HU |
|----|--|---|--|--|--|---|----|---|----|----|---|----|
| | | | has forest cover | maintained | area (recalculated as 2,150 Km ²). | | | | | | | |
| 29 | | Wetlands and waterholes restored | 79 wetlands in WTLC including 31 in PAs and BZ (2006) | At least 16 wetlands restored | Total of 37 (46.8%) wetlands conserved by augmenting water level, manual removal of water weeds (eutrophication). | Same indicator as #s 2 and 22. | | | | | | |
| 30 | Output 3.3: Agro-biodiversity conservation outside protected area improved. | At least five good practice of 'on-farm agrobiodiversity conservation' adopted by 50% of farmers' groups in 6 pilot VDCs. | No agro-biodiversity conservation activities in place before WTLC except farmers own system on the time of baseline 2007 | 50% of farmer's groups of 6 piloted VDCs practice at least five on farm agrobiodiversity good practice model | 60.4 % of farmer's groups in 6 pilot VDCs were practicing at least five on farm agrobiodiversity good practices. The main five good practices of agrobiodiversity are a) home garden; b) community-based seed production, c) use of community biodiversity management fund, d) conservation of local crop varieties, and e) agro-forestry. | | | | | | | |
| 31 | | At least 6 community seed banks and community-based seed production groups established to strengthen farmer-to-farmer seed system in three districts of WTLC. | No farmer seed production group and community seed bank in ABD sites | 6 CBSP groups and community seed banks in 3 districts | 82 community-based seed production groups comprising 168 farmers were established in three districts. Six community seed banks are operational in same three districts. | Seed banks are storing and maintaining germination capacity of seeds through home garden and cultivation in diversity blocks. They are also providing community biodiversity funds as incentives for conservation of local varieties and deposits in the seed bank. | | | | | | |
| 32 | | At least 20% increase seed transaction (exchange, sale and market) of the products of grassroots breeding, PVS and PPB methods. | No PVS, PPB and grassroots breeding activities in place | 20% increase from the base line data | Cannot be evaluated – see comments. 29.8 tonnes of seeds of paddy and wheat collected and sold in the market which is a 372% increase on the 2008 baseline (i.e. 8 tonnes). 1,849 households are involved in the production of seed generating a net income of NRs 1,200 (US\$ 14) each from selling of seeds. | A totally meaningless indicator – 20% of zero is still zero! | | | | | | |

| # | Objectives | Performance Indicator | Baseline | End of Project Target | Delivery Status at Final evaluation | Comments | HS | S | MS | MU | U | HU |
|----|---|--|--|--|--|--|----|---|----|----|---|----|
| 33 | Outcome 4: Local communities are empowered to practice sustainable, biodiversity-friendly natural resource and land use management and pursue diversified livelihoods. | HH level income of targeted community increased by at least 10% compared to the baseline of 2006. | Average HH level income of people in WTLC area is NRS 38,856 per year (2006) | Average HH income increased by 10% | A survey of forest-dependent households in 2011 showed a 19% increase in income generated from forest-based enterprise by NRs 7,428 to NR 46,284 per household per year. The TET has assumed the 10% increase applies to the life of the Project; and although the delivery status indicator is slightly different from that of the baseline, the TET considers it to be more relevant. | This is again a poor indicator since no time period is defined (per year? life of project?) and it should say "at a constant price" in order to remove the effects of inflation. | | | | | | |
| 34 | | Community led environment friendly conservation initiatives increased. | To be determined (by checking 2006's DDCs, VDCs OR selected User-groups financial records) | 30% committees (at district level and local level) have mobilized district and local level resources for environmental friendly initiative | The 2006 baseline survey of local finances showed no spending on biodiversity conservation. WTLC worked in partnership with 34 committees which mobilised NRs 15.2 million (US\$ 178,823), of which 64.2% was from internal resources; 12.8 % from DDC/VDCs; 9.6% from conservation partners; 8.3% from NGOs/INGO; and 5.3% from government line agencies. | | | | | | | |
| 35 | Output 4.1: Community user's groups (buffer zone and community forest), local NGOs, CBOs and others engaged in effective management of biodiversity in WTLC. | Over 80% forest dependent HHs of WTLC area involved in participatory forest management system (PFMS). | 53,861 HH ⁷¹ involved in PFMS (2006) | 80% additional households involved in PFMS compared to baseline 2006 | By 2012, 179.3% additional forest dependent households involved in PFMS within whole of Western Terai (including WWF and DFO areas) compared to baseline 2006 (150,419 households). In the WTLC working area, 73,612 forest dependent households are involved in participatory forest management at present against the baseline of 34,807 households – an increase of 111.6%. | | | | | | | |
| 36 | | Representation of women, Dalits and Janajatis increased in key decision-making positions in community groups | 44.6% women, 7.7% Dalits & 25.7% Janajatis in key decision making position of UGs (2006) | Representation of women, Dalits and Janajatis in UGs increased by 33% | Representation of women in key decision-making positions of forest user groups, CFCC, BZIs and BCDC increased by 4.2% (from 44.6% to 46.5%); of Dalit increased by 130% (from 7.7% to 17.7%); and of Janajatis increased by 43.2% (from 25.7% to 36.8%). | Key decision-making positions includes chair, vice chair, secretary, vice secretary and treasurer. | | | | | | |
| 37 | | Forest user | No | 50% of 700 | WTLC have worked in partnership with only 179 | | | | | | | |

⁷¹ Productive area: 26,228 HH and Protected area: 27,573

| # | Objectives | Performance Indicator | Baseline | End of Project Target | Delivery Status at Final evaluation | Comments | HS | S | MS | MU | U | HU |
|----|--|---|--|--|---|---|----|---|----|----|---|----|
| | | groups conduct general assemblies, including public hearing and audit of their affairs. | comprehensive data available | groups conducted general assemblies, public hearing and auditing | community institutions for conservation and livelihoods related activities. All those institutions which have worked in partnership with WTLCP have conducted regular public hearings and auditing. | | | | | | | |
| 38 | Output 4.2: Local communities involved in diversified livelihoods thereby, reducing pressures on biodiversity assets. | At least 10 new forest resource based micro-enterprises developed and operated. | No comprehensive data available | At least 10 forest resource based micro enterprises developed | WTLCP promoted 44 forest-based value-added micro-enterprises such as bamboo products, turmeric cultivation, furniture- and pickle-making, of which 13 enterprises remain either fully- or seasonally-operational. In addition, medicinal and aromatic plant cultivation is carried out by 400 households on 73 ha of agricultural land in 10 different localities. Hence, 23 forest-based micro-enterprises are functional in the WTLCP area. | The enterprises provide employment opportunities for 878 individuals. Of these, 56.9% are women, 3.3% are Dalit and 81.0 % are Janajati. Medicinal and aromatic plants alone generated a combined income of NRs 5.4 million (US\$ 63,529) in 2011 (NRs 13,500/household (US\$ 159). | | | | | | |
| 39 | | Number of HHs started forest and non-forest based employment | No comprehensive data available | 3,500 HH employed | Employments opportunities for 4,759 households/ individuals have been created through a) seed grant support; b) forest-based micro-enterprises; and c) cultivation of medicinal and aromatic plants. | Of the total benefited households/individuals, 51.6% are women, 13.1% Dalit and 61.4% are Janajati. | | | | | | |
| 40 | | Number of tourists increased in two PA | 1,191 tourist ⁷² visited 2 PAs of WTLC (2006) | 30% of tourists increased | Number of visitors visiting protected areas increased by over 8 times when compared to baseline, although those to Suklaphanta show variation – see Table ??. | | | | | | | |
| 41 | Output 4.3: Awareness level on biodiversity conservation and alternate livelihood increased at the local level. | Number of conservation awareness events organized by local institutions | No comprehensive data available | 300 conservation awareness events carried out | 18,137 people attended 380 conservation awareness events, carried out in partnership with community institutions, central level stakeholders, and district line agencies. | | | | | | | |
| 42 | | Population of targeted 52 VDCs listening conservation and | No conservation and livelihoods programme aired form local FMs | 150 episodes of programme aired and at least 1,20,000 people | 195 episodes of conservation radio programme broadcast on nine local FM stations between 2006 and Sept. 2012. It is estimated that each episode reached around 70-80 thousands listeners. | As of September 2012, radio programme is being phased out. | | | | | | |

⁷² BNP: 1,173 and SWR:18

| # | Objectives | Performance Indicator | Baseline | End of Project Target | Delivery Status at Final evaluation | Comments | HS | S | MS | MU | U | HU |
|---|------------|---|----------|--|---|----------|----|---|----|----|---|----|
| | | livelihoods programme through local FMs increased | | regularly listen the programme through local FMs | Evidence from the field suggested that the programme was popular. | | | | | | | |

ANNEX V: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS AT DE-BRIEFING

De-briefing held on 5th October 2012, 15:00-19:00

Venue :WTLCP hall, Babarmahal

Participants listed in alphabetic order

| Name | Organisation | Designation |
|--------------------|---|---|
| Arun Rijal | TET | National Evaluator |
| Barna Thapa | DNPWC | Under Secretary |
| Bijendra Basnyat | WTLCP | Biodiversity Programme Specialist |
| Bissu Tiwari | Far Western Regional Department of Forests | Regional Director |
| Gauri Timala | DoF | <i>De facto</i> Director General |
| Giridhar Amatya | LI-BIRD / WTLCP | Team Leader of Agro-biodiversity component |
| Harihar Sigdel | MFSC | Acting Secretary (Chair) |
| Indra Malla | DSCWM | Under Secretary |
| Jaganath Koirala | WTLCP | National Project Coordinator |
| Krishna Acharya | MFSC | Joint Secretary |
| Madhuri Karki | DoF | Under Secretary |
| Moon Shrestha | Ecosystem-based Adaptation Project | Programme Coordinator |
| Narendra Pradhan | WWF | Coordinator, Development, Research and Monitoring |
| Phillip Edwards | TET | Lead Evaluator |
| Prakash Shrestha | WTLCP | Communication and Documentation Officer |
| Ram Lamsal | MFSC | Joint Secretary |
| Randhir Singh | WTLCP | Programme Associate |
| Shreedher Adhikari | WTLCP | Administrative and Finance Officer |
| Suman Manandhar | LI-BIRD Pokhara | Senior programme Officer |
| Surendra Joshi | SNV | Programme Coordinator |
| Sushila C.Nepali | TET | National Evaluator |
| Top Khatri | Conservation and Sustainable Use of Wetlands in Nepal Project | National Project Manager |
| Uma Shah | NARC, Gene Bank | Senior Scientist |
| Vijaya P.Singh | UNDP | Assistant Country Director |

ANNEX VI: LIST OF PROJECT BOARD MEMBERS

Because of the frequent turnover of staff and the length of the Project, it is largely pointless to try and provide the names of those sitting on the two Project Boards. Therefore, a list of positions for each is provided in alphabetic order.

Project Outcome Board Members

Secretary, Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation (MFSC) – Chairperson
Joint Secretary, Ministry of Finance
Joint Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture
Joint Secretary, Ministry of Environment
Joint Secretary, Ministry of Local Development
Director General, Department of Agriculture
Director General, Department of Livestock Services
Director General, Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation
Director General, Department of Forests
Director General, Department of Soil Conservation and Watershed Management
Joint Secretary, National Planning Commission
Deputy Country Director, UNDP
Country Director, SNV
Country Director, WWF
Senior Scientist, Focal Point, Biodiversity International
Executive Director, National Agriculture Research Council
Executive Director, Local Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research and Development (LI-BIRD)
Executive Director, National Trust for Nature Conservation
Country Representative, IUCN

The Project Outcome Board (previously known as the Project Steering Committee) provides strategic guidance to the National Project Director and the National Project Coordinator on the Project's implementation and advice on policy matters. The POB facilitates intersectoral/inter-agency coordination and has a key role in the institutionalisation of the multi-sectoral approaches and in ensuring full involvement of multiple partners.

Project Executive Board Members

National Project Director, Joint Secretary, MFSC – Chairperson
Director General, Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation
Director General, Department of Forests
Director General, Department of Soil Conservation and Watershed Management
Director General, Department of Agriculture
Director General, Department of Livestock Services

Assistant Country Director, UNDP

Country Director, SNV

Country Director, WWF

Senior Scientist, Focal Point, Biodiversity International

Executive Director, National Agriculture Research Council

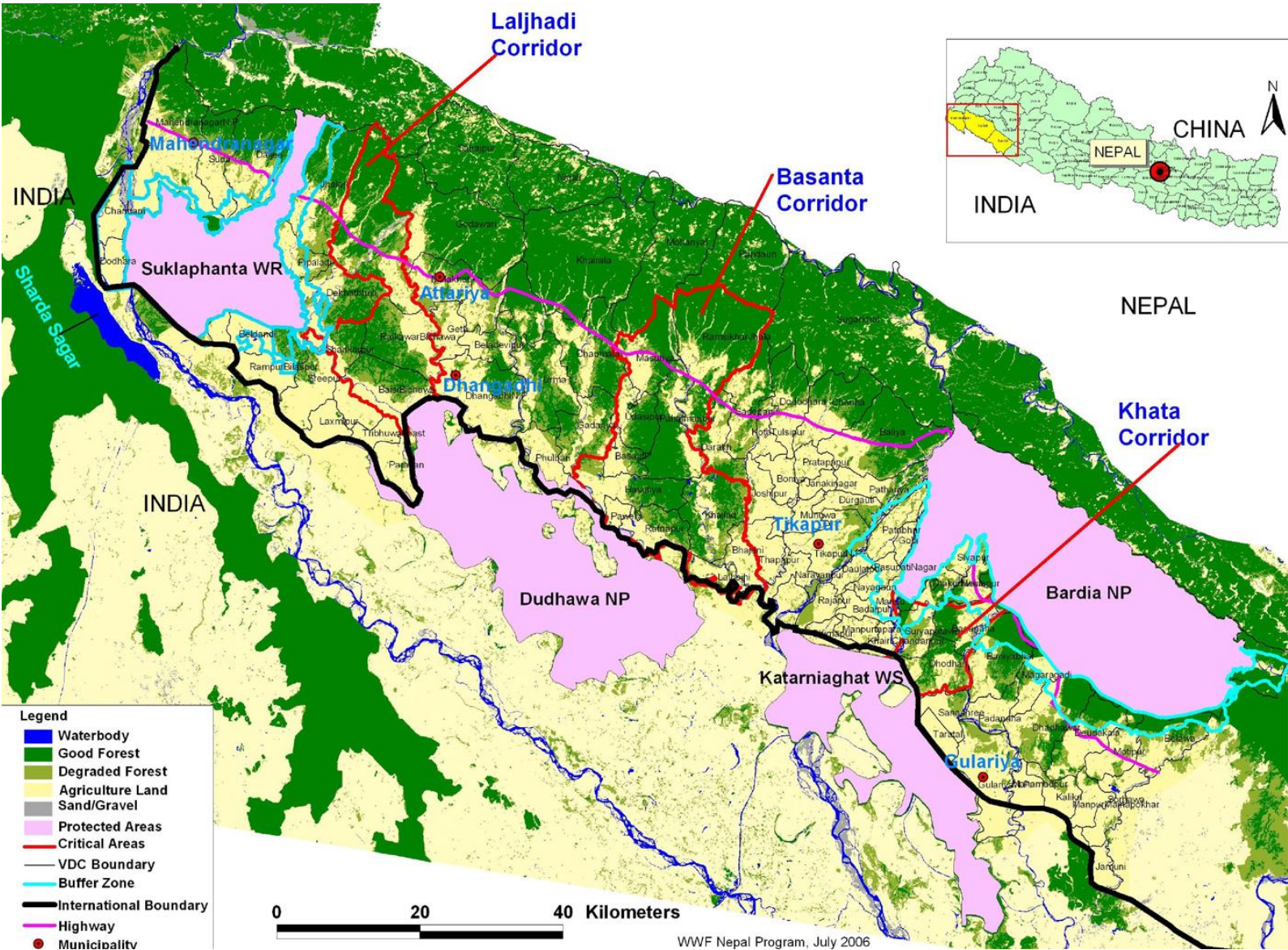
Executive Director, Local Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research and Development (LI-BIRD)

The Project Executive Board is responsible for making management decisions for the Project, including the endorsement of Project work plans and their revisions. The PEB is ultimately responsible for the execution and management of the Project.

ANNEX VII: LIST OF LANDSCAPE COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

| Designation/Representation | Designation in LCC |
|---|--|
| Regional Director, Mid Western Regional Forest Directorate, Surkhet | Chairperson for Mid Western Region and Member for Far western Region |
| Regional Director, Far Western Regional Forest Directorate, Dhangadi | Chairperson for Far Western Region and Member for Mid Western Region |
| Regional Director, Regional Agriculture Research Centre, Khajura Banke | Vice Chairperson |
| Chief Conservation Officer, Bardia National Park | Secretary for Mid Western Region and Member for Far Western Region |
| Chief Conservation Officer, Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve | Secretary for Far Western Region and Member for Mid Western Region |
| District Forest Officer, District Forest Office Bardia | Member |
| District Forest Officer, District Forest Office Kailali | Member |
| District Forest Officer, District Forest Office Kanchanpur | Member |
| Landscape Manager, WTLCP Dhangadi | Member |
| Conservation Officer, Black Buck Conservation Area Khairapur Bardia | Member |
| Project Manager, Tarai Arc Landscape Project, Dhangadi | Member |
| President, Buffer Zone Management Council Bardia National Park | Invitee member |
| President, Buffer Zone Management Council Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve | Invitee member |
| President, Buffer Zone Management Council Black Buck Conservation Area Khairapur Bardia | Invitee member |
| CFCC Representative (From Kailali and Kanchanpur) | Invitee member |

ANNEX VIII: MAP OF WESTERN TERAI LANDSCAPE COMPLEX



ANNEX IX: CAPACITY BUILDING AND BENEFICIARIES

| Training Name | Events | Total Participants | Beneficiaries (%) | | | | |
|---|------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| | | | Dalit | Janajati | Brahmin, Chhetri, and others | Male | Female |
| Book Keeping | 115 | 1,238 | 7.9 | 39.3 | 52.7 | 67.3 | 32.7 |
| Entrepreneurship Skill Development | 73 | 1,363 | 14.7 | 44.4 | 40.9 | 40.3 | 59.7 |
| NTFP Management | 41 | 2,059 | 5.1 | 64.9 | 29.9 | 49.4 | 50.6 |
| Community Forest Management | 70 | 1,307 | 10.2 | 45.4 | 44.5 | 38.0 | 62.0 |
| Natural Resource Management | 24 | 578 | 15.7 | 31.3 | 52.9 | 53.6 | 46.4 |
| Capacity Building | 70 | 1,585 | 7.2 | 32.6 | 60.2 | 60.1 | 39.9 |
| Agriculture and Livestock Management Training | 22 | 785 | 23.4 | 25.7 | 50.8 | 52.0 | 48.0 |
| Skill Enhancement | 26 | 573 | 11.9 | 48.3 | 39.8 | 44.3 | 55.7 |
| Agrobiodiversity | 6 | 103 | 10.7 | 41.7 | 47.6 | 32.0 | 68.0 |
| Biodiversity Conservation | 14 | 334 | 13.2 | 21.0 | 65.9 | 58.7 | 41.3 |
| GPS and IEE Training | 1 | 26 | 0.0 | 3.8 | 96.2 | 100.0 | 0.0 |
| Food and Beverage Training | 1 | 36 | 0.0 | 5.6 | 94.4 | 83.3 | 16.7 |
| HNPV Training | 1 | 21 | 9.5 | 33.3 | 57.1 | 57.1 | 42.9 |
| Stress Tolerance rice technology | 2 | 42 | 0.0 | 73.8 | 26.2 | 64.3 | 35.7 |
| Integrated Landscape level conservation and planning training | 7 | 175 | 22.9 | 34.3 | 42.9 | 61.7 | 38.3 |
| Organization Development including Cooperative | 6 | 150 | 23.3 | 34.0 | 42.7 | 62.0 | 38.0 |
| Total | 479 | 1,0375 | 10.9 | 43.0 | 46.1 | 51.5 | 48.5 |

ANNEX X: AWARENESS-RELATED ACTIVITIES

E = events; P = persons

| Activity | District | 2012 | | 2011 | | 2010 | | 2009 | | 2008 | | 2007 | | 2006 | | Remarks | Total | |
|--|-----------------|------|-----|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-----|------|----|------|---|--|-------|--------|
| | | E | P | E | P | E | P | E | P | E | P | E | P | E | P | | E | P |
| Extension workshop on CITES | Kailali | 0 | | 1 | 28 | 0 | | 0 | | 0 | | 0 | | 1 | | | 2 | 28 |
| Environment conservation awareness activities, environment event | Bardia /Kailali | 16 | 600 | 10 | 1,508 | 44 | 5,609 | 4 | 4,278 | 39 | | 73 | | 19 | | including Biodiversity day, Wildlife, week, street drama | 205 | 11,995 |
| Support to Maintain Basic School Facilities | | | | | | | | | | 11 | 700 | 10 | | 12 | | no of school | 33 | 700 |
| Study Tour to India | | | | | | | | 1 | 21 | | | 1 | 14 | | | | 2 | 35 |
| Experience sharing visit | | | | | | 1 | 163 | 1 | 21 | 9 | 257 | 4 | 69 | | | | 15 | 510 |
| Collaborative Forest Management Workshop | Kailali | | | | | 3 | 162 | 1 | | 1 | 50 | | | | | District level | 5 | 337 |
| Community level collaborative forest management workshop | | | | | | | | 5 | 125 | 6 | 210 | | | | | | 11 | 210 |
| Consultation Workshop cum meeting | | | | | | | | | | 11 | 50 | | | | | | 11 | 50 |
| Local Level Stakeholder Workshop on Agro-Biodiversity | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 | 0 |
| Institutionalized BZ Institutions | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 20 | 1 | 12 | | | UC's of BNP and SWR | 2 | 32 |
| Piloting public land management in ha. | | | | 2 | 27 | | | | | 1 | 21 | 1 | 25 | | | | 4 | 73 |
| Experience sharing visit for Eco club | | | | | | | | | | 4 | 156 | | | | | | 4 | 156 |
| Support to visit centre | | | | | | | | | | 2 | | | | | | | 2 | 0 |
| DFCC Capacity Enhancement | | | | | | 1 | 18 | 4 | 105 | | | | | | | | 5 | 123 |

| Activity | District | 2012 | | 2011 | | 2010 | | 2009 | | 2008 | | 2007 | | 2006 | | Remarks | Total | |
|---|------------|------|-----|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-----|------|---|---------|-------|--------|
| | | E | P | E | P | E | P | E | P | E | P | E | P | E | P | | E | P |
| Workshop | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Community forest interaction workshop | | | | | | 5 | 155 | 2 | 60 | | | | | | | | 7 | 215 |
| Youth focused programme support | | | | | | 49 | 2,256 | 21 | 1,653 | | | | | | | | 70 | 3,909 |
| Climate change adaptate workshop | | | | | | 6 | 170 | | | | | | | | | | 6 | 170 |
| Policy level exposure visit (International) | | | | | | 3 | 14 | | | | | | | | | | 3 | 14 |
| community level exposure visit | | | | | | 2 | 46 | | | | | | 1 | | | | 3 | 46 |
| CITIES sensitization workshop for line agency | | | | | | 1 | 28 | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 28 |
| Exposure Visit to BCDC Members | | | | 1 | 65 | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 65 |
| exposure visit to Medicinal and Aromatic Oil entrepreneurs | Kailali | | | 2 | 18 | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | 18 |
| Exposure visit to women groups involved in home based pickle enterprise | | | | 1 | 7 | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 7 |
| Exposure visit to UC's | Kanchanpur | | | 1 | 16 | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 16 |
| Total | | 16 | 600 | 18 | 1,669 | 115 | 8,621 | 39 | 6,263 | 85 | 1,464 | 90 | 120 | 33 | | | 396 | 18,737 |

ANNEX XI: LONGER COMMENTS ON THE EVALUATION FINDINGS

PMU comments

| Comment | Response |
|---|---|
| <p>Paragraph 22: LIBIRD was preparing activities on their own, and requesting for the support to WTLCP. WTLCP have less involvement on planning of annual programme of agro-biodiversity component. They implemented many activities for doing research only, which have less impact on project outputs. Both the MTE and also agro-biodiversity assessment suggested to prioritize agro-biodiversity interventions to have larger impact. The management cost of agro-biodiversity activities is very high, almost double that that of WTLCP, which often resulted into inadequate investment. They fully rely on WTLCP for management cost while no such provision was there on project document.</p> | |
| <p>Paragraph 27: This is the framework developed by DFID and all project staff are much aware of it. PMU fully agree that we don't have GESI strategy in place but we followed MFSC GESI strategy. Please note that front loading programme of WTLCP supported to prepare this strategy. Likewise, Project had in-built mechanism, where we have worked for all three components of this framework, including changing rule of law. This is quite well reflected during our planning processes and designing programme and activities. This framework is developed by DFID and most popular in Nepal, widely used by different forestry projects. Hence, referencing should be done to recognize other's work.</p> | |
| <p>Paragraph 40: The management cost appears very high since it includes monitoring and evaluation cost. M&E cost is 5.7% of management cost. Likewise, UNDP M&E cost (3.5%) of total budget, which is also included here. If we remove these two components, management cost is 21.1%, which is in line with project document (18% of management cost). Likewise, management cost of the project also increased because project tenure was increased by six months. The efficiency should also be seen from the duration, geographic coverage, and nature of activities. Comparing with other project without taking this into consideration might lead to misinterpretation.</p> | <p>The points are good but the figures for other projects include both M&E costs and similar length extensions. Also, Mongolia cover a much larger geographic coverage than WTLCP, and the Siberian Crane project covered four countries with management offices in each, plus an international office. The point remains that project management costs on this project remain high.</p> |
| <p>Paragraph 45: Social mobilizers and community motivator salary were at par with the salary of TAL motivators and govt staff till 2010 or even higher. Likewise, their salary was also similar to other UNDP projects. However, project decided to follow govt salary norm in 2011, since govt increases salary by more than 50%. Please note that social mobilizer salary did not increase even after salary adjustment with the government while that of community motivator increased by 40%. Apart from this, salary of these staff were provided by SNV support. Salary of these staff were revised three times during the project tenure to ensure consistency with salary increment of</p> | <p>The TET does not understand this comment. The MTE clearly raises low salaries and poor morale as an issue and it was dealt with accordingly as a management response. See Section 5.2 of the MTE:</p> <p><i>“The remuneration of project staff is found not updated for the last four years as per the annual inflation. So, the evaluation team suggests that their remuneration and travel per diem should be adjusted according to yearly cost of living inflation, as practiced by other similar projects in the country. One of the de-motivating factors for the Community Motivators has been their</i></p> |

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| <p>govt and other conservation partners.</p> <p>Project did not make any saving from staff salary, the expense is even higher. TET also noted that management expenses of project is very high compared to other project, then how can project save money from salary.</p> | <p>remuneration level. So, the team suggests that the project should review their remuneration at least in par with similar government field staff.”</p> <p>The second paragraph of the comment is illogical – i) costs would have been even higher if such savings had not been made; and ii) costs of social mobilisers and community motivators should have been allocated to the Outcomes they were working on, not to Project Management. This in turn raises the question as to whether other costs were misallocated to Project Management (a common mistake in GEF projects) thereby wrongly inflating these costs.</p> |
| <p>Paragraph 52: This is not the case as presented here. M&E officer resigns because he was not given responsibility of acting landscape manager (LM) during leave of LM. PMU strongly believe that M&E officer could not cope with the deadline pressure at the end of the project, hence decided to quit the job. This issue was more related with technical capacity and poor accountability towards the duties of M&E officer rather than for personal reasons.</p> | <p>Actually the TET was being tactful – the word “personal” is in inverted commas to show that the reasons were anything but personal – but the PMU appears to have misunderstood that the TET was trying not to publicise the details. That it feels free to do so is fine by the TET.</p> |
| <p>Paragraph 64: The principle of this assessment is to move from simple indicators in earlier years to use more complex afterwards, like what local development ministry did. The indicators are expected to be revised annually based on feedback of assessment and performance of the group. Hence, it is equally important to revise indicators based on performance. It is not always necessary that fund amount should be increased to provide incentives. If we move from simple to complex indicators, this problem can be solved. However, it is equally important for MFSC to secure sustainable funding for this source, which seems unlikely at present conditions.</p> | <p>The clarification is helpful – it is a shame that secure sustainable funding appears unlikely for such a clever initiative.</p> |
| <p>Paragraph 83: This publication was published by Nepal Forester Association with limited support from WTLCP. Other conservation partners such as WWF, National Trust for Nature Conservation, UNDP provided fund directly. We only included name of WTLCP while funding agencies name were not shown. This is the only publication which does not have GEF logo and is not published by the project. NFA also deny to put logo of funding agencies since they have made contract with WTLCP not with other agencies. Hence logo of GEF, SNV, Bioversity, NARC and LIBIRD did not appear. We are much concerned about GEF logo and is included on all published and un-published document prepared by project.</p> | |

MFSC comments

| Comment | Response |
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| <p>General: Ministry would first like to thank Terminal Evaluation Team (TET) for critically analysing project performance and providing useful insights. However, ministry is not convinced with TET rating for the project as moderately satisfactory. As per the TET’s own evaluation, project was successful in achieving all output and outcomes level indicators satisfactorily. Likewise, it also noted that three out of four immediate objective level indicators have been fully achieved and one partially achieved, despite lagging project</p> | <p>The TET apologises if the rationale behind its ratings remains unclear. It had believed that it had explained this fully during the de-briefing session on 5th October and the Report is consistent with this.</p> <p>The ultimate aim of the Project is stated unequivocally in the summary box on the cover page of the Project Document. It says: “Ultimately, the project aims to develop replicable landscape-level management models to safeguard the biological wealth and vital</p> |

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| <p>implementation by three years. Project was implemented during the peak conflict period when a key stakeholder withdrew their support, for example Natural Resource Sector Management Assistance Programme (NARMSAP). WTLCP had developed and tested many policy tools which have been either institutionalized or in the process of institutionalized by the government of Nepal. Ministry had rated this project highly satisfactory. Project was successful not only in reducing biodiversity threats significantly, improving livelihoods of forest dependent communities substantially but also improved management effectiveness of national biodiversity institutions, especially by strengthening their institutional capacity and developing new innovative policies such as Integrated landscape planning guideline, PES guideline, performance based financing guidelines, Encroachment Control and Management Strategy etc. As a result of this, Ministry is replicating best practices of WTLCP on protected forests. Likewise, Ministry has decided to continue project activities through Multi-stakeholders forestry programme, and a task force has been formed for this.</p> | <p>ecological functions in Nepal”. That this was not linked coherently with the logframe is part of the design flaw – the Report makes the point in paragraphs 18-19 that the “logframe was a mess”. Furthermore, if one was to rely on the logframe and aim to fulfil just its outputs and outcomes, then a period of five years for the Project would be satisfactory – as has indeed been shown to be the case since, as the MFSC points out, it did largely fulfil these. However, the Project was given eight years (far and away the longest project the Lead Evaluator has assessed) for the simple reason that both GEF and the designers knew it would need a long period of time to develop replicable models. In the event, despite its many successes, it did not fulfil its ultimate aim. This is can not be regarded as a minor shortcoming but has to be taken as moderate; a perusal of the definitions in Table 1 shows clearly that means the Project has to be ranked as “Moderately Satisfactory”. The old definition is even more accurate, “Project is expected to achieve most of its major relevant objectives but with either significant shortcomings” as described here, or “Project is expected not to achieve some of its major global environmental objectives” – it did not achieve its ultimate aim. The TET’s hands are tied. The Ministry’s ratings of its own projects are a matter for the Ministry only – the TET is independent and uses strictly objective criteria. Nonetheless, the TET is pleased that the Ministry considers the Project a success and is delighted to learn that it has decided to continue the activities. The TET wishes it every success.</p> |
| <p>Paragraph 24: Ministry has strong reservation on findings presented on para 24. Is it really mandatory for the local project like WTLCP to get documents published in international academic journals, scientific press, or through other publications? Many of these documents have been published by the project targeting local stakeholders (National) in partnership with other conservation agencies. The documents which are published by the project were widely disseminated by the project team in partnership with national biodiversity institutions. For example, Leveraging the landscape was launched and disseminated on Nepal’s Forester Day and a book on Sustainable Financing Mechanism was launched during Warden Conference. The target audience are the different. Please note that the project document is silent for the need to publish documents through international media. Nevertheless, project team had presented few scientific papers both nationally and internationally.</p> <p>Likewise, raising logo issue is surprising and not convincing. WTLCP is time bound government project while WWF is one of the conservation partners and an international organization. Statement on govt. wearing WWF t-shirt example does not justify the evidences or conclusions made in this para 24.</p> | <p>No, it is not mandatory to have documents published in international journals, and the TET does not suggest that it is. And the TET agrees that the Project Document is silent on the issue – but the TET feels that the Minsitry is perhaps picking and choosing how it interprets what is in the project document, particularly so given the comment and response immediately above. Publication in the international sphere is however considered good practice by GEF and projects are encouraged to do so. It is also interesting that it is not just the TET who was disappointed by this aspect of the Project as the quote from a senior MFSC official shows.</p> <p>The TET finds it strange that the Ministry finds the logo issue unconvincing. The whole theory of advertising is based around branding a product or a message, and a logo is one of the key tools to achieve this. The Lead Evaluator has seen many projects – those that have understood the branding concept and implemented it have invariably reached a wide audience and reinforced their message, achieving significant success through changed behaviour or deeper understanding as a result. Those that haven’t have had more limited success – see also response to comment concerning paragraph 83 below.</p> |
| <p>Paragraph 27: Ministry has developed the Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy with support from WTLCP again (frontloading programme of WTLCP). All the agencies working within the domain of ministry</p> | <p>See response to PMU comment on same paragraph 27 in this Annex above.</p> |

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| <p><i>is expected to follow this strategy. It is not necessary for the project to develop its own strategy. It would have been quite useful if the TET have evaluated how project was implemented in consistency with the GESI strategy of Ministry instead of identifying the new thing (see para 27). Likewise, example should have been from forestry sector instead of education, health and employment. Ministry wishes if the TET finds time to look from this perspective as well.</i></p> | |
| <p>Paragraph 45: <i>The issue of misguided saving is misleading. This further contradicts with statement made on earlier para. The expenditure was in line with the budget despite of increment of six month tenure of project. Likewise, salary paid to social mobilizers/community motivators is consistent with other projects, like TAL. PEB is very much sensitive to this issue and has increased salary 3 times within the project period to make it comparable with salary revision of the government. Please note that, UNDP had not provided any increment in salary for the staff recruited by it as per NEX guideline. Hence, this statement is quite misleading and does not have strong evidence to support the argument made in this para.</i></p> | <p>Please refer to response to PMU comment in Annex XI covering same issue.</p> |
| <p>Paragraph 55: <i>Ministry is again concerned with overall rating of the project presented in para 54. According to project log-frame, the development objective of the project is to “ensure the conservation and sustainable use of globally significant biodiversity in Nepal’s Western Terai landscape”. TET has rightly concluded that project has achieved biodiversity conservation outcomes highly satisfactory and also achieved livelihoods related outcomes satisfactory. Likewise, TET also highlighted 29 (72.5%) indicators have been successfully achieved, and six (15%) nearly successful, at the end of the project and concluded as a very good achievement.</i></p> <p><i>In this regards, Ministry has also initiated several activities for ensuring conservation and wise use of biodiversity in western Terai, which ensures sustainability of project activities. For example, MFSC has increased protected area fees for ensuring secure finance. Likewise it has declared three corridors of western Terai as protected forests and has given special status of management. Adequate staff, fund and institutions have been created for managing corridors. Many of project best practices and success stories have been replicated in designing and delivering plan and programme in protected areas and protected forests. Likewise, conservation partners are also replicating project best practices. Ministry felt that these have not been adequately considered during the rating of project.</i></p> | <p>Please refer to response given to same issue raised under the General comment above.</p> |
| <p>Paragraph 58: <i>According to TET, development objectives, those things that the project will “contribute towards”, are best assessed independently of the project and at portfolio level. However, the immediate objective is something that the project is trying to achieve “in its lifetime or shortly thereafter”. The immediate objective of the project is to “establish effective management systems and build capacity for the conservation and sustainable use of Nepal’s Western Terai landscape complex which is measured</i></p> | <p>Again, the TET is sorry that the Ministry contends that it has not done justice to the Project efforts and feels that the TET has not justified its ratings convincingly. The TET disagrees and refers the Ministry to its response to its own General comment above.</p> |

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| <p>by four indicators”. <i>TET mentioned that three have been achieved in general terms, and a fourth only partially. This indicates that the TET has not done justice to the project efforts. When the rating is done beyond the log frame indicators, it is necessary to justify it convincingly.</i></p> | |
| <p>Paragraph 64: <i>Ministry is committed to institutionalize performance based grant system. The recommendations made by the TET on para 65 are well taken into account. The system is at very infant stage, new to Nepal and we are still at learning stage. We may be following different options as we move ahead. It is not necessary that fund amount need to be increased annually as suggested by TET. What it is needed at present is to design or improve system which facilitates healthy competition among the different community institutions for conservation. This may require either increase in fund or improvement/revision in indicators.</i></p> | <p>No response necessary.</p> <p>The TET is pleased to learn that the Ministry intends to pursue this innovative and clever scheme, yet points to contradictions between its comment and that made by the PMU under the same point – see the footnotes.</p> |
| <p>Paragraph 80: <i>stated about perverse incentives regarding EIA/IEE. Ministry had already initiated action in this regards, which is also highlighted in the report. However, this is the issue is beyond the domain or scope of WTLCP.</i></p> | <p>Agreed. But it is relevant to WTLCP.</p> |
| <p>Paragraph 83: <i>about logo issue again? Do the TET really mean to say that GEF logo should be posted everywhere on ground? Expecting that project should teach the people that fund came from GEF is something which ministry cannot understand. Furthermore, GEF support is based on incremental benefit concept and different partners have collaborated towards it. Is it necessary that community should know the name of all seven partners collaborating for the project? Nevertheless, Ministry will take this into consideration while implementing other GEF project.</i></p> | <p>No, not at all. What is important is the message that the wildlife around the beneficiaries is globally important – and the names and logos of the partners do not help with this, but that of GEF may. The message itself was completely lacking in this project as the text points out. The issue is not about use of the logo per se, but about differentiating (using whatever means possible) the underlying reason for the project from the countless other development projects around – here this Project is providing development opportunities to people because of the important wildlife around them which they need to help conserve; not development aid just because they are poor. This is a fundamental difference - and as the text says a missed opportunity.</p> |
| <p>Paragraph 84: <i>discussed about the establishment of District landscape advisory body. However this recommendation needs further clarification and elaboration, especially on rationale, composition and purpose. Likewise, it should also highlight on how it differs from the role of DFSCC. Establishing new institutions without strong rationale and assessment is costly, time consuming and not practical.</i></p> | <p>The TET believes that the text provides the rationale behind this idea, i.e. the need to have “<i>continuity of approach through consistent, locally-based, technical knowledge</i>” when dealing with long-term initiatives that will have decisions being taken by short-term elected representatives, or by government staff who are rotated at frequent intervals. As indicated in the response to the PMU comment footnoted to this same paragraph, the timescale for this maybe wrong, but if the Government intends to continue with project activities as it states under its General comment, then the recommendation could still be implemented.</p> |
| <p><i>Finally Ministry is mainstreaming best practices of WTLCP’s initiatives in national policy and programme such as integrated landscape planning, sustainable financing mechanism and biological corridor management. This has been reflected in current three year plan, as highlighted by TET as well. Ministry is happy to note that WTLCP is one of the successful projects, which has contributed to both site level conservation initiatives and improvements in the management effectiveness of national biodiversity institutions.</i></p> <p><i>Ministry would once again thank TET for their hard</i></p> | <p>No action required.</p> <p>The TET thanks the Ministry for its cooperation throughout the evaluation and for its comments which have helped improve the text. The TET hopes its responses have clarified the Ministry’s concerns.</p> |

work and hope that Ministry's comments will be addressed appropriately in the final report.

UNDP comments

| Comment | Response |
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| <p><u><i>Effective loss of 3 year implementation time by the project and its failure to produce replicable model of landscape conservation:</i></u></p> <p><i>This is partly true. It was not a complete loss of 3-year implementation as the project, building upon WTLCB results, put efforts in building foundations for future work related to conserving biodiversity assets, enhancing livelihood, and setting up co-ordination mechanisms at the levels of the communities, districts, regions and central, which was important for project planning and progress review. This initial time was also well utilized by the project to establish systems and practices to work with the local communities and their organizations (CFCC and co-operatives), line agencies, and service providers, and setting mechanisms for monitoring field based activities by a multi-partner team, developing project communication strategy and modalities to work with project partners such as WWF, SNV, BI, Li-BIRD and NARC, which is evident from the copies of working arrangements agreed with them. Initially the project also spent a substantive time in bringing up a harmonized operation modality for field implementation which was an effort to harmonize different procedures and practices adapted by different project partners as to procurement of services, training fees and daily allowances.</i></p> <p><i>The reason behind why the outcome of demonstrating a replicable model of landscape conservation was not achieved was a combination of factors: a) lack of clarity in project log-frame and complex project design (this made the project team really difficult to identify priority for landscape policy work in the beginning and hence the team focused first on community level interventions), b) the objective itself was very ambitious as Nepal was quite new to landscape conservation approaches and hence the project had to depend very much on learning by doing on the components of the landscape to see how it fits in the overall landscape framework given the institutional complexities, and c) readiness of the government to acknowledge the model of landscape conservation and its further replication to other areas. Though the government was receptive to landscape approach of integrated planning and financing and endorsed the key policy document related to it, but there was no long term visioning about how the model of landscape conservation will actually materialize and replication would happen given the current system of planning and budgeting which is more sectoral in nature, managed through confines of respective ministries, and delivered through district line agencies.</i></p> <p><i>In conclusion the first three year of the project was not a complete waste but rather implementation was not</i></p> | <p>The TET thanks the UNDP-CO for these insights, but respectfully believes this is putting a slight gloss on events. There is no doubt that the logframe was poorly designed and caused considerable difficulties, but the harmonisation of modalities really should have been achieved during the PDF-B design period. Furthermore, the design recognised that the objective was ambitious and that a lot of learning-by-doing would be necessary. That is why it provided it with an implementation period of eight years. While the UNDP-Co is almost certainly correct in that the first three years was not a complete waste, much less was achieved in this period than had been envisaged and ultimately the Project's inability to use those years effectively and efficiently has resulted in the replicable landscape models remaining untested – or to use the analogy in the text, the parts still being in the garage unassembled and the car not road-tested.</p> |

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| <p><i>well planned and strategically guided in lack of an easily understandable project results framework.</i></p> <p><u><i>No integration of agro-biodiversity component in landscape approach because of design compromise of agro-biodiversity into the project:</i></u></p> <p><i>This is only partly true. The integration of agro-biodiversity component into the project was a design compromise but it was not the whole reason behind why the whole component looked marginalized in the entire implementation of WTLCP.</i></p> <p><i>The agro-biodiversity component is well encapsulated in the project log-frame, particularly to Outcome 3 and Outcome 4, with the mention of specific outputs to be produced. During the implementation the project had several discussions with the partners (NARC, LiBIRD and BI) in the beginning regards to how this component will be specifically defined in terms of actual targets and activities, and implemented in the project area over a period of time. As a result, a strategy to implement agro-biodiversity component of the project was drafted following intensive field survey and studies.</i></p> <p><i>In UNDP opinion there are two reasons behind the marginalization: a) the MFSC had a very poor control on the work done by agro-biodiversity partners of the project, which was natural, as the ministry was first time collaborating with agro-biodiversity partners on field implementation and b) agro-biodiversity partners, mainly represented by LiBIRD, were not fully prepared to integrate their work in the overall landscape framework. They wanted to maintain their separate identity in terms of management of agro-biodiversity component, and reporting on the progress. Despite several interventions by the project management and through PEBs, in practice their modality of operation did not change, and outputs and reports produced by them always remained isolated.</i></p> <p><i>The original idea was the agro-biodiversity partners will take lead on integration of agro-biodiversity component in the overall project, while at the same time they will also support implementation of planned activities from the project funds. For many reasons, they could not assume the leadership role and mere served as a sub-contracting party of the project to implement project activities.</i></p> | <p>No action necessary.</p> <p>The TET thanks the UNDP-CO for this comment which provides considerable insight into one of the problematic areas of the Project.</p> |
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Laxmi Bhatta, Livelihoods Advisor to WTLCP from SNV

| Comment | Response |
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| <p>General: TE mission, in many places, describes reservation on DFSCC, and recommends for landscape committees. My suggestion is to stick on original project document where landscape committees were not envisioned rather to build the capacity of district forest coordination committees, which is in fact joint initiatives of BISEP and WTLCP (in SNV agreement with GoN, this is considered as one project, BSSP (biodiversity sector support programme) refer original MoU).</p> | <p>No action. Suggestion noted and reproduced here.</p> |
| <p>Paragraph 23: I have strong reservation on TE observation “..... SNV.... Until the time of their (SNV) sudden and un- communicated withdrawal..... such withdrawal...”. As of my knowledge, SNV communicated well to the ministry of Finance (I still have copy of this letter in my computer) with a copy to MFSC (the implementing agency) and other partners on time. SNV strongly believes that WTLCP is well executed by the MFSC, and MFSC is in the drivers sheet.</p> | <p>The TET is interested to learn that you still have the copy of the letter on your computer. It appears that nobody else does. We could not find any information relating to this from the MFSC or SNV nor anyone connected with WTLCP. Interestingly, neither could the MTE and it reports as such. The evidence in front of the TET was that it was SNV’s withdrawal was not communicated properly to those involved and while SNV may indeed have sent a letter to the Ministry of Finance, better communication should have been extended to its partners in the Project.</p> |
| <p>Paragraph 24: The TE indicates that “stakeholder participation is highly satisfactory” whereas the team also mentioned that “...implementation has been too MFSC centric and not cross sectoral (page viii Key Issues).” this is somehow contradictory conclusion.</p> | <p>The TET disagrees. Stakeholder participation has been highly satisfactory with a wide range of stakeholders consulted and included. The implementation, particularly when dealing with mechanisms through which landscape level conservation will work, has been almost wholly viewed from the MFSC’s point of view.</p> |
| <p>Paragraph 25: I also suggest that MFSC gender and social inclusion strategy is one of the key strategy achievement that WTLCP (in fact, WTLBP) and BISEP-ST supported. Kindly include in Gender and social equity.</p> | <p>Although the MFSC developed the GESI strategy with the support of development partners, which was a step forwards with respect to addressing gender and social inclusion issues, its implementation on the ground by the field offices remained very weak in view of the lack of adequate backstopping and support from the Ministry. However, following the GESI monitoring tools developed by UNDP for all UNDP supported projects, WTLCP implemented the components of GESI throughout its operation, tracked the progress, and reported to the Government and UNDP annually.</p> |
| <p>Paragraph 39: “... SNV appears to agree that it simply made no communication.....”. I do not know how SNV agree on this statement, but I strongly disagree – please refer my statement above no 3, (SNV informed Ministry of Finance and MFSC with all partners on time, a copy of letter of correspondence should be therein WTLCP, as well).</p> <p>“.... SNV transferred The MTE notes that .. it could not find document Another example of poor communication”. This statement is not right, to the best of my knowledge. As far as I do remember, WTLCP and BISEP-ST are considered as one project namely BSSP- Biodiversity Sector Support Programme. As mentioned earlier, this was well communicated from SNV on time to MFSC, and partners.</p> | <p>See response to comment on paragraph 23 above.</p> |
| <p>Paragraph 82: the TE team surprisingly noted biogas programme as contra conservation activities citing the reasons on fodder requirement. I do not agree. We design biogas for those families who already rear water buffaloes or cows for their livelihoods rather than rear for biogas only. In economic sense, this is opportunity benefits.</p> | <p>No action. Suggestion noted and reproduced here.</p> |

Surendra Joshi, Programme Coordinator, SNV Nepal

| Comment | Response |
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| <i>Paragraph 23: should read like this: “It appear that SNV appreciated the partnership most, and certainly they were heavily involved up until end of 2010. Though SNV’s part of project was due for completion in 2009, but an extension of one year was granted. And, SNV has communicated its decision with the Ministry of Finance and MFSC. Even after moving out from the implementation, SNV remained as the member of the WTLCP Executive Board, and provided its inputs. SNV worked...”</i> | The TET appreciates SNV’s strongly held view, but while it accepts here that the Ministry of Finance was informed (the first time that the TET has learned this) there is no evidence anywhere to suggest wider communication with its partners. |
| <i>Paragraph 39; last sentence: We strongly disagree with this statement. We have well communicated our decision and there was clear go ahead from the Ministry. SNV considered MFSC as the major client and communicate all the decisions with other implementing partners and stakeholders through MFSC. Regarding fund transfer, there was again a clear communication. Moreover, SNV’s support was for BSSP- Biodiversity Sector Support Programme, under which we provided support to WTLCP and BISEP-ST (as 2 modules of the one programme).</i> | The TET refers to its above responses over this issue to both the Programme Coordinator and Livelihoods Advisor. The MTE also made exactly the same point and there was no response from SNV to the contrary. |

Dr. Uday Raj Sharma, Ex National Project Director

| Comment | Response |
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| <i>I like to thank WTLCP to have given me the opportunity to review this document. As the former National Project Director of the Project, I read the contents with interest. I wish I had interacted with the evaluation team.</i> | The TET would also have valued such a conversation and thanks Dr. Sharma for his inputs through this means. |
| <i>The report rightly summarizes the various shortcomings of WTLCP since its conceptualization. It went through various hurdles: Although GEF had approved the Project Brief as early as October 2002, the project could take off the ground only in March 2006 when the first disbursement was received. WTLCP reminds me as a difficult project implemented during a difficult time period of conflict and in bad security situation. It used to have a very confusing log frame with too many indicators. Some of these indicators were not even realistic or verifiable. But, fortunately it was revised in 2008. The other problem of the project was of too many partners, who wanted to impose their own modalities. The project came close to closing after the differences between UNDP and WWF escalated to a high level.</i> | The TET notes corroboration of its own views over the logframe. |
| <i>Despite all these hurdles, WTLCP has completed with many successful small scale projects and has made a significant impact in conserving the biodiversity of the landscape and improving the livelihoods of the residents. These have been well captured in the draft terminal evaluation report.</i> | The TET extends it thanks. |
| <i>I have a comment on the Paragraph 22, when the Mission states that agro-biodiversity was not seen as a component to fit within the overall Project Framework. I do not think that is the case. Agro-biodiversity has been recognized as one of the components of biodiversity in the MFSC-approved Nepal Biodiversity Strategy, 2002. The</i> | The TET is extremely grateful to the ex-NPD for bringing these important points and has sign-posted them more strongly than usual. |

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| <i>marginalization of agro-biodiversity could have been due to lack of understanding of this component by the project staff and inadequate/ineffective role of LI-BIRD and NARC. MFSC, being the focal point of CBD, cannot shy out from its responsibility of conserving agro-biodiversity in Nepal, and the WTLCP had provided a good ground to start replicable activities. Interestingly, the Mission has not recognized this aspect.</i> | |
| <i>Mission has rightly recognized that WTLCP has failed to provide a replicable model for landscape level management. Nevertheless, the overall achievement of the Project has remained satisfactory.</i> | Such recognition is key – see response to MFSC’s general comment above. The TET agrees that the remainder of the Project has been satisfactory, but the overall rating has to be maintained. |
| <i>Mission has listed some of the policy level outputs such as Corridor Management Policy, PES Guidelines, and Agro-biodiversity Policy of WTLCP. But, will these policies be effectively applied by concerned Ministries and agencies there under, is the point on which the Mission should have dealt in more detail. The report does not specify the processes through which these documents were formulated. What extent of participation the stakeholders made in the preparation of the document determines, in general, the acceptability of such policy documents.</i> | The TET apologises for not being able to deal with this in more detail, but time was always at a premium. Nonetheless, the ex-NPD raises the key issue that the TET has tried to impart throughout its report – “ <i>will these policies be effectively applied</i> ”? That is the test that the Project was supposed to undertake and did not – to re-visit the TET’s analogy, the parts are in the garage but will the car run? |
| <i>At the institutional level, I feel, WTLCP has made very little progress. The permanence of the institutions formed is questionable. A great deal depends on the role of DFSCC, and if it will give adequate attention to landscape level biodiversity conservation. I wish Mission had dealt more on the effort of WTLCP in sensitizing DFSCCs to this cause.</i> | The TET again notes the ex-NPD’s perceptive thoughts and wishes even more that it had been able to meet with him. The TET also has concerns over these institutions – again one of the reasons why it places so much importance on the lack of testing that the Project was able to achieve. |

Ekraj Sigdel, Ex Landscape Manager, WTLCP

| Comment | Response |
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| Paragraph 34: "MFSC Centric approach and inadequate coordination with other agencies". <i>The finding could be partially true for the field activities, which can be exemplified from the fact that financial as well as technical resource of District Development Committee (DDC), Village Development Committees (VDCs), District Livestock Service Office (DLSO) were being mobilized as matching fund for WTLCP supported activities. Aforementioned agencies' resources were mainly used in infrastructure development and livelihood improvement activities, which were prime need of local community on the one hand and on the other, were beyond scope of the project. For instances, Kailali DLSO supported local communities in Mohana Kailali Corridor and Godawari with piglets, training and improved legume/grass seeds. Also, WTLCP's annual activities have been reflected in Annual Plan and Progress Report of Kailali and Kanchanpur DDC, which are missing in the report. Therefore, though it could not be at the par, but efforts were there for coordinating other agencies, beyond MFSC. While reviewing the interacted stakeholders list in the Evaluation Report, I got an impression that the team had spent over 90% of their time discussing with forestry related stakeholders only. Therefore, they could not capture the role and views of other organizations.</i> | The ex-Landscape Manager correctly identifies that a large proportion of the stakeholders met by the TET were forestry-related (although 90% is an overstatement since we met many people other people). The itinerary was put together by the PMU, with some input from the TET; perhaps another example of the MFSC-centric approach continuing. However, the issue was more aimed at the mechanisms through which landscape level conservation will work, since these have been almost wholly viewed from the MFSC’s point of view. |
| Paragraph 53: The report does not mention the role | The TET apologises but the Joint Monitoring |

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| <p>of Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) – that represents District Development Committee (DDC), Chief District Officer, District Forest Officer, journalists and political parties which was constituted under DFCC in all project districts. The project had supported formation and mobilization of the committee in its project intervention sites regularly. Their role was instrumental for successful evacuation of over 400 hectare encroached forest land from Laljhadi Forest, an important site for wildlife habitat. Similarly, Joint monitoring mechanism and their interaction with local communities, made easy to access some of the activities to the communities through respective agencies. For instance, DDC Kailali had allocated over one million Nepalese rupees for maintaining embankment to Mohana River in Mohana Kailali Corridor. There are many other such incidences, which should be acknowledged by the report.</p> | <p>Committee was never mentioned by any of the persons interviewed or we would have included it in the text. Perhaps this is because the evacuation of encroached forest was undertaken without recourse to GEF funds and this aspect of the Project, from a GEF perspective, was not thought pertinent to be raised by the interviewees. Furthermore, it remains unclear from the comment, quite what role the JMC would have played in monitoring the impacts produced by the Project.</p> |
| <p>Paragraph 84: Proposition of District Landscape Advisory Units (DLSA), could be a good idea. However, mere creating additional structure would not be helpful for long term unless it has been constituted with sound legal basis. Sound legal foundation cannot be visualized in the available legal framework for establishing this kind of body now. Instead of forming such Units in district level, it would be wise strengthening the existing regional level Landscape Coordination Committee. Their role could be helpful for achieving/institutionalizing landscape level achievements as well.</p> | <p>The TET notes the suggestions.</p> |