Terminal evaluation of the project "Sustainable management of agrobiodiversity and vulnerable ecosystems recuperation in Peruvian Andean regions through Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems approach"

Project Evaluation Series
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Project code: GCP/PER/045/GFF
GEF ID: 9092

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Abstract

The purpose of the project was to promote the *in situ* conservation and sustainable use of globally important agrobiodiversity through the preservation of traditional agricultural systems; the integrated management of forest, water and land resources; and the maintenance of ecosystem services in 13 districts in five regions of southern Peru. The evaluation found that the project was highly relevant at the national and community levels, but it was less evident at the subnational level. The project has contributed to the establishment of an *in situ* conservation model for agrobiodiversity, with two new agrobiodiversity zones and one conservation area recognized. The project faced several challenges, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, political crises and continuous turnover of government authorities. These factors and the established implementation model affected the execution of the project. Sustainability may be threatened by a potential loss of institutional capacity and memory, and a lack of formal coordination mechanisms with public institutions and guarantees of long-term financing. Recommendations focus on consolidating initiatives to ensure the sustainability of the results. It is vital to create formal coordination mechanisms and implementation plans, and to raise awareness among new departmental authorities.

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Acknowledgements

The team in charge of the terminal evaluation of the project "Sustainable management of agrobiodiversity and vulnerable ecosystems recuperation in Peruvian Andean regions through Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems approach" (GCP/PER/045/GFF) was made up of two consultants: Warren Olding, international consultant, who acted as the main person responsible for the evaluation; and Pilar Vicentelo Euribe, national consultant and specialist in sustainable rural development, agroecology and climate change. The Evaluation Manager was Adriana Jaramillo Carvallo of the FAO Office of Evaluation and the Evaluation Supervisor was Lavinia Monforte of the FAO Office of Evaluation.

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Abbreviations

AGRO RURAL	Rural Agrarian Productive Development Programme, by its Spanish abbreviation
ANPE	National Association of Ecological Producers of Peru, by its Spanish acronym
ASPEC	Peruvian Association of Consumers and Users, by its Spanish acronym
CAP	Peruvian Agroecological Consortium, by its Spanish acronym
CLDP	Concerted Local Development Plan
EEZ	Ecological and Economic Zoning
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FPIC	free, prior and informed consent
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IGV	general sales tax, by its Spanish acronym
INIA	National Institute of Agricultural Innovation, by its Spanish acronym
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MERESE	Remuneration Mechanisms for Ecosystem Services Programme, by its Spanish acronym
MTR	mid-term review
OPIM	Operational Partners Implementation Modality
PGS	Participatory Guarantee System
PROFONANPE	Peruvian Trust Fund for National Parks and Protected Areas, by its Spanish abbreviation
PSC	project steering committee
ReSCA	Payments for Agrobiodiversity Conservation Services, by its Spanish acronym
RJA	Youth Network for Agrobiodiversity, by its Spanish acronym
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SENASA	National Agricultural Health Service of Peru, by its Spanish acronym
SERFOR	National Forestry and Wildlife Service, by its Spanish acronym
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

Executive summary

1. The project "Sustainable management of agrobiodiversity and vulnerable ecosystems recuperation in Peruvian Andean regions through Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems approach" was funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), which provided USD 9 369 864. In addition, partners committed a total of USD 88 801 739 in co-financing. It was implemented under the GEF's Operational Partners Implementation Modality (OPIM). The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) was designated as the implementing agency. In addition, Peru's Ministry of Environment was named the Executing Entity, and the Peruvian Trust Fund for National Parks and Protected Areas (PROFONANPE, by its Spanish abbreviation) was designated as the local operational partner of the project.

2. The purpose of the project was to promote the *in situ* conservation and sustainable use of globally important agrobiodiversity through: the preservation of traditional agricultural systems; the integrated management of forest, water and land resources; and the maintenance of ecosystem services in the selected Andean regions. It consisted of four components: i) integrated landscape management and agrobiodiversity conservation; ii) the development of markets for agrobiodiversity products; iii) institutional strengthening to incorporate conservation and the sustainable use of agrobiodiversity; and iv) monitoring and evaluation (M&E), as well as the dissemination of project information. The project was implemented in 13 districts located in five regions of southern Peru (Puno, Apurímac, Cusco, Huancavelica and Arequipa).

3. The objective of the evaluation was to conduct an independent assessment of the achievement of results by reviewing the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the project, as well as the factors that affected the results. This evaluation will serve to provide accountability to the GEF and to the national and regional governments. It will also serve to identify lessons learned and recommendations that will guide the closure of the project and the transfer and sustainability of the results achieved.

4. The evaluation considered the four components of the project, spanning from the start of project implementation in September 2018 to the end of data collection in November 2023. In terms of geographic coverage, the evaluation considered all stakeholders at the national level and in the five regions where the project was implemented.

5. The evaluation used a formative and participatory approach. This was based on stakeholder analysis and the project's theory of change, with a focus on identifying outcomes and lessons learned. The methods for data collection and analysis were mainly qualitative. Data collection was carried out through a desk review, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and on-site observation. The Evaluation Team conducted more than 60 interviews and focus group discussions, as well as field visits in four out of the five project intervention departments. The analysis was developed based on the evaluation criteria, identifying patterns that were validated and triangulated between the information sources, and the expert judgment of the Evaluation Team. The assessment of the results was also based on the quantitative analysis of data on the progress of indicators in the five departments, which was validated by key counterparts.

6. The project was highly relevant to national policies, strategies and plans, as well as in terms of international priorities on the conservation and protection of genetic resources, the restoration of ecosystems and the promotion of rural development. Also, the recovery of

the ancestral agricultural system practiced in the area is very relevant for the participating communities because it contributes to the recovery, conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity and the landscape, not only as a response to food security but also as an opportunity to rediscover the Andean worldview. At the subnational level, the relevance of the project was less evident due to the challenges faced in constantly having to raise awareness among local government officials regarding the benefits of agrobiodiversity due to the high turnover of key personnel.

7. The synergies established at the national level demonstrated that, by bringing together different specialized agencies, it is possible to advance in relevant activities such as Life Plans (*Planes de Vida*). The project could have been further strengthened if formal coordination mechanisms had been established between the Ministry of Environment and agencies or other programmes of the Peruvian State, as well as synergies with other projects financed by international donors and the GEF. This would have contributed to taking advantage of opportunities to co-finance activities, training and publications, while reducing the risk of duplication of resources and stimulating exchanges on environmental information, lessons learned and good practices, among others.

8. The project has contributed to the establishment of an *in situ* conservation model for agrobiodiversity where producer families receive direct benefits from this practice. Two new agrobiodiversity zones and one conservation area were recognized. This represents an important step towards the recognition of global environmental services provided by family farming and is a direct contribution to initiatives prioritized by the Ministry of Environment. Therefore, it can be concluded that the GEF funds were used to promote an innovative approach that not only recognizes Peru as one of the most mega agrobiodiverse countries in the world but also one of the most important countries for the *in situ* conservation of agrobiodiversity (GEF, 2017a, 2018). However, having four objectives – two environmental and two developmental – was ambitious for a five-year project with a budget of only USD 9 230 000 and in an intervention area with geographic, environmental and political risks.

9. By September 2023, almost all funds had been spent, with some important activities still to be completed in the closing phase. This involved the approval and implementation of restoration plans and progress in various restoration and reforestation activities, as well as the agroecological certification of agrobiodiversity products. The project faced several external challenges, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, political crises and the continuous turnover of government authorities. These factors and the established implementation model affected the execution of the project.

10. The political, institutional and financial risks are substantial and may threaten the sustainability of results since the project does not have a clear exit strategy. Sustainability may be threatened by the potential loss of capacity and institutional memory. This is due to turnover in regional and local governments and the lack of formal coordination mechanisms with key public institutions to sustain the results achieved in the three components and guarantees of long-term financing. Therefore, it is considered that the analysis of the technical and financial viability of the closure plan is important for the sustainability of the results achieved.

Recommendations and lessons learned

For the execution of the project in the closing phase

Recommendation 1. For PROFONANPE, the Ministry of Environment and FAO: the implementing agencies should carry out an update of the closure plan and exit strategy. This should be flexible and coordinated, in which the technical and financial feasibility of the actions are analysed and the mechanisms to ensure the sustainability of the results achieved are determined.

Recommendation 2. For the Ministry of Environment, the project steering committee (PSC), the Project Management Unit and FAO: the extension of the project should be oriented towards the consolidation of initiatives to sustain the results achieved (Numbers 1.1 and 2 of the results matrix). It is vital to create formal coordination mechanisms and implementation plans with the National Institute of Agricultural Innovation (INIA, by its Spanish acronym), the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion, the Social Development Cooperation Fund, the Rural Agrarian Productive Development Programme (AGRO RURAL, by its Spanish abbreviation) of the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation, the National Forestry and Wildlife Service (SERFOR, by its Spanish acronym), and the Peruvian Agroecological Consortium (CAP, by its Spanish acronym) (see suggestions for implementing this recommendation in Section 4.2).

Recommendation 3. For the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation, the relevant regional governments, the Project Management Unit and FAO: raise awareness among the new authorities in the Huancavelica, Apurímac and Cusco Departments on: i) the official recognition of the agrobiodiversity zones established in the Apurímac and Cusco Departments, which is in the final approval process; and ii) the importance of prioritizing the financing of at least one ecological public investment project registered in the multiannual investment programme in the Huancavelica, Apurímac and Cusco Departments as part of the strategy of the Ministry of Environment to promote the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity, the landscape, and its ecosystem services starting in 2024 when the GEF project is expected to close (Recommendation 2) (see suggestions for implementing this recommendation in Section 4.2).

For future similar GEF projects

Recommendation 4. For the Ministry of Environment and FAO: FAO Peru and the Ministry of Environment, as the focal point of the GEF, should discuss how to improve the information management of projects financed by the GEF and implemented by United Nations agencies – such as FAO, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme – that have closed since 2022, are currently in execution, or are in the process of being negotiated (see details on this recommendation in Section 4.2).

Recommendation 5. For the GEF Coordination Unit and FAO: it is recommended that the implementation modality be flexible enough to meet the needs and capacities of the executing partner.

Recommendation 6. For the PSC and FAO: the design of new projects in high Andean areas should consider a greater investment of financial and human resources due to the high logistical cost of their implementation. Also, it should explicitly include a gender approach to ensure that Indigenous women's groups can take on important roles as facilitators and extension workers.

Lessons learned

Lesson learned 1. The participation of *Yachachiqs* is a good practice because they live in the communities and can therefore continuously monitor project activities with the partners. In addition, when the project ends, the communities are left with lessons learned, skills and the memory of the activities implemented.

Lesson learned 2. The Life Plans, applying the Ministry of Culture's guide, encourage community mobilization in a participatory and inclusive manner. This approach is a good practice because it promotes the establishment of new associations that strengthen sociocultural, environmental, physical and economic capital, integrating various dimensions of community life. In addition, it offers the opportunity for local communities to identify and prioritize crops and varieties of agrobiodiversity.

Lesson learned 3. Seed banks represent a good practice to strengthen resilience and adaptation at a low cost, as well as to stimulate the exchange of seeds under protocols controlled by conservation committees. In addition, the seed bank is based on the same concept as the *colca* (family seed store) that the Incas used to mitigate climate variability.

Lesson learned 4. The project shows that participatory dialogue with communities is crucial to identify the local governance system and areas of conflict over communal lands. This is a good practice to strengthen the effectiveness and sustainability of restoration and local development activities, among others.

Lesson learned 5. The project shows that the marketing of certified organic agrobiodiversity products should prioritize local and regional markets and fairs before the products are included in value chains or sold in capital markets (e.g. the Lima market) in order to strengthen local marketing capacities. In addition, the sale of these products should be managed in coordination with key partners to ensure compliance with legal norms and procedures.

Lesson learned 6. The project shows that a good approach to gender and inclusion recognizes, values and actively involves women, young people, people with disabilities and older people who are knowledge holders. This approach achieves a dynamic that goes beyond respecting rights and highlights the strengths and opportunities that these groups have within the community and the commonwealth.

Executive summary table 1. The GEF evaluation criteria rating table

The GEF criteria/subcriteria	Rating	Summary comments
A. Results (relevance, coherence, effectiveness and progress towards impact, efficiency)	**MS**	
A1. Relevance	**MS**	Relevance is high at the national and grassroots levels, as is the alignment with the GEF and FAO objectives and priorities. However, it is less evident at the subnational level, where it may be compromised by high staff turnover, which then inhibits the continuity of processes initiated during the project.
A2. Coherence	**MS**	The coherence established with national institutions, such as SERFOR, the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion, the Ministry of Culture, and with some non-governmental institutions, is evident. However, there was a missed opportunity to strengthen formal coordination mechanisms with entities such as AGRO RURAL or the National Agricultural Health Service of Peru (SENASA), as well as to strengthen synergies with other GEF projects.
A3. Effectiveness	**MS**	Outcome 1.1 and Outcome 3 were largely achieved, while Outcome 1.2 and Outcome 2 were only partially achieved. In terms of Outcome 1.2, forest restoration plans have yet to be approved and implemented, while in the case of Outcome 2, value chain promotion was not profitable, and managing the direct sales of agrobiodiversity products in Lima proved to be very costly. However, in 2023, the project demonstrated that direct sales at regional fairs are profitable and generate immediate income for families. The additionality of the project is high due to the establishment of two agrobiodiversity zones and a private conservation area, together with two other new agrobiodiversity zones (Apurímac and Cusco) which, as of 2024, are in the final approval process.
A4. Efficiency	**MS**	The co-financing realized, as of September 2023, reached 82 percent of the amount committed and has facilitated the operations of the project. The efficiency analysis shows that socioenvironmental activities can generate good value for money by providing global environmental benefits associated with agrobiodiversity and landscapes. In contrast, the rate of return on the project's investment in the economic development of agrobiodiversity has been low.
B. Sustainability (financial, sociopolitical, institutional and governance, environmental dimensions, including sustainability risks)	**MU**	The project still has some key activities to complete and has not had the time to ensure adequate transfer of its results to state and non-state actors. This situation has been complicated by the change of authorities in subnational governments. In this scenario, there are important risks, and the project needs to define a clear exit strategy to ensure the continuity of key activities and the sustainability of the results achieved.

The GEF criteria/subcriteria	Rating	Summary comments
C. Implementation	**MS**	The OPIM and governance structure involved many diverse actors in operational, technical and decision-making roles. The re-engineering of the project carried out by the national leadership team in 2021 facilitated the development of useful tools to provide a more structured monitoring of the technical and financial execution of the project. Although the project adequately identified the risks, their lack of integration into planning and monitoring activities resulted in a failure to mitigate their impact.
D. Execution	**MU**	The PSC performed its administrative functions in accordance with the project document. The Ministry of Environment, as the Executing Entity, was able to play a more proactive role in stimulating collaboration mechanisms. At the Project Management Unit level, the quality of its work was satisfactory and a strong commitment of staff to support the project partners was observed. However, execution was negatively affected by the increase in administrative and operational processes, the frequent turnover at all government levels, and the lack of adequate project monitoring.
M&E plan	**MU**	The monitoring plan focused on the quantitative monitoring of activity and product indicators. The project generated frequent progress reports and published a wide range of informative communications on agrobiodiversity and its landscape. However, by not including qualitative indicators to measure expected changes, a micro data management approach was followed.
Implementation of M&E system	**MU**	The M&E system had structural difficulties in managing data to track the level of achievement of results, generate lessons learned and strengthen informed decision-making. A lack of adequate monitoring of risks resulted in a failure to introduce appropriate and timely measures.
Overall project rating	**MS**	

Note: * Highly Satisfactory (HS); Satisfactory (S); Moderately Satisfactory (MS); Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU); Unsatisfactory (U); Highly Unsatisfactory (HU). Sustainability: Highly Likely (HL); Likely (L); Moderately Likely (ML); Moderately Unlikely (MU); Unlikely (U); Highly Unlikely (HU); Unable to assess (UA).

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

1. This document corresponds to the terminal evaluation report of the project: Sustainable management of agrobiodiversity and vulnerable ecosystems recuperation in Peruvian Andean regions through Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems approach. The total budget assigned to the project was USD 88 801 739, of which USD 9 369 864 was financed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and USD 79 431 874 was provided through co-financing, including USD 65 775 548 in cash and the rest in kind.

2. The GEF designated the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) as the implementing agency, the Ministry of Environment as the national project Executing Entity, and the Peruvian Trust Fund for National Parks and Protected Areas (PROFONANPE, by its Spanish abbreviation) as the project's operational partner. In addition, the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation was considered an important partner, in particular: the General Directorate of Agrarian Promotion; the General Directorate of Agrarian Environmental Affairs through the Rural Agrarian Productive Development Programme (AGRO RURAL, by its Spanish abbreviation); and its affiliated institutions such as the National Institute of Agricultural Innovation (INIA, by its Spanish acronym) and the National Forestry and Wildlife Service (SERFOR, by its Spanish acronym). Box 1 summarizes the basic details of the project.

Box 1. Basic project information

The GEF project ID number: 9092
FAO project code: GCP/PER/045/GFF
The GEF operational focal point in Peru: Ministry of Environment
Implementing agency: FAO
Executing Entity: Ministry of Environment
Operational partner: PROFONANPE
Key partners: General Directorate of Agrarian Promotion and General Directorate of Agrarian Environmental Affairs (Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation)
The GEF-6 focal areas: Biodiversity 3 Programme 7, Biodiversity 4 Programme 9, Land Degradation 3 Programme 4, and Sustainable Forest Management 3 Programme 8
FAO operational strategy/programme: Strategic Objective 1 (contribute to the eradication of hunger and food insecurity), and Strategic Objective 2 (sustainably increase the provision of goods and services from agriculture, livestock, forestry and fisheries)
FAO regional outcome/priority areas: family farming and territorial development in rural areas
Country Programming Framework outcome (Peru): Strategic Objective 2 (make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable)
The GEF CEO approval date: 2 January 2018
Total budget: USD 88 801 739
The GEF budget: USD 9 369 864
Co-financing budget: USD 79 431 874
Project implementation start date: 27 September 2018
Project completion date: 30 June 2024
Geographic location: Huancavelica, Apurímac, Cusco, Puno and Arequipa Regions
Date of the final mid-term review (MTR): May 2021

3. The main users of this report are outlined in the following points.

   i. **The Government of Peru**, in particular the members of the project steering committee (PSC): this includes the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation (General Directorate of Agrarian Promotion and General Directorate of Agrarian Environmental Affairs) as responsible for the AGRO RURAL programme, and other related public entities such as INIA, SERFOR and the National Agrarian Health Service of Peru (SENASA, by its Spanish acronym).

   ii. **The subnational governments of Peru:** in particular, this involves the regional governments of Huancavelica, Cusco, Apurímac, Puno and Arequipa, as well as the local governments of the 13 districts of these departments that participated directly in the project.

   iii. **Both PROFONANPE and the Project Management Unit** are responsible for managing the budget and implementing the project, respectively, in order to deliver the expected outputs and outcomes on time and with satisfactory quality.

   iv. **FAO**, as the entity responsible for overseeing the implementation of the project in accordance with the GEF rules: this involves financial and technical oversight in accordance with the rules of the Operational Partners Implementation Modality (OPIM). Other stakeholders within FAO are: the GEF Coordination Unit based at FAO headquarters; the FAO Office of Evaluation, which is responsible for this evaluation; the FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (Santiago, Chile); and FAO Peru in Lima.

   v. **Non-governmental stakeholders** that have participated directly in the implementation of the project: this includes the Andean Ecosystems Association; the Association for Nature and Sustainable Development; the Specialized Association for Sustainable Development; the Peruvian Association of Consumers and Users (ASPEC, by its Spanish acronym); and the National Association of Ecological Producers of Peru (ANPE, by its Spanish acronym), among others.

   vi. **The project partners** that participated in the actions carried out within the 13 intervention areas: in particular, this involves the peasant communities and their producer associations.

1.2 Theory of change

4. The theory of change proposed in the project document was reviewed by the team during the initial phase. Some weaknesses were identified in its construction:

   i. The theory of change did not include the barriers and threats mentioned in the project document that could affect the achievement of the expected results.

   ii. The theory of change did not distinguish between immediate results, which were to be achieved during the life of the project, and the expected final results that would meet the project objectives. Additionally, it is noted that the indicators for each expected result established in the project document were not mentioned in the theory of change. For example, for Outcome 1.1, the indicator of 312 046 ha of landscapes under conservation and sustainable use, of which 15 970 produce at least 40 native crops benefiting 7 760 families in 58 communities, is not mentioned.

iii. The theory of change did not mention the cross-cutting assumptions, risks and priorities that were applicable during and after the project implementation phase to ensure the results are achieved through participatory and inclusive approaches.

iv. The monitoring and evaluation (M&E) function seems isolated in the theory of change rather than being an important tool to guide decision-making throughout the process, from the assessment of barriers at the beginning of implementation to the closure and post-closure phases.

5. Based on these findings, the Evaluation Team proceeded to reconstruct the theory of change in the project document. This was done in accordance with the procedures recommended by the GEF and FAO to develop a results-based theory of change. First, the desired impact of the project was determined, that is, the project objectives with their expected global environmental benefits. Then, the following were defined: i) the chain of final and immediate results expected to achieve the desired impacts at the end of the project and post closure; ii) the barriers and responses identified in the project document; and iii) the cross-cutting assumptions, risks and priorities of the project, emphasizing the importance of risk management and M&E throughout execution in order to achieve the expected immediate and final results. The proposed theory of change was then shared with the Project Management Unit for review and comments (see Appendix 1). It is worth mentioning that the revised theory of change has been used to guide the preparation of this report, in particular, the sections on effectiveness, conclusions and lessons learned.

2. Methodology

2.1 Scope and objectives of the evaluation

6. According to the terms of reference, the terminal evaluation has two main purposes: i) it will serve to provide feedback to the GEF and to national and regional governments; and ii) it will identify lessons learned, assessing the progress towards the achievement of results in terms of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, progress towards impact and sustainability. In this regard, lessons learned will be identified to sustain and expand the results, and to give continuity to the processes initiated by the project. In addition, the terminal evaluation should consider "the factors that contributed to and/or limited the achievement of the results, the reasons and circumstances of the results achieved and not achieved, as well as the good practices of the project." The evaluation findings, based on the lessons learned, conclusions and recommendations will provide evidence for the design and implementation of new projects, seeking to improve FAO's operational procedures and mechanisms, with an emphasis on the implementation modality. In addition, the findings will guide the closure of the project and facilitate the transfer and sustainability of the results achieved.

7. The scope of the terminal evaluation considered all the project actions, from its start date on 27 September 2018 to the closing of its technical activities on 27 September 2023.[1] In terms of geographical coverage, it included all parties affected by the project, both at the national level and in the five departments where it was implemented.

2.2 Methodology

8. The terminal evaluation was carried out within the framework of the norms and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG, 2005) and the specific guidelines of FAO (FAO, 2013, 2019) and the GEF (GEF, 2012, 2019) with respect to gender equality, the rights of Indigenous Peoples, and environmental and social safeguards. The Evaluation Team was composed of an international consultant, specialized in sustainable and resilient rural development (leader of the terminal evaluation), and a national consultant specialized in agroecology. The methodology was implemented in three phases.

9. In the initial phase, a review of key documents and a participatory analysis were carried out with the main stakeholders (Ministry of Environment, Project Management Unit and FAO). This identified a broad and inclusive sample of local actors and partners that could participate in the evaluation.

    i. **Priority actors** to be interviewed in person or remotely, or to participate in a focus group discussion: governmental or non-governmental actors directly involved in decision-making, service delivery, training, project monitoring and planning; people from the 72 partner communities participating in the project; and people responsible for applying new knowledge and implementing practices promoted by the project.

[1] This corresponds to the last day of fieldwork during the Evaluation Team's field phase (see Appendix 1).

ii. **Desirable actors** to be interviewed: this is because they have temporarily participated in the project, or because they are indirect beneficiaries.

iii. **Third-party actors** to be interviewed: this is because they are active in the environment and agriculture sectors.

10. Also, during the initial phase, the evaluation matrix was developed. This was the main tool to guide the planned interviews and focus group discussions. As can be seen in Appendix 4, the matrix aims to structure the key questions for the terminal evaluation in accordance with the terms of reference. Based on the stakeholder analysis and the evaluation matrix, the work agenda for the field phase was defined. Appendix 5 shows that, in the departments considered for the field visits, the sample of actors included a high percentage of participants from vulnerable groups, such as women and youth.

11. The field phase was conducted from 11 September 2023 to 10 October 2023. The Evaluation Team conducted more than 60 interviews and focus group discussions with the participation of between 5 and 20 people in 7 of the 13 intervention areas in the Puno, Huancavelica, Apurímac and Cusco Departments. In addition, due to the decision to extend the data collection phase until 10 October 2023, it was possible to interview the project staff of Atiquipa (Arequipa) and the vast majority of stakeholders based in Lima. All interviews were conducted based on the evaluation matrix (see Appendix 4). The responses were recorded through digital or paper notes, indicating the name of the person interviewed, the group or organization in which they participate and the place where the interview was conducted. It is important to note that the Evaluation Team conducted all interviews and focus group discussions in accordance with the United Nations Evaluation Group standards to protect the anonymity of the interviewees and their responses. In the Indigenous Peoples' communities, the FAO manual on free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) was used and permission was sought before taking images of partners and their activities.

12. The analysis phase was carried out from October to November 2023. To support this analysis, a series of tables were prepared that measured the quantitative progress of the project in each of the five departments visited (see Appendix 1). All findings from this evaluation have been subject to triangulation based on the analysis of: i) documents and secondary data; ii) information and primary data collected in the interviews; iii) field inspections, and taking photographs and making videos to include in a selection of images of the evidence collected; and iv) the expert judgement of the evaluators.

2.3 Limitations

13. The main limitations of the terminal evaluation were the following:

i. Difficulties in sticking to the interview schedule: there were delays and some field interviews had to be cancelled or rescheduled due to the large geographic areas in the departments visited.

ii. Difficulties in visiting some of the planned sites: some of the scheduled visits to observe restoration activities had to be postponed due to weather conditions. In Cusco, for example, visits to a family home, a community centre, and a dairy farm belonging to the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion were rescheduled.

iii. There was limited availability of some stakeholders for interviews, in particular representatives of the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation, SENASA, and the Natural Resources Manager in Arequipa, who was replaced during project implementation. Even so, the fieldwork covered the four departments and almost all key stakeholders at the national level, complying with the evaluation matrix (see Appendix 4).

2.4 Structure of the report

14. The evaluation findings have been presented in accordance with the GEF evaluation criteria and format, which require ratings (see Appendix 3). Section 3 presents the evaluation findings with an analysis of the results achieved by the project compared to the results expected in the project document (Subsections 3.1 to 3.4). The following sections present the project execution and implementation (Subsection 3.6), the M&E system (Subsection 3.7) and the sustainability of the project (Subsection 3.8). Finally, Section 4 presents the conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned.

3. Findings

3.1 Relevance

To what extent does the project respond to the global, national and local needs, and the policies and priorities of partners, institutions and beneficiaries?

Finding 1. The project is highly relevant to national priorities because it aligns with a wide range of national legislation related to rural land use planning, family farming and environmental protection. The project responds to the needs and aspirations of the partners (participating communities) to recover an ingenious agricultural system that has been used and sustained for thousands of years. This is due to its focus on diversity, and because it is strengthened by the exchange of seeds. The relevance of the project is less evident in subnational governments. This is due to the high turnover of key personnel, resulting in a lack of awareness of the benefits of agrobiodiversity and its landscape to ensure food and nutrition security and sovereignty, address the effects of climate variability and change, and conserve high Andean and coastal ecosystem services.

Finding 2. The project is aligned with and implements strategies that contribute to the objectives of the GEF-6: Biodiversity 3 Programme 7, Biodiversity 4 Programme 9, Land Degradation 3 Programme 4 and Sustainable Forest Management 3 Programme 8. The project remains aligned with the FAO Strategic Framework 2022–2031 (FAO, 2021) and Regional Initiative 2 of FAO's results and priorities for the Latin American and the Caribbean region (FAO, 2020).

15. An examination of the current legislative framework, at the level of international agreements and national laws with their approved regulations, confirms that the three main components of the project (Components 1 to 3) are highly relevant to the Government of Peru. The analysis carried out by the Evaluation Team has identified three strategic areas addressed by the project: biological diversity, seeds and family farming; and rural land use planning. At the subnational government level, it was determined that regional and local governments are obliged to integrate national policies into their Concerted Regional Development Plan (CRDP) and Concerted Local Development Plan (CLDP), respectively, but that their prioritization is not mandatory. In addition, it was observed that regional and local governments have experienced a high turnover of key personnel, which encourages decision makers to prioritize rapid and visible actions during their mandate, such as the promotion of technological packages, the response to food security and the construction of works to reduce the impact of prolonged droughts. As a result, the project has faced many difficulties in obtaining financing from public investment projects dedicated to expanding the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity and the rehabilitation of ecosystem services (Output 3.2 of the project document).

16. It was identified that the implementation of existing legislation has not facilitated the protection, recovery, conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity and its landscapes. In particular, interviews and field observations confirm an inadequate application of Law No. 27651 (President of the Congress of the Republic, 2002) and its related regulations, approved by Supreme Decree No. 045-10-PCM, on the formalization and promotion of small-scale mining and artisanal mining (Presidency of the Council of Ministers, 2010). In this case, an adequate mechanism has not been established to stop the expansion of informal mining in the project intervention areas, despite the issuance of Legislative Decree No. 1101 (President of the Republic, 2012), which establishes the

strengthening of environmental oversight as a mechanism to combat illegal mining. This law integrates mining initiatives proposed by the GEF and carried out by the Ministry of Environment, in coordination with the Ministry of Energy and Mines, which is the governing body in this area. In this regard, it is necessary to strengthen and make visible the permanent presence of the entities involved, both at the departmental and local level, to stop the expansion of informal mining in the intervention areas. In fact, it was found that members of the producer associations supported by the project also work in informal mining activities, which has contributed to increasing the vulnerability of the other members. Figure 1 shows examples of the expansion of informal mining in the districts where the project was implemented in Apurímac.

Figure 1. Expansion of informal mining in the Chiara District

17. Other legislation that does not facilitate the prioritization of agrobiodiversity in regional and local governments includes the following.

    i. Law No. 27783, the Decentralization Law (Congress of the Republic, 2002): this law requires greater emphasis on interdepartmental coordination and the creation of associations or other alliances that would allow for the promotion of, for example, the exchange of seeds (seed routes), interdepartmental training on the management of hydrographic basins or sub-basins, and Regional Environmental Information Systems, among others.

    ii. The lack of adequate coordination between the Water Resources Law, Law No. 29338 (President of the Republic, 2009), and the Law on Mechanisms for Compensation for Ecosystem Services, Law No. 30215 (Ministry of Environment, 2016): the Evaluation Team observed that the National Water Authority, as the governing body of the National Water Resources Management System, was not integrated as an important actor in the design of the project.

    iii. Law No. 29196 (Congress of the Republic, 2008): this law promotes organic farming, but it is not enforced. There is a National Plan for Organic Production 2021–2030 (President of the Republic, 2021), but there is no public investment allocated for its implementation at the national, regional or local level. Consequently, agencies attached to the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation, such as SENASA, are not promoting markets for agroecological products.

18. At the level of partners in the participating communities, it was determined that the project is highly relevant because it responds to the needs of farm families to access crucial services that allow them to continue conserving agrobiodiversity and their landscape in accordance with their ancestral practices. These are based on raising crops and domestic animals under local grazing protocols and crop rotation systems on terraces that manage the ecological floors of the landscape (*laymi* in Quechua).

19. The practice of *laymi* was observed to extend throughout the mountains from Huancavelica to Puno, confirming the use of an ingenious system of large-scale and interconnected global agricultural heritage through the expansion of seed routes or paths (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Examples of the *laymi* system in the Laria and Chiara Districts

20. The project also responded to the specific needs of some vulnerable groups. For female farmers, the project values and integrates their knowledge, practices and roles in the conservation of agrobiodiversity, reinforces their crop and variety preferences in terms of taste, utility, diet, rituals and so on, and strengthens female solidarity. It also responds to the needs of young people to have access to information, resources and training, participate in decision-making, and assume important roles in the community as communicators or *Yachachiqs* to obtain training that allows them to take on leadership roles.

To what extent are the project's approach, strategy and results in line with and have contributed to the GEF and FAO priorities?

21. The project has been found to directly contribute to the achievement of the following GEF-6 focal area objectives.

i. **Biodiversity Objective 3, Programme 7.** Sustainable use of genetic resources (Biodiversity 3, Programme 7): the project has participated in the Payments for Agrobiodiversity Conservation Services (ReSCA, by its Spanish acronym) mechanism so that 1 769 families can recover at least 11 crops per department and grow a total of 220 cultivars. In addition, 28 cultivars have been registered in the Andean traditional knowledge research booklets. Also, 14 Farmer Field Schools and 44 seed banks have been established or improved with the aim of conserving and promoting the sustainable use of a wide range of agrobiodiversity products, including their wild relatives and medicinal plants (see Table 1 in Appendix 1).

ii. **Biodiversity Objective 4, Programme 9.** Manage the human-biodiversity interface (Biodiversity 4, Programme 9): the project supported 21 population centres with the development of Life Plans that guided the integration of agrobiodiversity into the CLDPs of the 13 local governments participating in the project. It also supported the recognition of new agrobiodiversity zones.

iii. **Land Degradation Objective 3, Programme 4.** Scale up sustainable land management through a landscape approach (Land Degradation 3, Programme 4): in populated centres, the project contributed to the establishment of over 2 000 ha of grassland and wetland enclosures in highland areas over 4 000 m, established five community tree nurseries and restored strategic areas with native trees.

iv. **Sustainable Forest Management Objective 3, Programme 8.** Integrate sustainable forest management into landscape recovery (Sustainable Forest Management 3, Programme 8): for the SERFOR land management and cadastre department, the project provided a basic cartography study, a forestry study and a study of current land use in order to identify priority microzones for the conservation of agrobiodiversity and the restoration of high Andean and coastal ecosystems.

v. **Climate Change Objective 2, Programme 4.** Promote the conservation and enhancement of carbon stocks in forests and other land uses, and support climate-smart agriculture (Climate Change 2, Programme 4): this objective is not included in the project document. However, it corresponds directly to Output 1.1.3, which proposes the completion of a study on ecological and hydrological services that integrates carbon sequestration.

22. Regarding the compatibility of the project with FAO country-level priorities, strategies and programming, the Evaluation Team determined that it is consistent with the following.

i. **FAO Strategic Frameworks for 2018–2021 and 2022–2031:** in the case of the first, the project is consistent with Output 2.1.1 of Specific Objective 1, which included the dissemination of innovative practices for sustainable agricultural production. As for the second, the project contributes to achieving the four betters (better production, better nutrition, better environment and better life) needed to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and directly supports some of the 20 Programme Priority Areas, such as: Area 1 (innovation for sustainable agriculture production); Area 4 (equitable access to resources for small producers); Area 5 (digital agriculture); Area 11 (agrifood systems that mitigate the effects of climate change and are adapted to it); Area 13 (biodiversity and ecosystem services for food and agriculture); and Area 14 (gender equality and empowerment of rural women).

ii. **FAO results and priorities in the Latin America and Caribbean region** (FAO, 2020) since Component 2 of the project is consistent with Regional Initiative 2: hand-in-hand towards prosperous and inclusive rural societies.

iii. The **Country Programming Framework** developed by FAO Peru for the period of 2018 to 2021 (FAO, 2018), specifically Government Priority 2 (productive development, conservation and sustainable use of natural resources and biodiversity), which stipulates that "FAO will contribute to the management of agrobiodiversity and the recovery of vulnerable ecosystems in Andean regions by applying the GIAHS [Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems] approach" (ibid., p. 5).

23. Finally, the Evaluation Team found that the project has made an important contribution to several SDGs, which (in order of importance) are the following:

i. **SDG 15** Target 15.1. By 2030, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services. Target 15.5. Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt biodiversity loss, and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species. In this regard, the project also supported the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets (CBD, 1992). In particular, this involved: Target 1 awareness of the value of biodiversity; Target 2 integration of biodiversity into national and local development processes; Target 7 sustainable management of agriculture, forestry and aquaculture; Target 13 safeguarding genetic diversity; and Target 14 ecosystem restoration.

ii. **SDG 1** Target 1.3. By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technologies and financial services. Target 1.4. By 2030, increase the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations, and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extremes and economic, social and environmental disasters.

iii. **SDG 2** Target 2.4. By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, which maintain ecosystems and strengthen adaptive capacity to the impacts of climate variability and change.

iv. **SDG 13** Target 13.5. Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries. Target 13.b. Promote mechanisms to enhance capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and Small Island Developing States, including a focus on women, youth, and local and marginalized communities.

3.2 Coherence

To what extent does the project complement other relevant interventions in the country? Have other actors – such as civil society, rural communities or the private sector – participated in the design or implementation of the project?

Finding 3. At the national level, synergies were established with key institutions, such as SERFOR, and with other institutions, such as the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion and the Ministry of Culture, which facilitated training sessions and activities, including the preparation of Life Plans. However, formal coordination mechanisms were lacking between the Ministry of Environment and institutions such as INIA (as an organization), AGRO RURAL, SENASA and CAP to support the management of key project activities like the creation of the national registry of recovered cultivars and the application of agroecological certification. It was also identified that the project failed to establish synergies with some relevant interventions financed by international donors and the GEF.

24. The project document identified a number of grassroots initiatives promoted by the national government that offered "excellent opportunities for concrete collaboration, using the GEF resources in an incremental manner to ensure that [...] the maintenance and promotion of traditional agrobiodiversity production systems are integrated and complement the technical approaches envisaged in the grassroots investments" (p. 67). At the national level, the Evaluation Team identified that the project has established synergies with the following entities and programmes of the Peruvian State and the non-governmental sector.

i. The **Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation**, specifically with its related institutions: i) INIA (experimental stations), which has supported the implementation of activities such as ReSCA, the Farmer Field Schools and cultivar characterization in accordance with its manual for the genotypic characterization of genetic resources (Biondi *et al*., 2021), among others; and ii) SERFOR, which has supported zoning and microzoning with a specific focus on the conservation of agrobiodiversity and the restoration of high Andean and coastal ecosystems, in line with the legal and methodological framework stipulated in Article 7 of Supreme Decree No. 087-2004-PCM (President of the Republic, 2004). However, no synergies were identified with AGRO RURAL, which supports family farming, or with SENASA in the application of the Participatory Guarantee System (PGS).

ii. The **Ministry of Social Development and Social Inclusion**, which, through its National Tambos Programme (Government of the Republic of Peru, 2015), offered its multiservice platform to conduct workshops and training activities related to the project. This facilitated access to computers and the internet and provided logistical support. Within the framework of this evaluation, the Ministry of Development and

Social Inclusion facilitated access to its classrooms in the villages of Tambos de Cachin (Lares District, Cusco Department) and Virgen del Tambo (Apurímac Department).

iii. The **Ministry of Culture**, which, through its Directorate of Indigenous Policies and Intercultural Resources Centre and within the framework of the project, supported the development of Life Plans through a participatory and inclusive intercultural approach.

iv. The **ASPEC**, which, through its Kusikuy initiative, has supported agrobiodiversity producers in making their products known to end consumers and facilitating their online purchase in Lima through the Kusikuy website.

v. The **ANPE**, which guided the project on the development of certified and branded agrobiodiversity products based on lessons learned with its own brand: *Frutos de la Tierra* (Fruits of the Earth) (Zurita and Carrasco, 2013). In addition, it promoted the management of short marketing channels.

vi. The **Specialized Association for Sustainable Development**, which supported INIA in recognizing the Cotahuasi and Andahuaylas agrobiodiversity zones in 2023 and developing their management plans, as well as developing the management plan for the Laria agrobiodiversity zone (see Table 4 in Appendix 1).

vii. The **Association for Nature and Sustainable Development**, which contributed to the establishment and implementation of ten family seed banks, a communal bank in Cachin and a communal bank in Pampacorral (Cusco). It also contributed to the ongoing process of recognizing the agrobiodiversity zone in the Lares District of Cusco (see Table 4 in Appendix 1).

viii. The **Andean Ecosystems Association**, which contributed to landscape restoration actions in the Lares District, Cusco.

ix. The **Aymara Suma Yapu Association**, which contributed to the establishment of seed banks in the Acora District, Puno.

25. However, the lack of formal coordination mechanisms to support the management of key project activities has been identified. The establishment of an agreement between the Ministry of Environment and institutions attached to the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation has been difficult, mainly due to the high staff turnover rate. Despite a collaboration agreement with INIA through working groups established in 2019 to collaborate on activities such as the identification of agrobiodiversity zones and the implementation of Farmer Field Schools, a specific agreement has not been formalized between the Ministry of Environment and INIA to consolidate the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity in the five participating departments. In addition, there is no agreement between the Ministry of Environment and SENASA to guide the agroecological certification process for marketable agrobiodiversity products.

26. Furthermore, a lack of formal synergies with the National Family Farming Strategy was identified. Through the General Directorate of Biological Diversity of the Ministry of Environment, the Project Management Unit periodically reports to the AGRO RURAL technical secretariat on the fulfilment of the goals of the National Family Farming Plan and participates in the Multisectoral Commission on Family Farming. Greater linkage could have

been achieved if ad hoc synergies had been established with the following related initiatives of the National Family Farming Strategy.

i. The AGRO RURAL programme, through an interinstitutional commission, has supported rural agricultural development since 2015.

ii. Since 2017, the Sierra Azul Fund has financed up to 60 percent of studies and investments submitted through regional and local governments. These aimed at restoring landscapes (forests, grasslands, wetlands and *amunas*) and building small reservoirs (*qochas*), as well as filtering ditches and irrigation systems in rural areas of six departments, including Huancavelica and Apurímac (Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation-Sierra Azul Perú, 2021).

iii. The National Programme for the Recovery of Degraded Areas, until 2022, supported the restoration of 3 200 000 ha of degraded forest landscapes with funding from the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and the World Resources Institute.

iv. Since 2018, the Partner for Conservation initiative of the National Service of Natural Areas Protected by the State has promoted a brand with the same name, which benefits families that develop non-timber forest products under conservation and social inclusion practices within and around protected natural areas (SENANP, 2023).

v. Research programmes of universities and research centres, as these have a direct relationship with Indigenous technologies, the management of high Andean forest resources, and the processing and marketing of agrobiodiversity products, among others.

27. The Ministry of Environment, as the operational focal point of the GEF, carries out quarterly monitoring of the projects under its responsibility financed by the fund in order to identify risks and opportunities for improving execution and coordinate efforts with other projects. However, in the analysis of complementarity with other interventions financed by the GEF and other international donors, no evidence was found of synergies or exchanges of experiences with relevant projects.

i. The regional programme, Andean Forest and Climate Change (from 2014 to 2022), funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, supported communities in the Apurímac Department to reduce their vulnerability to climate change through sowing and harvesting water and the development of the Remuneration Mechanisms for Ecosystem Services Programme (MERESE, by its Spanish acronym) (Baiker and Kómetter Mogrovejo, 2022).

ii. The project Conservation and Sustainable Use of High-Andean Ecosystems in Peru through Compensation of Environmental Services for Rural Poverty Alleviation and Social Inclusion (from 2017 to 2023) was financed by the GEF and executed by the Ministry of Environment and PROFONANPE with technical and administrative support from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) (Ministry of Environment, 2023a). This project had components dedicated to the restoration of ecosystems in the Jequetepeque and Cañete river basins, the identification of management plans and the achievement of two MERESE-based agreements.

iii. The project Effective Implementation of the Access and Benefit Sharing and Traditional Knowledge Regime in Peru in Accordance with the Nagoya Protocol (from 2018 to 2022) was financed by the GEF and executed by the Ministry of Environment and PROFONANPE with support from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) (GEF, 2017b). This has a component dedicated to the conservation and sustainable use of local biodiversity to more efficiently implement the regime of access to genetic resources and benefit sharing.

iv. The project Conservation, Management and Rehabilitation of Fragile Lomas Ecosystems in Lima (from 2016 to 2022) was financed by the GEF and executed by the Ministry of Environment and the National Service of Natural Areas Protected by the State with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (UNDP, 2016). This project is aimed at rehabilitating coastal lomas in Lima, in an effort similar to that of the Atiquipa lomas conservation project.

v. The project Sustainable Productive Landscapes in the Peruvian Amazon (from 2017 to 2023) was funded by the GEF and implemented by UNDP (GEF, 2017a). This includes two similar outcomes to the project evaluated in this report: i) financial mechanisms and market incentives to promote sustainable production practices; and ii) the strengthening of the technical capacity to restore and sustain ecosystem services.

28. The lack of evidence of complementarity between the project and other projects suggests that the Ministry of Environment does not have a robust mechanism to promote synergies and exchanges of experiences between the GEF projects. In addition, no evidence was found that the United Nations agencies have an effective coordination mechanism to share lessons learned and good practices identified by the project, while also ensuring that the design of new projects incorporates adequate mechanisms to promote synergies, exchanges, and actions of mutual interest and benefit. However, spaces were identified to promote these types of mechanisms, such as the UNDP Small Grants Programme, financed by the GEF, in which the national director and the national coordinator of the project are members. In addition, the Project Management Unit reported that the programme, starting in 2024, will continue to support some project activities in the Lares and Acora Districts.

3.3 Effectiveness

To what extent has the project achieved Outcome 1.1: agrobiodiversity is conserved in situ *and managed sustainably and adaptively?*

Finding 4. The project significantly contributed to establishing an *in situ* model for the conservation of agrobiodiversity in which producer families receive direct benefits from this practice. These benefits are multidimensional. They strengthen human, sociocultural, environmental, economic and physical capital. This is key in increasing resilience, but also for the ownership of agrobiodiversity as a service of local, national and global importance. Through the project's actions, the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation recognized four new agrobiodiversity zones (two already established and two in the final approval process), and the Ministry of Environment recognized a private conservation area. These steps are important because they value and recognize the global environmental services provided by family farming and directly contribute to initiatives of importance to the Ministry of Environment, such as the 30x30 Initiative.

29. The evaluation found that the outputs implemented to date have largely contributed to the achievement of Outcome 1.1. Table 1 (see Appendix 1) shows that a total of 11 185 farmers have participated in the activities of this outcome, 2 237 directly and 8 948 indirectly, compared to the established targets of 1 560 and 7 800 farmers, respectively. The project exceeded the targets by 143 percent. Regarding agrobiodiversity landscapes under management systems, a progress of 129 712 ha (41.6 percent) was found compared to the target of 312 046 ha. Of these, 122 010 ha correspond to established agrobiodiversity zones and 7 700 ha to the management of 40 or more crops (48.2 percent of the target).[2] It is worth mentioning that progress does not include restored landscapes under Outcome 1.2 (see Table 3 in Appendix 1). The most significant achievements identified under Outputs 1.1.1 to 1.1.4[3] are highlighted below.

i. **Output 1.1.1.** Elaboration of Life Plans in accordance with the guidelines applied by the Ministry of Culture: this methodology encourages a structured, participatory and inclusive process to recover ancestral knowledge about agrobiodiversity. It also reproduces the agricultural calendar, which is a central element in the Andean worldview. The calendars were important for: i) incorporating key elements such as solidarity, paying homage to Mother Earth, the recovery of agrobiodiversity, and climate variability adaptation practices to safeguard food sovereignty and security and improve nutrition, among others; ii) applying a communal or local approach that is practical and easy to understand; iii) ensuring that this approach is supervised, followed and evaluated by the *Yachachiqs*[4] and community leaders instead of depending on extension agents from the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation (in the Huancavelica, Cusco and Apurímac Departments, it was found that they have the capacity to supervise the use and monitoring of agricultural calendars (see Figure 3); and iv) support communities to ensure informed decision-making in participatory budgets that help manage agrobiodiversity.

ii. **Output 1.1.2.** The creation and improvement of 44 family and community seed banks has been fundamental to advancing *in situ* conservation of agrobiodiversity, supporting family nutrition, and strengthening their resilience to natural disasters and the effects of climate variability and change. For example, the use of plastic containers with QR codes – instead of more fragile glass and clay containers – is a way of managing the risk associated with earthquakes and floods (see Figure 4).

[2] The 11 introduced crops are: añu; cañihua; izaño; kiwicha; maca; corn; oca; olluco; potato; quinoa and tarwi. However, it is also observed that farmers produce other local crops in association, such as herbs and fruit trees.

[3] Output 1.1.5 deals with the systematization of lessons learned that were analysed under Output 3.6.

[4] *Yachachiqs* in Quechua are people (women and men) appointed by the community to assume the role of caring for and loving Mother Earth under the practices of local promoters and extension agents. In Aymara, it is called *Yatichiris*.

Figure 3. Examples of agricultural calendars as an integral part of the Life Plan

Figure 4. Seed banks using plastic, clay or glass containers in Cusco

iii. **Output 1.1.3.** The application of the ReSCA[5] mechanism, using the services of INIA and technical consultants, has been crucial for the establishment of 14 Farmer Field Schools focused on recovering, conserving and replicating a total of 248 cultivars of 11 Andean crops. The training of *Yachachiqs* and community leaders has contributed to this achievement, as well as the monitoring of payments under the ReSCA and the networks of conservationists established to control the distribution of seeds in each district. Conservationists were found to be producing more than 80 varieties of corn in the Lares and Chiara Districts, and women have preserved up to 13 varieties of quinoa in Acora, which has stimulated the production of quinoa cakes (see Figure 5). Families also recorded cultivating eight varieties of maca in Laria, while another family was producing two new varieties of potato in Nuevo Occoro in the Huancavelica Department. Conservationists were managing up to 480 varieties of potato in Apurímac (see Figure 6).

iv. **Output 1.1.4.** The project achieved the official recognition of two agrobiodiversity zones in Laria (Huancavelica) and Cotahuasi (Arequipa) by the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation, both of which have management plans in the final stages of development (80 percent according to INIA). In addition, support was provided for the preparation and submission to INIA of requests for recognition of two other agrobiodiversity zones planned in the Chiara and San Miguel de Chaccrapampa Districts in the Andahuaylas Province (Apurímac) and in the Lares District (Cusco). Currently, INIA is in the phase of reviewing and preparing final observations with the communities involved.[6] In total, the four agrobiodiversity zones cover an area equivalent to 117 percent of the area planned in the project document. In addition, the recognition of the private conservation area, Lomas de Atiquipa (Arequipa), was renewed for a period of ten years and, together with strategic actors, the 2021–2025 Management Plan was developed, which focuses on strengthening tourism as a source of sustainable local development and promoting the regulation of livestock farming.

Figure 5. Experts in Andean grains (Cusco, Apurímac and Puno)

[5] The ReSCA requires the formation of mixed ReSCA groups, led by a person with experience in conservation, before beginning the delivery of genetic material to be preserved under the supervision of INIA, a specialist in Farmer Field Schools and *Yachachiqs*. It was observed that ReSCA compensation is paid in the form of tools and other agricultural materials after the first harvest and the redistribution of agrobiodiversity in the community. Participants only receive compensation once.

[6] The Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation officially recognized the Andahuaylas agrobiodiversity zone on 30 December 2023.

Figure 6. Experts in Andean tubers (Huancavelica and Apurímac)

30. The following weaknesses were identified with respect to Outputs 1.1.1 to 1.1.4:

i. **Output 1.1.1.** The Life Plans have not been adopted as part of the State's planning framework – even though they have been proposed by the Ministry of Culture and, for several years, have sought to be integrated by the Ministry of Economy and Finance and the National Centre for Strategic Planning. The coordination of the project with the Ministry of Culture ended after the workshops for the formulation of the Life Plans. An important partner was lost, both in promoting the adoption of these plans at the national level and identifying methods of social mobilization at the district and interdistrict level. This would allow for raising funds from participatory budgets to implement the Life Plans.

ii. **Output 1.1.2.** Evidence shows that the project has invested time and resources in raising awareness and pre-organizing the 14 established Farmer Field Schools in the process of recovering cultivars through ReSCA, and in the pre-characterization and building or improvement of 44 family and group seed banks. However, official follow-up to these activities by INIA is still pending. It is observed that the vast majority of the CRDPs and CLDPs that have been prioritized offer no guarantees that the new local government authorities will allocate resources for agrobiodiversity and the restoration of landscapes. There is no specific agreement between the Ministry of Environment and INIA (as the national body) on who will follow up on the registration of the seed banks in the Directorate of Management of Agrarian Innovation, or who will oversee the management and continuity of the Farmer Field Schools and ReSCA after the project closes. It is also unclear who will follow up on the registration of the 248 cultivars collected and characterized by the Directorate of Management of Agrarian Innovation. Furthermore, the lack of supervision by INIA reduces the opportunities for: i) creating an agrobiodiversity zone linking *in situ* conservation with *ex situ* conservation; ii) advancing in certification activities, for example, the "potato certificate" granted by SENASA through Supreme Decree No. 010-2018 (Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation, 2018) or the agrobiodiversity certification by regional governments; and iii) identifying agrobiodiversity products certified by the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation or through the PGS in the agrobiodiversity zones.

iii. **Output 1.1.3.** Report No. 00272-2023-Ministry of Environment/VMDERN/General Directorate of Biological Diversity/Directorate of Genetic Resources and Biotechnology and the 2023 ReSCA records show that the unit used to calculate the agrobiodiversity recovery and conservation area was based on the number of families (direct and indirect care) and peasant communities with conservation agreements. However, both the ReSCA monitoring sheets compiled during the last three farming seasons and the final reports of Biodiversity International[7] show that the areas of land per family or producer are small (mostly three to four plots of 30 to 500 m^2 each). In other words, the area was not calculated based on the number of families and communities directly affected but on the replicability factor of 6 000 m^2 per family due to a decontextualized conservation approach that was adopted during the project design. As a result, the value reflected in the project monitoring sheets does not correspond to the estimate of the cultivation area under payment agreements. The information collected by the evaluation indicates that in the third season (2022/23), participation in ReSCA was reduced from 60 to 18 communities. According to the experience of the people interviewed, the 4 Cell Method (Drucker *et al.*, 2023) was difficult to implement and had to be adapted in three main areas: number of selected cultivars, size of the work areas and cultivar selection criteria. Some interviewees stated that the recovery areas proposed by the mechanism were very large in relation to the number of seeds available. Regarding the selection criteria, they expressed that, in some cases – despite the fact that the cultivars were at risk – there was no interest in preserving them because they did not present nutritional or commercial value.

iv. **Output 1.1.4.** The INIA does not have a comprehensive mechanism to monitor and evaluate the overall effectiveness of the agrobiodiversity zones recognized by the project or a mechanism based on other models, such as the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems approach focused on the conservation of agrobiodiversity by farming families. Similarly, there is no workplan at SENASA in the post-project period that allows for the characterization of agrobiodiversity products and the certification of agroecological products, which limits sustainability.

To what extent has the project achieved Outcome 1.2: Andean landscapes are sustainably managed and restored to ensure the flow of ecosystem services in order to maintain agrobiodiversity and the sustainability of agrobiodiversity-based production systems?

[7] The report identified this as 68 percent on average, with the range being from 30 to 89 percent.

Finding 5. The project has made an important contribution to advancing the microzoning of the 13 participating districts in accordance with the current legal and methodological framework. Also, it has demonstrated that the application of Ecological and Economic Zoning (EEZ) and land use types, in accordance with SERFOR participatory process guidelines, are viable tools to determine the suitability of agricultural units for the conservation of agrobiodiversity and the degree of degradation of forest units. As a result, the project has identified 424 430 ha for restoration and reforestation, representing 84 percent of all zoned forest resources. The project has directly restored and reforested 2 057 ha, equivalent to 10 percent of the direct reforestation and improved management target, and has identified 422 375 ha for replication, which is more than 600 percent above the target.

31. The Evaluation Team identified that the project has partially met Outcome 1.2, even though the team did not have access to all data and information on progress towards the goal of 83 000 ha. To support its analysis, and with the support of the Project Management Unit, Table 3 was prepared between October and November 2023 (see Appendix 1).

32. **Output 1.2.1.** The project carried out the zoning of the 13 participating districts and then divided them into microzones, focusing specifically on the objectives of agrobiodiversity conservation and ecosystem restoration. This work was carried out following the legal and methodological framework stipulated in Article 7 of Supreme Decree No. 087-2004-PCM (President of the Republic, 2004) and through training on its application. Once the agricultural and forestry units were identified, the project carried out a detailed assessment to determine the suitability of the agricultural units for the conservation of agrobiodiversity and the degree of degradation of the forestry units using the FAO land use type methodology (FAO, 1976) and the SERFOR guidelines for ecosystem restoration. A total of 486 people (251 women) in 41 communities were sensitized on the use of micro EEZ. This process also taught the participants the importance of recognizing, valuing and integrating local knowledge about the landscape and ecosystem functions of forest resources, as well as identifying intercommunity conflicts related to access to natural resources – particularly water and community pastures. The microzoning of priority areas for forest resource restoration was integrated into the 21 approved Life Plans and 13 CLDPs of participating local governments, guiding the replication of 422 375 ha. As a result, it was identified that some communities and local governments are committed to signing collective agreements for the conservation of agrobiodiversity and forest resources, as well as issuing ordinances to protect and conserve prioritized forest resources.

33. However, three important issues were identified that may reduce the level of compliance with Outcome 1.2. First, the vast majority of CLDPs have not been approved because the new local government authorities are not adequately sensitized (see associated factors Number 72) on landscape restoration in the participating districts, which are subdivided into homogeneous spatial units based on their physical, biological and socioeconomic characteristics. This integrates the management of risks associated with climate variability and change. Second, in the 13 participating districts, the project has not developed management plans for the microzones to be restored. Rather, it has created plans for the restoration of forest ecosystems and other wild vegetation ecosystems (hereinafter "restoration plans") based on the current Forestry and Wildlife Law (President of the

Republic, 2011).[8] As a result, these plans do not require direct approval from SERFOR, as indicated in Executive Directorate Resolution No. 083-2018 (SERFOR, 2018), and their implementation is voluntary with the project time being insufficient to provide support and advice during their initial implementation. Third, the absence of a land use planning law is identified as a recognized tool that can contribute to reducing the disorderly development that generates the loss of natural resources and communal territory. The project applied the land use type methodology to identify the microzones prioritized for the restoration of forest resources with forest zoning being the only binding and mandatory instrument in the country. However, without a delimitation instrument per se, it is not evident that the expansion of the agricultural frontier or urbanization, which currently covers 137 905 ha and 2 107 ha, respectively, according to Table 3 (see Appendix 1), can be controlled. In this context, the lack of territorial planning could make it difficult to achieve Objective 4.1 of the 2050 National Development Strategic Plan (CEPLAN, 2022) and the comprehensive plan for upholding the rights of Indigenous communities in terms of resources in their territories. It should be noted that, in the national context, the rights of peasant (Andean) and Indigenous (jungle) communities in Peru are protected by the General Law of Peasant Communities (President of the Republic, 1987).

34. **Output 1.2.2.** In the project progress report from January to June 2023, it was explained that there were no adequate regulations for the effective implementation of the MERESE (p. 19). Therefore, a total of 20 conservation agreements were identified under an initiative that was originally launched by the National Service of Natural Areas Protected by the State in 2021. This approach focused on strengthening the organizational and community bases as a crucial preliminary step before the identification and long-term sustainable implementation of the MERESE in the participating districts and provinces. Although the project did not implement any MERESE, the Ministry of Environment was able to facilitate an exchange of experiences with the Andean Forests (*Bosques Andinos*) project that had established a MERESE in the Abancay Province of the Apurímac Department. In addition, as the first conservation agreements were not submitted to the Ministry of Environment until November 2023, it is evident that there was not enough time to monitor their implementation in the communities before the project closed.

35. **Output 1.2.3.** According to Table 3 (see Appendix 1), the project has carried out direct restoration and afforestation interventions on 2 057 ha (10 percent of the target)[9] and has identified a total area of 422 375 ha in replication. Of these areas, 11 749 ha were earmarked for reforestation activities (2 681 ha through the local government investment project and 9 068 ha through the regional government investment project), and 410 626 ha benefited from the improvement of forest ecosystem management as committed to in the district restoration plans (prepared under Output 1.2.1). Therefore, the planned replication is equivalent to 678 percent of the target of 62 250 ha set out in the project document. This situation confirms that the project, in accordance with the subsequent mid-term review (MTR) strategy adopted, placed a significant emphasis on state ownership of the planned restoration and afforestation activities. At the time of this terminal evaluation, it was found that most of the public investment projects have been incorporated into the Multiannual

[8] The Evaluation Team was informed in December 2023 that the Forestry and Wildlife Law only allows the preparation and implementation of management plans in forestry concessions.

[9] The Evaluation Team was only able to triangulate that, as of September 2023, the project had completed reforestation and direct improved management on 2 057 ha out of a goal of 20 750 ha.

Investment Programming of the Ministry of Economy and Finance. However, as mentioned, the restoration plans have not been adopted by the local governments involved.

36. Regarding direct restoration and afforestation activities, focus group discussions and field inspections confirm that the 2 057 ha of pasture and wetland closures undertaken have been very well received. In addition, these areas are beginning to regenerate important environmental services, but the project was unable to capture this result. Three other significant achievements were identified:

i. The construction of 600 filtering ditches and the restoration of *qochas* (see Figure 7) have improved the flow of drinking water in the Chiara community in Apurímac, raising the average flow from 15 l per second in 2021 to 45 l in 2023. This area has experienced a prolonged drought, so the Evaluation Team considers that this achievement may be of great interest to the National Water Authority. However, this entity was not recognized as a project partner to promote these initiatives to rationalize water use and encourage rainwater harvesting.

ii. The closure of pastures established in the Leoncio Prado annex (Conayca District, Huancavelica Department), using silvopastoral systems and massifs, is showing positive signs of wetland protection (see Figure 7). This is because the farmers are aware that rotational grazing has the same importance as the resting of soil under their ancestral *laymi* practices.

iii. The afforestation of Andean massifs using native trees, such as the queñua (*Polylepis rugulosa*) in areas up to 4 500 m and tara (*Caesalpinia spinosa*) in the Atiquipa hills, has taught the participating communities that this is a viable alternative compared to exotic plants such as eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus globolus*) and pine (*Pinus genus*). These species are relatively easy to reproduce at a low cost in relation to the environmental and economic benefits they provide, and these benefits are valued by the working groups at the local level. However, the project has not systematized this information, which would be useful for having a dialogue with local governments on the direct link between this activity and adaptation to climate variability, climate change and risk management. For example, using the queñua in living fences reduces the vulnerability of agrobiodiversity to winds, frost and hail, restricts the movement of pests and is a refuge for pollinators. These species, being native, can be used to protect areas at risk of landslides and degradation, and provide environmental services of fog collection and to generate products of high economic value, such as tara seeds and queñua bark, which have medicinal uses (see Figure 8).

Figure 7. Restoration of ecosystem services in the Apurímac and Huancavelica Departments

Figure 8. Integration of risk management through agroforestry systems and forests in Cusco and Arequipa

To what extent has the project achieved Outcome 2: marketing of agrobiodiversity-based products has been improved to support the sustainable use of agrobiodiversity and livelihoods?[10]

Finding 6. The project has shown that there is demand for agrobiodiversity products among consumers, especially at fairs in the capitals of the departments, from Huancayo to Puno. In addition, the evidence collected indicates that the marketing of agrobiodiversity products without agroecological certification is profitable, generates immediate income and is a cause of satisfaction in the farming families interviewed. By contrast, the marketing of agrobiodiversity products on a small scale through the Kusikuy platform, with its distribution centre focused on the Lima market, has not been profitable.

Finding 7. The promotion of the network of young environmentalists carried out by the project has been important to reconnect young people with ancestral knowledge about agrobiodiversity and the Indigenous technologies managed by their parents.

37. Overall, the Evaluation Team did not identify sufficient evidence to confirm that the project has met Outcome 2. However, during 2023, it was demonstrated that the sale of agrobiodiversity products in regional markets, both fresh and processed, is profitable, viable and popular among participating farmers. This confirmed that there is demand from consumers in the highlands. To facilitate the analysis of the achievements under Outcome 2 and based on the triangulation carried out by the team, Table 4 was prepared (see Appendix 1), which identifies the following results under Outputs 2.1 to 2.5.

38. **Output 2.1.** The project has supported the formation or consolidation of a total of 35 associations and one cooperative (in Puno). The goal set in the project document was 30 associations, for which 120 percent compliance was achieved. Of these associations, 27 have participated in sales through the Kusikuy initiative, which is an online platform managed by ASPEC in the city of Lima. Additionally, 36 associations have participated in regional, local and Lima city fairs, achieving sales higher than the goal proposed in the project document (see Table 4 in Appendix 1). The interviews confirm that this achievement is mainly due to the high interest of the participating families in freeing themselves from intermediaries and selling processed products to exploit their added value.

39. An analysis of the composition of the associations visited confirms that 33 associations and one cooperative have their Taxation Identification Number and that 27 associations have internal regulations. According to the people interviewed, not having the Taxation Identification Number may be a more desirable situation since having it means losing access to social benefits from the State. Additionally, it was determined that the vast majority of agrobiodiversity products do not have sanitary certification from SENASA or the PGS, which requires the endorsement of SENASA. The Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation defines the PGS as "a certification system that is developed with the direct participation of family agriculture producers, consumers and other members of the community who will be able to verify the origin and condition of ecological or organic products for consumption in the national market" (Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation, 2022). The project did not work with specialized partners, such as CAP, as planned in the project document, which may have limited the scope of the goal for associations with organic certification. This goal was also affected by the decision to

[10] This also addresses the question: Have other actors – such as civil society, peasant communities or the private sector – participated in the design or implementation of the project?

change the PGS to the internal control system in 2021. The Training and Implementation of Agroecological Practices procedure and the internal and external evaluation of the agroecological production system were applied instead of the internal monitoring system of the PGS (Muñoz *et al.*, 2023). This procedure does not have the power to accredit organic producers and products since the law requires that organic products be certified through the PGS (Congress of the Republic, 2019). In this regard, the project provided certification for agroecological products without a legal basis.

40. The net income generated by the sale of agrobiodiversity products through the Kusikuy platform from its inception in 2021 to 27 September 2023 amounted to only PEN 113 220 (USD 29 795),[11] benefiting 29 associations (see Table 4 in Appendix 1). In addition, it is noted that the project subsidized a large part of the operating costs for the development of this initiative in 2022. However, when these subsidies stopped, as defined in the agreement, the operating costs generated unsustainable losses. This led to sales stopping in the beginning of 2023. In addition, many partners stated that payments were slow because ASPEC only reimbursed producers when sales were processed with consumers. This situation was confirmed by the Project Management Unit and reported to ASPEC.

41. In contrast, sales at fairs generated an income of PEN 211 778 (USD 55 731), which is almost double that generated by Kusikuy. Sales at Lima markets achieve better prices. However, after deducting operational costs (including hotels, transportation, time and the return of unsold products), it has been determined that the costs and benefits of selling at regional fairs are more lucrative. For example, agrobiodiversity sales at the Wanchaq fair (Cusco) generated more than PEN 16 000 (USD 4 210) in one day in August 2023 and PEN 20 000 in one day in September 2023, confirming a high demand for agrobiodiversity products in regional markets. In the case of sales at local fairs, it was found that they are less profitable because they are in agricultural communities. However, they could have another important function as seed markets, which help to recover the ancestral routes of Andean seeds.

42. **Output 2.2.** Overall, the project has had difficulty delivering on this output. Table 4 (see Appendix 1) shows that the project has supported two value chain development activities out of the three piloted. The first is dedicated to the sale of white corn to a company in Urubamba (Cusco), and the second is a cooperative selling organic cheese in Acora (Puno). In addition, the project supported three out of the ten small businesses planned in the project document. This decision was the result of an internal evaluation of the ten business plans, of which only four (including the cooperative in Acora) met the social and economic criteria applied by the project.

43. The analysis of the cooperative's performance in Acora indicates that it had problems developing cheese value chains and diversifying the production of other dairy products. This situation is due to the fact that the tender launched for the installation of three-phase electricity was not concluded and to the cost of certifying the cooperative (PEN 40 000 or USD 10 526). Therefore, its business plan could not be implemented as expected. Regarding the other value chain supported in Cusco, it cannot be considered developed because only four 50 kg bags of white corn were sold. Regarding the three small businesses

[11] The exchange rate used throughout the document is: USD 1 = PEN 3.8 as of 30 September 2023.

created, it was identified that they are not fully operational. For example, the processing centre established in Laria does not have the machinery installed to produce maca flour and other agrobiodiversity products. This is due to a delay in the tender for the delivery of this equipment, and because the food processing centre in Santa Rosa de Yanaque in Puno can only process products on a small scale. Furthermore, a lack of commercial understanding related to tools and platforms to monitor prices and markets for agrobiodiversity products was identified.

44. **Output 2.3.** The project did not achieve certification of agrobiodiversity products or organic certification, such as the GSP, in the two agrobiodiversity zones supported by the project. The project established the Agrobio brand (see Table 4 in Appendix 1) instead of obtaining the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems certification. Although this brand was developed under the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems approach, it has no legal basis since it does not meet the certification requirements (see Number 39 and, for further details, FAO, 2024). The evaluation found that all 36 associations have packaged agrobiodiversity products with the Agrobio brand, including processed products (see Figure 9).

45. Regarding the goal of establishing at least one variety of agrobiodiversity with a designation of origin, it is confirmed that the project submitted a request to the National Institute for the Defence of Competition and the Protection of Intellectual Property for the recognition of the designation of origin of the variety of quinoa known as *qúytu negra* in the Aymara language. Additionally, the regional government of Puno confirmed that it submitted another application for the designation of origin to the National Institute for the Defence of Competition and the Protection of Intellectual Property. The promotion of the designation of origin represents a highly important initiative to advance the recognition of the intellectual property of the participating communities, as well as the opportunity to stimulate the expansion of the designation of origin in Peru. At the National Agrarian University – La Molina, for example, it has been determined that there are more than 3 000 varieties of quinoa (Andina, 2013).

Figure 9. Agrobiodiversity products using the Agrobio brand in Apurímac and Puno

46. **Output 2.4.** In relation to multistakeholder networks and alliances to promote the commercialization of agrobiodiversity-based products, increase market access and improve livelihoods, the project supported the development of two networks (see Table 4 in Appendix 1). The first one includes 29 associations that were part of the Kusikuy initiative and, after this platform terminated its operations in 2023, have joined the associations that manage products under the Agrobio brand sold at fairs through an informal network. The second is the Youth Network for Agrobiodiversity (RJA, by its Spanish acronym) with a total

of 185 members. According to the interviews conducted, most young people are satisfied to be part of the RJA because it offers them the opportunity to: i) learn about agrobiodiversity and the ancestral knowledge of their grandparents and great-grandparents, which they do not receive in schools and colleges; ii) participate in local initiatives, such as the installation of school gardens; iii) actively participate in the conservation, processing and marketing of agrobiodiversity products and in landscape restoration; and iv) take on jobs as *Yachachiqs* or *Yatichiris* under the National Strategy for the Promotion and Management of Rural Talent (AGRO RURAL, 2017) (see Figure 10).

Figure 10. Examples of RJA participation (Huancavelica, Cusco and Apurímac)

47. Youth participation in the project was an important factor in achieving effectiveness and sustainability. The participation of young men and women (32 in total) as *Yachachiqs* and *Yatichiris*, respectively, confirms that most of them intend to continue working voluntarily as local extension workers and participating in the network to sell their agrobiodiversity products.[12] For example, a group of women and young people in Puno won a competition under the PROCOMPITE initiative of the Ministry of Production (Ministry of Production, 2024), which gave them new equipment to increase the production of quinoa cakes. In this case, the sale of each cake in Puno markets generates a net economic benefit of PEN 40. This shows that participation in competitions is an important opportunity to generate income from the conservation of agrobiodiversity.

48. The project abandoned the promotion of competitions established in the project document following the recommendation of the MTR in 2021. To mitigate the impact of this decision, some communities were supported to participate in public competitions such as PROCOMPITE or the National School Feeding Programme, *Qali Warma* (Healthy Child), promoted by the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion.[13] In accordance with Law 31071 (President of the Congress of the Republic, 2020), this allows for the purchase of up to 30 percent of food from local producers.[14]

49. **Output 2.5.** The project hired a consultancy to prepare a manual of five tools to promote the marketing of agrobiodiversity products. This was scheduled to be reviewed by the Project Management Unit in October 2023 and expected to be published at the end of that

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[12] The interviewed young people commented that the certificates issued by the project for their participation in the RJA are not signed by the Ministry of the Environment.

[13] The Evaluation Team identified only one pilot in the preliminary phase in the Huancavelica Department. This is taken up as a reference in Recommendation 2.

[14] An exception is the RJA in the Huando District, which has supported the installation of a school garden at the Mariscal Agustín Gamarra High School with the purpose of promoting the consumption of agrobiodiversity products. This activity has encouraged the municipality to approve a public investment project dedicated to financing school gardens in other educational centres and the purchase of local products for the *Qali Warma*.

year. These tools include a guide to the application of Law 31071,[15] which is of strategic importance because more than 70 percent of state food purchases are destined for the *Qali Warma* programme. Another tool that will be included in this manual is a guide to develop organic labels with the intention of linking the associations participating in *Qali Warma* with other partners, such as ANPE, which received support from the project to renew the licence of its *Frutos de la Tierra* (Fruits of the Earth) brand at the beginning of 2023.

To what extent has the project achieved Outcome 3: strengthened an enabling environment for the sustainable use of agrobiodiversity?

Finding 8. The project made an important contribution to strengthening the institutional memory of the Ministry of Environment. It also strengthened the participating regional and local governments through the modernization of the State’s environmental information platform as the National Environmental Information System, and at the subnational level as Regional Environmental Information Systems and Local Environmental Information Systems in the five participating departments. This modernization has allowed, for the first time, the processing of data on agrobiodiversity to be more efficient, secure and flexible, facilitating access to environmental information for informed decision-making and public consensus.

Finding 9. The modernization of the Regional Environmental Information Systems, supported by the project, has been a factor that identified ten green public investment projects in the five participating regional governments. However, only five projects have been officially integrated into the Multiannual Investment Programming and considered for financing.

Finding 10. With the issuance of Supreme Decree No. 002-2020 (Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation, 2020), the application of the PGS in 2020 was abandoned and, therefore, so was the opportunity to integrate agrobiodiversity products within the agroecological sector in alliance with actors such as ANPE. Regarding the interinstitutional coordination mechanisms, there is an opportunity to strengthen the results achieved through the establishment of formal cooperation agreements with the attached institutions of the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation (SENASA, INIA and SERFOR) to ensure that the operations mechanism for the rescue, conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity is clear and the flow of information is organized.

Finding 11. The project implemented communications actions that captured and disseminated important information on ancestral knowledge about agrobiodiversity, the promotion of agrobiodiversity zones and the systematization of the project. However, except in the case of the promotion of agrobiodiversity zones, it is not evident that the project has a robust communications strategy to influence political spaces by highlighting the strategic importance and multidimensional benefits of agrobiodiversity for the health, education, culture, social inclusion, water and economic sectors, among others.

50. Based on the evidence analysed, it was determined that the project has partially achieved Outcome 3. This is because important spaces to establish a robust enabling environment for the sustainable use of agrobiodiversity have not been adequately addressed.

[15] Products such as quinoa, cañihua, maca and kiwicha are recognized as superfoods that should be included in the *Qali Warma*.

51. **Output 3.1.** The Evaluation Team identifies that quality results have been achieved with respect to the update of the digital platform of the Regional Environmental Information Systems in the four departments visited. In addition, this has facilitated the update of the National Environmental Information System managed by the Environmental Information and Research Directorate of the Ministry of Environment. In particular, the interviews carried out confirm the following progress: i) the analysis of the Ministry of Environment's information platform on access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits, known as *Genes Perú* (Genes Peru), facilitated the decision to update the platform of the National Environmental Information System and the portal of the National Observatory of Environmental Research in 2023 (currently in progress); ii) the Regional Environmental Information Systems in the five departments where the project operated were updated, including their connection to the local environmental information systems, in accordance with the guidelines and regulatory framework of the Ministry of Environment. This update included: the application of the latest version of the Drupal content management system, which is more reliable, secure and flexible than the previous version; cloud-based environmental data management under the Ministry of Environment, which facilitates access to networked environmental information and reduces operation and maintenance costs for regional governments; the delivery of new computers to migrate existing and new environmental data to the new platform; and the re-engineering of new webpages for the Regional Environmental Information Systems that improve their functionality and navigation. In addition, it was found that regional governments are applying the new open source software, GeoNode, to manage geographic information without paying for licences or subscriptions.

52. **Output 3.2.** For the analysis of the planning policies and instruments that incorporate the principles of agrobiodiversity conservation and integrated landscape management, Table 5 was prepared (see Appendix 1). It is noted that, in 2022, the project carried out a prospective study of biological diversity in each of the participating departments in accordance with the needs of the regional governments. However, they have not been used to guide the update of the Regional Biological Diversity Strategy because the Ministry of Environment must issue a new National Biological Diversity Strategy for the period from 2024 to 2028.

53. Regarding the integration of agrobiodiversity into the CLDPs, in 2022, the project and the previous authorities made good progress with the integration of agrobiodiversity into 12 out of the 13 CLDPs.[16] However, the change of local government authorities in 2023 has caused a delay in the official adoption of the CLDPs since the new authorities need to be sensitized and updated on this matter. As the change of authorities has not been completed, this awareness-raising process is still pending. Even so, the regional governments of Apurímac and Cusco and the local governments of Chaccrampa and Lares have already confirmed their support for the integration of agrobiodiversity into their CRDPs and CLDPs, respectively.

54. Progress in identifying green public investment projects with a focus on agrobiodiversity and restoration is evident in the five participating regional governments. In terms of the level of progress, the following is observed:

[16] The municipality of Huando did not participate because it already had a new CLDP.

i. four public investment projects are at the concept stage, with an estimated total budget of PEN 47 900 000 (USD 12 600 000);

ii. four public investment projects are at the planning stage, with an estimated total budget of PEN 65 010 000 (USD 17 110 000);

iii. two public investment projects are in the execution stage, with a total budget of PEN 26 million (USD 6 840 000);

iv. the department with the largest budget allocated for public investment projects is Huancavelica, with a total budget of PEN 57 340 000 (USD 15 090 000), followed by Apurímac, with a total budget of PEN 34 100 000 (USD 8 970 000); and

v. the total public investment expected to be raised by public investment projects amounts to PEN 154 390 000 (USD 40 630 000).

55. At first glance, these achievements are significant and meet the goal of the project document. However, it was confirmed that only five public investment projects have been integrated into the Multiannual Investment Programming (see Table 5 in Appendix 1). Therefore, the Evaluation Team considers that the project has achieved 50 percent of this goal of Output 3.2 because only these five public investment projects can be officially considered for financing. The interviews indicate that the regional governments of Cusco and Apurímac are willing to finance public investment projects in their region, while in Huancavelica, Puno and Arequipa it was found that more awareness-raising activities are needed in the new administrations.

56. **Output 3.3.** The revised regulations and legal aspects are ready to allow for the development and commercialization of products based on agrobiodiversity. In 2019, there was significant progress in the application for agroecological certification in Puno and Arequipa through the PGS. However, the process was paralysed in February 2020 by the issuance of Supreme Decree No. 002-2020 (Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation, 2020). This generated a significant increase in the costs associated with the failed PGS certification. The MTR concluded that this decree "has generated an inconvenience for the entire project that must be resolved soon" (Conclusion 5, p. 70). As a result, the project decided to use the internal control system as an alternative to the PGS, starting with virtual training on this system during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, according to the interviews, many families who did not have access to the internet or who could not get to one of the dairy farms provided by the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion for these training sessions were unable to access them. In total, 119 people from 16 associations, out of the 36 participating in the project, received virtual training in the Huancavelica, Apurímac and Cusco Departments. In addition, participation in face-to-face courses previously held for the PGS in Acora and Arequipa reached 145 people, 70 of whom were women.

57. To support the implementation of the internal control system, the project carried out a participatory process to develop a protocol to produce quality native potato seed in pictorial format that was validated by the Municipal Environmental Commissions in 2023. According to project implementation data, 562 families are currently using this protocol. Visits to the selected families confirm that they are using the internal control system in accordance with the protocol due to the delivery of key equipment, such as pallets (see Figure 11). However, the analysis of the protocol shows that they have omitted some

important activities, such as the use of labels to identify the new varieties introduced, and the lack of monitoring of the protocol by INIA.

Figure 11. Application of the protocol for native potato seed (Huancavelica and Cusco)

58. **Output 3.4.** According to the report on the execution of the programme from January to June 2023, the project met 100 percent of the goal. This included the participation of members of the Technical Group for Agrobiodiversity in field visits and meetings with the Regional and Municipal Environmental Commissions. However, other aspects were identified that can strengthen these results. For example, the establishment of interinstitutional coordination mechanisms between the Ministry of Environment and INIA: streamlining the management of ReSCA, especially from the second agricultural season; promoting the application of the internal control system; managing seed banks (in particular the renewal of conserved seeds and their registration in the INIA database); implementing restoration plans within agrobiodiversity zones; researching new varieties and the development of designations of origin; and updating relevant guides, protocols and agreements in coordination with the Regional and Municipal Environmental Commissions and in accordance with the lessons learned and good practices identified.

59. Furthermore, specific coordination mechanisms between the Ministry of Environment and SENASA, or between the Ministry of Environment and SERFOR, were not implemented. These are necessary to: improve the flow of information from important bodies within the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation to the Technical Group for Agrobiodiversity; promote dialogue and action for agroecological certification; and coordinate with institutions of the National Environmental Assessment and Control System in order to address environmental violations that threaten agrobiodiversity such as illegal mining and the lack of solid and liquid waste management, among others.

60. At the regional and district levels, the project has succeeded in strengthening the Regional Environmental Commissions in three regional governments (Apurímac, Cusco and Puno) and has supported the creation of nine Municipal Environmental Commissions that already have their internal regulations and corresponding municipal ordinance. In the case of the Regional Environmental Commissions, it is necessary to raise awareness and train the new members, which was planned for October 2023. In general, it is observed that the creation and strengthening of the Regional and Municipal Environmental Commissions has allowed for the creation of technical groups and 15 committees that have deliberated on important decisions like endorsing the adoption of the native potato protocol. These technical groups are key actors in supervising the preparation of the Regional Strategy for Biological Diversity in 2024, as well as in guiding the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity in the regional and local development agendas in accordance with the

approved CLDPs. Additionally, the constitutions, regulations and workplans of the 15 conservation committees supported by the project are aligned with the conservation agreements mentioned in this report (see Output 1.2.2).

61. **Output 3.5.** During 2021, the project conducted two virtual training courses as part of the capacity building programme for institutional actors on issues of territorial planning and the sustainable use of agrobiodiversity. In the first course, 183 participants (76 women) from regional and local governments were trained to apply the EEZ. In the second course, a total of 30 people (11 women) were trained in the development, management and implementation of public policies aimed at the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity with a focus on Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems. The evaluation confirms a high level of appreciation of the participants regarding the structure, methodology and presentation of the EEZ course. It was also found that this course not only directly supported microzoning, as proposed in Output 1.2.1, but also was an important input to guide the development of green public investment projects, which was proposed in Output 1.2.3. In addition, it has contributed to facilitating the modernization of the Regional Environmental Information Systems, including maps and restoration plans for the identified microzones. Furthermore, the project, in partnership with the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru, is developing a course on the formulation and evaluation of public investment projects aimed at the new authorities of the five regional governments, which will monitor this process from 2024 due to the technical closure of the project.

62. **Output 3.6.** In accordance with the provisions of this output, the project managed to produce a wide range of communications and educational and promotional materials, including: i) a manual describing the project's objectives, results, scope and resources, which has been a reference document for the technical team during implementation but did not include an exit strategy; ii) a communications plan to reach different project stakeholders; iii) practical guides for carrying out virtual activities and courses during the COVID-19 pandemic; iv) information documents on ancestral practices associated with agrobiodiversity, such as *apachicuy*;[17] v) a project website, within the PROFONANPE platform, and a Facebook page related to the project and the Agrobio brand; vi) press campaigns in Cusco (2021), Apurímac (2022) and Huancavelica (2023) which, in some cases, were broadcast by local and national television channels; and vii) the publication of documents such as *Las cartas de Marcelina* (Marcelina's Letters) (Ministry of Environment, 2023b), which address ancestral knowledge on agrobiodiversity, the integration of agricultural calendars into Life Plans, a recipe book of meals with agrobiodiversity ingredients, and a food hygiene and handling manual.

63. Communications materials were subject to various technical and quality controls by FAO, PROFONANPE and the Ministry of Environment before being printed and disseminated. According to interviews, this resulted in delays in their dissemination but ensured that the printing contracts were put out to tender in compliance with the procedures of the GEF and the strategy for the dissemination and promotion of agrobiodiversity zones.

[17] The *apachicuy* is an ancestral practice of sending meals from home to families located in other departments of the country.

To what extent has the project achieved Outcome 4: project implementation applies results-based management, and the lessons learned and good practices have been documented and disseminated?

64. **Outputs 4.1 to 4.3.** These are evaluated in Subsection 3.7 of this report, corresponding to the M&E section, where the Evaluation Team analysed: the design of the monitoring system and its capacity to provide systematic information on the achievement of the results and objectives expected in the project document, the results matrix and the theory of change (Output 4.1); the validation and participation of the stakeholders in the monitoring of results (Output 4.2); and the systematization of the results, lessons learned and good practices (Output 4.3).

What intended and unintended outcomes has the project achieved, and to what extent did these contribute to the achievement of the project's environmental and development objectives? What factors contributed to or constrained the achievement of the outcomes?

65. The Evaluation Team addresses these questions in accordance with the findings in Section 4, Conclusion 4 of this evaluation report.

In which areas does the project demonstrate additionality?

Finding 12. The project has demonstrated additionality in four out of the six GEF priority areas. Its specific environmental additionality is particularly evident through the official recognition of two new agrobiodiversity zones and one private conservation area covering a total of 78 536 ha, and two agrobiodiversity zones in the final process of approval covering a total of 43 476 ha. As a result, the project has directly contributed to Goal 3 of the 30x30 Initiative target (at least 30 percent of land, inland waters and oceans should be protected and conserved by 2030).

66. In line with the GEF Independent Evaluation Office guidelines on additionality (GEF Independent Evaluation Office, 2021), the evaluation has identified concrete evidence of additionality in three main areas with respect to the recovery, conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity: specific environmental additionality, institutional additionality and socioeconomic additionality. In terms of specific environmental additionality, it is evident that the GEF funds have been key in the following contributions:

i. Expand the natural protected areas that provide global environmental benefits with the official recognition by the State of a private conservation area in Arequipa, two new agrobiodiversity zones in Arequipa and Huancavelica, and two agrobiodiversity zones in the final stages of development in Apurímac and Cusco – totalling more than 122 000 ha. This action would not have been possible without the project, which has also generated other global environmental benefits like carbon dioxide sequestration, with an estimate pending of the amount of carbon (tonnes) that the sustainable management of agrobiodiversity could capture over 100 years.

ii. Direct restoration and afforestation of an area exceeding 2 000 ha and the potential replication of more than 422 000 ha, which would not have been possible without funding for the micro EEZs in the 13 participating districts. According to the project estimates, the restoration and afforestation of a total of 424 432 ha will generate a reduction of 3 772 623 CO_2-eq over a period of 100 years compared to pre-industrial levels, contributing to the achievement of goals established at the country level, such as the nationally determined contributions.

iii. The process initiated to obtain the designation of origin for the *Qúytu Negra* quinoa variety, submitted to the National Institute for the Defence of Competition and the Protection of Intellectual Property, would not have been possible without the support of the project. It represents a precedent for promoting the conservation of other quinoa varieties, as well as other Andean crops endemic to Peru.

67. At the level of institutional additionality, the GEF funds have generated important contributions that would not have materialized without the project.

i. The integration of agrobiodiversity into the modernization of the National Environmental Information System, the Regional Environmental Information Systems and the Local Environmental Information Systems has established a precedent for: i) making informed decisions in the five participating regional governments regarding the recovery, conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity; and ii) the opportunity to expand this action to other departments in the country that have areas of high agrobiodiversity with the purpose of declaring new agrobiodiversity zones.

ii. The strengthening of the Regional Environmental Commissions and the re-establishment and creation of the Municipal Environmental Commissions has facilitated the process of local dialogue on policies, strategies and plans to promote, prioritize and scale up the recovery, conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity. In practice, this process has contributed to strengthening awareness about agrobiodiversity within the framework of a democratic process that prioritizes the activities to be integrated into participatory budgets.

68. At the level of sociocultural additionality, the GEF funds have generated direct contributions that would not have materialized without the intervention of the project:

i. The opportunity to apply the pluricultural approach has generated a new paradigm based on the recognition, appreciation and support of the participation of agricultural families in local democratic processes. This aims at strengthening human, sociocultural, environmental, physical and economic capital as a key aspect to stimulate sustainable and resilient development in the Andean region, as well as protecting the country’s sovereignty and food security.

ii. The project’s communications materials have succeeded in integrating important elements of the Andean worldview, which has helped to ensure that the application of the pluricultural approach is included in decision-making at the local level and, to a certain extent, at the national level.

69. At the level of innovation additionality, the GEF funds have been indispensable in directly contributing to the recovery of Indigenous technologies that were in the process of being lost. These technologies include both the different forms of *in situ* conservation of seeds and their wild relatives, as well as the practice of *laymi* (crop rotation on terraces), which is a little-known activity and provides high added value to the land worked under this system (not yet calculated).

Capacity development: How is the level and quality of participation and involvement of key partners and counterparts assessed?

70. The evaluation found an adequate level and quality of participation and involvement of the project partners in the 72 communities affected. It is observed that the selection of the

farming families and their grassroots organizations was adequate. This is because it is evident that they have a real interest in organizing themselves and actively participating in the project. This approach means that people and organizations take ownership of the activities carried out. For example, it was determined that families with a seed bank have the capacity to manage it independently and in accordance with the management system that they were taught. Also, it became evident that the great majority of the participating families correctly apply the protocol for the management of native potato seed. However, protocols have not yet been established for other crops and grains such as corn seed, quinoa and tarwi. Finally, the training of the *Yachachiqs* and *Yatichiris* under the framework of the rural talent programme (Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation, 2015) established a network of local extension agents who, in partnership with the project facilitators, have managed to establish a new interface between the project and the participating communities in the implementation of agrobiodiversity activities that are established in Outcome 1.1, Outcome 1.2 and Outcome 2.

71. At the communal level, the involvement of Indigenous communities has been high. However, in terms of the quality of their training, mixed results are observed. For example, in the communal nurseries visited, satisfactory management and handling capacity was demonstrated. This was confirmed by the quality of the queñua plants inspected. Also, it was evident that the capacity to manage pasture closures is satisfactory. This involves a good level of understanding on the importance of applying pasture rotation, including sanctions for infractions of the rules. In contrast, the evaluation of the management of communal seed banks indicates that organizational training needs to be strengthened to increase their effectiveness and use.

72. At the local and regional government level, it was found that the Regional and Municipal Environmental Commissions have the capacity to support dialogue on the integration of agrobiodiversity into environmental and agricultural agendas. However, high staff turnover, especially in 2023, together with the lack of sensitized and qualified personnel, reduces the opportunities to implement long-term training processes. It is evident that they do not have the staff to manage certain activities, such as restoration or the review and application of the CRDP and the CLDP.

73. Finally, at the national level, it has been identified that the capacity of the Technical Group for Agrobiodiversity to coordinate with regional and local governments needs to be improved. Currently, the flow of communication from the regions to the Technical Group for Agrobiodiversity does not focus on providing strategic information that would allow the group to analyse the dynamics and good practices that are being developed – nor does it help to collect lessons learned on the challenges of integrating agrobiodiversity into the policies, strategies and plans of the Peruvian State.

3.4 Efficiency

Finding 13. The project demonstrates that its socioenvironmental activities can generate good value for money to conserve the overall environmental benefits associated with agrobiodiversity. In particular, the creation of four agrobiodiversity zones and one private conservation area indicates a unit cost of only USD 67.09 per ha recognized, considering that two out of the four agrobiodiversity zones in the final approval process will be recognized by the end of 2023. In contrast, the rate of return on the project's investment in the economic development of agrobiodiversity has been low. The project has had to invest USD 122 for every United States dollar generated from the sales of marketed agrobiodiversity products.

Finding 14. The project has spent close to 90 percent of the GEF funds, and some key activities need to be completed in the closing phase. The technical and financial feasibility analysis of the closure plan is considered relevant in this scenario, considering the reimbursement of the general sales tax (IGV, by its Spanish acronym) payment, which has not been achieved to date.

How efficient and cost-effective was the use of resources? Was management able to adapt to changing conditions to improve the efficiency of project implementation?

74. The project reports indicate that the overall physical progress as of 30 September 2023 was 90 percent of what was planned, compared to the financial progress of USD 8 185 923 as of the same date (see Table 7 in Appendix 1). This is equivalent to 93 percent of the GEF budget allocated to the project.

75. According to the observations in the report on the programme execution for the reimbursement of the IGV in the period from 2022 to 2023, the Evaluation Team verified that the refund of USD 446 184 by the National Superintendency of Customs and Tax Administration had not been made to date (end of 2023).

76. Therefore, as of 30 September 2023, the project had a balance of USD 595 107. However, payments were still to be deducted, leaving an actual balance of close to USD 230 000. With the available balance and the uncertainty of the IGV refund, the Evaluation Team considers that the project could face challenges in completing key activities in its closing phase. These activities include raising awareness of the project in regional and local governments, the development of restoration plans for the prioritized microzones and accompanying actions to strengthen green public investment projects in all regional governments. This is linked to the lack of adequate risk management and analysed in more detail in Subsection 3.6.

77. A review of the quality of financial management confirms that PROFONANPE was not subject to a fiduciary risk assessment during project design by FAO in its role as implementing agency. This is because PROFONANPE had already managed the GEF funds in other interventions and the Ministry of Environment selected PROFONANPE as its operational partner. Some weaknesses in PROFONANPE's role as operational partner are noted in Subsection 3.6 of this report.

78. The analysis of the total number of final beneficiaries who have participated in the activities under the three main components confirms the direct participation of a total of 3 750 families which, compared to the total recorded expenditures (USD 8 185 293) as of 30 September 2023, confirms an average investment of USD 2 182.74 per beneficiary

family. This figure is high compared to the USD 1 125.77 per participating family (7 800 families) planned in the project document. However, the project supported a total of 72 communities in the 13 participating districts, compared to the 58 communities planned, and a total of 36 associations instead of the 30 associations planned under Outcome 2. Therefore, the average cost per beneficiary family is moderately satisfactory. Furthermore, considering the project's environmental objective when analysing the costs and benefits of the GEF investment in terms of the number of hectares that are officially recognized as agrobiodiversity zones and private conservation areas – including those that are in the final recognition process (see Table 2 in Appendix 1) – it can be seen that the project's efficiency has been satisfactory. In this case, the average cost per hectare is USD 67.09 to protect a total of 122 012 ha in agrobiodiversity zones.

79. In contrast, the analysis of the costs associated with economic development as expected in Outcome 2 indicates that the project had to invest an average of USD 122.14 for every United States dollar generated in sales through the fairs and the Kusikuy. This achievement represents a very low rate of return on investment and confirms that there was no adequate analysis of the feasibility of applying this form of value chain prior to its adoption and implementation.

To what extent has the planned co-financing materialized, and how has the level of co-financing – lower or higher than expected – affected the results of the project?

80. Co-financing mobilized during project implementation through 30 September 2023 totals USD 65 176 506, leaving a balance of USD 14 255 369 with respect to the planned counterpart (see Appendix 2). This mobilization of funds is equivalent to 82.1 percent of the planned co-financing, which the Evaluation Team considers satisfactory, understanding that for every United States dollar provided by the GEF, the project contributed USD 7 420 000 in co-financing. It also shows that co-financing has been an important factor in achieving the results reported in Subsection 3.3. However, it is noted that Appendix 2 does not include the contributions made by institutions such as the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion and the Ministry of Culture. For example, in the case of the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion, it is evident that it facilitated the use of its dairy farms to conduct virtual training courses during the COVID-19 pandemic and provided logistical support to members of the community, the RJA and the *Yachachiqs*.

3.5 Cross-cutting priorities

Finding 15. The application of the FPIC process shows that this mechanism has contributed to increasing the participation of Indigenous communities. Indeed, it helps to recover ancestral knowledge, as well as identify, discuss and seek solutions to unknown or poorly understood issues at the local government level. In other words, it represents an important mechanism to answer the question: What is agrobiodiversity, and what is it for?

Finding 16. The inclusion of the gender approach in the project has been an important factor in carrying out key activities for the recovery, conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity. Women are currently the last remaining holders of knowledge about agrobiodiversity in many Andean communities. Also, the participation of young people in networks such as the RJA is crucial for the next generations to continue the conservation of agrobiodiversity in their districts and provinces of origin.

How has it been ensured that the project contributes to the promotion of human rights?

81. The triangulation of evidence indicates that the project has contributed to the United Nations human rights principles and followed the country's legislative framework. In particular, the use of highly participatory and inclusive approaches to decision-making has been observed. This addresses the needs and disputes of specific groups (women, men, young people, older people and people with disabilities). In addition, the project applied rules of conduct that prohibited inequitable or discriminatory acts in the planning and implementation of the project. This is a great achievement in a country with high levels of racism towards Indigenous communities, according to surveys by the Ministry of Culture as part of its Peru without Racism strategy (Ministry of Culture, 2023).

82. The Evaluation Team did not identify any evidence on the ground that the project consciously or unconsciously discriminated against or overlooked any specific gender or Indigenous Peoples. It was also found that the project did not take actions contrary to the United Nations human rights-based approach to ecosystem-based adaptation and the GEF guidelines and priorities related to gender equality and the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

To what extent has the work carried out with local communities applied approaches and processes that respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples?

83. The project used the FPIC principles in its approach, work and decision-making with the participating Indigenous and local communities. It is observed that it implemented the FPIC steps in accordance with the provisions of the project document (p. 109) and the guidelines established by FAO in its manual for field professionals (FAO, 2019). In addition, the implementation of these steps in the processes of preparing the Life Plans and in microzoning demonstrated the added value of applying this approach. It has demonstrated its intrinsic and instrumental value in areas such as promoting ancestral learning, opening a space for dialogue on the pre-Columbian worldview of Quechua and Aymara speakers, and identifying the needs and concerns of Indigenous and local communities considering their worldview. This approach was crucial to identify, discuss and seek solutions to unknown or poorly understood issues at the local and regional government levels, such as: i) the beliefs and practices that guide decision-making on planting, growing and harvesting crops that have been included in agricultural calendars; ii) local governance, including territorial conflicts between communities that have guided the process of selecting microzones; and iii) the protection of their intellectual property rights that has facilitated the process of obtaining the designation of origin for a variety of quinoa and the relevance of protecting ancestral knowledge, taken on by the National Institute for the Defence of Competition and the Protection of Intellectual Property (see Subsection 3.3).

84. In terms of the changes sought by the project, it is clear that, for the first time, the Life Plans establish an opportunity to recover agrobiodiversity in accordance with the Andean worldview and the concept of *sumak kawsay* (good living). This implies living in harmony with the physical and spiritual environment.[18] It involves not only food security as a national and local policy but also ensures a sustainable and resilient way of life. However, due to the decision not to allow the project to promote education on agrobiodiversity in local

[18] This concept is based on strengthening all types of capital of rural life, that is: i) human capital (knowledge, health, adaptation and resilience); ii) sociocultural capital (community, associations, tradition and well-being); iii) physical capital (terraces, irrigation, roads and housing); iv) environmental capital (biodiversity, water, soil and air); and v) economic capital (sale and exchange of surpluses, crafts and labour).

schools after the MTR, it was not possible to contribute to making the *sumak kawsay* concept known to new generations. It also was not possible to make it understood by other sectors, such as health and economic development, to ensure the incorporation of this concept in the implementation of social and economic programmes in rural areas of the participating departments.[19]

To what extent have gender considerations been considered in the design, implementation and M&E of the project?

85. The project document placed a strong emphasis on establishing a gender approach in the planning and implementation of all its main activities. This aimed to promote women's empowerment and required that these groups have full access to training and technical support resources. In addition, the results matrix stated that the participation rates of women and youth should not be less than 30 and 10 percent of the total participants, respectively. During implementation, it was found that the project emphasized the application of the gender approach in two main ways. First, this involves the family level so that men and women could learn together about their complementary roles in the recovery, conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity. Second, this involves paying special attention to vulnerable groups to identify their specific needs and interests, including older adults and youth aged 16 to 30. It is observed that, in the specific actions of the project such as the preparation of Life Plans, the gender approach promoted women's self-esteem and increased recognition of the roles they play in rural society.

86. Regarding the monitoring of the gender approach, the Evaluation Team identified a significant weakness in the periodic collection of data on the participation of women and youth for each project result, broken down by department. As a result, the project does not have these data, which would allow for an internal reflection on the effectiveness of the gender approach and guide its planning and communications strategy. The Evaluation Team considers that a formal strategy was not established to integrate the gender approach in the project document, as indicated in Finding 31 of the MTR. As a result, the project's communications actions have not emphasized the importance of women and youth in the recovery, conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity.

To what extent has the project ensured gender equity in participation and benefits, and what is its contribution to women's empowerment?

87. The Evaluation Team confirms that the participation of women at the departmental level and in the three main components of the project has been very satisfactory (see Table 6 in Appendix 1). Their participation has been higher than planned in the project document and, for example, in Puno, most of the final beneficiaries are women. It is also noted that out of the total of 3 750 men and women who participated, a total of 536 (14 percent) are young people, exceeding the target of 10 percent.

88. To determine whether this participation has resulted in the empowerment of women and youth, the Evaluation Team conducted interviews with these groups in all the departments visited. It was found that women occupy positions of authority in social and economic activities (*Yachachiqs* and *Yatichiris*, managers of three out of the four small businesses, participants in sales at fairs and producers of handicrafts) and felt more empowered. An important factor in their feeling of empowerment is the improvement in purchasing power

[19] In the health sector, a pilot project was carried out to combat anaemia and malnutrition in the pilot districts.

since several women responded that income generation allows them to invest in the education of their children and their housing. This observation was very frequent in Acora (Puno), where women had experience in selling their products. However, the Evaluation Team considers that this empowerment needs to be further strengthened. There is no official strategy at the regional and local government level to this end.

89. One of the activities that has contributed most to women's empowerment has been their participation in the implementation and management of seed banks. In departments such as Huancavelica and Apurímac, it was found that this activity has reinforced the status of women as the main "authorities" on seeds. The delivery of new equipment to support post-harvest seed conservation has also contributed to consolidating this status. The interviews indicate that the women's feeling of empowerment is based on the strengthening of their food sovereignty and on being recognized as official seed suppliers.

90. Regarding youth, it was found that they have begun a process of empowerment through their participation in the RJA. In particular, they have strengthened their knowledge of agrobiodiversity and their capacity for solidarity. In addition, their participation in economic activities, such as the sale of agrobiodiversity products at fairs, has contributed to their empowerment by allowing them to take on a commercial role, having the added advantage of knowing how to use technology, particularly smartphones. However, the project has not had sufficient time and resources to consolidate this process.

To what extent were environmental and social considerations taken into account in the design and implementation of the project?

91. The Evaluation Team has verified that the project document contains an analysis of the environmental and social safeguards and a plan to manage the identified risks (see Appendix 5 and Appendix 6 of the project document, respectively). The analysis of the environmental and social safeguards indicates that the following risks have been reviewed in the reports on the implementation of the programme.

   i. **Safeguard 2.** Biodiversity, ecosystems and natural habitats: Will this project be implemented in or around protected areas or natural habitats? Will it decrease biodiversity or alter ecosystem functionality? Will it use exotic species or genetic resources? Due to the creation of new agrobiodiversity zones and private conservation areas, the risk classification and mitigation actions should have been updated with respect to: i) the microzoning applied; ii) the protection and restoration plans; and iii) the protection of intellectual property with the National Institute for the Defence of Competition and the Protection of Intellectual Property.

   ii. **Safeguard 5.** Pest and pesticide management: Could this project lead to the direct or indirect procurement, supply or use of pesticides? The risk classification and mitigation measures should have been updated since some farmers confirmed the use of chemicals as a last resort, when natural methods do not stop pests, and the Peruvian State continues to support projects that promote technological packages in districts and provinces of the participating departments.

   iii. **Safeguard 9.** Could this project have Indigenous Peoples living in the area where activities will take place? As most project partners are part of Indigenous communities, the risk classification and mitigation measures, in particular the application of the FPIC and the identification of concerns of this group, should have been reviewed and integrated into a reflection that would guide the planning and communications strategy of the project.

3.6 Implementation and execution of the project

92. In assessing the quality of project implementation and execution, the Evaluation Team evaluates the performance of the implementing and executing agencies but does not assess the agencies themselves. In this regard, the Evaluation Team adhered to the descriptors of the GEF criteria and dimensions (see Annex 2 of the GEF terms of reference). Considering the nature of the OPIM established in this project and the operational partner agreement, the implementing agency was involved in some of the aspects managed by the executing agency and vice versa. However, beyond this implementation modality, the functions of the agencies were assessed. This had important effects on aspects of the implementation and execution of the project, which are analysed in this section.

Finding 17. The OPIM established in the project document involved various actors with operational and technical functions, in addition to including a high number of decision makers in the governance structure. This model proved to be unviable in the context of political instability in the country and high levels of staff turnover. This situation, together with the COVID-19 pandemic, affected the performance of the project, as well as the role of FAO as an implementing agency. This involved investing much more time and resources than expected.

Finding 18. Based on the recommendations of the MTR, audits and random evaluations, the re-engineering carried out in 2021 by the project management team resulted in the adoption of useful products that allowed for more structured technical and financial execution. However, its adoption and implementation resulted in a larger increase in administrative and operational processes than expected for the OPIM. Difficulties faced by the Project Management Unit in carrying out these processes and high staff turnover made it difficult to improve the efficiency of project execution.

Finding 19. The risks to the achievement of the results planned in the project document were identified by the main stakeholders and reviewed in the project progress reports on a quarterly and annual basis. However, these risks were not integrated into the planning and M&E system, which would have allowed mitigating their impact on project performance. Cases were identified where project activities were affected by the lack of mitigation measures, especially in Component 1 and Component 2. An important factor was the lack of a strategy to reduce the barriers identified in the project document, such as promoting awareness raising among the public and decision makers on the multidimensional benefits of agrobiodiversity.

3.6.1 Quality of implementation

To what extent has FAO complied with project identification, conception, appraisal, preparation, approval and implementation, and control and supervision?

93. One of the MTR's conclusions showed that "coordination and decision-making mechanisms are not functioning adequately, including communication between FAO, PROFONANPE and the Ministry of Environment within the project" (Conclusion 7). To rectify this problem, it was recommended to "rethink and/or clarify the roles of the agencies (FAO, PROFONANPE, the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation) both in terms of technical aspects and in the direction, supervision, responsibility and administration of the project […] and give a more active role

to the members of the PSC…" (Recommendation 1). Also, as part of financial audits and random evaluations, the need to improve the internal and financial control frameworks applied to the project were identified. In response to this situation, the National Project Directorate, made up of the Ministry of Environment, PROFONANPE and FAO, carried out a re-engineering of the project.

94. FAO, in its role as implementing agency, ensured the involvement and consensus of all stakeholders in this process. The outcome involved several products: i) the adoption of a project operational manual at the end of 2021 that defines timelines, flows and stakeholder participation in the approval of products, purchases and contracts,[20] including an annex with a governance manual that established the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in accordance with the governance section of the project document, the operational partner agreement and the guidelines of the Ministry of Environment; ii) adjustments to the project's results matrix under the leadership of the Lead Technical Officer to improve the alignment of the results chain;[21] iii) the approval of a strategy to implement Outcome 1.2; iv) the development of the global operational plan and the annual operational plan based on new formats, cross-referencing technical and financial information to improve reporting on results; and v) the review of quarterly reports, using these new formats.

95. According to the interviews conducted, the re-engineering process lasted several months and enabled more structured monitoring of the technical and financial execution of the project than in the previous phase. There, the process was rather based on the quarterly budget, and there was no evident progress towards the results. However, the Project Management Unit faced challenges in complying with these new procedures and reviews with the expected quality (see execution challenges in paragraph 103). To solve these problems, FAO Peru, in its role as implementing agency, developed the following technical assistance actions: i) activated the Project Management Team under the leadership of the Lead Technical Officer to oversee the technical, operational and administrative management of the project; ii) created a committee to support the Project Management Unit in order to ensure the quality of publications and compliance with the GEF rules; iii) carried out four field missions in Cusco and one in Puno, led by the Lead Technical Officer in 2022, in order to define the exit and closure strategy of the project; iv) hired a part-time technical specialist to support the Project Management Unit in actions such as the review of technical products, the formulation of the global operating plan and the annual operating plans for 2022 and 2023, among others; and v) appointed full-time staff for the re-engineering process and permanent coordination with the project team.

96. Overall, it is observed that these inputs improved planning and execution compared to the previous phase of the MTR. However, the re-engineering also resulted in greater controls for the Project Management Unit to organize the financial and technical execution of the project. This resulted in a significant increase in administrative and operational processes. This forced the Project Management Unit staff to spend a lot of time planning and

[20] The Evaluation Team was informed that the project's operating manual existed in several versions, published between 2019 and 2021, but it was not formally adopted.

[21] As part of the review process, working sessions were held with the project team, PROFONANPE and the Ministry of the Environment to review the indicators and means of verification. This ensured that a common understanding would be developed. The MTR identified that there was no common understanding of the results chain and the means of verification.

implementing these processes. In addition, due to the high turnover of staff among the stakeholders, it was difficult to expedite project execution as expected. This turnover included changes in the FAO Peru team and the FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, the national directors of the Ministry of Environment (three changes), and the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation (multiple changes), as well as in regional and local governments, which included new administrations in 2023.[22] As a contingency measure, after the MTR, FAO designated two people to support project execution.

97. The re-engineering carried out in 2021 resulted in significant improvements. However, it could not resolve the problems related to the burdensome administrative and compliance mechanisms.[23] The design of the OPIM established in the project document involved a high number of decision makers in the governance structure that were difficult to manage due to the high turnover of experienced staff. In addition, the project failed to ensure the proactive involvement of some important entities of the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation – such as the Directorate of Agrarian Policy and Agrarian Regulations, AGRO RURAL and SENASA – from 2022 onwards. Therefore, to date, there are no formal institutional mechanisms like cooperation agreements between the Ministry of Environment and actors such as INIA, SERFOR, SENASA and AGRO RURAL.[24] FAO, in its close relationship with the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation and in its role as technical guide and supervisor, could have supported the Ministry of Environment in facilitating the establishment of such mechanisms (see Number 103). The project also could have stimulated exchanges of experiences and synergies with other projects financed by the GEF and implemented in Peru by FAO or other agencies (UNDP, UNEP or IFAD). For its part, FAO promoted coordination between the communities of practice on family farming.

To what extent have risks been identified and managed?

98. The project has a matrix that identifies five main risks related to: i) frequent changes in national and local authorities (moderate risk); ii) high turnover of officials, which affects the political will to support the project (moderately high risk); iii) lack of interest of the final beneficiaries to participate in the project (moderate risk); iv) socioenvironmental conflicts, especially those caused by the mining sector and by disputes over territories between communities (moderate risk); and v) failure to comply with co-financing commitments (low risk). The analysis of these risks confirms that they all remain relevant and that they are subject to quarterly and annual analysis in the reports on the execution of the programme (see Appendix 4 of the project document). The Evaluation Team finds that the project has complied with the review of the risks, but it is less evident how this review is integrated into the annual planning, implementation and monitoring of the project. Furthermore, the classification of the risks analysed in the reports on the execution of the programme did not change substantially, despite the enormous changes experienced in the political

[22] It is also worth mentioning that there was a change in the coordinator for Outcome 2 in the last quarter of 2022.

[23] The report of the Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations system (2021) highlights that: "the factors that hinder the successful implementation of the OPIM [Operational Partners Implementation Modality] projects are: burdensome administrative and compliance mechanisms, inefficient project management, and a flawed selection process for operational partners" (p. 11).

[24] In fact, the Project Management Unit reports to the National Family Farming Plan, which is being implemented by AGRO RURAL (see paragraph 26).

situation in Peru between 2020 and 2023. For example, despite the high turnover of national and subnational state authorities in 2023, Risk 1 continues to be classified as moderate in the report on the execution of the programme in the period from 2022 to 2023. Similarly, Risk 6 maintains its classification as moderate in the report on the execution of the programme, despite the severe drought that has affected Peru since 2021. Finally, the report on the execution of the programme identified the "operational-financial sustainability of the Kusikuy channel" as a new risk. This includes a list of mitigation actions and progress on its implementation. However, the Evaluation Team verified with ASPEC that the Kusikuy channel had not been operational since January 2023.

How adequate and flexible has the project team's response been to external (context) and internal (funding, scheduling, staffing, etc.) changes during its implementation?

99. The most significant external change affecting project implementation was the issuance of Supreme Decree No. 002-2020 (Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation, 2020). This decree forced the project to abandon the application of the PGS. The Evaluation Team considers that the proposal of the Project Management Unit to replace the PGS with the internal control system was a good example of flexibility in seeking and proposing appropriate solutions according to the political situation in 2021.

How effective and adequate was the response to emerging situations (e.g. effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, social mobilizations, and changes in regional and local authorities) and the implications of this for project implementation and outcomes?

100. The project was found to have responded very effectively to the COVID-19 pandemic, the social mobilizations resulting from the constitutional crisis of September 2019 and the political unrest of 2022. Among the most effective responses to these situations, the following initiatives (which were proposed by the Project Management Unit, with FAO's approval) stand out:

i. The employment of Yachachiqs and Yatichiris from the communities, under the framework of the rural talent programme and together with the facilitators, ensured the continuity of field activities in complex political periods and during the COVID-19 pandemic, when only local people could travel within their territories.

ii. The cooperation established with the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion allowed the local population to participate in online training sessions during the COVID-19 pandemic (see Subsection 3.3). It is estimated that this initiative managed to cover around 70 percent of the people originally registered for training sessions on the internal control system.

iii. The decision to promote Farmer Field Schools, family banks and community nurseries ensured that families could largely continue to operate. At the same time, the project followed up with families and leaders through WhatsApp and other applications.

iv. The decision not to have a physical space for the Project Management Unit ensured that much of the internal communications were handled online – from the private homes of project staff or from the offices of institutions such as the Bartolomé de las Casas Centre in Cusco, where the Evaluation Team had a face-to-face meeting with project staff.

v. Awareness-raising activities were carried out with previous administrations of regional and local governments.

101. These responses contributed to maintaining project continuity at the local level. However, at the institutional level, they were less effective due to the lack of a strategy to manage risks – particularly the 2023 budget risk. The project had resources, but it was not contemplated that it would need contingency funds for the awareness-raising and training round with the new regional and local government authorities. Because of this, the project needs to resolve the recovery of the IGV to increase the sustainability of the achievements made by the project (see Subsection 3.8 on risks to sustainability). In recent communications, the Evaluation Team had information on PROFONANPE's progress in recovering the IGV, which would allow the project to be extended by investing in activities that support its sustainability.

3.6.2 Quality of execution

To what extent have the implementing entities fulfilled their functions and responsibilities associated with management and administration in overseeing the efficient and effective implementation of the project and its overall coordination?

102. Overall, the quality of implementation by the PSC has been moderately satisfactory in administrative terms. The PSC has been found to have fulfilled its functions by meeting every six months to approve key project documents, such as operational plans, progress reports, adjustments to the budget and the overall operational plan, among others. In addition, it established the only space where stakeholders at the national and subnational levels could engage in dialogue on project implementation. However, its role was mainly limited to monitoring project goals due to staff turnover problems in almost all institutions represented by the PSC. Also, insufficient monitoring of the qualitative aspects of implementation to identify the weaknesses, threats, strengths and opportunities of the project was observed.

103. Regarding the quality of the execution carried out by the National Directorate of the Project, composed of the Ministry of Environment, PROFONANPE and FAO, it was found that the re-engineering of the project in 2021 improved its internal coordination. The current director has shown interest in supporting project execution, as well as implementing the recommendations of this terminal evaluation. However, some challenges were identified in the execution of the project:

i. The Ministry of Environment applied its framework agreement with the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation but did not establish a specific cooperation mechanism with the agencies attached to the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation. This way, they would have formal roles in the execution of the project, particularly in the activities of Component 1 and Component 2, in which the absence of important actors such as AGRO RURAL, SENASA and CAP is observed.

ii. The project team was unable to establish a partnership with the Ministry of Culture that would allow it to stimulate a national dialogue on the importance and role of Life Plans in the country's decentralized planning system.

iii. The project team did not create a robust mechanism to identify synergies with other interventions funded by the GEF or other donors on topics of mutual interest, such as ecosystem restoration or small business development.

iv. Administrative and operational processes could limit progress in project execution, for example, given the time taken for some processes to be completed before project activities could be implemented (e.g. development of the project's operating manual). The project had to submit its requests two months in advance for approval by the Ministry of Environment. If this was not done within this period, then the requests and activities had to be rescheduled. In addition, the Ministry of Environment's responses could include additional questions which, in some cases, delayed activities for up to a year. In addition, FAO had to give its approval for certain actions in accordance with the deadlines defined in the project's operating manual, for example, in contracting and procurement over certain amounts.[25] It also had to approve progress reports, technical documents and financial reports. These reviews were carried out by different FAO personnel who had to give their approval (FAO Peru and the FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean).[26]

v. The reformulation of some indicators after the MTR forced the readjustment of the operational plans and budget for 2021. In 2022, the agreement to extend the duration of the project until 2024 required new budgetary changes, which needed the approval of the PSC.

vi. The preparation of various quarterly financial reports from PROFONANPE to the Ministry of Environment, the project progress report for FAO and the annual report (Programme Implementation Report) for the GEF involved investing a great deal of time in drafting these documents. Specific requirements and review processes contributed to increased administrative processes.

vii. In the absence of staff with the technical capacity required for adequate monitoring in all regions, it was necessary to hire staff to properly operate the Project Management Unit. Some of these employees terminated their contracts and the operational partner has lost important institutional capacity developed through this operational approach.

104. The Project Management Unit was formed with staff recruited under the coordination and supervision of the National Project Directorate. The team included a national coordinator, consultants responsible for each of the expected results (Outcome 1.1, Outcome 1.2, Outcome 3 and Outcome 4), a communications professional and a specialist in social safeguards and gender. In addition, the project included an administrative assistant, a technical assistant and experts to provide short- and medium-term forecasts. It was found that all staff had worked on the project since its inception, except for the consultant responsible for Outcome 2, who left the project in 2022. Regarding the staff profiles, it was determined that they largely match the profiles specified in the project document.

[25] FAO participates in contracts and acquisitions over USD 50 000.

[26] The review is carried out jointly by FAO (FAO Peru and the FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean), and a single response is sent within the specified time frame.

105. The Evaluation Team found that the Project Management Unit was made up of a team of consultants with extensive experience who carried out their functions adequately. For example, the consultant responsible for Outcome 1.1 has extensive experience in agrobiodiversity and ancestral knowledge and is a Quechua speaker, which was essential for communicating with most of the participating communities.

106. Regarding the quality of work carried out by the Project Management Unit, Subsection 3.3 found that most of the outputs were of good quality and supported by a capable and committed local technical team, made up of facilitators, *Yachachiqs*, technicians, community leaders, the RJA, and the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion, among others. However, two major weaknesses were identified: first, the Project Management Unit's management of information and data for M&E was poor. For example, for this evaluation, it was difficult to obtain information on the stakeholders in each department in the initial phase and to prepare the tables in Appendix 1. For this reason, FAO had to invest considerable time in technical assistance, control and quality of the technical documents, reports and communications of the project. Second, the Project Management Unit demonstrated weak marketing capabilities, which meant that a value chain promoted with ASPEC could not be maintained in 2023 and that Agrobio was used as a guarantee for agroecological products without an adequate legal basis. It is possible that the previous consultant for Outcome 1.2 did not have the appropriate experience to handle these issues, despite the alerts and corrective actions requested by FAO.

3.7 Monitoring and evaluation

Finding 20. The monitoring plan, based on the number and type of indicators in the results matrix and the monitoring formats (reports on the implementation and progress of the programme), included quantitative monitoring at the level of activities and products without qualitative indicators aimed at measuring project results. This approach encouraged the micromanagement of data rather than a system that stimulates learning about results and capturing lessons learned, while supporting informed decision-making.

3.7.1 Quality of the design of the monitoring and evaluation plan

How practical, appropriate and sufficient is the M&E plan to monitor environmental, gender and socioeconomic outcomes?

107. The monitoring plan was designed to monitor the large number of indicators and their targets set out in the project document. In total, the project has monitored a total of 38 indicators under 7 core indicators linked to Outcomes 1.1 to 4. The quality of the indicators is considered satisfactory as they are measurable over time against the targets set out in the results matrix. However, it is noted that the identification of 38 indicators may limit the capacity of the project team for timely and effective monitoring. Interviews showed that the Project Management Unit spent a lot of time and resources in collecting and validating field data, considering the weaknesses in this unit noted in Subsection 3.6. In addition, all indicators have a quantitative approach to measuring outputs and activities, making it difficult to monitor and evaluate the expected changes as defined in the theory of change. In this regard, interviews confirmed that the theory of change in the project document has not been applied.

108. The M&E plan is focused on collecting data to support the drafting of progress reports that the project is required to submit semi-annually to the PSC using FAO formats, as project progress reports, and to the GEF, as Programme Implementation Reports. In addition, as the Programme Implementation Report is submitted once a year and project progress reports twice a year, the Project Management Unit is required to produce two progress reports each July, resulting in the drafting of two reports with the same purpose but with different formats. In addition, as there are 38 indicators, the development of the results matrix is a long process depending on the quality of the information provided, which is generally in a summarized format. However, the Evaluation Team appreciates that this strengthens the micromanagement approach by capturing lessons learned based on the results.

109. Implementing the results matrix in this way does not facilitate the internal evaluation (based on a reflection of the progress achieved) or external evaluation (by independent evaluators) of important issues such as cross-cutting priorities. For example, the Evaluation Team held many exchanges with the Project Management Unit before constructing the tables of achievements by result (see Appendix 1).

3.7.2 Implementation of monitoring and evaluation

To what extent has the implementation of the M&E plan been efficient and contributed to the achievement of project results? Has the M&E information been used appropriately to make timely decisions and promote learning during project implementation?

110. In the implementation of the M&E plan, it was observed that the project has followed the indicators in the progress reports by output, allowing the progress towards the established targets to be reported. The evaluation shows an approach oriented towards the reporting of activities and outputs instead of focusing on the level of achievement of each outcome and lessons learned with respect to the level of compliance achieved.

111. The project did not establish an M&E system that included the systematization of lessons learned each year for the purpose of strengthening informed decision-making. A systematization report was prepared in October 2023, but it was too late because there was not enough time to act on the lessons and recommendations. In previous years, there were opportunities to address lessons learned. However, they were not adequately followed up or integrated into planning. For example, during the Lead Technical Officer's field mission in August 2022, lessons learned were captured regarding the sustainability of the Kusikuy platform and actions to be taken by the Project Management Unit. However, this information was not used to follow up, make decisions or improve the operation and effectiveness of this platform. This prevented participants from seeing that there was a high demand for agrobiodiversity products in the departmental markets, which could generate higher incomes than Kusikuy (see paragraph 98 on the risks to the sustainability of the platform in the report on the execution of the programme).

112. Furthermore, the reporting of progress (Programme Implementation Report and project progress report formats) does not include detailed information on the progress of the activities implemented by department. The Evaluation Team had to request the compilation of the tables in Appendix 1 to support the analysis. This is considered to have contributed to the lack of information management and weaknesses in monitoring and evaluating results. It also affected the timely identification of lessons learned and good practices for

internal use in supporting activities such as the development of Regional Environmental Information Systems.

113. It is concluded that there were two major weaknesses with respect to the M&E applied by the project. First, the project design did not include qualitative indicators aimed at measuring results (transformative changes in attitudes and practices) or an initial evaluation to review the established indicators.[27] In addition, the project did not capitalize on the spaces of the expanded technical committees to systematize its strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats, and to identify and propose the necessary changes to the PSC that would allow for optimizing effectiveness and efficiency. Stakeholders waited for the MTR findings to take actions to improve project performance. In 2022, FAO, in coordination with the GEF focal point at the Ministry of Environment, led the process of capturing lessons learned and opportunities for improvement. This resulted in a lessons learned document prepared jointly with the Ministry of Environment, the Project Management Unit and PROFONANPE.

3.8 Sustainability

Finding 21. Political, institutional, financial and environmental risks are substantial and jeopardize the sustainability of the project's results. The main risks are associated with the potential loss of capacity and institutional memory due to the high turnover of authorities and staff, and the lack of coordination mechanisms and formal financing commitments for the continuity of key activities. This is linked to weaknesses in risk management in the planning, implementation and monitoring of the project. In addition, the project does not have a comprehensive exit strategy to ensure the sustainability of the results achieved to date.

How sustainable are the results achieved to date at environmental, social, institutional and financial levels? What are the key risks that may affect the sustainability of the project's achievements?

114. The project was classified as moderate risk in the project document (p. 92). However, there was no monitoring of risks in the M&E system, nor any update of the risk classification in the Programme Implementation Reports.[28] According to the risk analysis carried out by the Evaluation Team, in line with the GEF and FAO requirements, the current risk to the project in sustaining its results is substantial.

115. **Political risk: substantial.** Political instability in the country increased during the final phase of implementation. The expected entry of new authorities in regional and local governments in 2023 could reduce the institutional capacity and memory related to agrobiodiversity that was developed with the officials who participated in and supported the project through the end of 2022. In addition, political instability is likely to return in the run-up to the new presidential elections scheduled for 2024. Consequently, the project could lose partners in institutions such as AGRO RURAL, which are key to integrating agrobiodiversity into the policy and action plan for family farming. At the community level, the participating communities are a minority in the 13 districts involved and face limitations

[27] The PSC adopted some adjustments to the results matrix in 2020, but these were not accepted.

[28] An important observation related to the risk classification in the project document is that the risks presented do not follow the risk categories that the GEF and FAO require to be applied in the mid-term and terminal evaluation reports.

in ensuring the financing of agrobiodiversity projects in participatory budgets. The financing of these projects depends on the mayor and governor of the regional government.

116. **Institutional risk: substantial.** This level of risk is justified by three reasons. First, institutional instability and the absence of formal agreements between the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation are a substantial risk for the continuity of many project activities. Second, the project, being implemented largely by external consultants, did not succeed in becoming institutionalized as the GEF had hoped. The institutional memory and capacities developed by the project could be lost at the level of the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation after its closure. Third, the project failed to establish synergies with some State institutions and programmes that could give continuity to important initiatives promoted by the project. In particular, the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation is clearly willing to integrate agrobiodiversity into the update of the multiannual AGRO RURAL plan, as well as take charge of a series of activities to support the continuity of the project (see Recommendation 2).

117. **Financial risk: substantial.** Four main reasons have been identified to justify this classification. First, the financial sustainability of key services has not been defined to support the ReSCA, Farmer Field Schools, seed banks, pasture closures, the four supported small businesses, or the development of agroecological brands in agrobiodiversity zones. In addition, there is no clear monitoring plan in 2024 to ensure the prioritization of the five ecological public investment projects, which are integrated into the Multiannual Investment Programming of the Ministry of Economy and Finance. Second, there is no State commitment to develop a payments system to compensate family farmers or their communities for the global environmental benefits they provide through the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity. Third, no official commitments were identified in the private sector to establish short and inclusive value chains with agrobiodiversity producers of interest to supply niche markets in Lima and other regions. Fourth, the lack of timely and complete reimbursement of the IGV by September 2023 is considered an important risk (see Subsection 3.4).

118. **Fiduciary risk: low.** The GEF funds were identified as having been managed in accordance with the GEF and FAO accounting and auditing standards and procedures. An analysis of the letter of agreement arrangements confirms that provisions have been made to ensure that FAO personnel can conduct audits, random checks and field inspections at any time.

119. **Social risk: substantial.** This rating is justified for three reasons. First, territorial conflicts over water and grazing rights were identified. Although the project was very careful not to work in these areas, the problem could escalate with climate variability and change, as well as worsening political crises. Second, monitoring of the microzone restoration plans is not guaranteed, and there is no clarity on the strategies to be applied to mitigate social risks that could affect local governance. Third, in the restoration plans, Life Plans and the CLDPs, there is no evidence of the integration of social conflict management or conflict resolution, which is key to strengthening territorial governance at district and provincial levels.

120. **Risks related to climate variability and change: substantial.** This rating is justified for three reasons. First, most of the interviewed family farmers expressed vulnerability to the potential risk of losing their crops due to frost, hail and drought. Therefore, it is necessary

to scale up family or communal seed banks, diversify crops and install living fences around their farms, which will allow them to reduce their vulnerability to climate variability in the short term and adapt to climate change in the long term. Second, the massif area covering 420 000 ha that benefited from restoration and reforestation under the project (Outcome 1.2) faces prolonged droughts that have already caused the loss of 40 percent of the queñua plants that were planted in 2022. Third, risk management was not adequately integrated as a cross-cutting axis in the development and maintenance of the 14 established Farmer Field Schools. In this regard, it is crucial to strengthen resilience and communicate this message in educational centres.

121. **Risks of ecological degradation: substantial.** The growth of informal mining, the plans of the new administrations that promote technological packages, and the degradation of soils in areas adjacent to the agrobiodiversity zones represent substantial ecological risks for the agrobiodiversity zones and the private conservation area in Atiquipa. It is observed that farmers in Atiquipa rejected the adoption of agroecological production on the pretext that it would reduce their productivity. Regarding informal mining, the lack of land use planning and law enforcement represent serious challenges to curbing its expansion (see Figure 6 and Figure 7).

122. **Health-related risks: low-moderate.** The risks of the COVID-19 pandemic have decreased and, since 2022, project activities have not been affected by restrictions. However, health risks persist, in particular diseases related to malnutrition (especially anaemia) in a large number of women, children and older people in rural areas. This risk is considered moderate since the nutritional approach to agrobiodiversity still needs to be improved to ensure that iron-rich crops and local plants are included in local diets in a sustainable manner.

123. Finally, it was determined that neither the project document nor the MTR mentioned the need for and importance of having a flexible and comprehensive project exit strategy taken on by the PSC. It is noted that, due to the low level of execution of the project through 2022, the re-engineering of the project focused on intensifying the implementation of the planned activities. For these reasons, the first four recommendations of this report focus on providing specific guidelines for the project's exit strategy.

4. Conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned

4.1 Conclusions

Conclusion 1. Relevance: Moderately Satisfactory. The project is highly aligned with national policies, strategies and plans dedicated to the conservation and protection of genetic resources, the restoration of ecosystems and the promotion of rural development. Alignment with the objectives and priority areas of the GEF-6 and FAO is high, in particular with Objective 3 for biodiversity (Programmes 7 and 9), demonstrating not only the relevance of the project but also its additionality (see Conclusion 4). The recovery of the ancestral agricultural system practiced in the area is very relevant for the participating communities that see in the recovery, conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity not only a response to their food security needs but also an opportunity to rediscover the Andean worldview based on "good living" or *sumak kawsay* and *suma qamaña* in the Quechua and Aymara languages, respectively. However, the project's relevance may be compromised by the need for constant awareness raising due to staff turnover, especially in regional and local governments, which inhibits the continuity of established processes.

Conclusion 2. Coherence: Moderately Satisfactory. The synergies established at the national level, with public institutions such as SERFOR, the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion, and the Ministry of Culture, have shown that, with the support of different specialized agencies, it is possible to achieve results of mutual interest. However, the lack of formal coordination mechanisms to establish complementarity between the project and other Peruvian State programmes, including other international projects, has reduced opportunities to co-finance activities, carry out training sessions, publish documents of mutual interest, avoid the duplication of resources, and stimulate exchanges on environmental information, lessons learned and good practices, among others.

Conclusion 3. Effectiveness (related to the fulfilment of specific objectives): Moderately Satisfactory. The decision to integrate four objectives (two environmental and two developmental) was too ambitious for a five-year project with a budget of only USD 9 230 000 in an area with barriers and risks that were identified in the project document. In addition, the project faced several external challenges: the COVID-19 pandemic from 2020 to 2022, as well as national political crises and a continuous turnover of key authorities. The conclusion on the level of fulfilment of each objective is as follows.

i. **First environmental objective:** develop, test and consolidate incentives to ensure the sustainable use of agrobiodiversity and associated rural livelihoods. The level of compliance with this objective is satisfactory since the project has managed to exceed most of the goals of Component 1.1 with a high level of satisfaction among the final beneficiaries. In particular, it has shown that the application of the ReSCA mechanism, the Farmer Field Schools, the seed banks, the implementation of Life Plans, and the recognition of agrobiodiversity zones have contributed to empowering the final beneficiaries and their organizations with a viable model to scale up the recovery, conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity for the benefit of rural communities in the participating departments.

ii. **Second environmental objective:** support the sustainable use, management and regeneration of the natural resources on which agrobiodiversity depends, that is, forests, soil and water. The level of compliance is moderately satisfactory. The project has managed to zone and microzone 12 of the 13 participating districts and to train a total of 486 people in the EEZ, but it has not achieved the approval and implementation of any of the restoration plans. In addition, the direct restoration and reforestation of landscapes totals 2 057 ha (10 percent of the direct reforestation and improved management target). The assignment of only one person to coordinate the implementation of the forest strategy under Component 1.2 contributed to this situation.

iii. **First development objective:** strengthen the planning, policy and regulatory frameworks, marketing, and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity. The Evaluation Team concludes that, at the legislative level, the degree of compliance with this objective is moderately satisfactory. The project has managed to strengthen the local planning framework with the Life Plans, the integration of agrobiodiversity in the CLDP and the improvement of the Regional Environmental Information Systems. These contributions promoted an important change in the management of environmental information, encouraged the reform of the national platform (National Environmental Information System), and supported the formulation of public investment projects to scale up agrobiodiversity and the restoration of Andean ecosystems (ecological public investment projects). However, the Life Plans have not been adopted in the local planning framework. Also, there are no guarantees of financing for the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity in the participatory budgets of local governments and in the five ecological public investment projects that have been registered in the Multiannual Investment Programming as of September 2023. At the commercial level, the degree of compliance with the first development objective is moderately unsatisfactory. The project failed to advance the agroecological certification of agrobiodiversity products in accordance with the current legislative framework, and the value chain (Kusikuy) established with ASPEC failed to register sufficient sales to be profitable. The ANPE and CAP were not actively involved in the promotion and marketing of agrobiodiversity products. In addition, although the project demonstrated that the sale of agrobiodiversity products in regional markets is profitable, it was not able to promote these sales at all the fairs in the departmental capitals – either with the support of AGRO RURAL of the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation or through alliances with the private sector.

iv. **Second development objective:** mainstream agrobiodiversity in agriculture, forestry and land use planning policies. The level of compliance is moderately unsatisfactory. The project contributed to strengthening the Regional and Municipal Environmental Commissions so that agrobiodiversity is present in the dialogue on territorial planning and regional and local development. However, its level of impact on agrarian policy at the national level may have been limited by frequent changes of ministers and senior staff in the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation. The project has not had an impact on the family farming policy, agroecological promotion policies, or on social and cultural programmes – especially the *Qali Warma* programme of the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion – where there is the opportunity to be suppliers of agrobiodiversity products to school feeding programmes.

Conclusion 4. Effectiveness (related to additionality). The extension of the natural protected area system through the creation of private conservation areas and the expansion of agrobiodiversity zones have been important to protect the global environmental benefits associated with agrobiodiversity, as well as to establish a new form of natural protected area as a contribution at the national and global levels.[29] In

[29] In China, a network of Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems has been officially established.

conclusion, the funds provided by the GEF promoted an innovative approach that recognizes Peru as one of the most mega agrobiodiverse countries in the world and the most important for the *in situ* conservation of agrobiodiversity.

Conclusion 5. Efficiency: Moderately Satisfactory. Regarding the GEF funds, it is concluded that the project has generated good value for money by supporting the GEF to protect and conserve global environmental benefits in Peru (the GEF-6: Biodiversity Objective 3, Programme 7; Biodiversity Objective 4, Programme 9). However, considering the data collected up to 30 September 2023, it is noted that, in terms of the development objective, the cost to establish the four agrobiodiversity zones and the private conservation area has been low (USD 67.09 per ha), while the cost of training, in relation to the number of final beneficiaries trained, has been high (USD 2 182.74 per participating family). Regarding the counterpart co-financing materialized as of September 2023 (in cash and in kind), it is concluded that the percentage mobilized was 82 percent. This allowed for the financing of operations as planned. However, PROFONANPE needed support from FAO to calculate the materialized co-financing. With 90 percent of the GEF funds allocated and some key activities still to be completed in the closure phase, the analysis of the technical and financial feasibility of the closure plan is deemed relevant.

Conclusion 6. Cross-cutting priorities. The project has applied the FPIC and gender approaches in an effective and inclusive manner. It is concluded that the application of these approaches has been a factor that has directly contributed to the high participation of Indigenous communities in general (including older people and local elders), as well as women (50 percent) and youth (14 percent). However, although the communications strategy was guided by a committee of communicators, which included a representative of FAO Peru, its focus on addressing the specific needs of Indigenous women was limited. In particular, the needs for access to information and training to calculate production costs, record sales, calculate gross and net profits, and manage an inventory of agrobiodiversity products were not adequately integrated. Finally, regarding environmental and social safeguards, it is evident that they were not applied or monitored in partnership with key actors, such as INIA for monitoring the application of the ReSCA mechanism (Environmental and Social Safeguard 2) and pesticides (Environmental and Social Safeguard 5), or the Ministry of Culture with respect to the application of FPIC (Environmental and Social Safeguard 9).

Conclusion 7. Quality of project implementation: Moderately Satisfactory. The OPIM and the governance structure included a large and diverse number of actors involved in operational, technical and decision-making functions which, combined with external factors, affected the performance of the project. With the re-engineering of the project in 2021, useful actions and products were developed to organize project execution. However, there were difficulties in establishing a flexible execution system in line with the national context. The adoption and monitoring of these products increased the number of administrative and operational processes, requiring the investment of more time and resources by FAO in its role as implementing agency, as well as by the Project Management Unit, which presented additional challenges.

Conclusion 8. Quality of project execution: Moderately Unsatisfactory. Despite coming together to carry out their administrative functions, the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation failed to establish proactive cooperation in key areas of the project. Formal coordination mechanisms with entities such as SENASA or AGRO RURAL were not achieved. At the level of the Project Management Unit, the quality of its work was satisfactory and there was a high level of commitment from staff to the final beneficiaries. However, execution was compromised due to the administrative and operational processes that were necessary to execute the project activities, the frequent rotation of staff at all levels of government, the lack of efficient management and systematization of information and data, and inadequate monitoring of the project. Also, there was a lack of key staff that could have accelerated the achievement of some results, particularly those related to Outcome 1.2 and Outcome 2.

Conclusion 9. Quality of M&E design and implementation: Moderately Unsatisfactory. The implementation of the project's M&E system based on the results matrix of the project document stimulated the micromanagement of a total of 38 quantitative indicators. Thus, the project produced many progress reports (quarterly, half-yearly and annual) on the level of achievement in meeting goals related to specific activities and outputs and published a wide range of informative communications on agrobiodiversity. However, without the inclusion of qualitative indicators aimed at measuring the results and changes generated, it was difficult to identify and reflect on the strengths, opportunities and weaknesses of the project to guide informed planning, stimulate political advocacy to generate change, and raise awareness among stakeholders and the public about the multiple benefits of conserving and sustaining agrobiodiversity in the Andean highlands.

Conclusion 10. Sustainability: Moderately Unlikely. The project needs to complete some important activities in the closure phase and ensure funding, ownership and continuity of key activities. In particular, formal institutional mechanisms, such as coordination agreements, have not been established with key public institutions to sustain the results achieved by the project under Components 1 to 3. Furthermore, the strategy for the financial sustainability of key services, such as ReSCA, Farmer Field Schools and seed banks, is unclear. The sustainability of the project is threatened by changes in regional and local government authorities in 2023 that require awareness raising among incoming officials on the multidimensional benefits provided by the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity, as well as the restoration of ecosystem services and the sale of certified agrobiodiversity products in the five participating departments. Finally, the project requires a comprehensive and flexible exit strategy.

4.2 Recommendations

4.2.1 For the execution of the project in the closing phase

Recommendation 1. For PROFONANPE, the Ministry of Environment and FAO in relation to Conclusion 5 and Conclusion 10. The executing agencies should carry out an update of the closure plan and exit strategy, which should be flexible and coordinated. This should include an analysis of the technical and financial feasibility of the actions, as well as mechanisms to ensure long-term economic and financial sustainability are determined, taking into account Recommendation 2 and Recommendation 3.

Recommendation 2. For the Ministry of Environment, the PSC, the Project Management Unit and FAO in relation to Conclusion 2, Conclusion 3 and Conclusion 10. The extension of the project should be oriented towards implementing initiatives that help to consolidate the sustainability of the achievements (Number 1.1 and Number 2 of the results matrix), considering coordination mechanisms and their related implementation plans with INIA, the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion, the Cooperation Fund for Social Development, AGRO RURAL of the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation, SERFOR and CAP. The following are suggestions for implementing this recommendation in the proposed extended phase:

i. The Project Management Unit and the INIA focal points or the Ministry of Environment should identify and agree upon a cooperation mechanism regarding the INIA workplan in the agrobiodiversity zones. This plan should include all pending activities identified by the Evaluation Team, in particular: i) the registration of all cultivars mentioned in Table 1 (see Appendix 1); ii) the certification of native potato varieties through the "potato certificate" granted by SENASA through Supreme Decree No. 010-2018 (Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation, 2018), as well as the certification of other relevant cultivars; and iii) the monitoring of Farmer Field Schools, seed banks and the management of agrobiodiversity brands.

ii. The Ministry of Environment should consolidate its work with the *Yachachiqs* and the youth of the RJA, supporting the establishment of a network of extension agents and local promoters who support INIA in the implementation of the workplan, as recommended in the previous point, to consolidate and monitor ReSCA, Farmer Field Schools and seed banks with the surplus production to be sold at regional fairs or processed in the processing centres. To this end, the Ministry of Environment would have to request the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion and the Cooperation Fund for Social Development to officially employ the *Yachachiqs* who worked in the agrobiodiversity areas covered by the project. For example, the *Haku Wiñay* (Let's Grow) programme, which has been previously supported by FAO, is employing *Yachachiq* in the department of Huancavelica (Salcedo du Bois and Arca Zimmermann, 2021).

iii. The Ministry of Environment could establish a cooperation mechanism and a workplan with the *Qali Warma* programme of the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion and AGRO RURAL. This could identify a system to certify agrobiodiversity products in each district and purchase surpluses directly from associations and cooperatives for consumption in schools in the same districts and provinces where they are located. In particular, it is proposed to use agrobiodiversity products to produce nutritious soups with the aim of implementing *Qali Warma* as a multifunctional strategy.

iv. It is recommended that the project prepare systematized information by department and district on the monitoring sheets of ReSCA and its app, *Causa y mama*.

v. The Ministry of Environment and the Project Management Unit should establish a dialogue with AGRO RURAL of the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation in order to identify the strategies to be used to: i) integrate agrobiodiversity into the policy, action plan and legal framework for the Promotion and Development of Family Farming in the Andean zone; ii) establish a cooperation mechanism between the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation and AGRO RURAL so that the women and youth participating in the project can sell their agrobiodiversity products, both at the *Chacra a la Olla* fairs and at other fairs supported by this programme in the cities of Huancavelica, Andahuaylas, Cusco and Arequipa; iii) train project beneficiaries to establish an inventory of the quantities of products they sell monthly, calculating production costs, sales prices and gross profits; and iv) support the review and implementation of the business plans of the four small businesses in terms of commercial strategies to be used with AGRO RURAL at regional fairs, as well as with the private sector, and review legislation so that agrobiodiversity is fully integrated into agroecological policy and agroecological brands are included and promoted in the country's trade policies.

vi. The Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation, and SERFOR should identify and agree upon a cooperation mechanism to oversee the implementation, in coordination with local governments, of the restoration plans established in the 13 participating districts.

vii. The Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Culture should establish a dialogue to identify a roadmap that will allow the Life Plan to be adopted as an official communal planning instrument of the Ministry of Environment for Indigenous communities to manage agrobiodiversity. In this regard, additional suggestions include:

- Formally recognize that the recovery of ancestral knowledge, as defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity, is a long-term process that allows Indigenous communities to rediscover "good living" (*sumak kawsay*).
- Ensure that the reconstruction, application and updating of the agricultural calendar of each community is shared with the other communities in each district to identify potential associations of communities (*mancomunidades*), where viable and desirable.
- Identify the priorities of each community in the short, medium and long term by applying methods such as appreciative inquiry. This allows for the implementation of the agricultural calendar as an official component in the CLDP, with assigned financial support and direct links for the sale of local agrobiodiversity products in the *Qali Warma* programme and in the *Chacra a la Olla* fairs.
- Identify the territorial rights that are crucial to enforce or resolve in order to support the sustainability of the Life Plans and the implementation of the forest resource restoration plans.

Recommendation 3. For the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation, the relevant regional governments, the Project Management Unit, and FAO in relation to Conclusion 1 and Conclusion 10. It is suggested that the new authorities in the departments of Huancavelica, Apurímac and Cusco be made aware of the importance of: i) the official recognition of the agrobiodiversity zones established and in the process of recognition in 2024 (Lares District, Cusco); and ii) prioritizing the financing of at least one ecological public investment project already included in the Multiannual Investment Programming in the Huancavelica, Apurímac and Cusco Departments as part of the strategy of the Ministry of Environment to achieve the continuity and expansion of the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity and ecosystem services, starting in 2025, when the project is expected to be closed. Suggestions for implementing this recommendation in the proposed extension phase are as follows:

i. First, the PSC must ensure the hiring of a person to raise awareness among the authorities and seek a financing agreement for at least three green public investment projects (one each in the departments of Huancavelica, Apurímac and Cusco), as well as obtain technical approval for the five existing public investment projects.

ii. The person hired should identify lessons learned and good practices regarding the awareness-raising activities carried out, with the purpose of supporting the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation, and the regional governments when there is a change of authorities.

iii. The person hired should establish a dialogue with the partners who provided training on the EEZ. This should involve the aim of identifying a roadmap for the adoption of territorial planning by the Ministry of Environment as a model that can support the implementation of the EEZ within a broader context, demonstrating the benefits of territorial planning for the protection of upper basins as water recharge zones, managing the agricultural frontier, controlling urban expansion towards suitable low-risk areas and improving territorial governance, in particular the protection of Indigenous territories, among others.

4.2.2 For future similar GEF projects

Recommendation 4. For the Ministry of Environment and FAO in relation to Conclusion 2, Conclusion 8 and Conclusion 9. The Evaluation Team recommends that FAO Peru and the Ministry of Environment, as the focal point of the GEF, conduct a dialogue on how to improve the information management of projects financed by the GEF and implemented by United Nations agencies (FAO, UNDP, UNEP, IFAD and the World Food Programme) that have closed since 2022, that are currently in execution, or that are being prepared. In particular, establish a mechanism to record reports, systematizations, case studies, research and important achievements of each project with respect to: i) the conservation of global ecological benefits in Peru; ii) lessons learned from the projects; and iii) recommendations to address these lessons and scale up good practices or innovative initiatives. This mechanism could have a dual function: to link the project to the National Environmental Information System and to support FAO, other United Nations agencies, and international donors in the design, implementation and evaluation of other projects (not only the GEF) dedicated to protecting, conserving and managing the country's natural resources. This would then support risk management and adaptation to climate variability and change.

Recommendation 5. For FAO in relation to Conclusion 7, Conclusion 8 and Conclusion 9. It is recommended that the implementation modality be flexible in accordance with the needs and capacities of the implementing partner. Suggestions for implementing this recommendation are as follows:

i. The GEF implementing agency carries out the fiduciary assessment of the operational partner during the design of the specific project, or the fiduciary re-evaluation if applicable. If necessary, it should make timely suggestions regarding the selection of the partner.

ii. Ensure and prioritize key actors in the integration of the PSC and establish clear lines of authority for decision-making, leaving the Project Management Unit to implement the project with sufficient autonomy. It is essential that the Project Management Unit has the authority and capacity to respond quickly to emerging needs and challenges, respecting the purpose of the project and the results framework. This implies defining, in the project document, the roles and responsibilities for decision-making and appropriate deadlines that do not delay the execution of activities.

iii. Establish the Project Management Unit within the executing partner. This should involve direct access to decision-making and the autonomy necessary to execute the technical part of the project based on a project operating manual that facilitates flexible decision-making on key activities approved in the global and annual operating plans.

iv. Ensure that the Project Management Unit integrates a multidisciplinary team that enables the project objectives to be achieved, where each member works on the basis of a division of tasks according to their capabilities and work experience.

v. Consider that the project document includes an initial phase of between four and six months, which allows for updating indicators, identifying and checking baselines, and adjusting quantitative and qualitative goals.

vi. Support the Project Management Unit in the ongoing monitoring and review of risks, as well as compliance with safeguards and the definition of the closure or exit strategy.

vii. Include in the project document at least one capacity building event for the Project Management Unit team to be carried out in the initial phase of the project and before the MTR. This space is intended to reflect on the strengths, opportunities and weaknesses of the project, allowing the entire team (including field staff) to participate in building on its strengths, as well as in jointly facing the challenges and risks.

Recommendation 6. For the PSC and FAO. The design of new projects in high Andean areas should consider a greater investment of financial and human resources due to the high logistical cost of their implementation. In addition, it should explicitly include a gender approach to ensure that Indigenous women's groups can assume important roles as facilitators and extension workers.

4.3 Lessons learned and good practices

Lesson learned 1. The employment of *Yachachiqs* is a good practice because they live in the communities and can therefore continuously monitor project activities with the final partners. In addition, when the project ends, the communities are left with lessons learned, skills and the memory of the activities implemented.

Lesson learned 2. The Life Plans, applying the Ministry of Culture's guide, encourage community mobilization in a participatory and inclusive way. This approach is a good practice because it promotes the establishment of new associations that strengthen sociocultural, environmental, physical and economic capital by integrating various dimensions of community life. In addition, it offers the opportunity for local communities to identify and prioritize crops and varieties of agrobiodiversity. In the case of the elders in Huancavelica, Apurímac and Cusco, the selection is related to: i) observation of wild relatives (location, type of pollinators and colours); ii) observation of the variety's resilience to pests, climate and soil type; and iii) its spiritual and cultural value (it may be selected for its flavour and nutritional value, but the elders also look for whether it has medicinal, cultural or historical value, and so on).

Lesson learned 3. Seed banks represent a good practice to strengthen resilience and adaptation at a low cost, as well as to stimulate the exchange of seeds under protocols controlled by conservation committees. In addition, the seed bank serves the same purpose as the *colca* that the Incas used to mitigate climate variability.

Lesson learned 4. The project shows that participatory dialogue with communities is crucial to identify the local governance system and the location of conflict areas over communal lands. This is a good practice to strengthen the effectiveness and sustainability of restoration and local development activities, among others.

Lesson learned 5. The project shows that the marketing of certified organic agrobiodiversity products, before becoming part of value chains or sold in markets of department capitals (e.g. the Lima market), could prioritize their sale in local and regional markets and fairs and strengthen marketing capacities. In the capital of Lima, most customers are not familiar with agrobiodiversity products or their preparation and handling. In addition, the sale of these products should be managed with partners specialized in agrobiodiversity, who ensure that regulations and legal procedures are followed.

Lesson learned 6. The project shows that a good gender and inclusion approach recognizes, values and actively involves women, young people, people with disabilities, and older people who are knowledge holders. This approach achieves a dynamic that, beyond respecting their rights, focuses on expanding the strengths and opportunities of these groups within the communities.

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Appendix 1. Summary tables of achievements towards Outcomes 1.1 to 3

Appendix table 1. Summary of quantitative achievements towards Outcome 1.1 as of 27 September 2023

Outputs (No./Area)	Huancavelica Department	Cusco Department	Apurimac Department	Puno Department	Arequipa Department	Total	Project document goal
Component 1	**4 601 167**	**52 %**	**4 371 594**	**95 %**			**229 573**
Outcome 1.1	1 720 739	20 %	1 698 256	99 %			22 483
Outcome 1.2	2 880 428	33 %	2 673 338	93 %			207 090
Component 2	**1 908 125**	**22 %**	**1 830 541**	**96 %**			**77 584**
Component 3	**1 856 150**	**21 %**	**1 686 910**	**91 %**			**169 240**
Component 4	**415 588**	**5 %**	**296 878**	**71 %**			**118 710**
Total	**8 781 030**	**100 %**	**8 185 923**	**93 %**			**595 107**
PROFONANPE	446 184	5 %	446 184	5 %			-
IGV to be reimbursed**	-	0 %	471 897	5 %			-
Variation in exchange rate	-	0 %	123 211	1 %			-
GRAND TOTAL	**9 227 214**	**100 %**	**9 227 215**				**595 107**

Outputs (No./Area)	Huancavelica Department	Cusco Department	Apurimac Department	Puno Department	Arequipa Department	Total	Project document goal
No. of Farmer Field Schools established	4	2	4	3	1	**14**	**13**
No. of families (partners)	376	466	247	1 130	18	**2 237**	**1 560**
No. of ancestral sets	20	21	20	20	19	**100**	**100**
No. of seed banks*	11	12	11	10	-	**44**	**5**
No. of crops recovered per department	11	11	11	11	-	**11**	**9**
No. of recovered cultivars**	57	48	45	70	-	**220**	**30**
No. characterized by INIA**	34	8	24	26	-	**92**	**30**
Rewarded ha/ReSCA***	1 213	1 404	583	9 723	-	**12 923**	**5 323**
No. of families rewarded	337	390	162	880	-	**1 769**	**-**
No. of communities with M&E	22	14	12	23	1	**72**	**72**
No. of leaders trained to replicate agrobiodiversity	58	63	49	125	9	**304**	**260**
No. of new agrobiodiversity zones****	1	1	1	-	1	**4**	**3**
Area of agrobiodiversity zones (ha)	13 742	22 551	20 925	-	45 766	**102 984**	**296 076**
No. of new private conservation areas	-	-	-	-	1	**1**	**-**

Area of private conservation areas (ha)	-	-	-	-	19 028	**19 028**	**-**
40+ crops, ha under management	-	-	-	-	-	**7 700**	**15 970**
Total area of intervention	13 742	22 551	20 925	-	64 794	**129 712**	**312 046**
Total no. of people	1 880	2 330	1 235	5 650	90	**11 185**	**7 800**
No. of communities with Life Plans	6	5	4	5	1	**21**	**-**

Notes: * This includes two communal seed banks in Apurímac and Puno, and two improved communal banks in Cusco.
** This includes 128 cultivars with ethnobotanical description and excludes 28 cultivars registered in the Andean Indigenous knowledge booklets.
*** Includes two agricultural campaigns applying ReSCA in the Cuyocuyo agrobiodiversity zone (Sandia District, Puno).
**** Two agrobiodiversity zones recognized by the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation in Cotahuasi (Arequipa) and Laria (Huancavelica), and two in the final process of recognition in Lares (Cusco) and Huayana (Apurímac).

Source: Authors’ own elaboration with data provided by the Project Management Unit.

Appendix table 2. Summary of agrobiodiversity zones and private conservation areas with and without project support as of 30 December 2023

Agrobiodiversity zones/private conservation areas with management plans	Area (ha)	Year recognized
Andenes de Cuyocuyo (Sandia District, Puno)	6 555	10/10/2019
Parque de la Papa (Pisac/Cusco)	7 238	03/03/2020
Ccollasuyo (Ccollasuyo/Cusco)	14 240	11/11/2020
Marcapata Ccollana (Marcapata/Cusco)	22 680	26/01/2021
Pariahuanca (Pariahuanca/Junín)	23 134	07/12/2021
Paymakis (Lambrama/Apurímac)	14 261	16/06/2023
Total agrobiodiversity areas (before/without project support)	**88 108**	-
Laria (Laria/Huancavelica)	13 742	01/12/2022
Cotahuasi (La Unión Province/Arequipa)	45 766	01/09/2023
Andahuaylas (Chiara y SM Chaccrampa/Apurímac)	20 923	30/12/2023*
Lares (Lares District, Cusco)	22 551	en tramite
Total agrobiodiversity zones (with project support)	**102 982**	-
Atiquipa private conservation area (Atiquipa District, Arequipa)	19 028	26/07/2023
Total private conservation area (with project support)	**19 028**	-
Total agrobiodiversity zones and private conservation areas (with project support)	**122 010**	-

Note: * This was recognized by the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation on 30 December 2023 during the writing of this report.

Source: Authors' own elaboration with data provided by the Project Management Unit..

Appendix table 3. Area under direct restoration and reforestation or replication (ha) for Outcome 1.2 as of 30 September 2023

Action	Huancavelica	Cusco	Apurímac	Puno	Arequipa	Total	Project document goal
Planning							
Zoned forestry area	47 424	196 092	68 220	148 248	**42 146**	**502 130**	-
No. microzoning district plans	4	2	4	1	1	**12**	**13**
No. plan for planned management	5	2	4	1	1	**13**	**13**
No. approved management	0	0	0	0	0	**0**	**13**
No. trained persons	158	151	97	70	10	**486**	**480**
Direct action							
SAF* area fenced	-	-	1 189	-	**-**	**1 189**	-
SVP* area fenced	39	-	133	175	**-**	**347**	-
MCZ* area forested	128	330	-	23	**40**	**521**	-
Total	**167**	**330**	**1 322**	**198**	**40**	**2 057**	**20 750**
Expected replication							
Local government public investment projects	939	218	995	35	494	**2 681**	
Regional government public investment projects	420	-	3 312	4 800	536	**9 068**	
Management plans	39 355	176 294	57 976	117 973	19 028	**410 626**	
Total	**40 714**	**176 512**	**62 283**	**122 808**	**20 058**	**422 375**	**62 250**

Note: * SAF: agroforestry system with queñua in living fences around farms, corrals or houses; SVF: agroforestry system with queñua to establish living fences around pastures enclosed with mesh, stone or fences; and MCZ: reforestation and afforestation with queñua in massifs.

Source: Authors' own elaboration with data provided by the Project Management Unit.

Appendix table 4. Project achievements towards Outcome 2 as of 30 September 2023

Action	Huancavelica	Cusco	Apurimac	Puno*	Arequipa	Total	Project document goal
Promotion of associations/cooperatives							
No. of associations or cooperatives	6	9	11	10	-	**36**	**30**
No. of direct families	84	12	185	329	-	**723**	**-**
No. of associations or cooperatives in Kusikuy	6	6	9	8	-	**29**	**9**
No. of associations or cooperatives in fairs	6	9	11	10	-	**36**	**21**
Kusikuy sales volume (kg)	1 340	1 787	8 568	2 336	-	**14 031**	**-**
Kusikuy sales value (PEN)	13 759	17 785	40 510	41 166	-	**113 220**	**-**
Sales volume per fair (kg)	6 340	13 801	14 336	8 417	-	**42 894**	**-**
Sales value per fair (PEN)	33 105	47 767	80 895	50 013	-	**211 780**	**-**
Commercial activities							
No. of value chains	-	1	-	1	-	**2**	**3**
No. of small businesses with business plans	1	-	1	2	-	**4**	**10**
Agrobiodiversity seal created	Agrobio	Agrobio	Agrobio	Agrobio	-	**1**	**1**
No. of registered geographical indications and designations of origin	-	-	-	1	-	**1**	**1**
No. of associations with their own brand	1	1	1	2	-	**5**	**10**
No. of associations with collective trademarks	6	9	11	10	-	**36**	**4**
No. of alliances promoted	-	-	2	-	-	**1**	**1**
No. of consumer networks	-	-	1	-	-	**1**	**1**
Established youth network	sí	sí	sí	sí	sí	**1**	**1**
No. of people in exchanges	43	59	43	33	31	**209**	**200**
No. of manuals or tools	-	-	-	-	-	**1**	**1**

Note: * This includes an organic dairy cooperative. It excludes seven individuals from other regions.

Source: Authors' own elaboration with data provided by the Project Management Unit.

Appendix table 5. Project achievements towards Output 3.2 as of 30 September 2023

Action	Huancavelica	Cusco	Apurimac	Puno	Arequipa	Total	Goal project document
Plans, studies and public investment projects*							
No. of biodiversity studies	1	1	1	1	1	5	5
No. of CLDPs integrating agrobiodiversity	4	2	4	1	1	12	13
No. of ecological public investment projects prepared	4	2	2	1	5	14	10
No. of ecological public investment projects in the Multiannual Investment Programming**	2	1	2	-	-	5	-
State and type of public investment projects							
Agrobiodiversity public investment projects with an idea	27 002 450	13 018 368	-	-	7 876 500	**47 897 318**	-
Agrobiodiversity public investment projects with a profile	-	11 365 384	27 153 801	26 491 834	-	**65 011 019**	-
Agrobiodiversity public investment projects with a file	19 046 677	-	6 950 211	-	-	**25 996 888**	-
Ecosystem public investment projects with an idea	-	-	-	-	4 198 060	**4 198 060**	-
Ecosystem public investment project with a profile	11 291 255	-	-	-	-	**11 291 255**	-
Total value of public investment projects	**57 340 382**	**24 383 752**	**34 104 012**	**26 491 834**	**12 074 560**	**154 394 540**	-

Notes: * This excludes a national public investment project for agrobiodiversity with the General Directorate of Environmental Territorial Planning and the integrated management of the Ministry of Environment, which is in the design stage and with an estimated budget of USD 3 150 000.

** The five public investment projects in the Multiannual Investment Programme are: i) improvement of the support service for the sustainable use of native aromatic and medicinal plants in the districts of five provinces of the Huancavelica Department; ii) recovery of degraded ecosystems in the microbasins of the Huancavelica Province; iii) recovery and conservation of local capacities for agrobiodiversity with an emphasis on native crops, including apa, oca, mashua, olluco, corn, tarwi, quinoa, cañihua, beans and kiwicha in the Paruro, Anta, Canas and Acomayo Provinces in the Cusco Department; iv) improvement of the provision of public information services for the management of biological diversity (flora and fauna) in the Apurímac region; and v) recovery of the humid puna *pajonal*, dry puna *pajonal* and wetlands ecosystems in the Trapiche, Oropesa, Pallccamayu, Huishuicha, Chuquibambilla and Sarcconta hydrographic units of the Antabamba and Grau Provinces in the Apurímac Department.

Source: Authors' own elaboration with data provided by the Project Management Unit.

Appendix table 6. Participation in the project by gender and number of young people

Department/ outcome	No. of men	No. of women	Total men and women	% Women	No. of young people*
Outcome 1.1					
Huancavelica	207	169	**376**	45 %	75
Cusco	306	160	**466**	34 %	83
Apurimac	170	77	**247**	31 %	45
Puno	521	609	**1 130**	54 %	98
Arequipa	12	6	**18**	33 %	-
Total	**1 216**	**1 021**	**2 237**	**46 %**	**301**
Outcome 1.2					
Huancavelica	89	69	**158**	44 %	28
Cusco	78	73	**151**	48 %	9
Apurimac	47	50	**97**	52 %	9
Puno	19	51	**70**	73 %	3
Arequipa	2	8	**10**	80 %	1
Total	**235**	**251**	**486**	**52 %**	**50**
Outcome 2					
Huancavelica	65	58	**123**	47 %	39
Cusco	74	92	**166**	55 %	41
Apurimac	147	77	**224**	34 %	39
Puno	70	287	**357**	80 %	28
Arequipa	6	25	**31**	81 %	31
Lima/otro	4	3	**7**	43 %	7
Total	**366**	**542**	**908**	**60 %**	**185**
Outcome 3					
Agrobiodiversity course	18	21	**39**	54 %	-
EEZ course	19	22	**41**	54 %	-
Public investment project course for Natural Infrastructure	24	15	**39**	38 %	-
Total	**61**	**58**	**119**	49 %	**-**
Grand total	**1 878**	**1 872**	**3 750**	**50 %**	**536**

Note: * This involves the breakdown of the number of men and women who are 16 to 30 years old.

Source: Authors' own elaboration with data provided by the Project Management Unit.

Appendix table 7. Summary of the total GEF expenditures as of 30 September 2023 (in USD)

Component	Budget planned 28 September 2018–30 September 2023 *	% plan	Amount spent 28 September 2018–30 September 2023	% of budget spent	Balance as of 30 September 2023
Component 1	**4 601 167**	**52 %**	**4 371 594**	**95 %**	**229 573**
Outcome 1.1	1 720 739	20 %	1 698 256	99 %	22 483
Outcome 1.2	2 880 428	33 %	2 673 338	93 %	207 090
Component 2	**1 908 125**	**22 %**	**1 830 541**	**96 %**	**77 584**
Component 3	**1 856 150**	**21 %**	**1 686 910**	**91 %**	**169 240**
Component 4	**415 588**	**5 %**	**296 878**	**71 %**	**118 710**
Total	**8 781 030**	**100 %**	**8 185 923**	**93 %**	**595 107**
PROFONANPE	446 184	5 %	446 184	5 %	-
IGV to be reimbursed**	-	0 %	471 897	5 %	-
Variation in exhange rate	-	0 %	123 211	1 %	-
GRAND TOTAL	**9 227 214**	**100 %**	**9 227 215**		**595 107**

Notes: * Amounts agreed upon in the adjusted global operating plan in December 2022.

** This amount has not been reimbursed.

Source: Authors' own elaboration with data provided by the Project Management Unit.

Appendix table 8. Summary of compliance with project indicators

Component	No. indicators	100% or more	80–90%	50–70%	10–49%
Component 1	**16**	**16**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Outcome 1.1	8	8	0	0	0
Outcome 1.2	8	8	0	0	0
Component 2	**10**	**6**	**0**	**3**	**1**
Component 3	**9**	**8**	**1**	**0**	**0**
Component 4	**3**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**1**
Total	**38**	**32**	**1**	**3**	**2**

Source: Authors' own elaboration with data provided by the Project Management Unit.

Appendix 2. Co-financing as of 30 September 2023

Co-financing entity	Type of co-financing	Co-financing agreed upon at the time of ratification by the CEO			Co-financing materialized at the end of the project (in USD)		
		Type of co-financing		Total	Type of co-financing		Total
		In kind	Cash		In kind	Cash	
Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation	Governmental	1 165 339	5 739 771	6 905 110	175 370	6 043 490	6 218 860
Ministry of Environment	Governmental	6 723 680		6 723 680		1 473 411	1 473 411
Huancavelica	Regional government	114 840	9 154 633	9 269 473	76 712	5 502 024	5 578 737
Apurímac	Regional government		18 019 753	18 019 753	-	21 940 396	21 940 396
Puno	Regional government	600 714	20 636 554	21 237 267	-	22 358 346	22 358 346
Cusco	Regional government	4 029 972	11 508 266	15 538 239	233 556	5 227 074	5 460 630
Arequipa	Regional government	100 608		100 608	-	468 654	468 654
Atiquipa	Local government	23 335		23 335			-
ANPE	Non-governmental organization	120 000	70 000	190 000	55 260	65 686	120 946
CAP	Civil society organization	277 840	276 400	554 240	-	43 271	43 271
PROFONANPE	Private non-profit entity	500 000		500 000	410 820	-	410 820
FAO	United Nations		370 170	370 170	44 915	605 008	649 923
Andean Peasant Technologies Project	Civil society organization				-	74 547	74 547
Andean Ecosystems Association	Non-governmental organization				-	377 966	377 966
Total		**13 656 327**	**65 775 548**	**79 431 875**	**996 633**	**64 179 874**	**65 176 507**

Source: PROFONANPE.

Appendix 3. The GEF evaluation criteria rating table

The GEF criteria/subcriteria	Rating	Summary comments
A. Results (relevance, coherence, effectiveness and progress towards impact, efficiency)	**MS**	
A1. Relevance	**MS**	Relevance is high at the national and grassroots levels, as is the alignment with the GEF and FAO objectives and priorities. However, it is less evident at the subnational level where it may be compromised by high staff turnover, which then inhibits the continuity of processes initiated during the project.
A2. Coherence	**MS**	The coherence established with national institutions, such as SERFOR, the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion, the Ministry of Culture, and with some non-governmental institutions, is evident. However, there was a missed opportunity to strengthen formal coordination mechanisms with entities such as AGRO RURAL or SENASA, as well as to strengthen synergies with other GEF projects.
A3. Effectiveness	**MS**	Outcome 1.1 and Outcome 3 were largely achieved, while Outcome 1.2 and Outcome 2 were only partially achieved. In terms of Outcome 1.2, forest restoration plans have yet to be approved and implemented, while in the case of Outcome 2, value chain promotion was not profitable and managing the direct sales of agrobiodiversity products in Lima proved to be very costly. However, in 2023, the project demonstrated that direct sales at regional fairs are profitable and generate immediate income for families. The additionality of the project is high due to the establishment of two agrobiodiversity zones and a private conservation area, together with two other new agrobiodiversity zones (Apurímac and Cusco) which, as of 2024, are in the final approval process.
A4. Efficiency	**MS**	The co-financing realized, as of September 2023, reached 82 percent of the amount committed and has facilitated the operations of the project. The efficiency analysis shows that socioenvironmental activities can generate good value for money by providing global environmental benefits associated with agrobiodiversity and landscapes. In contrast, the rate of return on the project's investment in the economic development of agrobiodiversity has been low.
B. Sustainability (financial, sociopolitical, institutional and governance, environmental dimensions, including sustainability risks)	**MU**	The project still has some key activities to complete and has not had the time to ensure adequate transfer of its results to state and non-state actors. This situation has been complicated by the change of authorities in subnational governments. In this scenario, there are important risks, and the project needs to define a clear exit strategy to ensure the continuity of key activities and the sustainability of the results achieved.

The GEF criteria/subcriteria	Rating	Summary comments
C. Implementation	**MS**	The OPIM and governance structure involved many diverse actors in operational, technical and decision-making roles. The re-engineering of the project carried out by the national leadership team in 2021 facilitated the development of useful tools to provide more structured monitoring of the technical and financial execution of the project. Although the project adequately identified the risks, their lack of integration into planning and monitoring activities resulted in a failure to mitigate their impact.
D. Execution	**MU**	The PSC performed its administrative functions in accordance with the project document. The Ministry of Environment, as the Executing Entity, was able to play a more proactive role in stimulating collaboration mechanisms. At the Project Management Unit level, the quality of its work was satisfactory and a strong commitment of staff to support the project partners was observed. However, execution was negatively affected by the increase in administrative and operational processes, the frequent turnover at all government levels and the lack of adequate project monitoring.
M&E plan	**MU**	The monitoring plan focused on the quantitative monitoring of activity and product indicators. The project generated frequent progress reports and published a wide range of informative communications on agrobiodiversity and its landscape. However, by not including qualitative indicators to measure expected changes, a micro data management approach was followed.
Implementation of M&E system	**MU**	The M&E system had structural difficulties in managing data to track the level of achievement of results, generate lessons learned and strengthen informed decision-making. Lack of adequate monitoring of risks resulted in a failure to introduce appropriate and timely measures.
Overall project rating	**MS**	

Note: * Highly Satisfactory (HS); Satisfactory (S); Moderately Satisfactory (MS); Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU); Unsatisfactory (U); Highly Unsatisfactory (HU). Sustainability: Highly Likely (HL); Likely (L); Moderately Likely (ML); Moderately Unlikely (MU); Unlikely (U); Highly Unlikely (HU); Unable to assess (UA).

Appendix 4. Evaluation matrix

Criteria and questions	Evaluation indicators	Means of verification
Relevance		
Question 1. *To what extent does the intervention respond to the global, national and local needs, policies and priorities of partners/institutions and beneficiaries?*	• Level of alignment of the project (at the beginning of 2018 and currently in 2023) with national and subnational government policies and plans regarding the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity and family farming • Level of alignment of project objectives and strategies with priorities of communities and other beneficiaries regarding unmet basic needs and level of risk management, security and other regional/national priorities achieved (by the state and grassroots communities) • Diagnosis of local needs carried out, as well as the causes of biodiversity loss and barriers to the conservation of agrobiodiversity • Quality of methodology used to identify communities • Number of concrete and significant changes in the project's adaptive response to political, institutional and social changes	• Project document • MTR report • Project management documents (annual operational plan, project implementation and progress report, annual reports, newsletters, etc.) • Strategic documents from FAO, government • External documentation (relevant formal and informal publications) • Reports (diagnostics, technical, monitoring) • Interviews with government agencies (national, local), local stakeholders and external informants
Question 2. *To what extent has the project team responded to external changes (context) to date?*	• Quality of response to changes in regional and local authorities • Quality of response to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic • Quality of response to social mobilizations	• MTR report • Project management documents • Internal reports and minutes of the PSC, PROFONANPE and FAO • Interviews
Coherence		
Question 3. *To what extent are the project approach, strategy and results in line with and have contributed to the GEF and FAO priorities?*	• Level of correspondence of the project's approach, strategy and results with the priorities of the GEF-6, FAO and its Country Programming Framework for Peru • Level of alignment with the SDGs, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change	• Project document • MTR report • Project management documents • Strategic documents of FAO and the GEF • Interviews with FAO Peru and the project team
Question 4. *To what extent does the project complement other relevant interventions in the country?*	• Number of projects financed by the GEF that have established synergies with the project or carried out information exchanges • Number of projects financed by other donors that have established synergies or exchanges of information with the project	• Project document • MTR report • Project management documents (project implementation and progress report) • Country programming framework for Peru and FAO annual reports • The GEF website

Criteria and questions	Evaluation indicators	Means of verification
		• Internal documents of PROFONANPE, the Ministry of the Environment, INIA, etc.
Effectiveness		
Question 5. *To what extent has the project achieved its specific objectives?*	• <u>Overall level of compliance with the specific project objectives:</u> i) supporting the sustainable use, management and regeneration of natural resources on which agrobiodiversity depends, i.e. forests, land/soil and water; ii) developing, testing and consolidating incentives to ensure the sustainable use of agrobiodiversity and associated rural livelihoods; iii) strengthening planning, policy and regulatory frameworks for the conservation, commercialization and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity; and iv) mainstreaming agrobiodiversity into agriculture, forestry and land use planning policies.	• Project document • MTR report • Project management documents (especially project implementation and progress reports) • Project products (technical documents, internal M&E, publications, event reports, communications products) • External documentation • Interviews with the project team and key stakeholders (at all levels) • Field observations
Subquestion 5.1 Outcome 1.1. *To what extent has the project achieved Outcome 1.1: agrobiodiversity is conserved* in situ *and managed sustainably and adaptively?*	• <u>Level of compliance with the output targets under Outcome 1.1 (Outputs 1.1.1 to 1.1.5)</u> 1.1.1 Participatory systems established in pilot locations for the recovery, generation, transfer and exchange of knowledge on the management and *in situ* conservation of agrobiodiversity, combining traditional production practices with technological advances aimed at conservation 1.1.2 Seed production, management and supply systems that guarantee farmers' access to high-quality and diverse genetic material of agrobiodiversity, according to their needs and conditions 1.1.3 Schemes to compensate producers for goods and services generated by agrobiodiversity production systems agreed in pilot locations 1.1.4 Agrobiodiversity zones in the target localities assessed for recognition in accordance with Peruvian legislation, with corresponding monitoring and management tools 1.1.5 Strengthened capacities and strategies for the dissemination and communication of knowledge and lessons learned at the pilot sites	
Subquestion 5.2 Outcome 1.2. *To what extent has the project achieved Outcome 1.2: agrobiodiversity is conserved* in situ *and managed sustainably and adaptively?*	• <u>Level of compliance with the output targets under Outcome 1.2 (Outputs 1.2.1 to 1.2.3)</u> 1.2.1 Planning and management instruments established and strengthened at different scales in the landscape to promote the flows of	

Criteria and questions	Evaluation indicators	Means of verification
	ecosystem services necessary for the maintenance of agrobiodiversity and the sustainability of agrobiodiversity-based production systems 1.2.2 Financial and economic instruments supporting ecosystem restoration and the maintenance of ecosystem services important for agrobiodiversity 1.2.3 Support programmes implemented for ecosystem restoration and the maintenance of ecosystem services important for agrobiodiversity	
Subquestion 5.3 Outcome 2. *To what extent has the project achieved Outcome 2.1: marketing of agrobiodiversity-based products has been improved to support the sustainable use of agrobiodiversity and rural livelihoods?*	• Level of compliance with the output targets under Outcome 2.1 (Outputs 2.1.1 to 2.1.5) 2.1.1 Strengthened trade links between small-scale farmers (family farming producers and Indigenous communities) and local and regional markets to support conservation through sustainable production of food and goods based on agrobiodiversity present in the Andes 2.1.2 Value chain strategy supported and strengthened to improve the inclusion of small-scale producers, youth and women, and job creation, while improving the marketing of agrobiodiversity products in the Andes 2.1.3 Geographical indications, labelling or certification standards developed for agrobiodiversity products in the Andes of Peru 2.1.4 Multistakeholder networks and alliances established to promote the commercialization of agrobiodiversity-based products, increase market access and improve livelihoods 2.1.5 Toolkit providing guidance for the promotion of agrobiodiversity-based products through trade linkages and labelling strategies	
Subquestion 5.4 Outcome 3. *To what extent has the project achieved Outcome 3: strengthened an enabling environment for the sustainable use of agrobiodiversity?*	• Level of compliance with the output targets under Outcome 3 (Outputs 3.1.1 to 3.1.6) 3.1.1 Information collected, systematized and disseminated among the institutions involved to improve decision-making and monitoring and evaluation of agrobiodiversity conservation programmes 3.1.2 Planning policies and instruments revised to incorporate the principles of agrobiodiversity conservation and integrated landscape management in five project regions 3.1.3 Regulations and legal aspects are revised to allow for the development and commercialization of agrobiodiversity-based products 3.1.4 Interinstitutional coordination mechanism that ensures the alignment and consistency of agroecosystem management based on agrobiodiversity principles	

Criteria and questions	**Evaluation indicators**	**Means of verification**
	3.1.5 Capacity building programme for institutional actors on issues of territorial planning and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity 3.1.6 Strategies for communication and knowledge exchange on the services and benefits of agrobiodiversity, traditional production practices and the concept of agrobiodiversity zones are available to a wide variety of audiences for awareness-raising, dissemination and replication	
Subquestion 5.5 Outcome 4. *To what extent has the project achieved Outcome 4: project implementation applies results-based management, and lessons learned/good practices are documented and disseminated?*	• Level of compliance with the output targets under Outcome 4 (Outputs 4.1.1 to 4.1.3) (linked to the section on M&E under factors affecting project implementation) 4.1.1 Project monitoring system in place that provides systematic information on progress towards achieving expected results and objectives 4.1.2 Instruments for stakeholder participation in project management 4.1.3 Project-related good practices and lessons learned systematized and published for a variety of audiences and stakeholder groups	• Project document • MTR report • Project management documents (especially reports on project implementation and progress) • Internal M&E reports and documents • Documents generated in communities • Interviews
Efficiency		
Question 6. *To what extent has the project been efficient and cost-effective in its use of project resources?*	• Level of progress of activities and disbursements in accordance with planning • Number and type of delays experienced in execution and the time and costs associated with them • Level of flexibility achieved by the intervention modalities (PSC, Project Management Unit and its planning and management system, partners) in administrative, operational and financial terms to achieve the expected results (includes examples of financial, technical or operational deficiencies) • Level of cost-benefit achieved by the project (cost per beneficiary and cost per hectare under conservation) • Quality of the M&E system in supporting project efficiency	• Project document • Project management documents • Project financial information • Accounting reports from co-financing sources • Audits • Interviews with the project team, FAO and partners managing funds
Question 7. *To what extent has the project team responded to changing conditions and internal needs (funding, scheduling, staffing)?*	• Examples of adaptive management of the annual operating plan and annual budget (based on information from the M&E system, risk management, consultations) – (*link to Question 2)	
Question 8. *To what extent has the planned co-financing materialized, and how has it affected the implementation*	• Level of co-financing achieved from each co-financing source established in the project document and subsequently during project implementation	

Criteria and questions	Evaluation indicators	Means of verification
and results of the project: lower or higher than expected?	• Number of regions or intervention areas affected by lack of co-financing provided for in the project document/post-MTR	
Sustainability		
Question 9. *To what extent are the results achieved to date at the environmental, social, institutional and financial levels sustainable?*	• Quality of the exit strategy with respect to: i) the capacity of public/grassroots/second-level entities to finance the resources necessary to maintain/expand the results achieved after project closure; ii) the capacity to implement legislative reforms (laws, regulations, policies, strategies, plans, local ordinances, etc.) at all levels to conserve and sustainably use agrobiodiversity and its landscape/ecosystem; iii) the capacity to maintain and strengthen existing value chains, develop local and national markets for agrobiodiversity products and carry out marketing campaigns; and iv) the capacity to sustain ancestral knowledge about agrobiodiversity and the integral management of the landscape.	• Project management documents • Project/partner financial information • National and subnational government documents • Civil society and grassroots organization documents • Ancestral knowledge transfer systems in Indigenous/local communities • Project products (publications, event reports, communications products) • External documentation • Interviews with project stakeholders and external informants
Question 10. *To what extent have the most relevant external and internal risks (at the political, institutional, social, financial and environmental/climate levels) been identified and managed?*	• Quality of the exit strategy with respect to: i) the capacity to manage risks (political, institutional, economic, environmental/climatic, etc.) that must continue to be mitigated to ensure the sustainability/scaling up of the results; and ii) the capacity of the Ministry of Environment and PROFONANPE to generate synergies with other relevant projects to support the sustainability of the project.	
Impact of the project at the national and global levels		
Question 11. *To what extent is the project contributing to scaling up the conservation of agrobiodiversity and its landscapes in Peru to increase the generation of global environmental benefits by 2030? (*added by the Evaluation Team in accordance with the GEF recommendations)*	• Level and type of evidence demonstrating the expansion of the conservation of agrobiodiversity in Peru	• Project management documents • Project/partner financial information • National and subnational government documents (including ordinances, regulations, policies, plans etc.) • Interviews
Factors that have affected the execution of the project		
Question 12: Participation. *To what extent have key stakeholders (civil society, communities, private sector, extension services, etc.) actively*	• Level of participation (active/passive) achieved (in terms of participating in decision-making)	• Project communications documents

Criteria and questions	Evaluation indicators	Means of verification
participated in the implementation of the project and shared its results?		
Question 13: Communications. *To what extent have project communications been effective with respect to project scheduling, implementation and sustainability?*	• Number of communications products that have been developed to guide the programming, implementation and sustainability of the project • Number of communications products generated through synergies with other projects	• Project communications strategy • Project communications documents and publications • Communications from other relevant projects
Question 14: Environmental and social safeguards. *To what extent have environmental and social considerations been applied during the design and implementation of the project?*	• Number of reviews of the list of environmental and social safeguards carried out since the project design (including mitigation proposals in the event that new safeguards are activated)	• Project design documents to determine the list of safeguards activated • Progress reports (report on project implementation) • Interviews • Field observations
Question 15: Gender. *To what extent have gender considerations (as per FAO and the GEF gender policies) been applied to advance gender equity and the empowerment of vulnerable groups, such as women and youth?*	• Level of participation (passive/active) of women and youth in project training and actions compared to the number who participate in decision-making on the implementation of activities • Women and other vulnerable groups interviewed can show that the project has strengthened their rights, increased their participation in agrobiodiversity conservation and achieved positive change in their livelihoods • Number of women and other vulnerable groups who have improved their economic income through the project's economic activities • Level of satisfaction reported by women who said that they have improved their food security and sovereignty, as well as family nutrition • Number of women who are leaders from traditionally marginalized groups • Level of gender mainstreaming achieved in legislative reforms carried out with the support of the project (including local ordinances) • Number of communities where access to goods, basic services, information and markets by traditionally marginalized groups (women, youth) needs to be strengthened • Number of unintended/intended negative impacts of the project (if any)	• FAO and the GEF gender policies • Project design documents on gender equity implementation • Progress reports (Programme Implementation Report) • Internal documents on the participation of vulnerable groups (by gender) • Interviews • Field observations
Question 16: Human rights and Indigenous Peoples. *To what extent has the project succeeded in advancing*	• Level of effective participation of ethnic groups in project training and actions in accordance with FAO and the GEF policies, such as the FPIC (FAO, 2019)	• FAO and the GEF policies on human rights, specifically Indigenous Peoples (FPIC)

Criteria and questions	Evaluation indicators	Means of verification
human rights and Indigenous Peoples' rights in accordance with United Nations policies?	• Level of integration of social inclusion in project planning (including budget decision-making) • Number of people (Indigenous Peoples and other highly vulnerable people) trained as leaders • The different needs of the different groups or collectives are taken into account in the implementation of the project • The intervention methodologies used are appropriate for the cultural context of the regions involved • Number of communications products and relevant project monitoring data that have been made accessible in a way that matches the needs of the beneficiary Indigenous communities	• Project design documents on the application of the human rights-based approach and Indigenous Peoples • Progress reports (project implementation report) • Internal documents on rights and food sovereignty (seeds, land, water sources, etc.) • Interviews • Field observations
Lessons learned		

Appendix 5. Interview schedule

<table>
<tr><th>Date</th><th>Time</th><th>Name/position</th><th>Location/district</th><th>Responsibility/result</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">Saturday 9 September 2023: Flight London–Lima</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Monday 11 September 2023</td><td>09.00</td><td>Mónica Oliveros, Project Task Manager
Yan Mercado, Administrative monitoring of the GEF projects
Raquel Medina, Technical monitoring of the GEF projects (virtual)</td><td rowspan="2">FAO Peru
(briefing and interview)
Calle Manuel Almenara 328, Urb. Aurora, Miraflores, Lima Tel. 447-2641</td><td rowspan="2">Budget Holder and person responsible for planning and implementation of the agrobiodiversity project at FAO Peru</td></tr>
<tr><td>11.30</td><td>Mariana Escobar Arango, FAO Representative Peru</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">15.00</td><td>Omar Corilloclla (Lima), Director of M&E</td><td rowspan="2">Offices of PROFONANPE, Av. Parque Gonzales Prada 396, Magdalena</td><td rowspan="2">All criteria, especially monitoring of Outcomes 1 to 3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Lourdes Lares Acero (Lima), Social Management Specialist</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Tuesday 12 September 2023</td><td>11.00</td><td>Carmen Mejía, Daniel Núñez and Víctor Gutiérrez
Ministry of Environment, Information Directorate</td><td>Avenida Juan de Aliaga 425, Magdalena, Lima</td><td>Component 3 (development of the database for the National Environmental Information System and the Regional Environmental Information Systems)</td></tr>
<tr><td>14.00</td><td>Beatriz Dapozzo, Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation, SERFOR
William Arellano, Directorate of Natural Resources Assessment and Climate Change
Giancarlo Vásquez Flórez, General Directorate of Agrarian Environmental Affairs of the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation</td><td>Av. Javier Prado Oeste 2442, Magdalena, Lima</td><td>Outcome 1.1 and Outcome 1.2</td></tr>
<tr><td>17.30</td><td>Ministry of Environment
Mariela Canepa, General Director of Biological Diversity, General Directorate of Biological Diversity of the Ministry of Environment
Jessica Amanso, General Office of Cooperation and International Affairs
Head of the Office of Cooperation and International Affairs, and Operational Focal Point of the GEF Peru</td><td>Avenida Juan de Aliaga 425, Magdalena, Lima</td><td>Outcomes 1.1 to 4
Note: Vice Minister of Strategic Development of Natural Resources; Ministry of Environment was not available</td></tr>
<tr><td>Monday 2 October 2023</td><td>10.00</td><td>FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (Santiago)
Ana Posas Guevara, Principal Technical Officer
Lorenzo Campos (Donor Liaison Officer)</td><td>Lima (remote interview via Zoom)</td><td>Monitoring of the technical and financial implementation of the project</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">Flight to Jauja (Huancavelica, Zone 1)</td></tr>
</table>

Date	Time	Name/position	Location/district	Responsibility/result
Wednesday 13 September 2023	16.00	Daniel Rodríguez Dionicio, Manager of Natural Resources and Environment, Huancavelica Regional Government Ciro Quinto, Assistant Manager of Environmental Management Fredy Mayo, Assistant Manager of Environmental Management Aida Riveros and Merlín Gutiérrez Daniel Rodríguez and Guadalupe Quispe, Natural Resources Management Staff Tulio Medina, Ministry of Environment	Huancavelica	Outcome 3
	17.30	Vilma Vilcas Melchor, Former Natural Resources Manager, Huancavelica Regional Government	Huancavelica (virtual interview)	Outcome 3
Thursday 14 September 2023	08.30	Vilma Alanya, RJA supporting school gardens Víctor Soto, Director of the Mariscal Agustín Gamarra School, Huando Cesar Condori, Assistant Manager of Economic Development of the Huando Municipality	Huando District	Outcome 1.1, Outcome 1.2 and Outcome 2
	09.30	Urbano Cuicapuza, Former Mayor of Laria and President of the *Sumak Calpa* Association Members of the *Sumak Calpa* Association (women and men, including Simón Hilario Quispe and Edilberto Mendoza)	Laria District	Outcome 1.1 and Outcome 2
	10.30	Presentation of project activities in the Laria District Víctor Rivera, Deputy Manager of the Laria Municipality Jhon Ilario, Project Facilitator in Huancavelica Alfredo Gómez, Project Technician Pamela Esteban, Commercial Advisor, Associations for the Marketing of Agrobiodiversity Products Doris Sibchi, Ex-*yachachiq* of the project, currently Conservationist and part of Agrobio Simón Hilario Cuicapuza, Conservationist and part of Agrobio Hilario Torres Cuicapuza, Conservationist and part of Agrobío Varón Asto Ilario, President, Catari Association of Agricultural Producers, Artisans and Agroindustrialists Dolería Payarco, Association of Agricultural Producers, Artisans and Agroindustrialists Musucc Llamkay Santos Huarcaya, *Yachcachiq* Peasant Community of Zunipampa	Laria	Outcome 1.1 and Outcome 1.2
	13.00	Pamela Esteban Taipe, Agrobio Food Processing Centre Doris Sibchi Mendoza, Commercial Ex-*yachachiq*	Laria	Outcome 2
	14.30	Field visit to the family seed bank and field schools for maca and potato farmers in Zunipampa Eulogio Astor, President of the Association of Agricultural Producers, Artisans and Agroindustrialists (Los Ayllus de Tahuantinsuyo) and Manager of the family seed bank Ana Yauri Mendoza, RJA and maca producer	Centro Poblado de Zunipampa (Laria District)	Outcome 1.1 and Outcome 2

Date	Time	Name/position	Location/district	Responsibility/result
	16.30	Edgar Cente Huarcaya, Mayor of Laria Adrian Eugenio Palmadera Milla, Assistant Manager of Local Development in the Laria Municipality	Laria	Outcome 1.1, Outcome 1.2 and Outcome 3
Friday 15 September 2023	08.30	Rosa Raymundo, First Councilwoman Denís Inga Ibarra, Municipal Manager Artur Cárdenas, Assistant Manager of Economic and Environmental Development Elizabeth Enriques, Assistant Manager of Social Development Cirilo Chanco, Communal President	District of Conayca	Outcome 1.1 and Outcome 3
	08.30	RJA focus group: Simón Hilario, Kelvin Cuicapuza, Rosa Ayala and Oscar Rojas Alejandro Barra Pariona, Conservationist and *Yachachiq*	Conayca	Outcome 1.1, Outcome 1.2 and Outcome 2
	10.30	Transect of the forest restoration zone and closure of pastures with Cesar Arias, President of the community, and members of the community of Anexo Leoncio Prado	Anexo Leoncio Prado (Conayca District)	Outcome 1.1 and Outcome 1.2
	14.00	Alejandro Barra Pariona and Hilaria Huarcco, family seed bank	Mariscal Cáceres (Conayca District)	Outcome 1.1 and Outcome 1.2
	16.00	Edwin Asto Manrique, Mayor of the Nuevo Occoro District Municipality	Nuevo Occoro District	Outcome 1.1, Outcome 1.2 and Outcome 3 (lack of time)
	16.00	Rolando Pariona, RJA		
		Juan Asto and Rolando Pariona, RJA		
	17.00	Oscar Rojas Inga, family seed bank and producer of a new variety of potato developed through research by INIA		Outcome 1.1
Saturday 16 September 2023: Transfer to Jauja				
Sunday 17 September 2023: Flight Jauja–Lima–Cusco (Zone 2)				
Monday 18 September 2023	09.00	Valentín Benavides, Mayor of the Lares District Municipality Jorge Arriegan, Manager of the Municipality Ana Rosa Quispe Quispe, Member of the RJA Members of the municipality	Lares District	Outcome 1.1, Outcome 1.2 and Outcome 3
	13.00	Hipólito Quispe, Director Educational Institutions Quishuarani	Centro Poblado de Quishuarani (Lares District)	Outcome 3
	15.00	Santos Lima Huisa, *Yachachiq* commercial Valentina Avilés, Agrobio, ReSCA, Farmer Field Schools Rosaura Huaraya Gutiérrez and colleagues, Agrobio, ReSCA, Farmer Field Schools Isabel Luna Huisa and colleagues, Agrobio, ReSCA, Farmer Field Schools	Centro Poblado de Pampacoral (Lares District)	Outcome 1.1 and Outcome 2
	18.00	Fortunato Huamán Hullpa, Commercial Advisor for the project in Cusco	Lares	Outcome 2

Date	Time	Name/position	Location/district	Responsibility/result
	20.00	Federico Huamán, Facilitator in Lares	Lares	Outcome 1.1, Outcome 1.2, Outcome 2 and Outcome 3
Tuesday 19 September 2023	08.00	Interviews with sellers and buyers at the Cachin barter market	Centro Poblado de Cachin (Lares District)	Outcome 2
	09.00	Rosalío Pfocco and Mrs Santosa, family seed bank		Outcome 1.1
	10.00	Ever Cruz, family seed bank		Outcome 1.1
	11.00	Genara Candenas Zúñiga, seed bank		Outcome 1.1
	12.00	Members of the RJA: Julio Cruz (rural communicator), María Quispe and René Quispe		Outcome 1.1 and Outcome 1.2 (Warren)
		Pedro Conde, *Yachachiq*		
		Alejandro Conde, Ex-*yachachiq*		
		Zenobio Candenas, Ex-*yachachiq*		
	12.00	Juan Huillca, Ex-*yachachiq* Maite Ainara Oxa Condori, Victoriano Quilca Huallpayunca, Yukio Iris Zúñiga Zuniga, Ana Rosa Quispe Quispe Farmer Field Schools: Rosana Huaraya, Hilda Juárez, Victoria Condori Virginia Hancco, Isabel Lima, Efenia Huahuasuncco, Valentina Aviles, Matilde Juárez and Santusa Wallpa, RJA		Outcome 1.1 and Outcome 1.2 (Pilar)
	15.00	Participants in the ReSCA, Farmer Field Schools and Agrobio: Sonia Quispe Tito, Julia Betancur, Marisol Cruz, Bernardina Tito Soto, Rina Cruz, Jenny Cárdenas, Teresa Apaza, Genara Cárdenas and Jacinta Tacca	Choquecancha (Lares District)	Outcome 1.1 and Outcome 2
Wednesday 20 September 2023	08.30	Javier Llacsa Tacuri (Component 1.1) Richard Prada Pimentel (Component 2) María Rosario Valer Gutiérrez (Component 3) and Jorge Luis Jordán Pareja (Component 4)	Cusco	Outcomes 1.1 to 2 (only time for Outcome 1.1, Outcome 1.2 and Outcome 2)
	11.00	Constantino Aucca Chutas, Director, Andean Ecosystems Association Gregorio Ferro, Specialist, Andean Ecosystems Association Carill Garay Valenza, Consultant, land use types Wilfredo Catalán Bazán, Senior Lecturer, National University of San Antonio Abad del Cusco, Faculty of Agronomy and Animal Husbandry Ladislao Palomino Flores, Potato Specialist, INIA Andenes Agrarian Experimental Station, Cusco Rosa Urrunaga, University Lecturer	Cusco	Outcome 1.1, Outcome 1.2, Outcome 2 and Outcome 3
	13.30	María Isabel Cazorla Palomino, Former Natural Resources Manager, Cusco Regional Government	Cusco	Outcome 3
	15.00	Armando Yucra Soto, Regional Manager of Natural Resources and Environmental Management and colleagues from work	Cusco	Outcome 3

Date	Time	Name/position	Location/district	Responsibility/result
	16.30	Victor Alejandro Baca, Head of the Cusco AGRO RURAL Zonal Unit Ladislao Palomino Flores, Potato Specialist at INIA Andenes Agrarian Experimental Station in Cusco	Cusco	Outcome 1.1 and Outcome 3
	18.30	Responsible for Component 1 and Component 4: Javier Llacsa Tacuri, Richard Prada Pimentel, Maria Rosario Valer Gutierrez and Jorge Luis Jordan Pareja	Cusco	Outcomes 3 to 4
Transfer Cusco–Abancay–Andahuaylas (Apurímac, Zone 3)				
Thursday 21 September 2023	11.00	Mr Buezo, Deputy Manager of the Regional Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Management Efraín Zegarra, Deputy Manager of Socioenvironmental Management	Abancay	Outcome 3
	14.00	Alcides Palacios, Specialist in Natural Resources Management at AGRO RURAL	Abancay	Outcome 1.1 and Outcome 1.2
	19.30	Adler Malpartida Tello, Former Mayor of Andahuaylas	Andahuaylas	Outcome 3 (Warren)
	19.30	Hilario Torre, Guisella Ubaqui and Mónica Taipe RJA in Andahuaylas	Andahuaylas	Outcome 1.1, Outcome 1.2 and Outcome 2 (Pilar)
Friday 22 September 2023	08.30	Andahuaylas Municipality	Andahuaylas	Outcome 3
	11.30	Visit the agrobiodiversity fair: Paul Ubaqui Salazar, *Yachachiq*, Huayana Prudence Flowers Sivipaucar, *Yachachiq*, Huayana Percy Vargas Chipana, Professor of Marketing, President of the New Association Luciano Vilcapuma Urpe, *Yachachiq* and RJA, Huayana Conservationists with family seed banks: Victor Rojas, Milia Couple Joanna Villa, Adela Sivipaucar, Mario Palomino, Jose Brown, Wilfred Villavicencio, Percy Vargas and others	Tumayhuaracca (Huayana District)	Outcome 1.1
	15.30	Americo Ccsani Palacios, Mayor of the Chaccr District Municipality Punchau Pampauquio, Tumayhuarcampa Mayor of Cochapuro	Centro Poblado de Cochapucro (Huayana District)	Outcome 3
	20.00	Ana Cecilia Sierra, Facilitator in Zone 3	Centro Poblado Virgen del Tambo (Chiara District)	Outcome 1.1, Outcome 1.2 and Outcome 2
Saturday 23 September 2023	06.30	Lucio Durán, family seed bank, greenhouses and Farmer Field Schools	Virgen del Tambo (Chiara District)	Outcome 1.1 and Outcome 2
		Field inspection, pasture fencing and restoration (filter ditches, *cochas* and afforestation with native species) César Paullino Carrasco, Mayor of the Chiara District Municipality	Chiara District	Outcome 1.2 and Outcome 3

Date	Time	Name/position	Location/district	Responsibility/result
		Rudy Mayhuire Quispe, family seed bank, RJA Chiara Milner Huarez Huamani and Luzmery Tueros Carrasco, President and Treasurer of the Chiara Community Percy Vargas, Former Project Teacher, President of the producers’ association, Musocpuncho Members of the Chiara Community		
Sunday 24 September 2023: Transfer Puquio-Lima				
Monday 25 September 2023: Transfer Lima–Juliaca–Puno				
Monday 25 September 2023	15.00	Wilman Mendoza Quispe, Regional Manager of Natural Resources and Environmental Management, Puno Regional Government Alfredo Loza, Assistant Manager of Natural Resources Raúl Rojas, Assistant Manager of Environmental Management Dina Alanoca, Investment Office of the Natural Resources Management Edson Mamani, Specialist, Regional Environmental Information Systems	Puno	Outcome 3
	16.30	INIA Puno		Outcome 1.1
	16.30	Lucio Eliseo Istaña Ramos, Former Mayor of the Acora District Municipality		Outcome 3
	17.30	Alicia Ponce Nina, Former Economic Development Manager of the Acora Municipality		Outcome 1.1, Outcome 1.2 and Outcome 3
	19.30	RJA: Lizbet Paredes, Roder Chipan, Demetrio Alanoca, Luz Vaca and Liz Cubailar		Outcome 1.1, Outcome 1.2 and Outcome 2
Tuesday 26 September 2023	09.00	Hernán Crisisto Aycaya, Mayor of the Acora District Municipality Raymundo Aguirre Ancco, Assistant Manager of Social Development Lolin Tari, Environmental Development Manager Cristian Churan, Public Services and Environment	Acora District	Outcome 1.1, Outcome 1.2 and Outcome 3
	10.30	Presentation of Agrobio products in the municipal auditorium Yolanda Catacora, *Yachachiq* commercial, Acora Pascuala Pari de Catacora, association (Agrobio) Norma Huanca, association (Agrobio) Noemí Condori, Fuerza Aymara Association (Agrobio)	Acora	Outcome 2
	11.30	Noemi Condori, Fuerza Aymara Association Fredy Quispe, San Santiago Cooperative Roxana Garabito, Chafapata Association Focus group of women from different Agrobio producer associations	Acora	Outcome 2
	13.00	Luzmila Méndez, Yanaque Andino Association		Outcome 1.1 and Outcome 2 (Pilar)

Date	Time	Name/position	Location/district	Responsibility/result
		Gladys Mendoza Quispe, Conservationist with family seed bank and agrobiodiversity food processing plant Lidia Coaricona, Conservationist with family seed bank Aurora Chura, Conservationist with family seed bank	Centro Poblado de Santa Rosa de Yanaque (Acora District)	
	13.00	Rodolfo Condori Barrientos, President of the association and the community of Santa Rosa de Yanaque		Outcome 1.1 and Outcome 2 (Warren)
	16.30	Sonia Ticona Quispe, Manager of the San Santiago Caritamaya Cooperative (dairy products) Vilma Arce, Assistant Manager of the San Santiago Cooperative Caritamaya Herminia Aguilar, Treasurer of the San Santiago Caritamaya Cooperative	Centro Poblado de Caritamaya (Acora District)	Outcome 1.1 and Outcome 2
	20.00	Richard de la Torre, Head of Component 1.2 Jorge Luis Jordán, Head of Component 4	Puno	Outcome 1.2 and Outcome 4
Wednesday 27 September 2023	08.00	Inspection of landscape restoration with native trees in Chila Rubén Raúl Escobar, President of the Huantacachi Chila Community Maura Calizana Gutiérrez, Member of the community and the group of artisan women Keiko Diana Escobar Escarcena, Member of the community and groups of artisan women Juan Chambilla Escobar, Vice President of the community	Centro Poblado de Chila (Acora District)	Outcome 1.2
	10.00	Jacoba Aguilar Alabe, family banks, ReSCA	Centro Poblado Culta Huantacachi (Acora District)	Outcome 1.1 and Outcome 1.2
	13.00	Inspection of the closure of pastures: Maura Calzana, Councilor of the Community Ruben Escaba, President of the Peasant Community Waldir Ccama Choquehuanca, President of the Community Néstor Huanca Arocutipa, Vice President of the Community	Centro Poblado de Cucho Esqueña (Acora District)	Outcome 1.2
	15.00	Inspection of the management of electric fences Teodosio Ccahuana Choque and Jesús Inchuña (livestock farmers participating in the project)	Sacuyo (Acora District)	Outcome 1.2
	20.00	Celedonio Ccamapaza, Project Facilitator in Acora, Puno	Puno	Outcome 1.1, Outcome 1.2, Outcome 2 and Outcome 3
Thursday 28 September 2023: Transfer to Juliaca/flight Juliaca–Lima				
Thursday 28 September 2023	15.00	Update of the work agenda and organization of interviews for the week from 2 to 6 October 2023	Lima	

Date	Time	Name/position	Location/district	Responsibility/result
Friday 29 September 2023	10.00	Assist in the technical closure and presentation of project results	Lima, Auditorio del Servicio Nacional de Meteorología e Hidrología del Perú, Jr. Cahuide 785, Jesús María	Outcomes 1.1 to 3
	15.00	Interview with project staff in Atiquipa (Arequipa): Julieta de la Torre Vera, Facilitator in the Arequipa Region Celia Mercedes Quispe, Ex-*yachachiq* and Tara Nursery Manager Yarisel Donixca Ramos Condori, Fog Catcher Specialist		Outcomes 1.1 to 3 (Warren)
Monday 2 October 2023	10.00	Interview with the FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean: Ana Posas Guevara (Principal Technical Officer) Lorenzo Campos Aguirre (Donor Liaison Officer)	Lima (in the offices of FAO Peru)	Outcomes 1.1 to 4
	11.00	Summary of preliminary findings of the field mission with: Mariana Escobar Arango, Representative of FAO Peru Enrique Román, Assistant Representative of FAO Peru Mónica Oliveros, Sector Coordinator Yan Mercado, Administrative Monitoring of the GEF projects Raquel Medina, Technical monitoring of the GEF projects		Outcomes 1.1 to 4
	13.30	Interview with Crisólogo Cáceres, President of ASPEC	Av. José Ramírez Gastón 151, Miraflores, Lima	Outcome 2
	15.30	Christian Renato Bueno Montaldo, Project Administration and Finance Manager Lino Quispe Flores, Head of Operations and Budget Gerónimo Aliaga, Operations and Budget	Offices of PROFONANPE, Av. Parque Gonzales Prada 396, Magdalena	Outcome 4 efficiency (Warren)
	18.00	Tatiana Mendoza Mojica Chef at Maras, Cusco and consultant on nutrition, recipes and hygiene in the project	Interview via Teams (virtual)	Outcome 1.1 and Outcome 2
Tuesday 3 October 2023	10.00	Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation Nery Alejandro Roncal Vázquez, Advisor to the Vice-Ministerial Office of Policies and Supervision of Agrarian Development Giovanna Gallegos, Directorate of Agrarian Policies and Regulations Martín Díaz, Head of the AGRO RURAL Planning Office	Jirón Cahuide 805, Jesús María	Outcome 1.1, Outcome 2 and Outcome 3
	12.00	Sonia Benilda Arce Serpa, General Director of Agrarian Policies		
	15.00	Elizabeth Fernández Huaytalla, Cristina Quintana and Dina Gutiérrez Subdirectorate of Genetic Resources of the Directorate of Genetic Resources and Biotechnology of INIA	Av. La Molina 1981, La Molina, Lima	Outcome 1.1 (Pilar)
	16.30	Iván Rómulo Rivera, Director, Directorate of Indigenous or Native Policies of the Ministry of Culture Arístides Flórez, Information Assistant of the Ministry of Culture	Av. Javier Prado Este 2465 15021 San Borja (Calle de Comercio, Puerta 5)	Outcome 1.1 and Outcome 3 (Warren)
	09.00	Preparation of the PowerPoint for the presentation of preliminary evaluation findings	Virtual coordination	Outcomes 1.1 to 4

Date	Time	Name/position	Location/district	Responsibility/result
Wednesday 4 October 2023	18.00	Joint analysis of the presentation		
	20.30	Discussion on the presentation for stakeholders on 10 May 2023 with Adriana Jaramillo, Coordinator of the final evaluation	Virtual meeting	Outcomes 1.1 to 4
Thursday 5 October 2023	12.00	Presentation of a summary of the field survey and identification of topics/policies where there are information gaps with the Ministry of Environment, PROFONANPE and FAO	Avenida Juan de Aliaga 425, Magdalena, Lima	Outcomes 1.1 to 4
	14.00	Working lunch with Cesar Sotomayor, Coordinator of the Project Management Unit	Avenida Juan de Aliaga 420, Magdalena, Lima	Outcomes 1 to 4
Friday 6 October 2023	09.00	Update of the work agenda in Peru and clarification of pending names of people interviewed	-	
	15.00	Eusebio Vázquez, President of ANPE	Jirón Lloque Yupanqui 1392, Jesús María	Outcome 2
	17.30	Juan Sánchez of CAP	Virtual interview	Outcome 3

	Completed		Not completed/not available

Appendix 6. The GEF rating scheme

Appendix table 9 below presents the performance descriptors[19] for each specific rating. In most cases, actual performance may not fully match any of the rating descriptions. Therefore, a rating will be based on the description that provides the best fit based on the evidence. Where the available evidence is insufficient to provide the rate performance, performance will be rated as unable to assess. Performance will be rated on a six-point scale.

Appendix table 9. Results ratings

Ratings	***Description***
Highly Satisfactory (HS)	*Level of outcomes achieved clearly exceeds expectations and/or there were no shortcomings.*
Satisfactory (S)	*Level of outcomes achieved was as expected and/or there were no or minor shortcomings.*
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	*Level of outcomes achieved more or less as expected and/or there were moderate shortcomings.*
Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	*Level of outcomes achieved somewhat lower than expected and/or there were significant shortcomings.*
Unsatisfactory (U)	*Level of outcomes achieved substantially lower than expected and/or there were major shortcomings.*
Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	*Only a negligible level of outcomes achieved and/or there were severe shortcomings.*
Unable to Assess (UA)	*The available information does not allow for an assessment of the level of outcome achievements.*

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability will be assessed by taking into account risks related to the financial, sociopolitical, institutional and environmental sustainability of the project results. The evaluator may also take into account other risks that may affect sustainability. Overall sustainability will be assessed using a six-point scale:

Appendix table 10. Sustainability ratings

Rating	***Description***
Highly likely (HL)	*There is negligible risk to the continuation of benefits and, based on progress made so far, the long-term objectives of the project are expected to be met.*
Likely (L)	*Either there is negligible risk to the continuation of benefits or there are some risks, but the magnitude of their effect is too small or the probability of their materialization is too small. Overall, the net benefits of the project are likely to continue.*
Moderately Likely (ML)	*There are some risks to sustainability, and they may have some effect on the continuation of benefits if they materialize. However, the probability of these risks materializing is low. The net benefits are more likely to continue than to decrease.*
Moderately Unlikely (MU)	*There are significant risks to sustainability. The effect on the continuation of benefits would be substantial if these risks materialize and the probability of these risks materializing is*

Rating	*Description*
	significant. Overall, the net benefits of the project are likely to decrease.
Unlikely (U)	*Because of the high risks, the net benefits of the project are unlikely to continue to accrue, and progress made so far is likely to be lost. The project is unlikely to achieve its long-term objectives.*
Highly Unlikely (AU)	*The project is not expected to achieve its long-term objectives. The main risks have already materialized and have stopped the accrual of net benefits or have a high probability of materializing soon and will stop the accrual of net benefits when they materialize.*
Unable to Assess (UA)	*It is not possible to assess the expected incidence and magnitude of the risks to sustainability.*

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND EXECUTION

The quality of implementation and execution will be rated separately. The quality of implementation refers to the role and responsibilities performed by the GEF agencies that have direct access to the GEF resources. The quality of execution refers to the roles and responsibilities performed by the country or regional counterparts that received the GEF funds from the GEF agencies and implemented the funded activities on the ground (this could be FAO itself with co-implementing partners or an implementing partner identified by a FAO operational agreement). Performance will be assessed on a six-point scale.

Appendix table 11. Implementation and execution ratings

Ratings	**Implementation**	**Execution**
Highly Satisfactory (HS)	The GEF agency's performance was exemplary. Project preparation and implementation were strong. The agency ensured that the relevant GEF policies were applied in project preparation and implementation. Project oversight was strong: the agency identified and addressed emerging concerns in a timely manner. The agency ensured that project implementation remained on track and that project activities were completed on time.	The performance of the implementing agency was exemplary. The execution of project activities was timely and of high quality. The relevant GEF policies and requirements were met. The GEF agency guidance was followed and corrective actions were taken, if necessary, promptly. Measures were taken to mitigate risks to sustainability, and measures were taken to support project monitoring. Project activities were completed on time.
Satisfactory (S)	Performance met expectations and had no notable weaknesses. Project preparation and execution were sound, and the relevant GEF policies were applied. The GEF agency provided good oversight of the project, identifying and addressing emerging concerns in a timely manner. The GEF agency ensured that project implementation was on track.	Performance met expectations and had no notable weaknesses. Implementation of project activities was timely and of high quality. The relevant GEF policies and requirements were met. The GEF agency guidance was followed. Measures were taken to mitigate risks to the sustainability of project results.
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Performance had some weaknesses but met expectations overall. Project preparation and implementation were adequate and the relevant GEF policies were applied, but there are some weak areas. Project oversight was adequate: emerging concerns were identified and	Performance had some weaknesses but met expectations overall. The implementation of project activities was generally timely but with some instances of delay. The relevant GEF policies and requirements were followed, but some minor errors also may have been noted.

Ratings	Implementation	Execution
	addressed by the GEF agency, but some may have been inadequately addressed. Project implementation had minor delays, and some activities may have been abandoned.	The GEF agency guidance was followed and issues were addressed. There were some areas for improvement in implementation.
Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Performance did not meet expectations, but there were some areas of strong performance. Project preparation and implementation had weaknesses, but they were not overly serious. Project oversight was somewhat weak. Although the GEF agency identified most emerging concerns, many remained unaddressed or were addressed inadequately. Project implementation was delayed, and some activities were abandoned or scaled back due to issues that were largely within the control of the GEF agency.	Performance did not meet expectations, but there were some areas of strong performance. The implementation of project activities was delayed, and the capacities of the implementing agency significantly limited project implementation. Several failures in adherence to the GEF policies and requirements were noted. The GEF agency guidelines were generally followed, and issues were addressed. However, such actions were often not timely. There are several areas for improvement in implementation.
Unsatisfactory (U)	Performance did not meet expectations. Project preparation and implementation were poor. Project oversight was weak: emerging concerns were not identified in a timely manner and were not addressed or were inadequately addressed. Activities were not implemented on time or were not carried out at all. Project implementation was delayed, and several activities were abandoned or scaled back.	Performance did not meet expectations. The implementation of project activities was delayed, and at least some activities were abandoned due to factors largely under the control of the implementing agency. Many failures to comply with the GEF policies and requirements were noted. Guidance from the GEF agency was not implemented or was implemented with considerable delay.
Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	Performance was seriously deficient. The GEF agency mismanaged project implementation and had poor oversight. Emerging concerns were not identified in time, including those that should have been obvious. Although instances of mismanagement were discovered, no corrective action was taken. Project activities were poorly implemented and several had to be abandoned.	Performance was seriously deficient. There were several instances of mismanagement by the implementing entity. Emerging concerns were not identified in a timely manner, including those that should have been obvious. Most activities were very poorly executed, experiencing delays and reduced activities. The relevant GEF policies and requirements were not applied.
Unable to Assess (UA)	The information available is not sufficient to allow a performance rating.	The information available is not sufficient to allow a performance rating.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The quality of project M&E will be assessed in terms of: i) quality of the design of the project M&E plan; and ii) quality of project M&E during implementation. The following table presents the relevant descriptors for each rating.

Appendix table 12. M&E ratings

Ratings	M&E plan	Implementation of the M&E system
Highly Satisfactory (HS)	The M&E plan is good practice and has no weaknesses. Its alignment with the project's theory of change is robust. Comprehensive baseline data has been provided. Specified indicators are appropriate and arrangements for implementation of the plan are adequate. Overall, the M&E plan exceeds expectations and is exemplary.	Implementation of the M&E plan was excellent. Weaknesses in the M&E plan, if present, were addressed promptly. The M&E activities were conducted in a timely manner, and the M&E data were used to improve project implementation. Overall, the M&E implementation exceeded expectations and was exemplary.
Satisfactory (S)	The M&E plan is robust and has no or only minor weaknesses. Its alignment with the project's theory of change is robust. Baseline data provided or their collection is planned at the start of the project. Specified indicators were appropriate and arrangements for implementation of the M&E plan were adequate. The plan met expectations.	Implementation of the M&E plan was generally strong. Weaknesses in the M&E were addressed in a timely manner. The M&E activities were conducted in a timely manner, and the M&E data were used to improve project implementation. Overall, the M&E implementation met expectations.
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	The M&E plan is robust overall. Its alignment with the project's theory of change is robust. Specified indicators were appropriate and arrangements for implementation of the M&E plan were adequate. There were areas where the M&E plan could be strengthened but, overall, the plan was adequate.	Implementation of the M&E plan was generally strong, with some weaknesses. Weaknesses in the M&E were generally addressed, but some weaknesses remained. Some of the M&E activities were delayed. The M&E data were used for reporting but had little use in improving project implementation. Overall, the M&E implementation met expectations with some areas of underperformance.
Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	The M&E plan is weak overall, but it has strengths in some areas. Alignment with the project theory of change is weak. The specified indicators are generally appropriate, but additional indicators are required to adequately capture project outcomes or else the arrangements for collecting data on the indicators are not adequate. The plan needs several improvements to meet expectations.	Implementation of the M&E plan was weak or did not address weaknesses in the original plan. Most of the M&E activities were completed, and some were suspended or delayed. The M&E data were not reported in a timely manner: there is little evidence to suggest that data were used to improve project implementation. Overall, the M&E implementation did not meet expectations, but there are some areas of adequate performance.
Unsatisfactory (U)	The M&E plan had serious deficiencies. Alignment with the project theory of change is weak. No baseline data are provided, nor is there any indication that these would be collected at the start of the project. Indicators do not adequately address project outcomes and other results. Relevant indicators have not been specified for several	Implementation of the M&E plan was weak or did not address weaknesses in the original plan. Several M&E activities were abandoned or were incomplete. The data collection methodology was not robust. The M&E data were not reported in a timely manner: there is little evidence to suggest that data were used to improve project

Ratings	M&E plan	Implementation of the M&E system
	results. There are gaps in the arrangements for implementing the M&E plan. No budget or an inadequate budget has been provided for the M&E system.	implementation. The M&E implementation did not meet expectations.
Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	No M&E plan has been prepared.	No M&E activities were implemented, or were insignificant, other than conducting the project evaluation.
Unable to Assess (UA)	This cannot be assessed because the project documents are not available.	This cannot be assessed as the terminal evaluation does not adequately cover M&E implementation.

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