

**Project Evaluation Series**

**11/2023**

**Terminal evaluation of the project  
“Securing Biodiversity Conservation and  
Sustainable Use in Huangshan  
Municipality”**

**Project code: GCP/CPR/049/GFF**

**Follow-up report**

Terminal evaluation of the project "Securing Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use in Huangshan Municipality" - Follow-up report					02/2024
Evaluation recommendation	Management response <b>Accepted,</b> <b>Partially accepted</b> or <b>Rejected</b>	Management plan			
		Actions to be taken, and/or comments about partial acceptance or rejection	Description of actions actually taken, or reasons for actions not taken	MAR Score	Impact of, or changes resulted from taken actions
<p><b>Recommendation 1.</b></p> <p>The sustainability plan that has been started should be finalized, with careful attention given to best practices dissemination, supporting Tier 3 and 4 NRs to improve management, sustaining and scaling up community co-management and alternative livelihoods activities, and learning from the Paradise Foundation and Green Anhui management model in Jiulongfeng PNR.</p> <p><i>Addressed to: PMO, HSAC</i></p>	<b>Accepted</b>	<p>FAO has provided feedback on the sustainability plan. The PMO will revise and finalize it.</p>	<p>The sustainability plan has been finalized.</p> <p>In April 2022, the Compilation Committee of Huangshan Municipal Office organized a study on the "Jiulongfeng NR (Nature Reserve) Model" and shared experience with other NRs.</p> <p>Following the sustainability plan, the Forest Bureau of Huangshan Municipality developed an experience exchange plan.</p>	Good	<p>The awareness and capacity of biodiversity conservation has been greatly improved in the NRs in Huangshan area.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 2.</b></p> <p>For Tier 3 NRs, continue providing support to improve their management effectiveness, using the learnings and best practices from this project.</p> <p><i>Addressed to: HMFB</i></p>	<b>Accepted</b>	<p>The municipal government consolidated the 73 NRs of Tier 1 to 4 to 21 NRs for optimized management in 2021, the capacity building and best practice adoption in these NRs will be better planned.</p> <p>There is regular budget from the public sector to support the experience sharing activities.</p>	<p>Story and material of "Jiulongfeng NR Model" was prepared.</p> <p>"Jiulongfeng NR Model" was selected as one of the 2022 Excellent Cases Collection for Biodiversity Conservation by the Ministry of Ecology and Environment and promoted national wide. It became the typical experience for other NRs in Huangshan to adapt.</p>	Good	<p>The management effectiveness of the NRs in Huangshan area has been improved. The project experience will also benefit biodiversity conservation work in other regions of China.</p>

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<p><b>Recommendation 3.</b></p> <p>For Tier 4 NRs, promote the adaptation of the community co-management approach and the Forest Chief Policy to develop a new model that empowers the community to manage the NRs and their natural resources.</p> <p><i>Addressed to: HMFB</i></p>	<b>Accepted</b>	<p>The municipal government consolidated the 73 NRs of Tier 1 to 4 to 21 NRs for optimized management in 2021, the capacity building and best practice adoption in these NRs will be better planned.</p> <p>There is regular budget from the public sector to support the experience sharing activities.</p>	<p>The training plan for other NRs with the community co-management approach and the Forest Chief Policy was developed.</p> <p>Forestry Bureau of Huangshan Municipal extended the experience of community co-management approach and the Forest Chief Policy to the 21 integrated and optimized NRs.</p>	Good	The management of the 21 NRs has been improved.
<p><b>Recommendation 4.</b></p> <p>Assess the effectiveness of the Paradise Foundation / Green Anhui entrusted management model in Jiulongfeng PNR and, if appropriate, explore opportunities to scale up and apply with other communities and forest areas and NRs with suitable conditions.</p> <p><i>Addressed to: PMO, HMFB</i></p>	<b>Accepted</b>	<p>Assessment of the effectiveness of the Paradise Foundation / Green Anhui entrusted management model will be included in the Terminal Report.</p> <p>There are national and provincial policies to encourage social societies and NGOs to participate in protected area conservation and development. There is regular budget from the public sector to provide the support.</p>	<p>Two rounds of discussions of further cooperation between forest department and Paradise Foundation/Green Anhui were held.</p> <p>In April 2022, the Compilation Committee of Huangshan Municipal Office organized a study on the "Jiulongfeng NR Model" and the experience in Jiulongfeng was further summarized and promoted.</p>	Good	NGOs are becoming more active in environment and biodiversity conservation work. Private and public partnerships are getting more popular in China.
<p><b>Recommendation 5.</b></p> <p>In future projects using an indirect execution modality, provide enhanced capacity building in the development of agreements and in the implementation of</p>	<b>Accepted</b>	FAO China Office has developed a comprehensive training package to brief the partners on FAO GEF project management, and will provide continuous	In November 2023, FAO organized comprehensive experience sharing and training sessions in the wrap-up workshop of GCP/CPR/048/GFF in Jilin. Partners of ongoing GEF	Good	National agencies showed great interest of working with FAO on GEF funded projects. About 10 proposals were developed, including

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required reporting and financial procedures. <i>Addressed to: OPIM team at FAO</i>		support to the partners during project implementation.	funded projects and potential partners for GEF 8 application participated in the training.		one with HSAC. One project with Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs was endorsed by GEF with the total budget of 20 million USD.
<b>Recommendation 6.</b> Assess the future needs in Huangshan Municipality for expert advice on biodiversity-related matters after the project ends and consider rationalizing the Project Leading Group, Biodiversity Conservation Committee, and Biodiversity Advisory Committee. <i>Addressed to: PMO, HMFB</i>	<b>Accepted</b>	Through the project, the related departments and experts have built partnership. After the project, they will continue working together on biodiversity conservation, although without the title of the Group or Committee. HSAC has applied for a new GEF 8 project. The mechanism set up by this project will continue to work for the new project if approved.	The project has improved the awareness and knowledge of biodiversity conservation of staff and officials of HSAC and NRs. They are applying it in daily work. The Committees are still functioning. The GEF 8 proposal with HSAC has submitted and might be combined with other projects in other provinces.	Good	Biodiversity conservation was mainstreamed in the work of HSAC. The expert committees continue providing technical support to all sectors involved in biodiversity conservation in Huangshan Municipality.
<b>Recommendation 7.</b> In future FAO GEF projects, if a project has a strong policy focus then the Operational Partner should be a provincial bureau (such as provincial grassland and forestry bureau). <i>Addressed to: FAO, national partners</i>	<b>Accepted</b>	FAO will follow the recommendation in designing new projects.	In the formulation of the GEF 8 funded project, a strong policy focus to strengthened partnership with Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs is considered. It has been endorsed by GEF with the total budget of 20 million USD.	Good	The terminal evaluation report and recommendations have been published. Other projects will also learn from the project experience.

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<p><b>Recommendation 8.</b></p> <p>Consider opportunities to promote the achievements, best practices and innovations of this project at the CBD COP 15 in Montreal, Canada, in December 2022. <i>Addressed to: PMO, HSAC</i></p>	<b>Partially accepted</b>	<p>Due to COVID 19, the project could not provide support to travel to Canada. FAO and the national partners will look for other opportunities to further extend the project practice and experience. There will be international events held in Huangshan in the coming years with the removal of the travel restrictions in China, e.g. Huangshan is the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, and the Global Geopark of UNESCO.</p>	<p>The plan was not implemented due to travel restriction caused by COVID 19. However, International exchange events of Huangshan World Biosphere Reserve was organized and more than 60 representatives from 17 countries including China, Spain, Austria, and the United States attended the conference on-site.</p>	Good	<p>The project impact was enlarged to benefit the international community.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 9.</b></p> <p>Explore opportunities to disseminate the achievements, best practices and innovations of this project internationally, including with preparation of materials in languages other than Chinese if necessary. <i>Addressed to: HSAC, FAO</i></p>	<b>Accepted</b>	<p>FAO website has published the project newsletter and fact sheet, so as the evaluation reports. When opportunities come, FAO will share the project experience with other countries and regions. The AI in the tourist center of Huangshan will continue sharing project knowledge to national and international tourists.</p>	<p>FAO has developed a short project promotion video and will broadcast on FAO website. The FAO GEF portfolio officer is now working in the regional office as the Operational Partnerships Specialist. She will disseminate the project experience to other countries in the region.</p> <p>Information on environment and biodiversity conservation in English is printed and being distributed in the tourist center in Huangshan.</p>	Good	<p>With growing GEF and OPIM portfolio, the project experience in China is valuable to projects in other countries. FAO is more experienced and will ensure smoother project cycle in later projects.</p> <p>The awareness and knowledge of public on environment and biodiversity conservation is greatly improved.</p>

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