

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

FINAL REPORT

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I. BASIC REPORT INFORMATION

Title of UNDP supported GEF financed project

Fifth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Program in Brazil

UNDP and GEF project ID#s.

GEF ID#: PIMS 4578

UNDP PROJECT#: BRA-12G32

Evaluation timeframe and date of evaluation report

The evaluation was carried out in August 2015. The field visit occurred from August 3 to 14, 2015. The Initial Findings session was carried out on August 14th and comments were received up to August 21. The Draft Final Report is dated August 24, 2015. The Final Report is dated September 7, 2015

Region and countries included in the project

The Project was implemented in Brazil in the UNDP Latin America and the Caribbean Region

GEF Focal Area / Operational Programs

The GEF Focal Area of this project is Multifocal (Biodiversity; Climate Change Mitigation and Land Degradation)

Implementing Partner and other project partners

The GEF Implementing Partner of the Project is UNDP with ISPN (Instituto Sociedade, População e Natureza) as implementing partner. Other Project Partners include the organizations receiving the small grants and other national organizations (Governmental, academic and civil) participating in different steering and advising structures.

Evaluation team members

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

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III. ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

APA-TO	Alternativas para Pequena Agricultura no Tocantins
APR	Annual Project Report
APR/PIR	Annual Project Review/Project Implementation Review
ASA	Articulação Semi Arido Brasileiro
ASSEMA	Associação em áreas de assentamento do estado do Maranhão
BC	Biological Corridor
CAA	Centro de Agricultura Alternativa do Norte de Minas (Minas Gerais)
CAV	Centro de Agricultura Alternativa Vicente Nica (Minas Gerais)
CBD	Convention of Biological Diversity
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CCF	Country Cooperation Framework
CCM	Climate Change Mitigation
CEPF	Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
CO	Country Office
CP	Country Program
CPAP	Country Program Action Plan
CPD	Country Program Document Framework
CPM	SGP Country Program Manager
CPMT	Central Program Management Team, SGP-UNDP
CPS	Country Program Strategy
COP	Conference of the Parties
CTI	Centro de Trabalho Indigenista
FSP	Full Size Project
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ISPN	Instituto Sociedade, População e Natureza
LD	Land Degradation
LULUCF	Land Use, Land Use Change, and Forestry
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MIQCB	Movimento Interestadual das Quebradeiras de Coco Babaçu (Piauí, Tocantins, Maranhão, Pará)
NC	SGP National Coordination Team
NGO	Non-government Organization
NSC	National Steering Committee
OP	Operational Program
PA	Protected Area
PES	Payments for Environmental Services
PIF	Project Identification Form
PIR	Project Implementation Review
PPR	Project Progress Reports
QPR	Quarterly Project Review
RR	Resident Representative
RTA	Regional Technical Advisor
SGP	GEF Small Grants Program
STAR	System for Transparent Allocation of Resources
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDAF	UN Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Information Table

PROJECT SUMMARY TABLE				
Project Title:	Fifth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Program in Brazil			
GEF Project ID:	PIMS 4578		<i>at endorsement (Million US\$)</i>	<i>At MTR (Million US\$)</i>
UNDP Project ID:	BRA-12G32	GEF financing:	5,000,000.-	2,080,088.-
Country:	Brazil	IA/EA own:	3,450,000.-	1,753,500.-
Region:	Latin America and the Caribbean	Government:	0.-	0.-
Focal Area:	Multifocal	Other:	1,893,500.-	712,300.-
Operational Program:	Biodiversity Climate Change Land Degradation	Total co-financing:	5,343,500.-	2,465,800.-
Executing Agency:	PNUD Brazil Country Office	Total Project Cost:	10,343,500.-	4,441,800.-
Other Partners involved:		PRODOC Signature (date Project began):		May 2, 2013
		(Operational) Closing Date:	Proposed: December 31, 2016	Actual: Same Dec 31, 2016

Project Description

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

The primary objective of the project is to ensure conservation of the *Cerrado* and *Caatinga* biomes of Brazil through community initiatives on sustainable resource use, and actions that maintain or enhance carbon stocks and increase areas under sustainable land management.

The project is achieving this objective and securing global environmental benefits through:

- (i) Biodiversity conservation in the production landscape through community-based sustainable resource use and management of natural resources;
- (ii) Maintenance of carbon stocks through avoidance of land use change and improved agriculture and forest management at the community level;
- (iii) Implementation of sustainable land management techniques that prevent land degradation, restore agro-ecosystem services, and improve livelihoods of local communities;
- (iv) Capacity development and knowledge management to help communities deliver global environmental benefits.

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

The Brazil SGP maintained its traditional focus since 1995 on the *Cerrado* biome, adding a new biome to its area: the *Caatinga* biome. Both biomes covered most of the sub-humid and semi-arid biomes and ecosystems of Brazil, including parts of the “*arco de desmatamento*” (arc of deforestation) in the transition from *Cerrado* to Amazonia. The work area of the Project includes 18 States of Brazil (a federal country).

Together, these biomes encompass approximately 2,850,000 km² (285 million hectares). The *Cerrado* is the second largest biome of the country after the Amazonian biome.

More than 20% of the total population of Brazil lives in these areas (45 million persons). The main project stakeholders are local communities (traditional peasants, indigenous groups and traditional black communities (*quilombos*), and in particular indigenous peoples. SGP Brazil partners with regional and national NGOs with technical and financial management skills that are present in the project areas to mentor community groups and to contribute to capacity building efforts and monitoring on the ground.

Project Progress Summary

The Project is progressing in a highly satisfactory way as shown in the Summary Tables of Progress Towards Results and Progress Towards Objectives below. Call for proposals were made as planned, grants were allocated and grant implementation is progressing well. A total of 94 grants were already allocated.

The National Steering Committee works satisfactorily; they meet twice a year and perform what was expected from them (project strategic orientation, selection of proposals for grants, etc.) very well.

The different Project internal processes (planning, M&E, reporting, communications, etc.) are well performed and no major concerns were identified by the MTR

The relationship with the UNDP Country Office is very good; the program officer is updated about the progress of the project and participates in project activities.

Project Progress Towards Project Objectives Summary Table

Objective	Indicator	Targets End of Project	Achievement Rating
<p>Project Objective: Conservation of the <i>Cerrado</i> and <i>Caatinga</i> biomes of Brazil through community initiatives on sustainable resource use, and actions that maintain or enhance carbon stocks and increase areas under sustainable land management</p>	Increased area in production landscapes meeting sustainability standards with enhanced biodiversity conservation	<p>Additional 300,000 ha sustainably managed in the <i>Cerrado</i> ecosystem</p> <p>100,000 ha in the <i>Caatinga</i> ecosystem</p> <p>Sustainability criteria and standards developed and adapted to social and environmental conditions of <i>Cerrado</i> and <i>Caatinga</i></p>	Achieved
	Carbon stocks maintained or increased through maintenance and expansion of habitats	<p>500 hectares of <i>Caatinga</i> ecosystem restored, equivalent to 18,200 tCO₂e sequestered</p> <p>500 hectares of <i>Cerrado</i> ecosystem restored, equivalent to 37,400 tCO₂e sequestered during life of project</p> <p>80,000 hectares with avoided conversion to pasture or monoculture and environmental services maintained, equivalent to 4,370,400 tCO₂e of emissions avoided during the life of the project</p>	Achieved
	Increased area of sustainable land management techniques that sustain the flow of environmental services in agro-ecosystems by communities supported by SGP	<p>An additional 200 hectares in <i>Caatinga</i> and 400 hectares in the <i>Cerrado</i> in which communities apply innovative soil management techniques</p> <p>2,000 hectares with improved ecosystem services as a result of community adoption of innovative water management techniques</p>	Achieved

Project Progress Towards Outcomes Summary Table

Outcome	Indicator	Targets End of Project	Achievement Rating
<p>Outcome 1: Sustainable use and management of natural resources by communities to enhance conservation of biodiversity in the production landscape</p>	Number of sustainable land use plans or resource use plans developed, as well as plans for conservation of endangered species	15 plans developed by stakeholders	On-target
	Number of native plant and animal species considered endangered or important for sustainable livelihoods conserved in-situ and sustainably used	50 plant species and 25 animal species, including <i>Cerrado</i> and <i>Caatinga</i>	On-target
	<p>ORIGINAL INDICATOR Number of families participating in <i>Caatinga</i> and <i>Cerrado</i> bio-products marketing networks</p> <p>REDEFINED INDICATOR Number of families generating income through marketing of biodiversity products.</p>	5,000 families generating income through marketing of biodiversity products. REDEFINED TARGET	On-target
	Number of hectares with forest cover under regeneration in community lands	1,000 additional hectares under natural regeneration practices	Achieved

Objective	Indicator	Targets End of Project	Achievement Rating
Outcome 2: Carbon stocks maintained through avoiding land use change and improved agriculture and forest management at the community level	Number of hectares under sustainable forest management in community lands	40,000 additional hectares under sustainable forest management	On-target
	Area under ecological agriculture management	15,000 hectares under ecological agriculture management REDEFINED TARGET 3,000 has under ecological agriculture management	On-target
	Area on which smallholders apply fire control techniques or avoid use of fire	Smallholders apply fire control techniques or avoid the use of fire on at least 25,000 hectares	On-target
	Number of families adopting sustainable water management techniques and sustainable land management techniques	1,200 additional families have adopted sustainable water management techniques and SLM techniques	Achieved
Outcome 3: Sustainable land management techniques preventing land degradation, restoring agro-ecosystem services, and improving livelihoods of local communities implemented	Area with erosion in grantee farmlands	Reduction of erosion in 1,200 ha as a result of SGP interventions	On-target
	Area under sustainable water and soil management	2,000 ha (including both <i>Caatinga</i> and <i>Cerrado</i>)	Achieved
Outcome 4: Communities deliver global environmental benefits through capacity development and knowledge management	Percentage of project reports that receive a “very good” score, according to SGP Brazil project assessment method	70% of project reports “very good”	Achieved
	Number of community leaders aware of global environmental issues	150 additional community leaders	Achieved
	Number of policy inputs or recommendations provided to policymakers based on lessons learned	10 additional inputs or recommendations	Achieved

In both aspects, Project Objectives and Project Outcomes, the Project progress is highly satisfactory. Despite having the necessary information, the Project has not yet completed its reports to the GEF Tracking Tools.

MTR Rating Table

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

Measure	MTR Rating	Achievement Description
Project Strategy	N/A	The Project strategy is sound in the context of dealing with two weakly addressed huge biomes in the largest country of Latin America. The triple pronged approach (field projects, knowledge management and contributions to policy) seems very adequate. The Project LFA is well constructed and it is used by the project (National Steering Committee and National Coordination).
Progress Towards Results	<p><u>Project Objective:</u> <i>Conservation of the Cerrado and Caatinga biomes of Brazil through community initiatives on sustainable resource use, and actions that maintain or enhance carbon stocks and increase areas under sustainable land management</i></p> <p>Achievement Rating: 6 Highly satisfactory</p>	<p>The Achievement Rating is based on the Achievement of Project Indicators. As presented in the Summary Table of Progress Towards Objectives and the fully detailed table in section 4.2 Progress Towards Project Objectives.</p> <p>According to the Tables mentioned above, the SGP has already achieved all three indicators and targets of this Outcome.</p> <p>There is just some imbalance between target areas managed sustainably in both biomes, with achievements in the <i>Cerrado</i> twice as large as committed and the opposite in the <i>Caatinga</i>. As more than 90% of the grants are already under way, but there are more of them in the <i>cerrado</i> than the <i>caatinga</i>, it is not clear if this imbalance will be reduced significantly at end of project.</p>
	<p><u>Outcome 1</u> <i>Sustainable use and management of natural resources by communities to enhance conservation of biodiversity in the production landscape</i></p> <p>Achievement Rating: 6 Highly satisfactory</p>	<p>In this Outcome the SGP Brazil has already achieved 1 indicator (3 in total), and the other three are rated as On target.</p> <p>The MTR is recommending adjusting one of these indicators in order to have it better defined. (See Recommendation 2)</p>
	<p><u>Outcome 2</u> <i>Carbon stocks maintained through avoiding land use change and improved agriculture and forest management at the community level</i></p> <p>Achievement Rating: 6 Highly satisfactory</p>	<p>Same as Outcome 1. There is one indicator already achieved and the other three are rated as On target.</p> <p>The MTR is also recommending adjusting one of these indicators in order to have it better defined. (See Recommendation 2)</p>

	<p>Outcome 3 <i>Sustainable land management techniques preventing land degradation, restoring agro-ecosystem services, and improving livelihoods of local communities implemented</i></p> <p>Achievement Rating: 6 Highly satisfactory</p>	<p>This outcome has two indicators. One was already achieved (and surpassed by a factor of five) and the other is On target.</p> <p>Most of the commitments for the second indicator are coming from a cofinancing project (COMDEKS / Satoyama initiative) that began its field operations early this year; therefore its progress were not formally reported yet and not captured by the SGP M&E System.</p>
	<p>Outcome 4 <i>Communities deliver global environmental benefits through capacity development and knowledge management</i></p> <p>Achievement Rating: 6 Highly satisfactory</p>	<p>This Outcome has three indicators and all of them are achieved already and one of them widely surpassed.</p>
Project Implementation & Adaptive Management	6 Highly Satisfactory	<p>According to the results shown in Section 4.3 (Management Arrangements) regarding Work planning, Finance and co-finance, Project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, Stakeholder engagement, Reporting and Communications, all these areas are managed adequately and the MTR did not identify any major concern about them.</p> <p>There is a minor issues about the delay in reporting to the GEF TT but as the information is already available, this issue is not significant enough to reduce the rating</p>
Sustainability	4 Likely	<p>According to the results shown in Section 4.4 Sustainability, the MTR did not identify major concerns about different sustainability areas (financial, socioeconomic and institutional) were assessed as Likely, while environmental one was assessed as Moderately likely because of the expected impacts of climate change in a sub-humid to semi-arid biomes according to current scenarios and models.</p>

Summary of conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions

1. The current project full size corresponding to the 5th Operational Phase of the GEF SGP is relevant to the GEF and country objectives with which it must be consistent.
2. The progress made until the MTR time shows that the project is progressing towards its planned objectives and outcomes in a highly satisfactory way.
3. The involvement of the ISPN team in the implementation and oversight of SGP grant projects is perceived as very appropriate by both parties.
4. The SGP project strategy of combining field actions involving strong local partners in several regions of the *Cerrado* and *Caatinga* biomes, with knowledge management and acting as these biomes voice in processes at the state and federal level is adequate.
5. The SGP Project progress is highly satisfactory. All three calls for proposals planned were already completed and 94 grants were awarded and are under implementation.
6. There are five grants already completed and closed. Their final reports are satisfactory. The rest of the grants are in progress and the overall SGP project still has 18 months of implementation. No SGP project extension was requested.
7. The analysis of the level of progress towards achieving Project and Outcome indicators is highly satisfactory. Many indicators were already achieved and it is expected that the remainder will be achieved smoothly by the end of the project.
8. SGP Project products and results are visible in the field in form of better farming practices, water conservation and management practices, agroforestry and silvopastoral systems, new productive sustainable alternatives, equipments, installations, strengthened organizations, publications, Websites, etc.
9. The committed cofinancing is being disbursed appropriately, particularly in terms of the ISPN committed cofinancing. In this regard, COMDEKS (Satoyama Fund), Amazonia Fund and other cofinancing funds are disbursed on schedule and properly complementing GEF grants.
10. The work relationships between SGP/ISPN with UNDP Brazil Country Office are very good and fluent in all aspects. The "executing partner" role for ISPN seems to be working very well for the implementation of the SGP.
11. The project design is adequate but some minor adjustments were analyzed and agreed. The adjustments are to have a more concrete wording of an indicator and adjust the associated target; and to adjust the target of another indicator.
 - Outcome 1. New indicator and target
Number of families in *Caatinga* and *Cerrado* generating income through marketing of biodiversity products. New target: 5,000 families
 - Outcome 2. New target
Reduce to 3,000 has the target of the "Area under agro-ecological management" indicator
12. The filing system of project information is very good: it is clear, orderly and comprehensive.
13. The monitoring and evaluation system is effective and provides adequate information for the indicators. It is important to use this information to provide better details in the reports and to visualize activities providing results to two or more indicators.

14. The Brazil SGP has developed a very good methodology for estimating carbon sequestration in ecosystem restoration processes and to estimate avoided carbon emissions through different practices.
15. Project Reports (PIR) are submitted regularly and were accepted by those who receive them. The Project report to the GEF Tracking Tools is still pending, but the required information is already available; therefore there are no major constraints to complete this task.
16. No major risks are perceived in addition to those included in the PRODOC. The risks described in the PRODOC are not affecting project performance at the MTR time.
17. There is a potential risk regarding the approval of a new phase of the Brazil SGP Country Program in GEF OP6 because governmental agencies may decide to prioritize their own projects over a new SGP phase.

Recommendations

1. To complete the current phase of the SGP Brazil maintaining the current ways of operation that has proven effective and efficient to achieve the agreed results. Overall the Brazil SGP Project implementation is very successful and so the first recommendation is to maintain the good work.
2. To adjust two indicators of the Project logframe as follows:
 - Outcome 1. New indicator and target
Number of families in *Caatinga* and *Cerrado* generating income through marketing of biodiversity products. New target: 5,000 families
 - Outcome 2. New target
Reduce to 3,000 has the target of the "Area under agro-ecological management" indicator
3. To complete the pending tasks of reporting to the GEF Tracking Tools using the information it already has.
4. While the SGP regional partners (such as APA-TO, CAV, CAA, MIQCB, ASSEMA, CTI and others) are providing long-term support to the CBOs in their areas, it is important for the SGP to develop strategies with these organizations to keep supporting SGP-supported CBOs beyond the SGP grant projects. In other words, local groups will not become autonomous and sustainable over a period of two years with a small grant; longer processes are needed. Hence the importance of defining these strategies and rely on the work of strategic partners beyond the duration of the grants.
5. The SGP could strengthen its work with key partners via strategic projects. It seems that the potential of this type of project is not yet fully exploited by the SGP and this may be a strong instrument to increase its influence across the biomes.
6. The bridge between OP4 and OP5 stage was a difficult experience for the Brazil SGP. Nothing suggests that the transition from OP5 to OP6 will be different. Therefore, the MTR recommends beginning the process towards OP6 as soon as possible with a basic PIF that can be used to obtain the endorsement letter from the country and then to start the elaboration of the full PIF required for entering in GEF OP6.
7. As the last group of SGP grants was approved just before the MTR and less than a year and a half remains until the end of the current SGP Project, it is recommended to the SGP to maintain open the possibility of negotiating an extension of the current project by six months to allow time for the completion of those grant projects.

8. The SGP agro-ecological work is very good and very important and it is very focused on water issues and plant production. However the MTR perceives much less emphasis on including cattle raising in the agro-ecological approach. Livestock production is the activity that after agribusiness occupies more land and causes more degradation of the *Cerrado*. Therefore, a more explicit emphasis on cattle raising issues is recommended, for example through pilot grant projects helping peasants to evolve from extensive ranching to stabled systems articulated with release of land for natural regeneration of the *Cerrado*.
9. Projects supported by the SGP include women and youth. However the logical framework has no targets or indicators on this issue and not obvious unbundled records of activities, participation and impact on these groups. The SGP should advance in this respect, at least at the record level; merely recording information on these aspects draws attention to them and create space for more explicit activities about them.
10. The SGP should continue supporting efforts to simplify regulations for marketing family agriculture and biodiversity products with basic processing (pulps, jellies, preserves, flour, etc.). Basic processing adds value to products and much needed income to rural families; unnecessary or excessive regulations blocking access to markets need to be adjusted or removed.
11. There seems to be many opportunities to tenders, sales, projects, funding, etc. for CBOs and local organizations from different federal, state and municipal entities, but the information about this seems to be fragmented and scattered. The SGP should analyze the possibility of supporting efforts to perform clearing-house actions to organize the information and make it more accessible for *Cerrado* and *Caatinga* organizations.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Purpose of the MTR

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

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

2.2 Scope & Methodology

Scope

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

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

Methodology

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

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

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

2.3 Structure of the evaluation report

The Table of Contents complies and is consistent with the original TOR and the guidelines established in the GEF-UNDP Guidance for Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects guiding the mid-term reviews from July 1st, 2014.

3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND CONTEXT

3.1 Development context

The *Cerrado* is the most biodiverse savannah in the world, with an area of more than 2 million square kilometers (some 21% of the Brazilian territory). It comprises a great variety of unique ecosystems that are particularly rich in species, and that are important for maintaining carbon stock and water resources. The *Cerrado* landscape is characterized by extensive savannah formations crossed by gallery forests and stream valleys. The number of vascular plants is estimated at around 10,000 species of which 44% are endemic, and herbaceous species are almost entirely endemic. Over 1,600 species of mammals, birds and reptiles have been recorded. The number of freshwater fish species is 800 of which 25% are endemic. Many large mammals that range widely throughout South America have the *Cerrado* as one of their principal habitats. One of the best known of these species is the maned wolf (*Chrysocyon brachyurus*), while two of the most unusual species are the giant armadillo (*Priodontes maximus*) and the giant anteater (*Myrmecophaga tridactyla*), which is the largest anteater in the world and can grow up to 1.9 meters in length. The *Cerrado* biome is still poorly represented in the protected areas system of Brazil with only 5.5% of the total land area protected, and only around 28,500 km² (1.4%) under IUCN categories I to IV.

The *Caatinga*, the only biome that is exclusively Brazilian, occupies 850,000 square kilometers in 10 states of northeast Brazil (over 10% of the national territory). The *Caatinga* is the largest dry forest region in South America and certainly one of the richest dry forests in the world. Biotic interchange over evolutionary time with surrounding biomes - i.e., *Cerrado*, Atlantic Forest and Amazon, has led to significant biodiversity. Although *Caatinga*'s biota is poorly known, studies so far have identified at least 1,200 species of vascular plants, 185 fish species, 44 lizards, 9 amphisbaenians (worm lizards), 47 snakes, 4 turtles, 3 crocodylia, 49 amphibians, 350 birds, and 80 mammals. The percentage of endemics is very high among vascular plants (around 30%). Two of the ten most threatened birds in the world, the indigo macaw (*Anodorhynchus leari*) and little blue macaw (*Cyanopsitta spixii*) are found here. Distinctive and endemic plant species include *Godmania dardanoi*, *Cordia globosa*, *Billbergia fosteriana*, *Cereus jamacaru*, *Melocactus oreas*, *Pilosocereus gounellei*, *Copernicia prunifera*, and *Ziziphus joazeiro*. Other examples of endemics include the spiny rat (*Proechimys yonenagae*), and several lizards, *Tropidurus amathites*, *Tropidurus divaricatus*, and *Tropidurus cocorobensis*. Despite its biodiversity significance, less than 1% of the *Caatinga* biome is protected.

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

Among the various threats faced by the *Cerrado* and *Caatinga* biomes, land use change - where native vegetation and traditionally community-managed areas are substituted by large-scale cropland, eucalyptus monoculture, and pasture - is the most serious. Land use change in the *Cerrado* is the biggest single source of GHG emissions in Brazil.

The *Cerrado* is being cleared rapidly, with 47% of the area already deforested and about 14,000 square kilometers cleared per year, far more than the rate of deforestation in the Amazon. According to FAO 2005, the annual forest cover change in Brazil is 3,103,000 hectares, which means land use change in the *Cerrado* accounts for almost 50%. The main driver of this deforestation is Brazilian public policies that have historically favored or stimulated the expansion of the agricultural frontier towards the center and north of the country. These policies have resulted in enormous crop production in the *Cerrado* region, mostly for export, from very large

farms and ranches. In 2000, the *Cerrado* was responsible for 35% of all crop production in Brazil, including for 58% of the country's total soy production. In addition, there are nearly 40 million head of cattle in *Cerrado*. Steady growth in the agriculture and cattle sectors is projected. While agricultural expansion in the *Cerrado* has had a positive impact on the Brazilian economy, the negative effects on the environment and local communities are now significant. The land use change process of conversion to monoculture or pasture has led to deforestation and landscape fragmentation, dislodging and isolating rural communities. Many traditional territories are surrounded by monocultures, such as Xingu Indigenous Park, which impedes community access to natural resources on which they traditionally depend. Several afro-descendent communities have lost their water courses or had them contaminated by agricultural inputs. In addition to the loss of biodiversity resulting from forest clearing and degradation, the agriculture system used by large-scale farms - which includes a period where the soil stays uncovered - causes soil erosion, increases rainwater runoff, carrying sediments and pollutants to water courses, and decreases soil infiltration capacity. The silting up of water courses aggravates water scarcity during the dry season and floods during the rainy season. Large-scale agriculture also causes loss of traditional crop seed varieties and genetic erosion. Local communities are emigrating and selling their lands. *Cerrado* communities cannot compete with large-scale farms and cattle ranches in national or international markets. According to the 2006 Brazilian Agriculture Census, 69% of all rural properties in the *Cerrado* are still owned by small farmers, representing 9% of the total area (some 180,000 square kilometers). Unless local communities receive support, concentration of land in large farms is likely to continue, increasing land use change.

Land use change in the *Caatinga* is also quite significant with an estimated 56% of the area's native vegetation already destroyed or significantly altered by human activities. One of the most populated semi-arid areas in the world, *Caatinga* has 27 million inhabitants and is located in the poorest region of Brazil; only 4.6% of the municipalities have HDI equal to or higher than 0.5. The annual rainfall average of 600 mm characterizes a semi-arid climate, which makes most of the region unfit for large-scale agriculture and cattle ranching, except for areas with irrigation schemes. Irrigation policies are, however, concentrating land and water in the hands of major companies, while the small farmers who depend on agriculture for their basic subsistence are not profiting as much from it. As in the *Cerrado*, land property concentration is high, with 89% of the properties/farms owned by small farmers, but covering 37% of the total area only.

Extensive goat and sheep raising, the main economic activity for local communities, has been practiced in the region for centuries with rudimentary management techniques, which means animals feed on the natural vegetation, eliminating new plants and shoots, affecting the natural regeneration of disturbed areas. A large area of the *Caatinga* is ranked today as highly threatened by desertification.

Besides the reduction of their territories, communities are facing water scarcity, soil erosion, and impoverishment, which are the main reasons for rural exodus in the *Caatinga* and for unsustainable use of natural resources. Other threats to the biome are eucalyptus and crop plantations, wood extraction for charcoal and fuel, forest fires and hunting. At least 28 animal species in this threatened ecosystem are endangered. Many plant species from this biome are used both for commercial and subsistence purposes. For example, people from this area are greatly dependent on palms such as babaçu, carnaúba, tucum and macaúba, from which lauric and oleic oils are extracted. Many trees are also used for lumber, including species such as *Anadenanthera macrocarpa*, *Ziziphus joazeiro*, *Amburana cearensis*, *Astronium fraxinifolium*, *Astronium urundeuva*, *Tabebuia impetiginosa*, *Tabebuia caraiba*, and *Schinopsis brasiliensis*, *Cedrela odorata*, *Dalbergia variabilis*, *Didymopanax morototoni* and *Pithecellobium polycephalum*.

Besides deforestation, fire is a significant cause of GHG emission in Brazil. In the *Cerrado* and *Caatinga*, fire is traditionally used by local inhabitants to open new areas for small-scale agriculture and to promote pasture re-growth during the dry season. In some cases, it is also used to manage plants of economic interest, like golden grass. However, it is common for fire to go out of control and spread to other areas, causing loss of biomass and nutrients and the deaths of animals and trees. The use of fire is being intensified, so the frequency of fire in natural areas is also higher, increasing the scope for damage.

Barriers

The key barriers addressed by the Brazil SGP are those related to biodiversity conservation and sustainable land management by communities. Within this broad category, the following specific barriers were identified.

Implementation challenges for alternative, environmentally friendly and economically viable community livelihood options:

While traditional communities and local farmers know about the potential or actual uses of many wild species, there are significant challenges involved in establishing sustainable production practices that would also be economically viable. Sawyer (2009) identified more than 100 barriers to the sustainable use of biodiversity in Brazil of which some of the most critical are the following:

- *Policy and regulatory barriers:* Small farmers and traditional communities find it very difficult to comply with existing regulatory frameworks, including sanitary and fiscal legislation, which was designed for other products and in a different context. These regulatory frameworks impede community access to markets and credits for the harvesting and transformation of non-timber forest products. Despite this negative context, in the last 10 years several government policies, especially those from the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Agrarian Development and Ministry of Agriculture are focusing on sustainable use of biodiversity by small farmers and local communities. Most of these policies, see section A.2 above, are relatively new instruments and are not yet consolidated. There is a need to help implement these policies and give feedback to the relevant entity to improve them and to enable their effective application at the community level.
- *Financial barriers and difficulties for production at scale:* Credit lines are not available in Brazil for small-scale non-timber forest products enterprises, and there is still little interest in the private sector in investing in sustainable harvesting and marketing of wild species and related products in the *Caatinga* and *Cerrado* regions. Remoteness and dispersion of communities also create organizational, transport and other challenges to achieving sufficient quantities of products for certain markets.
- *Educational barriers:* The two regions where GEF-SGP Brazil is focusing have serious social problems, such as weak health and educational assistance. Most local communities are distant from urban centers and road conditions are correspondingly bad. This makes it difficult for small farmers and traditional communities to succeed in managing projects and marketing their production because they are not used to develop business plans, dealing with bureaucracy, accounting, reporting, etc. In rural Brazil it is uncommon to find people with entrepreneurial skills and there are few development practitioners who understand communities' specificities and are willing to live in remote places. Moreover, local communities cannot obtain certification for their products because they are unable to meet the required standards or they cannot cover the cost to obtain the certificates.

Community level constraints to sustainable land and forest management and maintenance of carbon stocks:

- Insufficient data or access to existing data to methods for carbon stocks monitoring at the community level: There is no adequate baseline data readily available for estimating, measuring, monitoring and reporting on changes to carbon stocks and greenhouse gas emissions from LULUCF in the *Cerrado* and *Caatinga*. It is necessary to extrapolate generic data to different sites and situations. There is a need to consolidate information from different sources to establish a better baseline for LULUCF and carbon in the *Cerrado* and *Caatinga*. Furthermore, communities may not have capacity to monitor carbon stocks, considering the basic educational problem in Brazil and the rather esoteric nature of quantifying carbon.
- Lack of community access to information and training for agroecological production and sustainable land and water management: Small farmers and communities in agrarian reform settlements do not receive agricultural extension support to implement environmentally friendly agricultural practices that are suitable to local climate and soil conditions. This leads to low productivity and high indebtedness. On the other hand, indigenous groups and traditional communities' production methods are no longer adapted to present conditions. Most of them live in smaller territories than the original ones, surrounded by deforested land, which causes changes in crop production and dietary tradition. They need to update their knowledge to adapt to the new reality. Agroecological techniques can help these groups improve their food production methods adapted to local conditions, aligned with ecosystem functions and increasing food security, but information and training on these techniques is not readily available to these communities.

3.3 Project Description and Strategy

Project Description

The SGP Brazil Country Program as a GEF full-size project

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

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

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

This initiative was highly successful as documented in different evaluations and it was renewed with each one of the different GEF OPs. Therefore, and given both its continuity and *modus operandi*

these national SGPs became programmatic, in the sense of long-term interventions based on the demands from local communities and civil society.

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

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

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

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

One aspect to be highlighted is the particular execution arrangement of the SGP in Brazil; under this arrangement the Project is executed by ISPN, a Brazilian NGO implementing the SGP since its establishment in Brazil in 1995, acting as implementing partner of UNDP that is the GEF implementing organization. This arrangement means that the SGP National Coordination (two persons: the Country Program Manager and administrative assistant) are integrated in a team with the ISPN staff. This integration allows the ISPN staff to be involved in the implementation and supervision of the SGP grant projects; it also means that the technical team available to SGP (seven persons) is much larger than other similar programs, providing a good environment for strategic and technical discussions regarding the Project and its results and influence. The National Coordination maintains a close articulation with UNDP Country Office that handles the financial transactions with the grantees and with the National Coordination and that is also an active member of the SGP National Steering Committee (NSC).

Strategy

The GEF Small Grants Program (SGP) in Brazil is a multifocal project. Brazil has ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, and is therefore eligible for GEF financing in the three Focal Areas.

The SGP in Brazil is also directly relevant to, supportive of, and consistent with national priorities and policies such as the following.

National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP). Published in 2002 and modified in 2003 by the Ministry of Environment, the NBSAP identified the *Cerrado* and *Caatinga* biomes as priority conservation areas. GEF-SGP Brazil also acts directly on a key NBSAP objective i.e., the sustainable use of native species.

National Program for *Cerrado* Biome Conservation and Sustainable Use (Sustainable *Cerrado* Program), published by the Ministry of Environment in 2005, the first major effort to protect the *Cerrado* biome. It created the Sustainable *Cerrado* Program National Commission (CONACER) that promotes civil society participation. Three grantees, one GEF-SGP NSC member, as well as ISPN, are participating in the commission, ensuring that GEF-SGP project activities are consistent and supportive of the *Cerrado* Program.

The Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Deforestation and Burning in the *Cerrado* Biome (PP*Cerrado*) was prepared in 2009 through several public consultations in which ISPN participated, and signed in September 2010. GEF-SGP activities are lined up with the objectives of the Plan. The main actions foreseen in the Plan, which can help consolidate important strategic actions of GEF-SGP grantees, are to support sustainable use of *Cerrado* species (especially pequi and babaçu palm), recovery of degraded land, and fire prevention and fire fighting. The Plan also includes technological innovation to stimulate sustainable agriculture, strengthening traditional livelihoods and access to natural resources by communities and small farmers. The Plan is monitored by civil society through the Sustainable *Cerrado* Programme National Commission (CONACER).

National Policy on Traditional Peoples and Communities, published in 2007 and coordinated by the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Social Development and the Fight Against Hunger, recognizes the identities and specificities of traditional social groups and provides for a Social Agenda of Traditional Peoples and Communities. The *Cerrado* region is home to 38 ethnic groups, with a population of approximately 45,000 people. These groups include the Krahô, Xavante, Xerente, Bororo, Karajá, Kayapó, and Canela. GEF-SGP strives to ensure that traditional peoples benefit from the project in accordance with the policy.

National Plan for Promotion of Sociobiodiversity Product Chains - the plan, published in 2008, focuses on the promotion of income generation through added value, sustainable management, and consolidation of appropriate marketing for ten native non-timber forest products, which include important *Cerrado* species. The initiatives comprised inclusion of biodiversity products in the National Guaranteed Minimum Price Policy, which establishes a minimum price for each product and pays the difference if it is sold below this price and promotion of local value chains (of many native non-timber forest products) focusing on indigenous and quilombola (Afro-descendent) communities. The SGP actions are relevant to this Plan, but the implementation of this Plan by Government was not as active as expected.

Two recent policies related to food security are also relevant to GEF-SGP's sustainable land management and conservation work with *Caatinga* and *Cerrado* farmers: (i) the Food Acquisition Programme from Family Agriculture (PAA), coordinated by the Ministry of Agriculture, that focuses on distribution of farming products for people in situations of food insecurity and on formation of strategic food stocks. The main purpose is to support farmers through acquisition of their production through a simplified process. The products are bought through farmer associations and cooperatives and are destined for public stocks or for donation to people in situations of food and nutritional unreliability. The purchase is made directly by the Ministry, which pays fair prices, respecting regional peculiarities, dietary habits and local market situations; and (ii) the National School Food Programme (PNAE), coordinated by the Ministry of

Agriculture, that determines that at least 30% of the schools' food supply has to be bought directly from small farmers in the region. This policy benefits GEF-SGP grantees as it creates a local and secure market for wild and cultivated products sustainably managed.

The Ministry of Environment prepared the Plan for Deforestation Prevention and Control in the Caatinga. The GEF-SGP expansion to the *Caatinga* biome is lined up with the new policies of the Ministry of Environment, and can contribute to its implementation and improvement.

The National Action Programme to Combat Desertification and to Mitigate the Effects of Drought (NAP), published in 2004, focuses on poverty reduction; sustainable expansion of productive capacity; conservation and sustainable management of natural resources; as well as institutional strengthening in areas that are defined as susceptible to desertification, like the *Caatinga* biome. The GEF-SGP project contributes to the NAP through supporting sustainable land management projects in line with NAP priorities such as helping to improve harvesting of wild products and their marketing, agroecological techniques, and enrichment of degraded areas.

The National Climate Change Policy (Law nº 12.187, published in 2009), contains the Brazilian commitment of 38.9% emissions reduction by 2020. It foresees actions to reduce deforestation in all Brazilian biomes and includes actions to reach the target, such as creation of protected areas, homologation of indigenous territories, improvement of the deforestation monitoring system and incentives for sustainable production activities. Brazil has also a National Plan on Climate Change, published in 2008 and currently being revised through debates at the Brazilian Forum of Climate Change and Inter-ministerial Commission on Global Climate Change. At a global level, Brazil voluntarily presented at COP 15 the national goals for reduction of emissions by 2020, now including the *Cerrado*, in addition to the Amazon. Government actions on climate change mitigation in the two regions constitute the baseline for GEF-SGP CC actions through local communities.

It is important to note that many other policies relevant to GEF-SGP Brazil are developed by state and municipal governments, such as a state law that regulates golden grass harvest or one that determines free access to babaçu palm areas for traditional harvest. GEF-SGP's work take into consideration all these policies.

In terms of relevance to UN initiatives, the SGP Project was prepared under the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for Brazil covering the period 2007-2011. The priorities in the UNDAF and its five expected results were derived from the findings of the Common Country Assessment (CCA) of 2005. The GEF-SGP Brazil project was designed to contribute to the Fifth UNDAF Result "*Efficient use of natural resources to ensure equitable and environmentally sustainable economic development*". By targeting women's groups as well as traditional and indigenous communities, GEF-SGP Brazil also contributes to the second UNDAF expected result "*Gender, racial and ethnic inequalities reduced, taking into consideration the impact of territorial differences*". The main target beneficiaries of the GEF-SGP are indigenous communities, small farmers, and other traditional populations such as afro-descendants, wild species collectors, artisans, rubber tappers, and Brazil nut and babaçu collectors that depend on ecosystem services for maintaining their livelihoods. GEF-SGP Brazil's strategy is also aligned with goal seven of the Millennium Development Goals on environmental sustainability, a UNDP priority in Brazil.

During OP5, the Brazil SGP is funding 94 projects, and all planned calls for proposals were implemented. All grant projects have a budget up to US\$ 50,000.- and there are also two strategic projects (up to US\$ 150,000.-) under implementation in OP5.

Objectives, outcomes and indicators

Objective	Indicator	Baseline	Targets End of Project
<p>Project Objective: Conservation of the <i>Cerrado</i> and <i>Caatinga</i> biomes of Brazil through community initiatives on sustainable resource use, and actions that maintain or enhance carbon stocks and increase areas under sustainable land management</p>	Increased area in production landscapes meeting sustainability standards with enhanced biodiversity conservation	200,000 hectares managed sustainably as a result of SGP support in OP4	Additional 300,000 ha sustainably managed in the <i>Cerrado</i> ecosystem 100,000 ha in the <i>Caatinga</i> ecosystem Sustainability criteria and standards developed and adapted to social and environmental conditions of <i>Cerrado</i> and <i>Caatinga</i>
	Carbon stocks maintained or increased through maintenance and expansion of habitats	Deforestation rate in the <i>Caatinga</i> biome is 276,300 ha/year and 1,418,000 ha/year in the <i>Cerrado</i>	500 hectares of <i>Caatinga</i> ecosystem restored, equivalent to 18,200 tCO ₂ e sequestered 500 hectares of <i>Cerrado</i> ecosystem restored, equivalent to 37,400 tCO ₂ e sequestered during life of project 80,000 hectares with avoided conversion to pasture or monoculture and environmental services maintained, equivalent to 4,370,400 tCO ₂ e of emissions avoided during the life of the project
	Increased area of sustainable land management techniques that sustain the flow of environmental services in agro-ecosystems by communities supported by SGP	2200 ha (as a result of SGP support in OP 4)	An additional 200 hectares in <i>Caatinga</i> and 400 hectares in the <i>Cerrado</i> in which communities apply innovative soil management techniques 2,000 hectares with improved ecosystem services as a result of community adoption of innovative water management techniques
<p>Outcome 1: Sustainable use and management of natural resources by communities to enhance conservation of biodiversity in the production landscape</p>	Number of sustainable land use plans or resource use plans developed, as well as plans for conservation of endangered species	There are no existing plans in targeted communities	15 plans developed by stakeholders
	Number of native plant and animal species considered endangered or important for sustainable livelihoods conserved in-situ and sustainably used	29 endangered plant species, 6 endangered and 16 vulnerable animal species in project areas supported previously by SGP in <i>Cerrado</i> and 0 plant and animal species in <i>Caatinga</i>	50 plant species and 25 animal species, including <i>Cerrado</i> and <i>Caatinga</i>

Objective	Indicator	Baseline	Targets End of Project
Outcome 1 (cont.)	Number of families participating in <i>Caatinga</i> and <i>Cerrado</i> bio-products marketing networks	6,000 families currently participate	8,000 additional families participate
	Number of hectares with forest cover under regeneration in community lands	612 hectares currently under regeneration	1000 additional hectares under natural regeneration practices
Outcome 2: Carbon stocks maintained through avoiding land use change and improved agriculture and forest management at the community level	Number of hectares under sustainable forest management in community lands	36,190 ha under sustainable forest management (in projects supported in OP4)	40,000 additional hectares under sustainable forest management
	Area under ecological agriculture management	250 hectares (est.)	15,000 hectares under ecological agriculture management
	Area on which smallholders apply fire control techniques or avoid use of fire	Smallholders do not currently apply fire control techniques or avoid the use of fire	Smallholders apply fire control techniques or avoid the use of fire on at least 25,000 hectares
	Number of families adopting sustainable water management techniques and sustainable land management techniques	517 families have adopted sustainable water management techniques and SLM techniques as a result of SGP support	1200 additional families have adopted sustainable water management techniques and SLM techniques
Outcome 3: Sustainable land management techniques preventing land degradation, restoring agro-ecosystem services, and improving livelihoods of local communities implemented	Area with erosion in grantee farmlands	2400 ha of grantee farmland undergoing erosion, to be confirmed through project submissions	Reduction of erosion in 1200 ha as a result of SGP interventions
	Area under sustainable water and soil management	1,200 ha in <i>Cerrado</i>	2000 ha (including <i>Caatinga</i> and <i>Cerrado</i>)
Outcome 4: Communities deliver global environmental benefits through capacity development and knowledge management	Percentage of project reports that receive a “very good” score, according to SGP Brazil project assessment method	51% very good	70% of project reports “very good”
	Number of community leaders aware of global environmental issues	30 community leaders	150 additional community leaders
	Number of policy inputs or recommendations provided to policymakers based on lessons learned	10 inputs or recommendations as a result of SGP support in OP4	10 additional inputs or recommendations

3.4 Project Implementation Arrangements

The SGP in Brazil is executed and implemented by UNDP with ISPN (Instituto Sociedade, População e Natureza) as implementing partner. ISPN is a Brazilian NGO that implemented the SGP since its beginning in Brazil in 1995.

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

The SGP Country Program in Brazil is guided by a National Steering Committee (NSC) integrated by governmental and non-governmental organizations with a non-governmental majority, a UNDP representative and representatives from different sectors and organizations and individuals with expertise in the GEF Focal Areas. The NSC is responsible for grant approval and for determining the overall strategy of the SGP in the country. According to the PRODOC, the members of the NSC are chosen jointly by ISPN and UNDP Country Office.

The National Coordination Team (NC) is composed of a National Coordinator (also called Country Program Manager or National Coordinator), a technical assistant and a Program Assistant. The National Coordination Team is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the program. The National Coordination Team is integrated as a team with the ISPN staff; some members of the ISPN staff (not paid by SGP) have responsibilities in supervising grant projects according to their area of expertise (native territories, ecological agriculture, etc.) bu. This close relationship between the SGP NC and the ISPN staff is highly beneficial for the SGP Project.

The Project works on the basis of annual calls for proposals from the prioritized biomes (*Cerrado* and *Caatinga*) and focused on the GEF focal operational areas addressed by Brazil SGP (Biodiversity, Climate Change and Land Degradation). Because of the volume of proposals, they are reviewed for fulfillment of requirements, technical availability and relevance by the Technical Chamber, composed by ISPN team and collaborators from Ministries, Universities and NGOs. The selection process is conducted by the NSC that analyzes the proposals indicated by the Technical Chamber and decides which ones will receive funding from SGP.

In the Brazil SGP Country Program the grants are usually on the order of US\$ 35,000 to 50,000. During the grant implementation period each project is visited by members of the SGP National Coordination Team and/or ISPN staff members collaborating with SGP. The grantee organizations should submit regular reports that are reviewed (and returned with comments when necessary) by the SGP National Coordination.

3.5 Project timing and milestones

The Brazil SGP Country Program began its Fifth Operational Phase (OP5) in May 2013. Immediately after that date the Project began and there were three annual calls for grant proposals in 2013, 2014 and 2015. No other calls are planned for OP5.

94 grants were allocated in these calls, distributed as follows:

- 2013: 36 projects
- 2014: 24 projects

2015: 34 projects

According to PRODOC the project is expected to end in December 31, 2016. There was not any request for Project extension yet.

3.6 Main stakeholders

The main stakeholders of the project are local communities from the prioritized biomes who design and implement small grants projects. GEF-SGP partners are associations, cooperatives and NGOs that represent or assist local communities from the *Cerrado* and *Caatinga* biomes. The Cerrado Network (Rede Cerrado) and the Semi-Arid Articulation (ASA) organization are special stakeholders because they congregate hundreds of CBOs and NGOs present in these biomes. They are represented in the NSC and contribute to disseminate information about GEF-SGP. Other important stakeholders are the Cerrado Central and the Bodega da Caatinga, which are networks that congregate about 30 initiatives each, working with marketing of *Cerrado* and *Caatinga* products. Cerrado Central was created as a result of the GEF-SGP Brazil work, and was formalized as a cooperative in 2010, being able to access formal markets and new possibilities of financial support. The Bodega da Caatinga is one of the main results of the Caatinga GEF FSP, which had actions in several regions involving more than 30 community groups. The Bodega is helping these groups to improve their marketing capacity. It had a special role in publicizing locally GEF-SGP calls for proposals and assisting the communities to prepare their project proposals, considering that GEF-SGP is intervening in the *Caatinga* for the first time. SGP Brazil is now supporting directly one of the organizations that is part of the Bodega and about five that are part of the Cerrado Central.

ISPN has a close relationship with the University of Brasília, which is especially important for GEF-SGP's knowledge management activities and products. Through the Florelos Project, supported by the European Commission between 2007-2013, ISPN granted scholarships to students that are focusing their research on local communities and *Cerrado* conservation. Partnerships with the private sector were explored, especially in cosmetics. Cooperation with local and national government institutions is fundamental to turn pilot experiences into public policies.

4. FINDINGS

4.1 Project Strategy

Project Design

Conceptually, the project is well designed and the PRODOC is clear and provides a good framework for implementation.

A very interesting aspect of the Project design is the strategy to address such a large area as the *Cerrado* and *Caatinga* with their respectively large populations, covering totally or partially 18 States of Brazil.

The main reason to have the project aiming to work across the Brazilian *Caatinga* and *Cerrado* biomes, as SGP is doing since 1995 for the entire *Cerrado*, is that the *Cerrado* is considered as one of the global biodiversity hotspots and there is no other organization outside ISPN working in these biomes as a whole, with the exception of the Semi Arid Articulation (ASA) that plays a regional role for water resources management in the *Caatinga*.

Brazil is a federal country and each State having these biomes work on them, but there is a need to

develop and communicate a comprehensive view of these critical large areas in a country where the prioritized biomes are Amazonia (more extensive than *Cerrado*) and the Atlantic Forest (*Mata Atlântica*, more degraded and deforested).

Only through an inclusive work at the overall biome level it is possible to fully understand and communicate its problems, to attract attention and to develop proposals and contribute to policy elements at appropriate scales.

From the MTR perspective these reasons are valid and they justify adequately the decision to work on the entire territory, despite the expected logical problems of dispersion of efforts, complexity and implementation costs.

The Project and ISPN strategic approach to this task has several important and concurrent aspects as follows:

- a) Execution of grants in the field in partnership with local and regional organizations with long local history and extensive experience and recognition. This approach allows for the multiplication of SGP Project efforts without skyrocketing costs.
- b) Supervision and monitoring grant projects involving the whole ISPN team, which reduces the workload of the National Coordination and generates a highly valuable space for analysis and discussion.
- c) Concentration of efforts in knowledge management tasks that generate documents, books, videos, etc. that can be used throughout the biomes.
- d) Efforts to influence processes on a large scale (biome and national) for awareness creation, capacity building, project design and generation of contributions to the formulation of policies at the states and federal levels.

In the opinion of the MTR this strategy is valid in the mentioned context of biomes covering large areas and politically fragmented into smaller, autonomous administrative units and under the need to integrate these realities in large scale, comprehensive, views.

Another relevant process influencing the SGP design for OP5 in Brazil is its “upgrading” to a full-GEF project within the national GEF STAR allocation. This “upgrading” process meant evolving from an operation centrally coordinated and supervised by the SGP-CPMT in UNDP HQ and receiving annual budgets from an OP allocation through CPMT to become a GEF full-size project, with a 4-year implementation period and pre-assigned funds for the entire period based on a budget coming from the Brazil GEF STAR allocation.

In terms of project strategy shifting from annual allocations of funds to secure funds for a 4-year period is a significant change in terms of project strategy. It is not completely evident that the SGP Brazil made full use of this strategic difference during OP5 as its basic operations continued around annual calls for small grants and the decision to allocate funds to different themes and areas across the *Cerrado* and *Caatinga* without making a broader use of the strategic projects to ensure long-term results at the very local level (grantee CBOs). Regarding this point, it is fair to report that the CPM does not see significant differences in the above aspect; the CPM view is that the major difference between the traditional SGP and the FSP one is about the need to comply with previously set indicators.

In other words, it is the perception of the MTR that the advantages of the Brazil SGP being an upgrading program still have opportunities to improve, particularly through a wider use of strategic projects to strategic partners used to ensure some continuity of the local level processes until a reasonable level of sustainability is reached by the local organizations that benefited from SGP grants.

Finally, as reported before, the SGP project is well aligned with global and national priorities. Brazil is also a signatory of the different global Conventions that make it an eligible country for GEF funding in these areas.

In terms of gender issues, the Brazil SGP PRODOC has no specific objectives or indicators for gender and youth, but the field visits showed active presence of women and youth in the activities and that the concerns about key issues for both are well considered and achieved in the field projects. Moreover, the Project collects some information disaggregated by sex and age from the grantee reports. Therefore, it should not be difficult for the Project to intensify these information collection activities in this way in order to develop a better reporting and to include explicit and specific gender and youth indicators in the new proposals.

Summarizing, from the MTR perspective there are no major or significant concerns about the design of this project for GEF OP5.

Results Framework/Logframe

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

The Brazil SGP was able to make the links between this clear logical structure with the SGP implementation mechanism, particularly at the level of the indicators and targets of the Project Objectives and Outcomes. In turn, these elements are incorporated into the M&E system that is also able to provide the required information to assess the achievement of these different indicators.

Two minor areas of improvement were identified during the MTR regarding indicators and targets defined in the PRODOC. As a result the following adjustments were agreed in order to be considered by UNDP and GEF.

1. To redefine the third indicator of Outcome 1 as follows:

ORIGINAL INDICATOR

Number of families participating in *Caatinga* and *Cerrado* bio-products marketing networks

REDEFINED INDICATOR

Number of families in *Caatinga* and *Cerrado* generating income through marketing of biodiversity products

It was agreed that the new formulation is more specific and helps to better understand what is pursued. The target at end of project for this indicator is proposed to be 5,000 families.

2. To adjust the end of project target of the second indicator of Outcome 2 as follows:

To reduce the target of 15,000 ha under ecological agriculture management to 3,000 ha under the same condition. The basic reason for this change is that ecological agriculture areas are small (usually less than 1 ha per family) for the small farmers and traditional groups in the *Cerrado* and *Caatinga* as evidenced by the grant proposals received during the three OP5 calls for proposals. As mentioned in a previous section, SGP can only implement what is proposed and submitted by its grantees and there are several constraining conditions (market access, credit, logistical processes as transportation and storage, etc.) that are maintaining the interest of the SGP beneficiaries focused on small scale interventions aiming to gain experience and finding ways to break through the mentioned barriers.

These adjustments are considered by the MTR as minor in relation to the other indicators and targets agreed on the PRODOC.

Therefore, and summarizing, there are no major MTR concerns in this area of project design linked specifically to the Project Results Framework.

4.2 Progress Towards Results

Progress towards outcomes analysis

The analysis of progress towards outcomes based on the results of the project information regarding partial progress achieved by projects under implementation and the field visits to several grant projects demonstrate that the SGP project is going very well as many of the agreed indicators are already achieved at the time of MTR and the remaining ones are on-target; therefore it can be expected that the SGP will achieve all the agreed products and results by the end of the OP5.

The following table shows progress by outcome and indicators as reported in the 2015 PIR completed at the MTR time. The following table presents the information about progress towards project objective indicators including the pertinent MTR ratings and their justification.

Progress Towards Project Outcomes

Outcome	Indicator	Baseline	Targets End of Project	Progress level at MTR (August 2015) based on 2015 PIR	Achievement Rating	Justification for Rating
<p><u>Outcome 1:</u> Sustainable use and management of natural resources by communities to enhance conservation of biodiversity in the production landscape</p>	Number of sustainable land use plans or resource use plans developed, as well as plans for conservation of endangered species	There are no existing plans in targeted communities	15 plans developed by stakeholders	23 projects developing plans for conservation or sustainable use of their land, resources or species funded by SGP and ISPN as co-financing.	On-target	Approved projects under implementation seem to ensure target achievement by end of project.
	Number of native plant and animal species considered endangered or important for sustainable livelihoods conserved in-situ and sustainably used	29 endangered plant species, 6 endangered and 16 vulnerable animal species in project areas supported previously by SGP in <i>Cerrado</i> and 0 plant and animal species in <i>Caatinga</i>	50 plant species and 25 animal species, including <i>Cerrado</i> and <i>Caatinga</i>	70 plant species and 10 animal species being conserved by sustainable use.	On-target	Plant species target already achieved. Animal species target still progressing; approved projects under implementation seem to ensure target achievement by end of project.
	<p>ORIGINAL INDICATOR</p> <p>Number of families participating in <i>Caatinga</i> and <i>Cerrado</i> bio-products marketing networks</p> <p>REDEFINED INDICATOR</p> <p>Number of families generating income through marketing of biodiversity products.</p>	6,000 families currently participate	5,000 families generating income through marketing of biodiversity products. REDEFINED TARGET	3,609 families generating income through marketing of biodiversity products	On-target	Approved projects under implementation seem to ensure target achievement by end of project. BOTH INDICATOR AND TARGET WERE REDEFINED AIMING TO HAVE A MORE PRECISE SET
	Number of hectares with forest cover under regeneration in community lands	612 hectares currently under regeneration	1,000 additional hectares under natural regeneration practices	4,153 ha of <i>Cerrado</i> and <i>Caatinga</i> under natural regeneration practices	Achieved	Indicator already surpassed by a factor of four

Outcome	Indicator	Baseline	Targets End of Project	Progress level at MTR (August 2015) based on 2015 PIR	Achievement Rating	Justification for Rating
<u>Outcome 2:</u> Carbon stocks maintained through avoiding land use change and improved agriculture and forest management at the community level	Number of hectares under sustainable forest management in community lands	36,190 ha under sustainable forest management (in projects supported in OP4)	40,000 additional hectares under sustainable forest management	12,547 hectares under sustainable forest management	On-target	Approved projects under implementation seem to ensure target achievement by end of project.
	Area under ecological agriculture management	250 hectares (est.)	15,000 hectares under ecological agriculture management REDEFINED TARGET 3,000 has under ecological agriculture management	1,185 hectares under ecological agriculture management	On-target	Approved projects under implementation seem to ensure target achievement by end of project. TARGET WAS REDEFINED AIMING TO HAVE A MORE REALISTIC GOAL. Original target was grossly overestimated as ecological agriculture areas are in average less than one hectare per family
	Area on which smallholders apply fire control techniques or avoid use of fire	Smallholders do not currently apply fire control techniques or avoid the use of fire	Smallholders apply fire control techniques or avoid the use of fire on at least 25,000 hectares	6,224 ha with fire control being applied	On-target	Approved projects under implementation seem to ensure target achievement by end of project.
	Number of families adopting sustainable water management techniques and sustainable land management techniques	517 families have adopted sustainable water management techniques and SLM techniques as a result of SGP support	1,200 additional families have adopted sustainable water management techniques and SLM techniques	2,077 families adopted sustainable water management techniques and SLM techniques	Achieved	Indicator already surpassed by a factor of two

Outcome	Indicator	Baseline	Targets End of Project	Progress level at MTR (August 2015) based on 2015 PIR	Achievement Rating	Justification for Rating
Outcome 3: Sustainable land management techniques preventing land degradation, restoring agro-ecosystem services, and improving livelihoods of local communities implemented	Area with erosion in grantee farmlands	2400 ha of grantee farmland undergoing erosion, to be confirmed through project submissions	Reduction of erosion in 1,200 ha as a result of SGP interventions	193 ha where erosion activities are being applied	On-target	Approved projects under implementation (COMDEKS) seem to ensure target achievement by end of project as their reports were not submitted yet.
	Area under sustainable water and soil management	1,200 ha in <i>Cerrado</i>	2,000 ha (including <i>Caatinga</i> and <i>Cerrado</i>)	10,029 ha under sustainable water and soil management in <i>Caatinga</i> and <i>Cerrado</i>	Achieved	Indicator already surpassed by a factor of five
Outcome 4: Communities deliver global environmental benefits through capacity development and knowledge management	Percentage of project reports that receive a "very good" score, according to SGP Brazil project assessment method	51% very good	70% of project reports "very good"	85% of project reports presented in the period scored as "very good"	Achieved	Indicator already achieved
	Number of community leaders aware of global environmental issues	30 community leaders	150 additional community leaders	1,608 community leaders aware of global environmental issues	Achieved	Indicator already surpassed by a factor of ten
	Number of policy inputs or recommendations provided to policymakers based on lessons learned	10 inputs or recommendations as a result of SGP support in OP4	10 additional inputs or recommendations	11 inputs or recommendations provided to policymakers based on lessons learned	Achieved	Indicator already achieved

Progress towards Project Objectives

The progress of the Brazil SGP to achieve its Project Objectives is highly satisfactory as the project has achieved several of the Objectives indicators and the remaining ones are on target as shown in the table below.

This information is enough to complete the report to the GEF Tracking Tools. It is expected that the Brazil SGP will complete its Report to the GEF TT during the remaining time of OP5.

Objective	Indicator	Baseline	Targets End of Project	Progress level at MTR (August 2015) based on 2015 PIR	Achievement Rating	Justification for Rating
<p><u>Project Objective:</u></p> <p>Conservation of the <i>Cerrado</i> and <i>Caatinga</i> biomes of Brazil through community initiatives on sustainable resource use, and actions that maintain or enhance carbon stocks and increase areas under sustainable land management</p>	<p>Increased area in production landscapes meeting sustainability standards with enhanced biodiversity conservation</p>	<p>200,000 hectares managed sustainably as a result of SGP support in OP4</p>	<p>Additional 300,000 ha sustainably managed in the <i>Cerrado</i> ecosystems</p> <p>100,000 ha in the <i>Caatinga</i> ecosystems</p> <p>Sustainability criteria and standards developed and adapted to social and environmental conditions of <i>Cerrado</i> and <i>Caatinga</i></p>	<p>586,624 ha. under sustainable management in the <i>Cerrado</i></p> <p>2,526 ha in the <i>Caatinga</i></p>	<p>Achieved</p>	<p>The total area already achieved is roughly 50% larger than committed, but its distribution is still uneven.</p> <p>The achieved area in <i>Cerrado</i> is almost double than planned.</p> <p>In <i>Caatinga</i> is much less than planned but many <i>Caatinga</i> projects are just beginning and the final figures will be higher. Probably the <i>Caatinga</i> target will not be met, but it can be considered as compensated by the over achievement in the <i>Cerrado</i>.</p>

Objective	Indicator	Baseline	Targets End of Project	Progress level at MTR (August 2015) based on 2015 PIR	Achievement Rating	Justification for Rating
	Carbon stocks maintained or increased through maintenance and expansion of habitats	Deforestation rate in the <i>Caatinga</i> biome is 276,300 ha/year and 1,418,000 ha/year in the <i>Cerrado</i>	<p>500 hectares of <i>Caatinga</i> ecosystem restored, equivalent to 18,200 tCO₂e sequestered</p> <p>500 hectares of <i>Cerrado</i> ecosystem restored, equivalent to 37,400 tCO₂e sequestered during life of project</p> <p>80,000 hectares with avoided conversion to pasture or monoculture and environmental services maintained, equivalent to 4,370,400 tCO₂e of emissions avoided during the life of the project</p>	<p>558 ha of <i>Caatinga</i> biome being restored equivalent to 2,623 tCO₂e sequestered</p> <p>481 ha <i>Cerrado</i> biome being restored equivalent to 29,112 tCO₂e sequestered</p> <p>73,605 hectares with avoided conversion to pasture or monoculture and environmental services maintained, equivalent to 5,154 tCO₂e of emissions avoided during the life of the project</p>	Achieved	<p><i>Caatinga</i> already achieved.</p> <p><i>Cerrado</i> almost achieved (96%)</p> <p>Avoided conversion to pasture almost achieved (90%)</p> <p>CO₂ tons were grossly overestimated due to absence of measuring experience. The SGP Brazil has now a well developed system to measure CO₂ emissions</p>
	Increased area of sustainable land management techniques that sustain the flow of environmental services in agro-ecosystems by communities supported by SGP	2200 ha (as a result of SGP support in OP 4)	<p>An additional 200 hectares in <i>Caatinga</i> and 400 hectares in the <i>Cerrado</i> in which communities apply innovative soil management techniques</p> <p>2,000 hectares with improved ecosystem services as a result of community adoption of innovative water management techniques</p>	<p>2,570 hectares in which communities apply innovative soil management techniques</p> <p>4,424 hectares with improved ecosystem services as a result of community adoption of innovative water management techniques</p>	Achieved	Both indicators are already surpassed

Remaining barriers to achieving the project objective

Based on the information from the table in the previous section it is fairly evident that the project is well on-target to achieve most of the agreed end-of-project outcome targets and its Project objective target by the end of the project in December 2016.

Summarizing, the MTR did not identify significant remaining barriers constraining the achievement of the project results and objectives at the end of the GEF current phase (OP5).

4.3 Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

Management Arrangements

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

The Project is implemented by UNDP with ISPN as implementing partner. The SGP National Coordination is based at ISPN and handles technical and administrative relationships with partners and grantees. UNDP Country Office manages the transfers of funds to grantees and ISPN to cover the SGP NC expenses.

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

The Brazil SGP is well recognized and respected within UNDP CO and there is a good working relationship with different units and projects.

The NSC meets regularly twice a year and contributes to the overall management of the SGP by participating in both the selection of proposals and also in the general orientation of the SGP Country Program.

Given that the Project is implemented by ISPN as UNDP implementing partner, the Project is steered by the National Steering Committee where UNDP, Governmental organizations and civil society organizations are represented. Therefore, the structure is straightforward and it seems not to have multiple reporting lines issues and problems.

Work planning

Work planning does not present major problems. The SGP develops and follows an Annual Workplan that is used to guide the different operational tasks along the year. All approved project proposals are based on the SGP logframe results and indicators, and there is a clear and visible connection between the project logframe and the proposals.

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

Finance and co-finance

The project management costs have remained at similar levels to previous OPs. There are studies indicating that the efficiency of the SGP is comparable or better than the average of GEF projects; therefore it can be said that this good situation is maintained. No comments were recorded regarding the costs of project coordination by the authorities or other organizations involved in the project.

The Brazil SGP keeps a good track of the co-financing reporting from the grantees and other co-financing sources identified in the PRODOC. The co-financing situation at the time of the MTR is summarized in the following table.

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Pledged Amount (US\$)	Actually Accounted at TE (July 2015) US\$	Actually Accounted at TE (July 2015) %
Satoyama Init.	COMDEKS	Grant	293,500	145,690	49
GEF Agency	UNDP	Grant	1,100,000	0	0
ISPN	Grantees	Grant	2,350,000	1,753,500	75
CBOs	Grantees	Grant	800,000	215,040	27
CSOs	Grantees	In Kind	800,000	351,570	44
Total:			5,343,500	2,465,800	46

Sources of Co-Funding	GRANT			IN KIND		
	Amount at design	Disbursed until July 2015	Difference	Amount at design	Disbursed until July 2015	Difference
GEF Agency	1,100,000	0	1,100,000	0	0	0
Satoyama	293,500	145,690	147,810	0	0	0
ISPN	2,350,000	1,753,500	596,500	0	0	0
CBOs	800,000	215,040	584,960	800,000	351,570	448,430
TOTAL	4,543,500	2,114,230	2,429,270	800,000	351,570	448,430

The previous tables show that the general level of co-financing at MTR time is 46% that can be assessed as good considering that the Project still has 18 months to run. Moreover, the co-financing situation assessment also considers that all grant projects were already allocated through the three planned calls for proposals, but almost 90% of them (89 out of 94) are still under implementation.

Moreover, commitments from other sources different than the grantees (National Government, UNDP, etc.) are usually accounted at the end of the project. Therefore, their contributions are just partially registered at MTR and some of them does not show any record yet despite the fact that they are already active contributing to SGP implementation in different ways.

Therefore, it is the opinion of the MTR that the SGP Brazil is in a good track regarding co-financing and that the expected levels of co-financing defined in the PRODOC will be achieved by the end of the Project.

One final issue to highlight is that, in all visited areas, the products resulting from the investments made by the SGP grants are visible (construction, materials, equipment, works of various kinds, home gardens, etc.) depending on the type of funded project.

Project-level monitoring and evaluation systems

The monitoring and evaluation of the Brazil SGP Country Program is very good for all its components (biodiversity, climate change and land degradation). Two components (biodiversity and land degradation) were monitored since the beginning of the OP5. The system works through the coordinated work of the different grant supervisors (ISPN staff and SGP NC Team staff) working coordinately with the National Coordination team who aggregates the information in a data base

The third component, climate change, faced the problem of not having a methodology to quantify CO₂ sequestration and avoided emissions across the projects in these large biomes. The issue was properly addressed through the hiring of a consultant that developed a very interesting methodology to quantify CO₂ using existing research and information at large scales. The system generates credible estimates given the rigor used in its development. It may be interesting for all SGPs across the system to consider this approach to generate credible information about carbon sequestration and avoided emissions from land use, changes in the use of fuel wood, etc.

The M&E process starts from the approval of the grant project, frequent phone and email contacts, report analyses and the implementation of monitoring visits (in general at least 1 per project depending on complexity, constraints, need for closer follow-up and other issues). These visits are also used to maintain contact with local partners such as local Governments, partner NGOs, other institutions, etc. In this regard, it is important to remember that these biomes are very large, scarcely populated and long distances by rural roads should be used to reach distant grantee groups and associated / collaborating organizations and partners; therefore, these M&E visits, frequently made jointly by more than one person from the ISPN team, are an essential component to maintain a close relationship with all grant project stakeholders and the strategic partners supporting them.

This system is very good and become a very important tool for decision-making for the NSC (National Steering Committee) and to supply information for reporting and for other organizations. The close monitoring is an essential SGP feature and supports local communities to manage small grants, which is a significant challenge in general.

The M&E information is filed in the individual physical archive of each project and it is also loaded into the ISPN Intranet helping to maintain a closer monitoring with more than 150 grants under execution simultaneously (combining SGP, COMDEKS and Amazonia Fund projects).

In summary, there are no significant MTR concerns about Project monitoring and evaluation.

Stakeholder engagement

The SGP in Brazil has formed well established and long-standing relationships with national and community level initiatives and partners and has continued seeking synergies during OP5.

Local community groups located in the prioritized areas are the most important SGP partners, as well as regional strategic partner organizations.

The Brazil SGP works in partnership with several key partners located across its large area on influence. These key partners are:

APA-TO	Alternativas para Pequena Agricultura no Tocantins
ASSEMA	Associação em áreas de assentamento do estado do Maranhão
CAA	Centro de Agricultura Alternativa do Norte de Minas (Minas Gerais)
CAV	Centro de Agricultura Alternativa Vicente Nica (Minas Gerais)
CTI	Centro de Trabalho Indigenista
MIQCB	Movimento Interestadual das Quebradeiras de Coco Babaçu (Piauí, Tocantins, Maranhão, Pará)
FASE	Federação de Órgãos para Assistência Social e Educacional (Mato Grosso)Central do Cerrado
	Articulação Pacari de Plantas Mediciniais
MOPIC	Mobilização dos Povos Indígenas do Cerrado
	Núcleo do Pequi

The SGP Project and ISPN are also engaged in several regional and national networks such as:

1. Rede Cerrado
2. Articulação do Semiárido Brasileiro (ASA)
3. Articulação Nacional de Agroecologia (ANA)
4. Fórum Brasileiro de ONGs e Movimentos Sociais para o Meio Ambiente e o Desenvolvimento (FBOMS)
5. Associação Brasileira de ONGs (ABONG)

In terms of local stakeholders, the Brazil SGP Results Framework includes gender indicators that are properly tracked and reported on by the M&E system. Moreover, during the MTR visits and interviews it became evident that gender equity is an aspect that runs effectively across all project activities.

Based on the evidence provided by the field visits and interviews, it becomes clear that there is a close communication between the National Coordination and its partners at different levels, both local CBOs and NGOs and other partner organizations (civil, local Governments, etc.)

All these mechanisms contributed to develop an active and fluid relationship between the project and the local organizations providing a strong base for a better engagement of the stakeholders in all project activities.

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

Reporting

The reporting process in the SGP Brazil Country program works well in general, particularly regarding the reporting from the National Coordination team (NC) to the National Steering Committee. The regular NSC meetings are usually attended by all representatives and there is also a significant flow of information within the system through email and other digital means.

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

GEF reporting is well performed in general. During OP5, PIR documents for 2014 and 2015 were completed on schedule and the 2015 PIR was completed just before the implementation of this MTR.

GEF Biodiversity Tracking Tools

As mentioned before, the SGP Brazil Country Program has not made yet its report to the GEF Tracking Tools in the different focal areas of SGP intervention (Biodiversity, Climate Change and Land Degradation). This is a minor issue considering that the required information for this GEF TT report is already available as part of the M&E system products.

Therefore, it is expected that this situation will be addressed in the short term in order to have this GEF requirement fulfilled.

Summarizing, there are no major MTR concerns regarding reporting with the Brazil SGP Country Program besides the mentioned need to complete the report to the GEF Tracking Tools.

Communications

As presented above in the section on stakeholder engagement, SGP communications with stakeholders and partners are very good. In fact, this is a significant strength of the Brazil SGP helped by the fact the ISPN is a technical organization with capacities to develop good communication products.

In terms of public communications the SGP Website (<http://www.ispn.org.br/projetos/ppp-ecos-programa-pequenos-projetos-ecossociais/>) is hosted within the ISPN website (<http://www.ispn.org.br/>), in a prominent and visible location. The SGP website is good, well designed and includes valuable information for organizations interested to apply for grants, as well as for the general public.

SGP and ISPN also have a different site, the Cerratinga Portal (<http://www.cerratinga.org.br/>), aimed to the general public, particularly in urban areas. The name Cerratinga came from joining the names of the involved biomes (*Cerrado* and *Caatinga*). The site is very well designed, very visual, and has a large number of pieces of information, links, documents, videos, etc. about the biomes, its species, cultural aspects, key biodiversity resources, products, food recipes, etc. It is an excellent way to generate awareness about these biomes and their characteristics and products in a cost-effective way.

SGP has also partnered with ISPN and other organizations for a number of years (including GEF OP5) in generating a collection of 14 documents focused on similar number of *Cerrado* and *Caatinga* species that can be used sustainably. Each document includes description of the species and its uses, as well as good practices for sustainable extraction of its products. These documents are available as printed documents and PDF digital versions available at the above mentioned Websites.

SGP, ISPN and partners have also produced printed guides for CBOs and NGOs about project preparation and administrative and financial management of small grants. There is also a highly valued publication on Environmental, Health and Fiscal Regulations for products from community processing of biodiversity products. This is an area of relevant work given the constraint faced by the CBOs to take their processed products (fruit pulp, jelly, preserves, dairy products, etc.) to the formal markets.

This richness of experience and lessons is one of the greatest legacies of the Brazil SGP (in addition to its concrete field results) and the fact that these lessons and experiences are obtained, properly documented and easily accessible to the public is an important strength to highlight.

4.4 Sustainability

Financial risks to sustainability

The financial risks to the sustainability of the actions funded in OP5 do not seem important. In other words, the invested resources are there in the hands of the local organizations and well incorporated into their actions. Moreover, most of the actions are aimed to really basic aspects of the wellbeing of the local communities (water, productive soils, access to markets, cash income and similar); therefore, the recipients and beneficiaries of these activities are the ones with the highest interest in keeping them active at the individual/family level.

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

Socio-economic risks to sustainability

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

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

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

In the case of activities at the community/community-group level, what is perceived from the field visits and interviews is that they are well involved in project implementation and they have strong organizations. Their main constraints are related to lack of communications, administrative skills, lobbying to get more attention from governmental organizations, stronger networking for better access to markets, etc. All these issues are being developed through training by the different NGOs accompanying/mentoring these organizations.

The MTR perception is that this capacity building process at the CBO level will not be completed in all cases by the end of OP5 and that a continuation of activities during OP6 will be necessary in most cases.

While the Brazil SGP does not forbid a community organization to receive new funding support after their first grant, the actual possibilities for this to happen are low (even when that situation actually happened) considering the large number of applications received by the SGP in each call for proposals. Therefore a different strategy is needed to address the issue about how to maximize the possibilities of grantee organizations to maintain their processes towards becoming a mature and sustainable organization after the short and small grant received by SGP.

A possibility may be to develop longer term support through the strategic partners in the different regions and a broader use of the SGP strategic projects. A appropriate combination of both aspects may lead to a longer term support to the development process of SGP supported CBOs

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

Institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability

The national institutional framework in Brazil is stable and there are clear legal and regulatory instruments focused on biodiversity conservation, support to family agriculture, support to better water management and use, etc.

Moreover, ISPN participates in several processes at different governmental levels on issues related to the conservation and sustainable use of the *Cerrado* and *Caatinga* biomes that are also the focus of the SGP actions.

Therefore, and even when national politics are very dynamic, the existence of well consolidated governmental institutions and processes and specific legislation approved and under implementation reasonably ensures the institutional sustainability of SGP actions.

Because of this situation the MTR rating of sustainability in this aspect is Likely.

Environmental risks to sustainability

The most evident risk to the environmental sustainability of SGP actions is a long-term one: climate change. This is a relevant risk because of its scale and because it has the potential to affect the core component of the SGP (and GEF) approach: biodiversity conservation across the prioritized biomes.

The expected increases in temperatures (both average and extremes) coupled with model estimations of reduced rainfall during the dry season means that these biomes may face more extreme conditions in terms of water deficit during the dry season, as well as a more active process of organic matter degradation in soils leading to more vulnerability to erosion due to poor management practice (extensive cattle ranching). These conditions may worsen the degradation processes in both biomes and, eventually, lead to more intensive emigration of local population.

These long term risks, coupled with short-term ones as deforestation, forest fires, overgrazing and environmental degradation (soil, water, etc.) can be significant in different specific parts of these biomes or to some very specific SGP-supported projects, but they do not imply a generalized risk for the entire set of project activities.

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

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

1. The current project full size corresponding to the 5th Operational Phase of the GEF SGP is relevant to the GEF and country objectives with which it must be consistent.
2. The progress made until the MTR time shows that the project is progressing towards its planned objectives and outcomes in a highly satisfactory way.
3. The involvement of the ISPN team in the implementation and oversight of SGP grant projects is perceived as very appropriate by both parties.
4. The SGP project strategy of combining field actions involving strong local partners in several regions of the *Cerrado* and *Caatinga* biomes, with knowledge management and acting as these biomes voice in processes at the state and federal level is adequate.
5. The SGP Project progress is highly satisfactory. All three calls for proposals planned were already completed and 94 grants were awarded and are under implementation.
6. There are five grants already completed and closed. Their final reports are satisfactory. The rest of the grants are in progress and the overall SGP project still has 18 months of implementation. No SGP project extension was requested.
7. The analysis of the level of progress towards achieving Project and Outcome indicators is highly satisfactory. Many indicators were already achieved and it is expected that the remainder will be achieved smoothly by the end of the project.
8. SGP Project products and results are visible in the field in form of better farming practices, water conservation and management practices, agroforestry and silvopastoral systems, new productive sustainable alternatives, equipments, installations, strengthened organizations, publications, Websites, etc.
9. The committed cofinancing is being disbursed appropriately, particularly in terms of the ISPN committed cofinancing. In this regard, COMDEKS (Satoyama Fund), Amazonia Fund and other cofinancing funds are disbursed on schedule and properly complementing GEF grants.
10. The work relationships between SGP/ISPN with UNDP Brazil Country Office are very good and fluent in all aspects. The "executing partner" role for ISPN seems to be working very well for the implementation of the SGP.
11. The project design is adequate but some minor adjustments were analyzed and agreed. The adjustments are to have a more concrete wording of an indicator and adjust the associated target; and to adjust the target of another indicator.
 - Outcome 1. New indicator and target
Number of families in *Caatinga* and *Cerrado* generating income through marketing of biodiversity products. New target: 5,000 families
 - Outcome 2. New target
Reduce to 3,000 has the target of the "Area under agro-ecological management" indicator
12. The filing system of project information is very good: it is clear, orderly and comprehensive.

13. The monitoring and evaluation system is effective and provides adequate information for the indicators. It is important to use this information to provide better details in the reports and to visualize activities providing results to two or more indicators.
14. The Brazil SGP has developed a very good methodology for estimating carbon sequestration in ecosystem restoration processes and to estimate avoided carbon emissions through different practices.
15. Project Reports (PIR) are submitted regularly and were accepted by those who receive them. The Project report to the GEF Tracking Tools is still pending, but the required information is already available; therefore there are no major constraints to complete this task.
16. No major risks are perceived in addition to those included in the PRODOC. The risks described in the PRODOC are not affecting project performance at the MTR time.
17. There is a potential risk regarding the approval of a new phase of the Brazil SGP Country Program in GEF OP6 because governmental agencies may decide to prioritize their own projects over a new SGP phase.

5.2 Recommendations

1. To complete the current phase of the SGP Brazil maintaining the current ways of operation that has proven effective and efficient to achieve the agreed results. Overall the Brazil SGP Project implementation is very successful and so the first recommendation is to maintain the good work.
2. To adjust two indicators of the Project logframe as follows:
 - Outcome 1. New indicator and target
Number of families in *Caatinga* and *Cerrado* generating income through marketing of biodiversity products. New target: 5,000 families
 - Outcome 2. New target
Reduce to 3,000 has the target of the "Area under agro-ecological management" indicator
3. To complete the pending tasks of reporting to the GEF Tracking Tools using the information it already has.
4. While the SGP regional partners (such as APA-TO, CAV, CAA, MIQCB, ASSEMA, CTI and others) are providing long-term support to the CBOs in their areas, it is important for the SGP to develop strategies with these organizations to keep supporting SGP-supported CBOs beyond the SGP grant projects. In other words, local groups will not become autonomous and sustainable over a period of two years with a small grant; longer processes are needed. Hence the importance of defining these strategies and rely on the work of strategic partners beyond the duration of the grants.
5. The SGP could strengthen its work with key partners via strategic projects. It seems that the potential of this type of project is not yet fully exploited by the SGP and this may be a strong instrument to increase its influence across the biomes.

6. The bridge between OP4 and OP5 stage was a difficult experience for the Brazil SGP. Nothing suggests that the transition from OP5 to OP6 will be different. Therefore, the MTR recommends beginning the process towards OP6 as soon as possible with a basic PIF that can be used to obtain the endorsement letter from the country and then to start the elaboration of the full PIF required for entering in GEF OP6.
7. As the last group of SGP grants was approved just before the MTR and less than a year and a half remains until the end of the current SGP Project, it is recommended to the SGP to maintain open the possibility of negotiating an extension of the current project by six months to allow time for the completion of those grant projects.
8. The SGP agro-ecological work is very good and very important and it is very focused on water issues and plant production. However the MTR perceives much less emphasis on including cattle raising in the agro-ecological approach. Livestock production is the activity that after agribusiness occupies more land and causes more degradation of the *Cerrado*. Therefore, a more explicit emphasis on cattle raising issues is recommended, for example through pilot grant projects helping peasants to evolve from extensive ranching to stabled systems articulated with release of land for natural regeneration of the *Cerrado*.
9. Projects supported by the SGP include women and youth. However the logical framework has no targets or indicators on this issue and not obvious unbundled records of activities, participation and impact on these groups. The SGP should advance in this respect, at least at the record level; merely recording information on these aspects draws attention to them and create space for more explicit activities about them.
10. The SGP should continue supporting efforts to simplify regulations for marketing family agriculture and biodiversity products with basic processing (pulps, jellies, preserves, flour, etc.). Basic processing adds value to products and much needed income to rural families; unnecessary or excessive regulations blocking access to markets need to be adjusted or removed.
11. There seems to be many opportunities to tenders, sales, projects, funding, etc. for CBOs and local organizations from different federal, state and municipal entities, but the information about this seems to be fragmented and scattered. The SGP should analyze the possibility of supporting efforts to perform clearing-house actions to organize the information and make it more accessible for *Cerrado* and *Caatinga* organizations.

Turrialba, Costa Rica, September 7, 2015

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

UNDP-GEF Midterm Review Terms of Reference Template

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

1. INTRODUCTION

This is the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the UNDP-GEF Midterm Review (MTR) of the full-sized project titled Fifth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Program in Brazil (PIMS 4578) implemented through the UNDP and Institute for Society, Population and Nature (ISPN), which is to be undertaken in 2015. The project started on May 20 13 and is in its third year of implementation. In line with the UNDP-GEF Guidance on MTRs, this MTR process was initiated following the completion of the second Annual Project Review/ Project Implementation Report (APR/PIR). This ToR sets out the expectations for this MTR. The MTR process must follow the guidance outlined in the document *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* (attached).

2. PROJECT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The project's goal is to have Global Environment Benefits secured through community-based initiatives and actions for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and maintenance of carbon stocks in the Cerrado and Caatinga biomes. The key outcomes are: 1. Sustainable use and management of natural resources by communities to enhance conservation of biodiversity in the production landscape; 2. Carbon stocks maintained through avoiding land use change and improved agriculture and forest management at the community level; 3. Sustainable land management techniques preventing land degradation, restoring agro-ecosystem services, and improving livelihoods of local communities implemented; and 4. Communities deliver global environmental benefits through capacity development and knowledge management. The project execution started in May 2013 and will finish in March 2017. The total budget is USD 10,343,500. The GEF budget is USD 5,000,000 and USD 5,343,500 is provided as co-financing by UNDP country office, ISPN, COMDEKS and grantees.

The project is executed under the NGO modality by Instituto Sociedade, População e Natureza (ISPN) and UNDP acts as the GEF Implementing Agency. ISPN, which has been the NGO National Host Institution for GEF-SGP in Brazil before its upgrading, is executing agency, taking over the previous execution role played by UNOPS, and is responsible for the day-to-day management and implementation of project activities with the support of a full time Country Programme Manager (CPM) and under the leadership of the National Steering Committee (NSC). The project is implemented with UNDP support, and UNDP ensures that the project receives technical and managerial support, as needed, from the UNDP Country Office, and from the regional team, as well as the global team responsible for project oversight for all GEF-SGP upgraded Country Programme projects.

Three calls for proposals were launched and 94 grants were selected, allocating 100% of the project grant budget. In addition, a COMDEKS call for proposals selected other seven grants. In July 2015, 107 grants were under execution.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THIS MTR

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

4. MTR APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

The MTR must provide evidence based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The MTR consultant will review all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase (i.e. PIF, UNDP Initiation Plan, UNDP Environmental & Social Safeguard Policy, the Project Document, project reports including APR/PIRs, project budget revisions, lesson learned reports, other project files, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the team considers useful for this evidence-based review).

The MTR consultant is expected to follow a collaborative and participatory approach¹ ensuring close engagement with the Project Team, government counterparts (the GEF Operational Focal Point), the UNDP Country Office(s), UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisers, and other key stakeholders.

Engagement of stakeholders is vital to a successful MTR.² Stakeholder involvement should include interviews with stakeholders who have project responsibilities, including but not limited to project grantees; executing agencies, senior officials and task team/ component leaders, key experts and consultants in the subject area, Project Board, project stakeholders, academia, local government and CSOs, etc. Additionally, the MTR consultant is expected to conduct field missions to Caatinga and Cerrado biome, including the project sites. The final MTR report should describe the full MTR approach taken and the rationale for the approach making explicit the underlying assumptions, challenges, strengths and weaknesses about the methods and approach of the review.

5. DETAILED SCOPE OF MTR

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

5.1 Project Strategy

Project design:

- Review the problem addressed by the project and the underlying assumptions. Review the effect of any incorrect assumptions or changes to the context to achieving the project results as outlined in the project document.
- Review the relevance of the project strategy and assess whether it provides the most effective route towards expected/intended results. Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated into the project design?

¹ For ideas on innovative and participatory Monitoring and Evaluation strategies and techniques, see [UNDP Discussion Paper: Innovations in Monitoring & Evaluating Results](#), 05 Nov 2013.

² For more stakeholder engagement in the M&E process, see the [UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results](#), Chapter 3, pg. 93.

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

Results Framework/Logframe:

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

5.2 Project Results

Progress Towards Results:

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

5.3 Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

Work Planning:

- Review any delays in project start-up and implementation, identify the causes and examine if they have been solved.
- Are work-planning processes results-based? If not, suggest ways to re-orientate work planning to focus on results?
- Examine the use of the project document logical/results framework as a management tool and review any changes made to it since project start. Ensure any revisions meet UNDP-GEF requirements and assess the impact of the revised approach on project management.

Finance and co-finance:

- Consider the financial management of the project, with specific reference to the cost-effectiveness of interventions.

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

Monitoring Systems:

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

Reporting:

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

Communications:

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

Management Arrangements:

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

5.4 Long-term Sustainability

- Validate whether the risks identified in the Project Document, APR/PIRs and the ATLAS Risk Management Module are the most important and whether the risk ratings applied are appropriate and up to date. If not, explain why. Give particular attention to critical risks.

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

6. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

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

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

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

7. TIMEFRAME

The total duration of the MTR will be eight weeks starting August 3rd according to the tentative MTR timeframe as follows:

DATE	ACTIVITY
July 1 st	Finalize ToR, begin contacting consultants
July 20	Select MTR consultant
July 20-27	Prep the MTR consultant (handover of Project Documents)
July 27- August 3 rd	Desk review of project documents
August 3 rd	MTR Inception Workshop
August 3 rd	Validation of MTR Inception Report

<i>August 4th - 13th</i>	Stakeholder meetings, interviews, field visits
<i>August 14th</i>	Mission wrap-up & presentation of initial findings
<i>August 17th - September 4th</i>	Preparing draft report
<i>September 8</i>	Incorporating audit trail on draft report/Finalization of final report (off-site)
<i>September 10-19</i>	Preparation & Issue of Management Response
<i>September 20-29</i>	Comments/ Feedback on the Management Response
<i>September 30</i>	Expected date of full MTR completion

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

8. MIDTERM REVIEW DELIVERABLES

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

9. MTR ARRANGEMENTS

The principal responsibility for managing this MTR resides with the Commissioning Unit. The Commissioning Unit for this project's MTR is the UNDP Country Office.

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

10. TECHNICAL COMPETENSES

The consultant will conduct the MTR with experience and exposure to projects and evaluations in other regions globally. The consultant cannot have participated in the project preparation, formulation, and/or implementation (including the writing of the Project Document) and should not have a conflict of interest with project's related activities.

The consultant must comply with the following:

- Recent experience with result-based management evaluation methodologies;
- Experience applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios;
- Competence in adaptive management, as applied to Biodiversity, Climate Change and Land Degradation;

- Experience working with the GEF or GEF-evaluations, especially with SGP upgraded country programmes;
- Experience working in Latin America;
- Work experience in relevant technical areas for at least 10 years;
- Demonstrated understanding of issues related to Biodiversity, Climate Change and Land Degradation; experience in gender sensitive evaluation and analysis.
- Excellent communication skills;
- Demonstrable analytical skills;
- Project evaluation/review experiences within United Nations system will be considered an asset.

11. PAYMENT MODALITIES AND SPECIFICATIONS

Upon approval of the Work Plan and Inception Report, 20% of the payment will be disbursed. Upon draft report of the Midterm Review report by the Commissioning Unit and the UNDP-GEF RTA/team, 40% and upon approval of the final report, 40% of the payment will be disbursed.

TOR ANNEX A: List of Documents to be reviewed by the MTR Consultant

1. Project Document
2. Project Inception Report and Project Implementation Reports (APR/PIR's)
3. Quarterly progress reports and work plans of the various implementation task teams
4. Audit reports
5. The Mission Reports
6. M & E Operational Guidelines
7. All monitoring reports prepared by the project
8. Financial and Administration guidelines.
9. Environmental and Social Screening results

The following documents will also be available:

10. Project operational guidelines, manuals and systems
11. Minutes of Fifth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Program in Brazil Meetings
12. Minutes of the National Steering Committee
13. Maps
14. The GEF Completion Report guidelines; and
15. UNDP Monitoring and Evaluation Frameworks.

TOR ANNEX B: Guidelines on Contents for the Midterm Review Report³

- i. Basic Report Information (*for opening page or title page*)
 - Title of UNDP supported GEF financed project
 - UNDP PIMS# and GEF project ID#
 - MTR time frame and date of MTR report
 - Region and countries included in the project
 - GEF Operational Focal Area/Strategic Program
 - Implementing Partner and other project partners
 - MTR consultant
 - Acknowledgements
- ii. Table of Contents

³ The Report length should not exceed 40 pages in total (not including annexes).

iii. Acronyms and Abbreviations

1. Executive Summary (*3-5 pages*)
 - Project Information Table
 - Project Description (brief)
 - Project Progress Summary (between 200-500 words)
 - MTR Rating & Achievement Summary Table
 - Project Recommendations Table
 - Concise summary of conclusions
 - Recommendation Summary Table
2. Introduction (*2-3 pages*)
 - Purpose of the MTR
 - Scope & Methodology
 - Structure of the MTR report
3. Project Description and Background Context (*3-5 pages*)
 - Project start and duration
 - Problems that the project sought to address
 - Immediate and development objectives of the project
 - Main stakeholders
 - Expected Results
4. Findings (*12-14 pages*)
 - 4.1 Project Strategy
 - Project Design
 - Results Framework/Logframe
 - 4.2 Project Results
 - Progress towards outcomes
 - 4.3 Project Implementation and Adaptive Management
 - Work planning
 - Finance and co-finance
 - Monitoring systems
 - Reporting
 - Communications
 - Management Arrangements
 - 4.4 Long-term Sustainability
5. Conclusions and Recommendations (*4-6 pages*)
 - 5.1 Conclusions
 - Comprehensive and balanced statements (that are evidence-based and connected to the MTR's findings) which highlight the strengths, weaknesses and results of the project
 - 5.2 Recommendations
 - Corrective actions for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project
 - Actions to follow up or reinforce initial benefits from the project
 - Proposals for future directions underlining main objectives

6. Annexes

- MTR ToR (excluding ToR annexes)
- MTR Mission Itinerary
- List of persons interviewed
- List of documents reviewed
- Questionnaire or Interview Guide used
- Audit Trail from received comments on MTR draft report
- Co-financing table
- Project Ratings Scales
- Signed UNEG Code of Conduct form
- Signed MTR clearance form
- *Annexed in a separate file:* Relevant midterm tracking tools (METT, FSC, Capacity scorecard, etc.)

TOR ANNEX C: UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators/Midterm Review Consultants⁴

Evaluators/Consultants:

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

MTR Consultant Agreement Form

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

Name of Consultant: _____

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): _____

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

Signed at _____ (Place) on _____ (Date)

Signature: _____

⁴ www.undp.org/unegcodeofconduct

TOR ANNEX D: MTR Ratings

Ratings for Project Results/ Progress Towards Results: (one rating for each outcome and for the objective)

6. Highly Satisfactory (HS): 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”.
- 5: Satisfactory (S): Project is expected to achieve most of its major global environmental objectives, and yield satisfactory global environmental benefits, with only minor shortcomings.
- 4: Moderately Satisfactory (MS): 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.
3. Moderately Unsatisfactory (HU): Project is expected to achieve its major global environmental objectives with major shortcomings or is expected to achieve only some of its major global environmental objectives.
2. Unsatisfactory (U): Project is expected not to achieve most of its major global environment objectives or to yield any satisfactory global environmental benefits.
1. Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): The project has failed to achieve, and is not expected to achieve, any of its major global environment objectives with no worthwhile benefits.

Ratings for Project Implementation & Adaptive Management: (one overall rating)

6. Highly Satisfactory (HS): The project has been managed in very effective and efficient manner in accordance with the workplan, schedule and budget. The project can be presented as “good practice”.
- 5: Satisfactory (S): The project has been managed in a reasonably effective and efficient manner, largely in accordance with the workplan, schedule and budget.
- 4: Moderately Satisfactory (MS): The project has been managed in an acceptable manner but not fully in accordance with the workplan, schedule and budget.
3. Moderately Unsatisfactory (HU): The project has been managed in a marginally effective and responsive manner but not fully in accordance with the workplan, schedule and budget.
2. Unsatisfactory (U): The project has been managed in a less than effective manner due to internal or external factors and not in accordance with the workplan, schedule and budget.
1. Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): The project has been managed in an ineffective manner particularly due to internal factors and clearly not in accordance with the workplan, schedule and budget.

Sustainability Ratings: (one overall rating)

4. Likely (L): negligible risks to sustainability
3. Moderately Likely (ML): moderate risks to sustainability
2. Moderately Unlikely (MU): significant risks to sustainability
1. Unlikely (U): severe risks to sustainability

Additional ratings where relevant:

- Not Applicable (N/A)
- Unable to Assess (U/A)

TOR ANNEX E: MTR Report Clearance Form

(to be completed by the CO and UNDP-GEF RTA and included in the final document)

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

ANNEX 2. EVALUATIVE MATRIX

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

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

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

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

* Methodology:

DR. Documents Review

I. Interviews

DO. Direct Observation

ANNEX 3. MTR RATINGS AND RATINGS SCALE

Measure	MTR Rating	Achievement Description
Project Strategy	N/A	The Project strategy is sound in the context of dealing with two weakly addressed huge biomes in the largest country of Latin America. The triple pronged approach (field projects, knowledge management and contributions to policy) seems very adequate. The Project LFA is well constructed and it is used by the project (National Steering Committee and National Coordination).
Progress Towards Results	<p><u>Project Objective:</u> <i>Conservation of the Cerrado and Caatinga biomes of Brazil through community initiatives on sustainable resource use, and actions that maintain or enhance carbon stocks and increase areas under sustainable land management</i></p> <p>Achievement Rating: 6 Highly satisfactory</p>	<p>The Achievement Rating is based on the Achievement of Project Indicators. As presented in the Summary Table of Progress Towards Objectives and the fully detailed table in section 4.2 Progress Towards Project Objectives.</p> <p>According to the Tables mentioned above, the SGP has already achieved all three indicators and targets of this Outcome.</p> <p>There is just some imbalance between target areas managed sustainably in both biomes, with achievements in the <i>Cerrado</i> twice as large as committed and the opposite in the <i>Caatinga</i>. As more than 90% of the grants are already under way, but there are more of them in the <i>Cerrado</i> than the <i>Caatinga</i>, it is not clear if this imbalance will be reduced significantly at the end of the Project.</p>
	<p><u>Outcome 1</u> <i>Sustainable use and management of natural resources by communities to enhance conservation of biodiversity in the production landscape</i></p> <p>Achievement Rating: 6 Highly satisfactory</p>	<p>In this Outcome the SGP Brazil has already achieved 1 indicator (3 in total), and the other three are rated as On target.</p> <p>The MTR is recommending adjusting one of these indicators in order to have it better defined. (See Recommendation 2)</p>

	<p>Outcome 2 <i>Carbon stocks maintained through avoiding land use change and improved agriculture and forest management at the community level</i></p> <p>Achievement Rating: 6 Highly satisfactory</p>	<p>Same as Outcome 1. There is one indicator already achieved and the other three are rated as On target. The MTR is also recommending adjusting one of these indicators in order to have it better defined. (See Recommendation 2)</p>
	<p>Outcome 3 <i>Sustainable land management techniques preventing land degradation, restoring agro-ecosystem services, and improving livelihoods of local communities implemented</i></p> <p>Achievement Rating: 6 Highly satisfactory</p>	<p>This outcome has two indicators. One was already achieved (and surpassed by a factor of five) and the other is On target. Most of the commitments for the second indicator are coming from a cofinancing project (COMDEKS / Satoyama initiative) that began its field operations early this year; therefore its progress were not formally reported yet and not captured by the SGP M&E System.</p>
	<p>Outcome 4 <i>Communities deliver global environmental benefits through capacity development and knowledge management</i></p> <p>Achievement Rating: 6 Highly satisfactory</p>	<p>This Outcome has three indicators and all of them are achieved already and one of them widely surpassed.</p>
<p>Project Implementation & Adaptive Management</p>	<p>6 Highly Satisfactory</p>	<p>According to the results shown in Section 4.3 (Management Arrangements) regarding Work planning, Finance and co-finance, Project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, Stakeholder engagement, Reporting and Communications, all these areas are managed adequately and the MTR did not identify any major concern about them. There is a minor issues about the delay in reporting to the GEF TT but as the information is already available, this issue is not significant enough to reduce the rating</p>

<p>Sustaina- bility</p>	<p>4 Likely</p>	<p>According to the results shown in Section 4.4 Sustainability, the MTR did not identify major concerns about different sustainability areas (financial, socioeconomic and institutional) were assessed as Likely, while environmental one was assessed as Moderately likely because of the expected impacts of climate change in a sub-humid to semi-arid biomes according to current scenarios and models.</p>
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MTR RATING SCALES

Ratings for Progress Towards Results: (one rating for each outcome and for the objective)		
6	Highly Satisfactory (HS)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve or exceed all its end-of-project targets, without major shortcomings. The progress towards the objective/outcome can be presented as “good practice”.
5	Satisfactory (S)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve most of its end-of-project targets, with only minor shortcomings.
4	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve most of its end-of-project targets but with significant shortcomings.
3	Moderately Unsatisfactory (HU)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve its end-of-project targets with major shortcomings.
2	Unsatisfactory (U)	The objective/outcome is expected not to achieve most of its end-of-project targets.
1	Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	The objective/outcome has failed to achieve its midterm targets, and is not expected to achieve any of its end-of-project targets.

Ratings for Project Implementation & Adaptive Management: (one overall rating)		
6	Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Implementation of all seven components – management arrangements, work planning, finance and co-finance, project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, stakeholder engagement, reporting, and communications – is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management. The project can be presented as “good practice”.
5	Satisfactory (S)	Implementation of most of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management except for only few that are subject to remedial action.
4	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Implementation of some of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management, with some components requiring remedial action.
3	Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Implementation of some of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive, with most components requiring remedial action.
2	Unsatisfactory (U)	Implementation of most of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management.
1	Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	Implementation of none of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management.

Ratings for Sustainability: (one overall rating)		
4	Likely (L)	Negligible risks to sustainability, with key outcomes on track to be achieved by the project's closure and expected to continue into the foreseeable future
3	Moderately Likely (ML)	Moderate risks, but expectations that at least some outcomes will be sustained due to the progress towards results on outcomes at the Midterm Review
2	Moderately Unlikely (MU)	Significant risk that key outcomes will not carry on after project closure, although some outputs and activities should carry on
1	Unlikely (U)	Severe risks that project outcomes as well as key outputs will not be sustained

ANNEX 4. MTR MISSION ITINERARY

The field visit was conducted between August 3 and 14, 2015 in accordance with the following schedule agreed with the SGP National Coordination and with support from the UNDP Country Office

August 2, 2015. Sunday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trip Costa Rica - Brazil. Arrival and accommodation in Brasilia • Review of SGP documents
August 3, Monday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with the ISPN Technical Team • Meeting with the SGP National Coordination Team
August 4, Tuesday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air trip to Belo Horizonte and Montes Claros (Minas Gerais, MG) • Road trip to Turmalina (MG) • Night in Turmalina
August 5, Wednesday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit to the Centro de Agricultura Alternativa Vicente Nica (CAV) in Turmalina • Visit to AFAV Project in Veredinha (Asoc. De Feirantes) • Visit to Boiada community • Night in Turmalina
August 6, Thursday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit to Gentio community • Visit to Grota do Porto community • Night in Turmalina
August 7, Friday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit to Mato Grande community • Visit to Family Agroculture School (EFA) • Visit to CAV Experimental Farm • Roadtrip to Montes Claros • Night in Montes Claros
August 8, Saturday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air trip to Belo Horizonte and Brasilia • Night in Brasilia
August 9, Sunday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free day
August 10, Monday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road trip to Cristalina, Goiás • Visit to Rede Terra organization and projects • Night in Cristalina (GO)
August 11, Tuesday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road trip to Luziania (GO) • Visit to Indaiá community and Cooperative • Road trip to Brasilia • Night in Brasilia

August 12, Wednesday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with SGP team in ISPN • Meeting with Carbon emissions expert • Night in Brasilia
August 13, Thursday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit to Central do Cerrado (Sobradinho, DF) • Meeting with the SGP National Steering Committee (NSC) • Meeting with the UNDP Program Officers (Rosenely Diegues and Luana Lopes) • Night in Brasilia
August 14, Friday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debriefing meeting with SGP NC and ISPN staff. • Night in Brasilia
August 15-16, 2015, Saturday / Sunday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Departure from Brasilia • Air travel to Costa Rica

ANNEX 5. SUMMARY OF FIELD VISITS

Grantee / Organization	Visit Summary
CAV (Centro de Agricultura Alternativa Vicente Nica) Turmalina, Minas Gerais (MG)	A meeting took place in the CAV headquarter in Turmalina. The team explained the SGP intervention approach and the schedule of visits to stakeholders during the field trip.
Farmer´s Market Program Association (Programa de Apoio as Feiras Livres no Vale do Jequitinhonha), Veredinha, MG	The program supports the commercialization of agricultural products establishing a direct connection between producers and consumers. Some of the local seeds are collected to keep up their production. There is a market place building that was established in association with the municipality authorities. Once a week the agricultural production is sold in this market.
Boiada Community Maria Mercedes y Joãozinho	SGP has provided financing and technical support to build in this (10 has approx.) property some technology to mitigate water scarcity during the long dry season. The embankment (<i>barraginha</i>) and contention basin (<i>bacia de contenção</i>) are both built to allow water to infiltrate in order to recover water sources by recharging the water table. This new source of water allows them to produce vegetables under irrigation. The production is used for family consumption and to sell in the free market and for the official programs ⁵ that provide vegetables for school and other state and county institutions. They also have other income sources as small livestock, and charcoal production from the eucalyptus plantation leftovers.
Boiada Community Antonio Camargo	In his small 1.5 ha property this farmer is changing his cattle growing approach to recover the field. SGP offers him technology and financial support to fence the grazing fields to allow the recovering of the vegetation. This is recognized as a requisite to recover soil quality and to allow water table recharge.
Turmalina Honey Processing Cooperative - APIVAJE	In Turmalina there is a Honey Processing Cooperative that has recently built new processing facilities. It has also fulfilled the complex sanitary requirements to sell its production in the state market. The Cooperative receives their associate (120 bee-keeping) honey production contributing to keep an activity that has no impact in the regional critical ecosystem situation.
Gentio Community Zé Branco e Donizete	They have just built terraces in its property (21.6 has) and a <i>bacia</i> to mitigate dry season by keeping up some water and at the same time improving infiltration. They also have some cattle in an extensive management approach that needs to turn into a more ecological production in order to contribute to soil recovery.

⁵ National Food School Program (PNAE, PROGRAMA NACIONAL DE ALIMENTAÇÃO ESCOLAR) http://portal.mec.gov.br/index.php?option=com_content&id=16691&Itemid=1115

Food Purchase Program (PAA, Programa de Aquisição de Alimentos) <http://www.mds.gov.br/falemds/perguntas-frequentes/superacao-da-extrema-pobreza%20/inclusao-produtiva-rural/paa>

Gentio Community Manoel	He also built a <i>bacia</i> and is fencing cerrado areas to keep them free from cattle grazing
Grota do Porto Community Lidio and Jovelina	This young couple is producing vegetables to sell through the <i>Free Farmer's Market Program Association</i> to the state programs PNAE and PAA. SGP has financing the purchase of a small <i>motocultivador</i> (tractor) that is shared among some farmers to prepare the soil for vegetable production.
Córrego do Ouro Association, Veredinha	This Association held a meeting to settle the agreements in order to build some technologies in their associates' properties. The target is to build six <i>barragiinhas</i> and ten <i>bacias</i> to mitigate dry season and to recover freatic level.
EFAV Escola Família Agrícola de Veredinha	SGP supported this school to strengthen agro-ecological production and to promote young students rural identity. The curriculum covers academic as well as agricultural technical subjects. Students graduate as Agricultural Technician and some of them are working with SGP farmers. The approach conceives and alternated schedule that allows students to attend lessons during two weeks and then they have a two week period of practice at their own family farm. There are lodging facilities for the students, as well as classrooms and enough land to make agro-ecological practices, a nursery, and some additional land for practice. Students also develop other skills (bakery, jam elaboration, etc.) to add value to farmer production.
Banco de Alimentos de Cristalina Rede Terra Cristalina, Goiás	Familiar Agriculture production is gathered in a special office provided by the Municipality. It is received once a week to be distributed to de PNAE and PAA according to the agreement signed with these programs. Famers can sell remaining production in a free market that belongs to the municipality, where consumers buy directly to farmers. There are other open markets (<i>quitandas</i>) in different locations during other days of the week in Brasília. They are organized in the Cooperative <i>Rede Terra</i> , in this way the production of many Cooperative members is sold by a few of them in a single post at the different markets.
Rede Terra Cristalina, Goiás	The Cooperative Headquarter is located in Cristalina. They have a meeting room and their office and a cafeteria. The Cooperative provides technical and marketing support to its members. Cooperative gives services to many associates who bear a diversify level of performance. Members have different needs and the support is adjusted to their special context and production. Some members produce just to supply for the household needs, some others produce enough surpluses to sell in the different markets, and there are those that sell elaborated products that have added value.
Feira Cristalina	Visit to the open market site in Cristalina town and the area allocated to the family agriculture
APAE Associação de Pais e Amigos do Excepcional	The school gives attention to special education students. It attends a population of different ages, from very young students to adults. The school belongs to a family association. They benefit with the PNAE and PAA. It has classroom facilities as well as a vegetable growing land, nursery, workshops to recycling material (paper, fabric, others). It gives health support to students and food services.

<p>Cristalina rural area Edson Ferrari</p>	<p>Edson Ferrari is a cooperative member and has a property where the family grows diversified agro ecological production. He benefits with the participation in different markets and he is one of the associates that brings products (his own and some other associates) to the CEASA Market in Brasilia.</p> <p>Some of the Cooperative staff has been trained in project design and management in Brasilia by the SGP.</p>
<p>Indaiá Community and Cooperative</p>	<p>This is a SGP Association beneficiary that produces for the PAA and PNAE. There are agroforestry initiatives in some farms, they produce a variety of products in a diversify pattern. The aim is to produce while recovering the soil that has been under extensive cattle production. They also develop nurseries and a native seed bank to strengthen reforestation with native species and local vegetable production.</p> <p>The community association is improving its production and marketing opportunities, therefore its requiring more staff. Both situations open new rural job opportunities which are facilitating the return of young adults that have been migrated to the nearby cities looking for income.</p> <p>There are many farmers that grow specific products for the free market and alimentary programs with agroecological approach. They share their skills and spread their knowledge among community farmers.</p>
<p>Central do Cerrado Sobradinho, DF</p>	<p>Regional products need to be known to build new market for them, this is a target that faces the <i>Central do Cerrado</i>. It promotes products from different regional farmers' Associations in potential markets. When there are clients interested in the products, they support the associations to fulfill the gap between the producers and the clients. The <i>Central do Cerrado</i> facilitates events to promote products to open potential markets. As a way to do this, a women Association delivers catering services offering diversify dishes made with agroecological and biodiversity manufactured products in political and cultural events.</p>
<p>Central de Abastecimento de Brasilia (CEASA Brasilia)</p>	<p><i>Rede Terra</i> has representatives that sell products on Saturdays in the Brasilia Supply Regional Central Market (CEASA Central de Abastecimento). It is a wholesale and retail market where agroecological products are offered every week.</p> <p>There are other initiatives to promote <i>Rede Terra</i> products in Brasilia, like the Universal Café who adds a small market where farmers sell directly to consumers (“quitanda”) and the well-known Café in the TV Tower in the center of Brasilia. This last one is a special tourist spot as well as a rented place for special events. All these projects have the purpose to promote agricultural production as well as other valued added products like sauce, ham, cheese, cakes, biscuits and others made with native products, and a diversity of other handicrafts.</p> <p>In this way <i>Rede Terra</i> and <i>Central do Cerrado</i> coordinate their actions to open markets to add value to farmer products from the region.</p>

ANNEX 6. LIST OF INTERVIEWED PERSONS

The list of persons interviewed during this MTR includes:

Organizations and persons at the community level

Programa de Apoio as Feiras Livres no Vale do Jequitinhonha / Farmer's Market Support Program Association

1. Claiton Rodrigues Mendes (technical staff)
2. Jéssica Gomes da Silva (secretary)

Boiada Community, Veredinha

1. Maria Mercedes y Joãozinho (farming family)
2. Antonio Camargo (farmer)

Honey Processing Cooperative, Turmalina

1. Renato Alves Souza Edimar (CAV technical officer)
2. Pinheida Oliveira (consultant)

Gentio Community, Turmalina

1. José Branco (farmer)
2. Donizete (farmer)
3. Manoel (farmer)

Grota do Porto Community, Turmalina

1. Lidio and Jovelina (farming family)

Mato Grande Community, Turmalina

1. Waldir (President of AFAVE)
2. Rodrigues (technical officer, APLAMT)
3. Eduardo Ortiz, Sindicato de Trabalhadores Rurais de Turmalina
4. Ruvalino (member of the Turmalina Municipality Council)
5. Cassia Ferreira (farmer)
6. Fortunata (farmer)
7. José Antonio dos Santos (farmer)
8. Maria (farmer)
9. João (farmer)
10. Vermilio (farmer)

Associação de Córrego do Ouro, Veredinha

1. Several participants in a workshop (no names collected)

EFAV Escola Familiar Veredinha

1. No names collected

Cooperativa Rede Terra, Cristalina

1. Levi Cerqueira (Cooperative President)
2. Luis Carlos "Zizo" Simion (Coordinator)
3. Mario Pereira Santos
4. Vagner Pereira Santos (Rede Terra Cooperative Coordinator)
5. Tomas (Quitandas / Feiras)
6. Átila Cesar Daminelli (Quitandas / Feiras)

APAE (Associação dos Pais e Amigos do Excepcional)

1. Maria Cristina Jorge Maróstica (Director)

Cristalina area

1. Edson Ferrari (farmer)

Cooperativa and Community Indaiá, Luziânia

1. Luciano Andrade (technical officer)
2. Donizete (administrative officer)
3. Judite and Alonso (Community Association members)
4. Benedito and Marcio (farmers)
5. Azarias and Teresa (farming family)
6. Francisco Cordeiro (farmer)

Key partner organizations supporting CBO

CAV (Centro de Agricultura Alternativa Vicente Nica), Turmalina, MG

1. Valmir Soares de Macedo (CAV General Coordinator)
2. Sueli Gomes Fernandes (CAV SGP Project grant coordinator)
3. Dario Oliveira (CAV SGP Agronomist)

Central do Cerrado, Sobradinho (DF)

1. Luis Carrazza (Coordinator)
2. Ildete (assistant)

UNDP Brazil Country Office

1. Rosenely Diegues, UNDP Brazil Country Office, Project Analyst
2. Luana Lopes, UNDP Brazil Country Office, Project Analyst

ISPN (Instituto Sociedade, População e Natureza)

1. Fábio Vaz Ribeiro de Almeida, Executive Coordinator
2. Donald Sawyer, Sênior Advisor
3. Isabella Braga
4. João Guilherme
5. Juliana Napolitano
6. Rodrigo Noleto
7. Silvana Bastos
8. Fabiana Paula de Castro Alves
9. Werlon de Souza Fontes
10. Aurilene Timbó

Brazil SGP National Coordination (NC)

1. Isabel Figueiredo, SGP Country Program Manager
2. Renato Araújo, Technical assistant
3. Carolina Gomes, Program Assistant
4. Felipe Lenti, Carbon Sequestration Consultant

Brazil SGP National Steering Committee (NSC)

1. Isabel Schmidt, Universidade de Brasília
2. Rosenely Diegues, UNDP

Global Coordination of the GEF-UNDP Small Grants Program (SGP)

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

ANNEX 7. LIST OF DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

1. Brazil SGP Project Document (PRODOC)
2. 2014 Project Implementation Report (PIR)
3. 2015 Project Implementation Report (PIR)
4. Brazil SGP Project files from all Projects approved in OP5 in the three calls, including
 - a. Project proposals
 - b. Project Reports
5. M&E instruments
6. United Nations Development Assistance Framework Brazil (UNDAF)
7. UNDP Country Program Document Brazil (CPD)
8. UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects
9. UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results
10. GEF Evaluation Office. The ROTI Handbook: Towards enhancing the Impacts of Environmental Projects
11. UNEG. UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation
12. Lobo, Figueiredo y Andrade. 2010. Sementes lançadas, frutos colhidos, o Programa de Pequenos Projectos Ecosociais. PPP-ECOS, ISPN
13. ISPN, PPP-ECOS. 2012. Normas Fiscais, Sanitárias e Ambientais. Regularização de Agroindústrias Comunitárias de Produtos da Sociobiodiversidade.
14. PPP-ECOS, ISPN. 2011. Recomendações para boas práticas de gestão administrativa e financeira de pequenos projetos.
15. ISPN, PPP-ECOS. 2015. Guia de elaboração de pequenos projectos socioambientais para organizações de base comunitária.
16. ISPN. 2013. Memorial Annual
17. Book Series on Good Management Practices for Sustainable Use of different Cerrado and Caatinga species (Boas práticas de manejo para o extrativismo sustentável do...). 14 books covering the following species
 - a. Pequi
 - b. Barú
 - c. Mel de abelhas sem ferrão (hony from native species)
 - d. Buríti
 - e. Babaçu
 - f. Capim Dourado
 - g. Coquinho Azedo
 - h. Mangaba
 - i. Umbu
 - j. Fava d'Anta
 - k. Licuri
 - l. Jatobá
 - m. Gueroaba

ANNEX 8. UNEG CODE OF CONDUCT FOR EVALUATORS/MIDTERM REVIEW CONSULTANTS

Evaluators/Consultants:

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

MTR Consultant Agreement Form

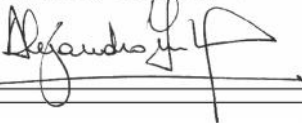
Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System:

Name of Consultant: _____ Alejandro Carlos IMBACH _____

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

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

Signed at _____ *Turrialba, Costa Rica* _____ (Place) on _____ *July 31, 2015* _____ (Date)

Signature: _____


ANNEX 9. MTR REPORT CLEARANCE FORM

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