

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMME/GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT
FACILITY ASSISTANCE TO SELECTED NON-ANNEX I PARTIES
FOR THE PREPARATION OF INITIAL NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS

PREPARATION OF THE INITIAL NATIONAL COMMUNICATION RELATED TO
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK
CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE (UNFCCC) IN THE
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

GF/2200-97-46

PROJECT EVALUATION REPORT

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Acronyms

ENDA	Environment and Development Association
FCCC	Framework Convention on Climate Change
FPMB	Fund Programme Management Branch
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IPCC	Inter Governmental Panel on Climate Change
UCCEE	Collaborating Centre for Energy and Environment
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. Monitoring

1. From its start-up in late 1997, the project experienced frequent ups and downs due to the political instability experienced by the country in 1996, 1997, May 2001 and September 2001. Only activity 1, which involved the establishment of the Project Management Team and the National Study Team, was implemented on time. The greenhouse gas inventory was established in 1999 and validated in April 2000. No more project activities, besides awareness-creation, were carried out due to poor morale.
2. The first task of the evaluator took place from 23 August to 2 September 2002 in Bangui, during which the following activities were conducted:
 - (a) An assessment of office equipment and materials revealed that the office building had been burned and its contents had been looted by the military; only the new equipment acquired through the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) was in place;
 - (b) A workshop was held to assess mitigation and vulnerability/adaptation studies and to provide corrective measures allowing each expert to finalize his/her study. Other activities defined in the approved project document were also reviewed and appropriate recommendations were made. A work plan with precise guidelines on how to implement all the remaining project activities was prepared with the experts group and the project coordinator;
 - (c) All outstanding project quarterly and financial reports were prepared and the project's budget status was clarified with the help of the staff of UNEP.

B. The evaluation

3. The project has implemented nine activities. The actual results correspond roughly to the planned outcomes. The preparation of the initial national communication has raised public awareness and brought the greenhouse gas inventory and analytical tools to the scientific community in the area of climate change. Public awareness about climate change has been adequately addressed through the media and Government authorities have been continuously informed.
4. The executing agency, the Ministry of Environment, Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fisheries, supervised the project implementation process. It should be noted that the project suffered from attempts by the military to destabilize the democratically elected Government, which led to the suspension of the project for about three years.
5. UNEP, the implementing agency, decided to relaunch the project activities at the initiative of the Task Manager in response to the request of the Central African Republic's Project Coordinator. The Task Manager at UNEP has served as a focal point during the implementation of the project, responded to project queries, provided technical support and acted as a financial intermediary of the Budget and Financial Management Service (BFMS) of UNEP. The Finance Department of BFMS has provided considerable support. UNEP as a whole has been very tolerant in extending the project duration four times in response to the request of the Government. The UNEP Collaborating Centre for Energy and Environment (UCCEE) was not involved in the management of the project during project implementation.
6. The budget allocation for strengthening and consolidating national capacity represented a big share of the total GEF project budget. The project, having built effectively on existing expertise, enabled researchers to apply and to develop their skills in the fairly new science of climate change. The national consultants were drawn from both the public and the private sectors and representatives of non-governmental organizations. The outputs of these expert groups provide sufficient indications of a fairly adequate establishment of a minimum level of expertise in the various areas of climate change. However, it is worthwhile, from the standpoint of sustainability, to strengthen the capacity of these groups to enable them

to identify mitigation, vulnerability/adaptation measures and response strategies for the remaining sectors identified in the project document.

7. The process of preparation of the initial national communication has taken into consideration actual national development frameworks and targeted planning objectives. A targeted integration process can only be achieved and be effective if policy makers integrate mitigation and other measures into their plans on the basis of the vulnerability assessments and policy options identified and recommended by the initial national communication.

8. The Project Coordinating Unit considered UNEP's support to have been instrumental in ensuring a prompt response to its requests. The Task Manager provided timely assistance upon the request of the teams and guidance to keep the project on track and within the budget. The core technical advisors were not contracted for writing the sector reports although they were available for consultations throughout the duration of the project. UNEP received timely progress reports from the Project Coordinating Unit during the early and late stages of project implementation.

9. The project document also mentioned that cash advances were to be made on a quarterly basis, subject to certain conditions. The successive disbursements indicate that these conditions were met and that UNEP was obliged to adopt this good management approach because of the distance from the Central African Republic.

10. The potential contribution of the project to the furtherance of the objectives of the relevant global, regional and national environmental assessments, policy frameworks and action plans, and its role in strengthening the Convention, have been addressed throughout this evaluation. It should be noted that there is uncertainty with regard to whether the project design and implementation took place before UNEP's guidelines on gender sensitivity had been established or not. The project advocated the participation of women.

11. On an evaluation rating scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the highest and 5 being the lowest, the project was given an overall rating of 3 and the following scores under the listed individual items:

C. Rating of the project

Implementation aspect	Excellent 1 90 - 100 %	Very good 2 75 - 89 %	Good 3 60 - 74 %	Satisfactory 4 50 - 59 %	Unsatisfactory 5 < 49 %
Timeliness				√	
Achievement of results and objectives			√		
Attainment of outputs			√		
Completion of activities			√		
Execution within the budget		√			
Impact of the project		√			
Sustainability		√			
Overall score			√		

D. Lessons learned

12. The project has experienced many ups and downs, an understanding of which could benefit future UNEP projects. These comprise positive lessons which can be replicated and negative ones that may have a negative impact on the implementation of future activities.

E. Conclusions and recommendations

13. The decentralization principle of UNEP induces a certain level of active involvement and responsibility of the host countries of the project. The following are specific recommendations regarding potential follow-up evaluation measures that would enable UNEP and GEF to assess the longer-term benefits and the sustainability of project activities:

(a) A follow-up review of the project and its impacts on policy-making, capacity-building and public awareness after a year or so is critical. The most effective approach would probably be for this to be done by the Task Manager or a national consultant who would be assigned a catalytic role. Subsequent project phases or related climate-change activities should provide adequate funding for this;

(b) It is worthwhile for the sustainability of the project results to build capacity to identify mitigation, vulnerability and adaptation measures and response strategies in the sectors that have been left out and to enhance the capacity of development planners and decision makers to integrate climate change concerns into national planning;

(c) It is expected that there will be little voluntary investment in impacts and adaptation from the Government. Financial and technical support will hence be needed to consolidate the actual project results for the next two years. GEF and other financial mechanisms could be urged to support the Central African Republic in this regard through phase II, the national adaptation plan of action or other enabling activities.

14. Phase II, "Climate Change Enabling Activities to Assess Technology Needs", is of great concern to this country which, despite political instability, made tremendous efforts to achieve the project outputs of phase I. The Central African Republic has developed technical capacity to benefit from regional activities related to climate change. Because of this and its natural resource base, its participation is fully recommended.

15. The Central African Republic has been experiencing regrettable political instability and an economic recession for the last ten years. It should be acknowledged, however, that the Government made a tremendous effort to complete this UNFCCC enabling activities project relatively quickly. In view of this remarkable achievement, the Central African Republic deserves substantial assistance from the donor community to enable it to conserve its flourishing biodiversity base.

INTRODUCTION

A. General information on the Central African Republic

1. Geographical setting

16. The Central African Republic is among the world's least developed countries. Its surface area is 623,000 Km² and its population was barely 3.4 million in 1998. Its landscape is characterized by hills and mountains, with the Ngaoui Hill in the Yade mountainous area reaching a height of 1410 meters.

17. The country, as its name suggests, is at the heart of Africa and has common borders with Cameroon in the west, Congo Brazzaville and the Democratic Republic of Congo in the south, Tchad in the north and Sudan in the east. It is landlocked and the nearest harbours are those of Douala in Cameroon and Pointe Noire in Congo, located at 1500 km and 1000 km away respectively.

18. With regard to climate, the Central African Republic is located in the fourth parallel north and hence is in the tropical zone, with a summer season stretching approximately from November to May and a rainy season from June to October. The annual mean temperature is 26°C. Humidity varies from 36 per cent to 55 per cent, whereas the mean precipitation is 1200 mm.

19. The Central African Republic has a dense tropical forest in the south and a Sudanese savanna in the north, with a rich biodiversity of flora all along the climatic gradient. In the south, there is an equatorial

forest, located between 2° and 5° latitude north with a short dry season. The savanna zone stretches in the centre between 5° and 9° latitude north under the humid tropical climatic influence of June to October and dry conditions from November to May in the north.

20. The fragile soil in the Sangha-Mbaéré, Basse-Kotto and Mbomou areas and the hilly zone of Carnot-Gadzi and Ouadda is rather sandy and poor in organic manure for agricultural use. The Mbomou and Upper Mbomou areas are completely unsuitable for agriculture. The fertile area of Aouk is not cultivated, probably because of excessive erosion. The eastern areas remain largely unpopulated but have tremendous potential.

2. The socio-political environment

21. From independence until the 1980s, the Central African Republic has gone through three single-party political regimes with an unsuccessful attempt at democratization in 1981. In 1993, the country had its first multiparty elections and democratic institutions were put in place. In 1996, 1997 and 2001, the country, which had already been weakened by the reign of Jean Bedel Bokassa, experienced repeated political upheavals that caused heavy human and economic losses. Many enterprises closed down and unemployment rose, leading to spectacular budget deficits and inability to pay salaries. The donor community lost confidence in the Government's ability to manage the country's affairs and the economy experienced near total collapse.

3. The macroeconomic context

22. The Central African Republic is rich in natural resources. The climate is favourable and land is abundant. About 3,600 plant species have been identified in the Central African Republic. The country also has a wide variety of species of fauna, some of which are endemic to the region including forest antelope and buffalo. These endow the Central African Republic with a potential for tourism, game reserves and national parks. Despite all this, natural resources have not been exploited and the country is one of the poorest on the continent, ranked 156 out of 173 countries (UNDP, 1993). Due to rampant poaching, a significant number of elephants and black rhinoceroses have been killed.

23. The economy of the Central African Republic is heavily dependent on agriculture, which constitutes 33 per cent of the gross national product (GNP) and provides 75 per cent of employment; forestry, livestock, hunting and fisheries account for 53 per cent of GNP. Cereal production, which is entirely consumed locally, accounts for 30 per cent of GNP. The country is rich in diamonds and gold, which contributed 14 per cent to GNP in 1995.

24. With regard to finance, government expenditure is heavy and represented 65 per cent of GNP in 1997. Government loan repayments reached 80 per cent of GNP during the same period, greatly limiting the country's capacity to combat poverty. This situation made the economic development of the Central African Republic very dependent on foreign aid for investments. A structural adjustment programme was developed in 1997 but was never implemented because of insecurity and instability in the country. There was a brief period of economic recovery in 1994 before the military upheavals of 1996-1997 and 2001 caused mass destruction of public property, paralyzed the administration and led to economic collapse. The main constraints on the country's development are low productivity of the main sectors of the economy, coupled with undeveloped social infrastructure and poor governance (First National Conference on Economics and Finance, September 2001).

B. Background of the evaluation

25. The project under review has been implemented internally by the UNEP Task Manager for Climate Change Enabling Activities, currently located in the Division of Policy Development and Law and externally by the Ministry of Environment, Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fisheries of the Central African Republic. Under the guidance of the Chief, Evaluation and Oversight Unit and in close collaboration with the Task Manager for Climate Change Enabling Activities, a combined monitoring and final evaluation of the UNEP/GEF sub-project Central African Republic Enabling Activities for the Preparation of Initial National

Communications Related to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (GF/2200-97-46) have been carried out.

26. The combined monitoring and evaluation exercise was conducted as a one-month activity spread over a six-month period starting from August 2002. It was divided into two phases. The first phase aimed at monitoring and reviewing the progress made in the implementation of project activities. This took the form of a spot-check evaluation to obtain an accurate picture of what was happening in the project as its duration doubled from the originally planned time frame. What are referred to as special circumstances in the terms of reference that severely affected project implementation are, therefore, what justified the timely intervention of UNEP through this consultation, with the objective of assisting in taking corrective measures. This was done to ensure successful completion of project objectives and achievement of expected results in a cost-effective manner. The evaluation, which took place in the second and final stages, was intended to highlight the lessons learned and the impact of this enabling activities project.

27. The views expressed in this report are solely those of the evaluator, who interviewed project participants and stakeholders.

C. Scope of the project monitoring and evaluation exercise

28. Recognizing the special circumstances of the Central African Republic, specifically the recent political and economic problems that lasted for a significant period of time and severely affected the implementation of the project activities, the assignment took the form of a two-fold exercise as follows:

(a) Review of the progress made in the implementation of the project activities by the Ministry of Environment, Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fisheries, provision of guidance thereafter and filling of gaps to achieve the main project output;

(b) Evaluation of the overall project activities and definition of other practical steps required to ensure successful implementation of new UNEP-sponsored activities.

29. The terms of reference therefore recognized the need for a two-phase special assignment. In the first phase, the evaluator was to compare the planned outputs of the project to the actual outputs and assess the steps needed to follow up activities in the country with a view to completing the initial national communication to UNFCCC. The evaluator was thereafter to recommend corrective measures to fill gaps and to complete the main project output. The evaluator would provide guidance to the project coordinator at the Ministry of Environment, Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fisheries in consultation with UNEP to put in place corrective measures and to recommend other practical steps required to strengthen and to improve the institutional framework, specifically to ensure successful implementation of Climate Change Enabling Activities Phase II, the National Adaptation Plan of Action, and participation in regional climate change projects such as capacity-building for systematic observation systems.

30. Upon completion of phase I, the evaluator would also highlight the lessons learned from the implementation of pending activities in the area of climate change and assess the appropriateness of this project in meeting the longer-term objectives of UNEP, GEF and UNFCCC. Finally, the evaluator would review the national institutional and technical capacity built by the UNEP/GEF project and the linkages established with related ongoing activities in the country.

D. Review of the objectives of UNFCCC, GEF and UNEP

31. The ultimate objective of UNFCCC is the “stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system” (article 2). With the support of GEF, the project under review provided financial assistance to the Central African Republic to:

(a) Develop a greenhouse gas inventory to the 1994 base year;

- (b) Identify and assess mitigation options;
- (c) Develop a comprehensive vulnerability assessment for various sectors;
- (d) Identify stage I adaptation options;
- (e) Build capacity to integrate climate change concerns into planning;
- (f) Provide public awareness and other relevant information required to achieve the general objective of UNFCCC under its article 2.

32. In order to achieve this goal, all Parties to UNFCCC, taking into account their common but differentiated responsibilities and their specific national and regional development priorities, objectives and circumstances, have committed themselves to a number of response measures listed under article 4 of the Convention. In accordance with article 4 and article 12, paragraph 1, each Party must prepare and periodically update a communication containing information related to the implementation of the Convention.

33. In this regard, GEF and UNEP share the same objective since GEF is the interim financial mechanism of UNFCCC and UNEP acts, inter alia, as an implementing agency of GEF by providing Parties with financial resources and technical assistance that address enabling activities.

34. The guidelines set by the Convention for the preparation of initial national communications by non-annex I Parties have the following five principal objectives, taking into account article 4, paragraph 7:

- (a) To assist non-annex I Parties in meeting their reporting requirements under the Convention;
- (b) To encourage the presentation of information in ways that are consistent, transparent, comparable and flexible to improve the completeness and reliability of activity data, emission factors and estimates;
- (c) To facilitate the process of preparation, compilation and consideration of the communications;
- (d) To serve as policy guidance to GEF for the timely provision of the financial support needed by non-annex I Parties to meet their obligations;
- (e) To ensure that the Conference of the Parties has sufficient information to carry out its responsibilities, to assess the overall effects of the steps taken by the Parties and to assess the implementation of the Convention.

E. Commitment of countries under UNFCCC

35. Article 12, paragraph 1 of UNFCCC requires that each Party, in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, shall communicate the following to the Conference of the Parties through the secretariat of the Convention:

- (a) A national inventory of anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of all greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer;
- (b) A general description of steps taken or envisaged to implement the Convention;
- (c) Any other information relevant to the achievement of the objectives of the Convention and suitable for inclusion in the communication.

36. The commitment of the Central African Republic under the Convention consists in reporting to the Conference of the Parties, through appropriate channels, on the amount of emissions and on the measures

that can be taken to reduce these emissions and to adapt to climate impacts. Article 12, paragraph 5 of the Convention specifies the time frame of the submission within three years of the entry into force of the Convention for each Party while the Central African Republic, which signed and ratified the Convention respectively on 13 June 1992 and 10 March 1995, intended to prepare and submit its initial national communication two years after the commencement of the project in August 1997.

F. Methodology of the evaluation

37. This evaluation has been carried out through the use of the following four methodological components:

(a) Review and assessment of reports and documents from or commissioned by the implementing institutions, the Ministry of Environment, Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fisheries and UNEP;

(b) An information search through the project's stakeholders and personnel not directly involved in the project to find out the "impact" of the project;

(c) A structured survey and informal interviews among project personnel and a selected group of the personnel involved;

(d) A review of the results and lessons learned from the implementation process and of the assumptions and expectations.

38. The evaluation necessitated two trips to Bangui during which three informal meetings were held with the national project experts and staff. The trips coincided with two workshops aimed respectively at assessing vulnerability and adaptation studies with experts and validating the initial national communication with the stakeholders in general. In addition, an in-country visit was made to Yaloke and to the Boali Dam area to assess the vulnerability of these two sites to climate change.

39. The evaluation focused on the following areas:

(a) Political results: The Central African Republic had to complete its initial national communication in order to fulfil its commitment and to report to the Conference of the Parties as other non-annex I Parties had already done. Was it successful in completing the planned output within the time frame?

(b) Technical results: The project was intended to bring about capacity-building, research and analysis of methodological issues related to UNFCCC and to facilitate the dissemination and use of this knowledge in the area of climate change for the conclusion of a national initial communication to the Conference of the Parties. Did it achieve its objectives?

(c) Management results: The Atmospheric Unit of UNEP gave full responsibility for project implementation to the Initial Communication Steering Committee with the support of a staff member of the Ministry of Environment, Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fisheries. Did the Project Coordinating Unit, located in the Ministry of Environment, Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fisheries, manage the resources and implement activities within the budget? Is this approach more beneficial to future UNEP/GEF projects in comparison with other managerial approaches?

(d) Cost-effectiveness and project achievement indicators: The Task Manager and the UNEP Evaluation and Oversight Unit agreed with the evaluator to combine the budgeted mid-term review and final evaluation of the project as well as the monitoring task aimed at relaunching the project activities in a single assignment. Has this initiative been beneficial to project completion?

40. Rating the success of the implementation would, in addition to the above indicators, assess the impact of the project and its sustainability.

41. The aim of the report is to provide an assessment covering all these areas of interest on the basis of the sources of information described above.

42. In the sections that follow, the report will assess the extent to which the objectives have been met. Chapter I focuses on the project review and the relaunching stage. Each question raised for the evaluation will then be examined in chapter II by restating the objective and the background situation before assessing the project implementation results. Chapter III gives an overview of the perceived rating value of project implementation, chapter IV the lessons learned, while chapter V makes some recommendations for future activities.

I. PROJECT MONITORING

A. Project review and monitoring

43. The objective was to compare the planned outputs of the project with the actual outputs and to assess the steps needed for follow-up in the country in view of completing the initial national communication.

44. The project stalled for more than two years, from late 1999 to 2002. Successive military attempts to rule the country created instability in the country, leading to a freezing of project implementation. From its start-up in late 1997, the project experienced frequent difficulties due to political instability in 1996, 1997, May 2001 and September 2001. Only activity 1, i.e., setting up the project management team and the national study team, was implemented on time. The greenhouse gas inventory was prepared in 1999 after a joint training session for the experts on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 1996 revised methodology in Nouakchott. This greenhouse gas inventory was validated only in April 2000. No other project activities except public sensitization were undertaken thereafter, as the political situation and related problems had dampened morale.

B. Corrective measures recommended to relaunch project activities

45. The objective was to recommend corrective measures to fill gaps and to achieve the main project output. The consultant was expected to provide guidance to the Project Coordinator at the Ministry of Environment, Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fisheries in consultation with UNEP to enable him to put the corrective measures in place.

46. Besides activities 1 (institutional bodies) and 2 (the greenhouse gas inventory), four workshops aimed at raising public awareness on climate-change issues and vulnerability assessment studies (which the consultant contracted from Cameroon had initiated but had not finalized), the project was forced to discontinue its activities. However, the project staff was dedicated and the coordinator was adequately qualified to conduct the remaining project activities.

C. Corrective measures implemented to relaunch project activities

47. A work plan divided into two phases, with the first phase aiming at relaunching the implementation of the project, was proposed to UNEP. This first task took place from 23 August to 2 September 2002 in Bangui, during which the following activities were undertaken:

(a) An assessment of office equipment and materials revealed that the office building had been burned and that its contents had been looted by the military; only the new equipment acquired through UNITAR was intact;

(b) A workshop was held to assess the mitigation and vulnerability/adaptation studies and to provide corrective measures allowing the experts to finalize their studies. Other activities defined in the approved project document were also reviewed and appropriate recommendations were made. A work plan with clear guidelines on how to implement all remaining project activities was prepared with the experts group and the project coordinator;

(c) All outstanding quarterly and financial reports were prepared and the budget status was clarified with the help of UNEP staff.

48. On the basis of the above project results and of the assessment of the overall progress of the project, it was considered appropriate to provide the Project Coordinating Unit with some additional financial support to implement the remaining project activities. UNEP provided the financial support on request at an opportune moment. This process led to the finalization of the initial national communication of the Central African Republic with a validation workshop chaired by the Prime Minister in January 2003. The outcomes of that workshop were incorporated into the initial national communication report before its submission to UNFCCC and UNEP.

II. EVALUATION

A. Project assistance to the country to fulfil its commitments

49. The objective of the evaluation was to analyze the quality and usefulness of the planned and current project outputs and to determine how they contributed to the attainment of results and of the overall objectives defined in the approved project proposal in meeting its commitments under UNFCCC. The evaluation was expected to determine whether the project had been able to respond to the identified needs and problems in the Central African Republic.

50. The Government of the Central African Republic, which ratified UNFCCC on 10 March 1995, is fully committed, as a non-annex I Party, to the implementation of UNFCCC and it therefore intended to prepare and submit its initial national communication within a reasonable time frame (November 2000) after entry of the Convention into force or after the approval of GEF funding for the project. The evaluation was to determine to what extent the enabling activities had assisted the country in responding to its main financial needs and problems so as to fulfil its contractual commitment under UNFCCC.

51. The objective of the project (with financial support amounting to \$350,000) was to enable the Central African Republic to fulfil its reporting requirements under UNFCCC. The requested financial support reflected the current specific needs and concerns of the country aimed at fulfilling its commitments for the implementation of the Convention. It was realistically estimated by the country and critically reviewed and disbursed by UNEP. Technical assistance was also available to the Central African Republic from UNEP upon request.

52. The national study team appears not to have experienced any problems in accessing climate change resources. UNEP assigned a task manager to the project and approved institutional arrangements which gave total authority to the Government to implement the project. BFMS made six financial disbursements, representing 89.7 per cent of the total amount as shown below (with the remaining 10.3 per cent in the form of in-kind or cash contributions made by the Government).

Table 1. Contributions of the Government

23 December 1997	75,000.00
23 October 1998	79,611.70
March 1999	57,318.80
April 2001	50,000.00
14 December 2002	40,000.00
January 2003	12,069.50
TOTAL	314,000.00

53. Training workshops, greenhouse gas inventories, vulnerability assessment and policy framework analysis have all been undertaken to facilitate the collection of all the necessary information for the preparation of the initial national communication under the supervision of the Task Manager.

B. Impact of the project results on UNFCCC and their usefulness to GEF projects

54. The objective was to measure the impact of the planned and current results of the first activity on the preparation of the initial national communication to UNFCCC. This should also include a determination of the usefulness of the results to GEF-funded "Enabling Activities to Prepare National Communications to UNFCCC" projects.

55. By addressing climate change impacts on the environment, this project has contributed to the fulfilment of the objectives of UNEP. Through the provision of new data, climate change impacts, assessments of response strategies and the implementation of activities to meet national commitments and to promote capacity-building in climate change issues, this project has significantly contributed to the implementation of UNFCCC. As noted above, in setting guidelines for the preparation of initial national communications by non-annex I Parties, the Parties to the Convention defined five objectives. The project has met those objectives in one way or another, thus demonstrating its usefulness.

56. Despite the delay in finalizing the initial national communication and the quality of this document, the country was able to report the amount of its emissions, assess its vulnerability to climate change and report on measures for adapting to climate change impacts. In the process of preparation of the initial national communication, the project has also raised wide and diversified public awareness on climate change among groups such as government officials, the provincial administration, members of Parliament, local governments, the media, civil society and local communities.

C. Assessment of the qualifications of the project consultants for project implementation

57. The objective of this task was to assess the quality of the consultants hired for the implementation of the various project components, to identify the lessons learned and to make recommendations in consultation with the project staff on how such involvement could be improved.

58. Climate change is a wide subject which involves almost every government department, the private sector and civil society. For the implementation of this enabling activities project, a project management team and a national study team were established under the auspices of the Department of Environment, for which a number of national consultants were selected on the basis of existing scientific and technical expertise. These expert groups (greenhouse gas, vulnerability/impact assessment and adaptation, policy framework, analysis, etc.) which were assigned the tasks of conducting the project activities, particularly thematic studies, needed additional technical background on the IPCC guidelines and methodologies.

59. UNEP is the implementing agency for the climate change enabling activities, while the executing agency is the Ministry of Environment, Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fisheries through the Department of Environment. Both institutions have played a crucial role in drawing up the country's proposal for enabling activities and in selecting local consultants as well as the external technical evaluation expertise of UNEP. The key player in the implementation of the project is the Department of Environment, where the project coordinator is located.

60. According to the project document, the Ministry of Environment, Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fisheries will maximize the use of national expertise and institutions from public/private sector institutions and non-governmental organizations. The Ministry of Environment, Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fisheries, through the Department of Environment, has demonstrated total commitment to this. Of the 35 experts involved in the greenhouse gas inventory activity in 1997, the project had only twelve experts by the time of relaunching. Out of all these experts, who are university graduates, only five, including the project coordinator, have demonstrated total commitment to conducting their respective assignments. These are the members of the Initial Communication Steering Committee, which is the core writing group of the initial national communication, whose selection was approved by the Task Manager and on whom he relied to carry out the remaining project activities.

61. The preparation of the initial national communication has provided an opportunity to the project coordinator and the Director of Planning to get more involved than anyone else in preparing the final draft

that has been submitted for validation by the Government and civil society. UNEP has played an important role in assisting the experts and reviewing the various study documents, including the initial national communication.

62. The project document put emphasis on drawing upon the expertise available from the country's public and private sectors. The project also included a budget provision for enhancing the capacity of the national experts with regard to the various climate change issues, through group training workshops and hiring and subcontracting of various national consultants who are paid a monthly allowance.

63. This shows that the project coordinator did his best to prevent the experts from leaving the country due to lack of money as the Government could not pay their monthly salaries. This strategy helped to keep the best local expertise in the country and top-level officials working for the project.

64. The project, having effectively built on existing expertise, enabled researchers to apply and to develop their skills in the fairly new science of climate change. The thematic teams (vulnerability, adaptation, greenhouse gas inventories) were drawn from experts who were involved in public planning and were composed of the public sector (ministerial departments, academia), the private sector (private national consultants) and representatives of non-governmental organizations.

65. The outputs of the technical studies demonstrate clearly that these teams had a very good level of expertise in the various areas of climate change. Nine workshops were organized by the project for training of experts or for awareness creation in which the experts moderated the discussions. The project coordinator attended several international training workshops and meetings, from which he acquired a great deal of knowledge on climate change issues.

D. Assessment of capacity-building by the project

66. The objective of this task was to assess the role played by the project in building the capacity of the participating national institutions in the area of reporting to the Conference of the Parties to UNFCCC and to recommend practical actions to strengthen and to maintain the long-term sustainability of the benefits of this capacity-building.

67. The departments responsible for transportation, aviation and meteorology, public health and population and energy and industry, the University of Bangui, and non-governmental organizations were all co-opted as members of the national study team and thus as counterpart agencies in the areas of greenhouse gas inventories, mitigation analysis and vulnerability adaptation studies. The project document states that they may benefit from institutional strengthening.

68. In addition to what has been stated in the preceding section, the preparation of the initial national communication also relied on local technical expertise in climate-change-related areas. There is a need, however, for the sustainability of this capacity, to strengthen capacity at the level of individual agencies and to enhance the capacity of development planners and decision makers to integrate climate change concerns into the future planning priorities of the country. No formal training, apart from training on greenhouse gas inventory methods, has been extended to ministries and the personnel of government agencies who are directly in charge of planning and decision-making. From the standpoint of sustainability, it would have been more beneficial to the country to strengthen the capacity of the representatives of these institutions first, instead of that of the consultants.

69. As mentioned above, several workshops were organized to raise the capacity-building efforts of the project. Attendance at these workshops was very good; while those of 1997 and 1999 registered a wide range of participants from various ministries, the private sector, university staff, and non-governmental organizations, the ones held in 2001, on the contrary, recorded mainly experts and representatives of non-governmental organizations.

70. The Project Coordination Unit has requested no training or any assistance from UNEP to identify training programmes.

E. Assistance required from UNEP and GEF in implementing the national adaptation plan of action and the initial national communication phase II projects

71. The objective was to determine the future assistance required from UNEP and GEF, particularly for ensuring successful implementation of upcoming GEF-funded projects, to identify the lessons learned and to provide recommendations that might improve the delivery of similar assistance to similar projects in the country.

72. Because of the long period of time taken to implement this project, there was concern at UNEP headquarters with regard to the ability of the country to implement other GEF-funded projects.

73. The Central African Republic is undergoing a very serious crisis, which at first sight appears hopeless because of the overall instability in the region. Global environmental protection is needed to save natural resources and the fauna which are marginalized in times of political turmoil. The United Nations system is therefore called upon to assist in the preservation of this rich biodiversity of the Central African Republic that might otherwise be lost. UNEP, as an implementing agency of GEF-funded projects, has an important role to play in this regard.

74. The Central African Republic could not build full capacity from enabling activities during the preparation of the Initial National Communication because of the country's political instability. Therefore, building on environmental assessments and transfer of knowledge could not take place and the country still lacks capacity to fully implement GEF projects of this kind.

75. The intervention of UNEP could take the form of temporary assistance in the form of a technical advisor like the one already in Mauritania, who would ensure a better delivery system for upcoming GEF-funded projects. The technical advisor would play the crucial role of counselling and assisting in the design of appropriate actions to be taken. In addition, the English language is a major constraint for this French-speaking country, which the technical advisor could help to relieve, particularly with regard to reporting and speeding up of activities.

F. Effectiveness of the monitoring/evaluation systems developed by the project

76. The objective was to review the adequacy of national and international monitoring and evaluation systems developed to supervise and to implement the project and, on the basis of the lessons learned, to make recommendations that could improve current procedures related to monitoring and evaluation.

77. UNEP has entrusted the Government with total responsibility for the implementation process, which includes quarterly progress reports prepared by the Project Coordination Unit. These reports could enable the Department of Environment to provide an overview of the progress of the implementation on an ongoing basis and to identify shortcomings at an early stage before reporting to UNEP. To assess the adequacy of the monitoring and evaluation systems developed for the supervision and implementation of the project, current practices and relationships need to be critically examined.

78. The coordinators from the Atmospheric Unit, BFMS and the UNEP/GEF Coordination Office received timely progress reports from the Project Coordination Unit at the early stages of project implementation. On the occasions when these reports were not received, every effort was made to obtain the latest information. Good project reports and the timely completion of project activities attest to the effective monitoring and follow-up of project activities throughout the project.

79. According to the project document, each of the study teams should provide monthly progress reports to the project management team, the Department of Environment and UNEP. This is intended to enable the Department of Environment to evaluate progress, to identify difficulties and to provide remedies at the early stages of project implementation. The department is requested to provide a quarterly progress report and financial reports to UNEP. The project management team and the national study team were expected to meet on a quarterly basis to review project progress and to provide technical and scientific, policy and

strategic guidance. The minutes of these meetings were to be shared by all participating institutions, and quarterly progress financial reports should have been provided to UNEP based on UNEP's standard format. The project management team and the national study team did not meet these reporting requirements because they failed to submit the required progress reports on time. This transparent communication approach would have enabled the Department of Environment and its supporting institutions to evaluate the implementation of the project on an ongoing basis, to assess the quality of the work and its conformity with the terms of reference and deadlines, and to identify difficulties and shortcomings at the initial stages. Unfortunately, this approach appears not to have been effectively followed during the suspension of project implementation corresponding to the collapse of the Department of Environment.

80. The disbursements table (table 1, above) indicates the status of project implementation with two gaps (March 1999 to April 2001 to December 2002) corresponding to the induced suspension of the project due to the political paralysis in the country.

81. The project document also indicated that cash advances were to be made on a quarterly basis, on condition of timely confirmation by the Department of Environment that the expected rate of expenditure and the actual cash position necessitated payment, submission of a satisfactory financial report of the expenditure of the past quarter and timely and satisfactory progress reports on project implementation. The Project Coordination Unit met the above three requirements regularly as indicated by the disbursements table.

82. UNEP was obliged to stick to this good management practice given its distance from the Central African Republic, in addition to agreeing to the Government's request to accelerate the process so that the initial national communication could be submitted sufficiently early.

G. Effectiveness of the organizational structure, management and financial systems

83. The objective was to review the effectiveness of the organizational structure and of the management and financial systems, which played an important role in the implementation of the project, and to investigate the staffing, administrative arrangements and operational mechanisms, with emphasis on coordination within and outside UNEP. The evaluator solicited the views of relevant UNEP staff members on the usefulness of the project in enhancing the work of UNEP and GEF in the area of climate change.

84. The project's institutional arrangement recognized the Ministry of Environment, Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fisheries as the coordinating authority. The project management team, the national study team and the project implementation units are the institutions that deal directly with the project within the Ministry of Environment, Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fisheries.

85. A set of terms of reference for each institution was developed so as to assign individual project missions to implementing units. A review of the effectiveness of these combined systems called for the scrutiny of each individual component and of the coordination within and outside UNEP. Particular attention was given to the assumptions and risks anticipated in this regard.

86. The institutional arrangements for the implementation of climate-change-related activities in the Central African Republic evolved around the enabling activities project. From an organizational point of view, the Ministry of Environment, Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fisheries is the executing agency and was to supervise the project implementation process. It is worth noting that the following three management bodies representing the institutional operational bodies have been created:

(a) The National Climate Change Management Committee, chaired by the Prime Minister and vice-chaired by the Minister of Environment, Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fisheries and composed of representatives of the relevant ministries, the private sector and non-governmental organizations;

(b) The Project Management Committee (the Initial Communication Steering Committee) or the Scientific and Technical Support Steering Committee, chaired by the Director of Environment;

(c) The national study team, which is in charge of day-to-day operations.

87. The project management team, which is headed by the Director of Environment and comprises the project coordinator and the thematic group leaders, worked as an operating unit in integrating this project into other environmental issues and activities and has been very dynamic. The national study team in turn played its role in project implementation. The institutional framework, however, had its limits, since no one could undertake activities due to the political environment, which had not been anticipated as a risk.

88. UNEP, as an implementing agency, played a technical support and advisory role through its Atmospheric Unit with the support of the UNEP Regional Office for Africa and UCCEE. The Task Manager in the Atmospheric Unit was at the centre of project implementation and responded in a satisfactory manner to project queries and technical support issues. He also acted as the financial intermediary with BFMS. He made one trip to Mauritania to attend the regional workshop mentioned above. No particular request was made to UCCEE. The UNEP/GEF Coordination Office and the Finance Department of BFMS provided significant support in transferring cash advances expeditiously and in assisting the project coordinator in his financial reporting. Funds were directly transferred to the project account according to the financial arrangement in the approved project document.

89. UNEP as a whole has been very tolerant and flexible in extending the project duration five times and consequently reviewing the budget in response to the difficulties faced by the Central African Republic.

H. Technical and/or operational constraints encountered during project implementation

90. The objective was to identify the technical and/or operational constraints encountered during project implementation, particularly recognizing the special circumstances of the country that led to delays in the implementation of the project, and to identify further the actions required by UNEP and the Ministry of Environment, Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fisheries to overcome the constraints and any appropriate alternative measures that could be taken.

91. The project encountered many technical and/or operational constraints during its implementation. The first type of constraint was encountered during the greenhouse inventory activity according to expert reports and the minutes of workshops. The consultants interviewed during informal meetings confirmed the following constraints:

(a) Stakeholders from all spheres (the population, Government departments, civil society and private enterprises) were reluctant to communicate information on their activities. This resulted in contradictory data;

(b) Quality data: The last agricultural census was carried out in 1983 and there is discordance of the statistics (greenhouse gas emissions are different and vary from one ecosystem to another; since the consultants could not visit all regions, the use of weighted mean values and extrapolations was frequent in doing calculations);

(c) Budgetary constraint: Stakeholders felt that the available resources were insufficient to implement project activities. The conclusion of the evaluation is that the budget matched the project's needs even though there were reallocations between budget components. Civil servants did not receive their salaries for several years;

(d) Technical expertise related to climate-change-related issues: A less than competent expert had to be brought from Cameroon.

92. All these constraints delayed the work plan originally spread over a period of 24 months. The duration of the project was extended to 67 months, ending in March 2003.

I. Assessment of the integration of the results into national policy making and/or planning

93. The objective of this task was to identify and to assess any measures initiated by national institutions to integrate the results and recommendations of the initial national communication into national policy-making and/or planning. The evaluator also had to make specific recommendations regarding follow-up measures that would enable longer-term benefits and sustainability of project activities.

94. Activity 6 of the project aimed at building or strengthening the national capacity to integrate climate change concerns into medium and long-term planning through education and training on climate change for national development planners and policy and decision makers. A workshop on this particular aspect was to be held for a targeted audience. The objective in this regard was to identify the measures initiated to integrate the results and recommendations of the initial national communication into national planning.

95. If workshops or training of national development planners and policy and decision makers were to be used as indicators of achievement of the objectives of the project, then it is clear that the project was successful. High-ranking officials of the Department of Planning, who included the Director of Planning himself, participated positively throughout the process and in so doing assured the integration of UNFCCC issues into national planning. The Director of Planning was Vice-Chairman of the initial national communication drafting group and participated in a climate change workshop on capacity-building held in New Delhi in January 2003.

96. If the goal was to integrate the results and recommendations of the initial national communication into national planning, then it should be noted that the initial national communication has just been finalized and the process of integration of its conclusions into national planning will take place only later. The process of formulation of the initial communication has taken into consideration the actual national development framework and the targeted planning objectives.

J. Potential contribution of the project

97. The objective was to determine the potential contribution of the project to the furtherance of the objectives of the relevant global, regional and national environmental assessments, policy frameworks and action plans, and to the strengthening of UNFCCC.

98. Past activities related to climate change and the existence of a legal framework have facilitated the development of standards and tools for environmental assessment. The project aimed at bringing about, through enabling activities, ways to further the objectives of environmental assessments, policy frameworks and action plans and to strengthen the Convention. The evaluation sought to provide an assessment of the potential contribution of the project to these targets. This issue is addressed throughout the evaluation under the various headings.

K. Comparison of actual project results with planned project results

99. The objective of this task was to determine whether the actual results of the project corresponded to the long-term and short-term results identified in the project document and what needed to be done further. The project document sets forth the major expected output for each individual project activity. One way of determining if the project has been successful or not is to compare the actual results with the planned results in the project document.

100. The project includes the nine main activities described below.

1. Establishment of the project management team and the national study team

101. The composition and responsibilities of each of these organs were clearly defined. The major output stated in the project document is the establishment of the Project Management Committee and the national study team, which would be fully committed to the successful implementation of the project. These two bodies were established by the Ministry of Environment, Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fisheries in October 1997. While leadership of the Department of Environment changed in September 2002, the Project Coordination Unit changed its coordinator twice; in September 2002 the project coordinator became simultaneously the Director of Environment. The 12 experts who make up the four core groups went through a selection process. They formed the national study team. The Director of Environment, together with the project leaders of the core groups, formed the project management team. They were all very active at the various stages and participated actively in project implementation. The national consultants were either university academic staff or qualified national experts. Each ministry was represented at a high level. The project enjoyed a very wide range of national publicity, including the support of non-governmental organizations and civil society. All these participants contributed to the public awareness campaign, inventory activities and other project activities.

2. Preparation of the greenhouse gas inventory

102. Three major outputs were identified for this activity, which is the main component of the project. Following guidelines adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its second session, the greenhouse gas inventory based on the 1994 IPCC methodology was to be prepared, focusing on gases emitted by selected processes and sources. The actual results correspond to the following planned results:

(a) A comprehensive greenhouse gas inventory based on the 1994 data was prepared in May 2000 and distributed to the various stakeholders of the project in February 2001. In the various documents, the experts identified shortcomings and gaps in the IPCC guidelines in relation to local conditions;

(b) Recommendations for areas of targeted research to improve future inventories were made and proposals of revisions to the existing IPCC greenhouse gas inventory methodology were made. The mechanism for regular updating and management of the inventory database is, however, not well defined;

(c) A large number of consultants benefited from a training session on methodology held in May 1998 in Nouakchott. The selected inventory study group was inaugurated on 20 September 1998 and its work culminated in the workshop held in May 2000 to examine and to validate reports of the identified sector subgroups of the Central African Republic: energy, industry, agriculture, forestry and land use and wastes. The results of the inventory are shown in table 2.

Table 2. Results of the greenhouse gas inventory

Greenhouse gas	Sink potentials	Emission sources					
	CO ₂	CO ₂	CH ₄	CO	N ₂ O	NO _x	NMVOC
Sectors							
Energy		203	286	105	41	0	0
Industry		0	0	0	0	0	0
Solvents and other substances		0	0	0	0	0	0
Agriculture		0	274	4173	33	48	13
Land and forestry	140000	1535	1	13	0	0	0
Wastes		0	4	0	8	0	0
TOTAL	140000	1738	565	4291	82	48	13

Sector emissions

103. Only one activity has not been specifically addressed, i.e., the original research needed to develop and/or apply new emission factors for specific activities. The group could not identify or anticipate new emissions since all known ones were already included.

3. Programmes to address climate change and its adverse impacts, in particular abatement and sink enhancement

104. This activity could not be launched due to lack of experts.

4. Policy options for monitoring systems and response strategies for impacts

105. A comprehensive assessment of the potential vulnerability of three sectors to climate change, i.e., agriculture, energy and forestry, was conducted by the group from past and existing studies. The experts also identified and developed policy options for monitoring systems and response strategies for climate change impacts on these sectors. While assessments of vulnerability for the agricultural, energy and forestry sectors have been conducted, the task of identifying policy options for other sectors mentioned in the project document, i.e., forest/land use, water resources, energy, human health, human settlements and aquatic life, has been left for the next national communication.

5. Policy frameworks for implementation of adaptation measures and response strategies (stage I)

106. A range of potential adaptation (stage I) options for the selected sectors (agriculture, energy and forestry) have been identified and assessed, which allowed the formulation of a national strategy to minimize the impacts of climate change. Policy frameworks for implementing adaptation measures and response strategies have been developed accordingly.

6. Building capacity to integrate climate change concerns into national planning

107. A workshop was held with the aim of strengthening national capacity to integrate climate change concerns into short, medium and long-term planning at the national level. At that workshop, participants benefited from education and training exercises on how common national socio-economic issues influence climate change and sustainable development, a presentation of the results and recommendations of the various studies, and the plans and aims of the project and the potential benefits of the project to the economy of the Central African Republic if successfully implemented. With the participation of the various partners in the environment sector, the workshop participants committed themselves fully to sharing the project results and recommendations.

7. Programmes related to sustainable development, research, public awareness, etc

108. The project aimed at developing climate change programmes that were related to sustainable development, research and systematic observations, education and public awareness, training, etc. These activities were intended to introduce a new environmental culture and mentality into the daily lives of the people. The results have been satisfactory, particularly through the use of television and radio, newspaper articles and speeches at conferences. The evaluator reviewed all these project activities.

8. Provision of other information

109. Other relevant information required for achieving the broad objective of UNFCCC under article 4 has not been addressed.

9. Preparation of the initial national communication

110. The Initial National Communication Steering Committee has done a tremendous job in preparing the first draft report, which has been submitted for review to government representatives and civil society. The objective is to enable experts and policy makers to review the draft and to ensure that the document meets the desired scope and quality and reflects national policies on sustainable management of climate change in the long term. The initial national communication approved by the Government, which could not meet the deadline, was subjected to a thorough improvement exercise that ended in January 2003.

L. Assessment of the integration of gender considerations

111. The objective of this task was to determine the extent to which gender considerations were incorporated into the various technical and operational aspects of the project. Although gender issues were not explicitly included in the project document, sources of household energy, including charcoal and fuelwood, which contribute to greenhouse gas emissions, and project activities of this nature that deal with climate change suggest that women are at the top of the list of stakeholders. The report will, therefore, determine the extent to which gender considerations were incorporated into the various operational aspects during project implementation.

112. It should be noted that there is uncertainty with regard to whether or not the project design and implementation took place before the establishment of UNEP's guidelines on gender sensitivity. However, options to abate greenhouse gas emissions and response measures to vulnerability assessment induce a shift from traditional fuelwood consumption as a source of energy to new emission-free technology. This would predict a reduction of the daily chores of women such as collecting firewood for household cooking and domestic energy uses. Otherwise, in all project activities, the attendance and participation of women are negligible.

M. Assistance provided by UNEP

113. The objective was to make concrete recommendations to the national executing agency and UNEP and to assist them in implementing them, as appropriate. The national executing agency worked on this GEF/UNFCCC enabling activities project from the design stage to its funding by GEF. UNEP assigned a project Task Manager for the supervision of the project and provided technical assistance. After the project stalled, a monitoring/evaluation mission was assigned to recommend concrete actions to remove project bottlenecks and to implement the remaining activities.

114. With regard to this issue, the Ministry of Environment, Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fisheries made the following recommendations:

(a) A vulnerability/adaptation assessment should be carried out and studies, reports and guidelines for improvement should be provided;

(b) An assessment of project activities 3 and 5 to 9 should be carried out and solutions to the problems relating to the initial national communication raised should be found, including the formulation of new terms of reference for further studies (mitigation, vulnerability/adaptation, other information, initial national communication reporting) or workshops (public awareness, validation);

(c) The work plan should be reviewed with high-ranking Government officials (the Prime Minister and the Minister of Environment, Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fisheries) in the setting of specific deadlines;

(d) All due reports should be prepared for the Project Coordinating Unit: financial reports, cash advance requests and quarterly project reports;

(e) Project activities should be monitored on a daily basis from Mauritania through a diversified communication network - telephone, e-mail and fax.

115. UNEP made the following recommendations:

(a) Monitoring/evaluation should be split into two phases, one intended to relaunch the project activities and the other for evaluation;

(b) Transfer of funds to the project should be requested on the basis of in situ assessment and project work should resume once assurance is obtained from high-ranking officials.

III. RATING OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

116. The results of the project are evaluated against its objectives and achievement indicators. This rating is arbitrary because any weighting attached to these indicators would in essence introduce some value bias because it would be based on personal judgement.

A. Timeliness

117. The project was expected to last two years from September 1997 to August 1999. It was, however, revised four times, extending the duration to December 2002, and will inevitably be revised a fifth time to end in March 2003 to allow the completion of the project activities.

118. The project stalled several times due to the political instability of the country. The Task Manager expressed his concerns to the Government on several occasions. These delays were beyond the control of UNEP and the Government. Otherwise, the progress of work during the active periods of the project was satisfactory.

119. On the basis of the above analysis and of the absence of a time restriction for non-annex1 Parties under the Convention, a rating of 4, that is, "satisfactory", was given because 50 per cent of the outputs were achieved on schedule.

B. Achievement of results and objectives

120. The objectives already reviewed above were achieved at 70 per cent, leaving a provision of 30 per cent for uncompleted activities such as mitigation studies and other sectors left out in the vulnerability studies. The initial national communication has been drafted; it summarizes the uphill task the Central African Republic had to perform to meet its commitment. A great deal of work, however, remains to be done. A rating of 3, that is, "good", is given because about 70 per cent of the project results and objectives were achieved.

C. Attainment of outputs

121. The major outputs set for each individual activity were achieved except those referred to in the preceding sections of this report. A rating of 3, that is, "good", is given because only 70 per cent may be considered as having been achieved.

D. Completion of activities

122. As stated in the foregoing paragraphs, the nine activities set for the project were completed at around 70 per cent. Completion of activities, however, does not refer only to the fact that workshops were actually held according to schedule; the impact and the costs of these workshops should also be considered. The achievement of this output is therefore rated 3, that is, "good".

E. Execution of the project within the budget

123. The project was implemented by the Department of Environment. A bank account was opened for the project and UNEP made transfers directly to it. Full responsibility was given to the project coordinator in order to implement the activities and handle financial matters. It has been difficult to trace consistent records of the project finances, notably regarding its expenditure during project implementation, because military-led break-ins into two offices resulted in loss of files and records. All disbursements were made on time upon the request of the Government and with the consent of the Task Manager. Four budget revisions were made during project implementation to reschedule unspent balances from one year to the other against

respective items of expenditure, or to extend the project duration. There are no accounting discrepancies. The project document expected an in-kind contribution from the Government amounting to \$84,000 over the project period. This contribution paid for office costs, vehicles for field trips, the salaries of the technicians and other support staff. The Government, which was responsible for organizing two workshops aimed at sensitising local authorities, contributed more than this amount.

124. The project provided some office equipment, which enhanced performance. For all these reasons, a rating of 2 is given to acknowledge the personal effort of the project coordinator to keep the planned project budget. A rating of 1 has not been granted due to a lack of transparency with respect to record-keeping and an inability to trace certain financial transactions due to destruction of relevant documents by the military.

F. Impact of the project

125. The most significant impact of the project is in the area of capacity-building in which a group of experts has developed the capacity to understand the concept of climate change and its applications. Public awareness, the database (greenhouse gas inventory, vulnerability assessment, adaptation measures) and framework options and response strategies as tools for further analysis and comprehensiveness of climate change are all considered valuable impacts of the project, particularly in this country that has been seriously affected by successive coups d'état. A rating of 2 is given since the expected impact has been achieved at least 80 per cent.

G. Sustainability

126. The main indicator of sustainability of the project is the strengthening of scientific, technical and institutional capacity in various aspects of the proposed activities, which has been relatively well addressed except for government agencies. Over 68 per cent of the budget was devoted to this objective. One of the project outputs was to set up a data collection and management system that would make it possible to regularly update the greenhouse gas inventory and to contribute to the sustainability of one of the major components of the climate change process. This has been addressed in the final report of the initial national communication. Since the total commitment of the Director of Planning may be considered as proof of involvement, climate change policies are expected to be integrated into planning henceforth; a rating of 2 is therefore given.

H. Overall project rating

127. The overall rating of project implementation is 3, that is, "good". This rating corresponds to the general assessment of the project by the external observers, notably some international partners and private individuals.

IV. LESSONS LEARNED

128. The objectives and the planned results were very clear. The guidelines given by UNFCCC were fully reflected in the implementation arrangements. Conceptually, the project identified all major project implementation issues and outputs. This is partly attributable to the standardized format of enabling activities applied to all non-annex I Parties. This is an important lesson learned from this project.

129. The project experienced many ups and downs, understanding of which could benefit future UNEP projects. The following are the positive lessons which could be replicated and could have a positive impact on the implementations of future projects:

(a) The stability of a country is the most critical requirement for the implementation of enabling activities projects. In a case where a country is unstable, environmental protection should be of global concern, just as human lives are;

(b) Each of the various study groups underscored the need for various team members to visit institutions, villages and inventory sites and to attend training sessions. They noted that the whole exercise

was a kind of learning process from which they greatly benefited, particularly through the interactions, contacts and training;

(c) Assessment of stakeholder involvement in project implementation has shown a fairly unbalanced representation with respect to both the public and the private sector and gender. The composition of the country teams in the future requires more attention to ensure better balance of targeted groups. In this regard, the Government's disengagement policy should induce and encourage more participation of civil society;

(d) With regard to the assistance provided by UNEP, regardless of the inconvenience that may be involved in the transfer of project management skills to the host country, the approach is welcomed by many observers, particularly in the host country. However, despite its ability to enhance the country's control of project implementation, this approach implies a simultaneous loss of influence of the implementing agency over the monitoring of sensitive aspects such as finance. The lesson to be learned in this regard is that there is a need for closer control of expenditure so long as UNEP maintains its principle of decentralization in financial management;

(e) The Central African Republic did not implement fully the monitoring and evaluation systems developed to supervise and to implement the project. Quarterly reports were not sent to UNEP on a regular basis and the lack of reports rendered the project evaluation process difficult. One way of preventing such difficulties in the future would be to subject expenditure above a certain amount to UNEP's approval. In addition, a terminal report such as the one planned in the project document would have been more beneficial to the final evaluation because it would have made the assessment of the project more comprehensive.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS AND GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

A. Recommendations

130. The decentralization principle of UNEP induces a certain level of active involvement and responsibility on the part of host countries. To ensure that funds are properly channelled to project activities, there is a need to subject project payments to the written approval of UNEP. This would entail additional administrative work on the part of UNEP, which would have to be budgeted for. This might improve project implementation in the future.

131. The following are specific recommendations regarding potential follow-up evaluation measures that would enable UNEP and GEF to assess the longer-term benefits and sustainability of project activities:

(a) A follow-up review of the project and its impacts on policy-making, capacity-building and public awareness after a year or so is of paramount importance. The most effective method would probably be to use the services of the Task Manager or of a national consultant who would be assigned a catalytic role. Funding of this assessment should be provided for in the subsequent phases of the project or similar activities;

(b) It is worthwhile, for the sustainability of the project results, to strengthen capacity-building to identify mitigation, vulnerability and adaptation measures and response strategies in the sectors left out, and to enhance the capability of development planners and decision makers to integrate climate change concerns into planning in future priorities and assistance. Phase II could contain, inter alia, such activities;

(c) It is expected that there will be little voluntary investment in impacts and adaptation by the Government. Financial and technical support will therefore be needed to consolidate the project results for the next two years. GEF and other financial mechanisms could be urged to support the Central African Republic in this regard. Phase II of this project may be the appropriate mechanism through which GEF and UNFCCC could assist the country.

132. The climate change enabling activities phase II project, the key objective of which is to assess technology needs, is of great concern to this country, and the country has made tremendous efforts to achieve the project outputs of phase I in spite of political instability. The country has developed technical capacity to benefit from regional climate change-related activities; because of that and also because of its rich natural resources base, its participation is fully recommended.

B. General conclusions

133. The Central African Republic has experienced political instability and economic recession for the last ten years. Major problems faced by the project include political instability and lack of financial resources, (at one time the ministry used part of the project funds for celebrating Environment Day), lack of office equipment, drop-out of some experts and poor external expertise to finalize vulnerability/adaptation studies.

134. Except for political instability, the project could find appropriate solutions to all these problems. It could, for example, encourage the Government to reimburse the diverted resources and to buy office equipment, while hiring new qualified experts and benefiting from UNEP's evaluation consultant.

135. The Government should be commended for the tremendous effort it has made to host this UNFCCC enabling activities project relatively quickly. This remarkable achievement deserves recognition and proper assistance from the donor community to save the rich biodiversity base of the country.

Annex I

TERMS OF REFERENCE

MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE UNEP/GEF SUB-PROJECT GF/2200-97-46 (ENABLING ACTIVITIES FOR THE PREPARATION OF INITIAL NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS RELATED TO THE UNFCCC – CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC)

Under the guidance of the Officer-in-Charge of the Evaluation and Oversight Unit (EOU) of UNEP and in close collaboration with the UNEP Task Manager for Climate Change Enabling Activities (CCEA), the evaluator shall undertake monitoring and evaluation of the UNEP/GEF sub-project “Central African Republic: Enabling Activities for the Preparation of Initial National Communications Related to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) GF/2200-97-46). This evaluation will be conducted during the period of August 2002 to November 2002.

I. BACKGROUND

The project to be evaluated is being implemented internally by the UNEP Task Manager of Climate Change Enabling Activities, currently located in the Division of Policy Development and Law (DPDL) and externally by the Ministry of Environment, Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fisheries in Bangui, Central African Republic. This project provided the financial assistance necessary for the following activities:

- (a) Develop the Greenhouse Gas Inventory to the 1994 base year;
- (b) Identify and assess mitigation options;
- (c) Develop a comprehensive vulnerability/assessment for various sectors;
- (d) Identify stage I adaptation options;
- (e) Build capacity to integrate climate change concerns into planning;
- (f) Provide public awareness and other information.

II. SCOPE OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Recognizing the special circumstances of the Central African Republic, specifically the recent political and economic disturbance that lasted for a significant period of time that severely affected the implementation of the project activities, this evaluation will be divided into the following phases:

- (a) In Phase I, the consultant will monitor and review the progress made in the implementation of the project activities by the Ministry of Environment, Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fisheries and suggest corrective measures;
- (b) This will be followed by an evaluation of the project activities

The first phase will include the following:

- (i) The consultant will compare the planned outputs of the project to the actual outputs and assess the steps needed to follow up in the country in view of completing the Initial National Communications to the UNFCCC;
- (ii) The consultant will recommend corrective measures to fill the gaps and complete the main project output;
- (iii) The consultant will provide guidance to the project coordinator at the Ministry of Environment, Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fisheries in consultation with UNEP for putting the corrective measures in place;

(iv) The consultant will recommend other practical steps required to strengthen and improve the institutional framework, specifically to ensure successful implementation of the following activities:

- a. Phase II of Climate Change Enabling Activities;
- b. Preparation of National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs);
- c. Participation in regional climate change projects such as capacity- building for systematic observation systems.

On completion of the first phase, the consultant will start the following:

(v) The consultant will also highlight the lesson learned from the implementation of pending activities in the area of climate change and assess the appropriateness of this project in meeting the longer- term objectives of UNEP, GEF and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC);

(vi) The consultant will review the national institutional and technical capacity built by the UNEP/GEF project and its linkages established with related ongoing activities in the country.

III. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE EVALUATOR

The evaluator shall:

(a) Analyze the quality and usefulness of the planned and current project outputs and determine how they contribute to the attainment of the results and overall objectives identified in the approved project proposal in meeting its UNFCCC commitments. It should determine whether the project has been able to answer the identified needs and problems in the Central African Republic;

(b) Measure the impact of the planned and current results of the first activity in the preparation of the Initial National Communications to UNFCCC. This should also include a determination of the usefulness of the results to the GEF-funded *"Enabling Activities to Prepare National Communications to the UNFCCC"* project.;

(c) Assess the quality of the consultants used in the implementation of the various project components, identify the lessons learned and make recommendations in consultation with the project staff on how such involvement could be improved;

(d) Assess the role the project played in building the capacity of the participating national institutions in the area of reporting to the UNFCCC COP climate change and recommend possible practical measures in the country to strengthen and maintain the long-term sustainability of the benefits of this capacity-building;

(e) Determine the future assistance required from UNEP and GEF, specifically in ensuring successful implementation of upcoming GEF-funded projects identified in chapter II. Identify the lessons learned and provide recommendations that might improve the delivery of similar assistance to similar projects in the country;

(f) Review the adequacy of national and international monitoring and evaluation systems developed to supervise and implement the project and based on the lessons learned, provide recommendations that could improve current procedures related to monitoring and evaluation;

(g) Review the effectiveness of the institutional structure, management and financial systems which played an important role in the implementation of the project, investigating the staffing, administrative arrangements and operational mechanisms with emphasis on coordination within and outside

UNEP. The evaluator will solicit the views of relevant UNEP staff members on the usefulness of the project in enhancing the work of both UNEP and GEF in the area of climate change;

(h) Identify the technical and/or operational constraints encountered during project implementation, especially recognizing the special circumstances of the country that led to delays in the implementation of the project. Identify further the actions required by UNEP and the Ministry of Environment, Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fisheries to overcome the constraints, and any appropriate alternative measures that can be taken;

(i) Identify and assess any measures that national institutions have initiated to integrate the results and recommendations of the Initial National Communication into national policy-making and/or planning and make specific recommendations regarding follow-up measures that would enable longer-term benefits and sustainability of project activities;

(j) Determine the potential contribution of the project to the furtherance of the objectives of the relevant global, regional, and national environmental assessments, policy frameworks and action plans, and to strengthen UNFCCC;

(k) Evaluate whether the actual results of the project compare with the long-term and short-term results identified in the project document and what needs to be done further;

(l) Determine the extent to which gender considerations were incorporated into the various technical and operational aspects of the project;

(m) Propose concrete suggestions or recommendations to the national executing agency and UNEP and assist them in undertaking them as appropriate.

IV. FORMAT OF THE EVALUATION REPORT

The evaluator will visit the country twice to complete both phases of monitoring and evaluation in consultation with the national executing agency and UNEP and provide at least weekly reports until the finalization of all project activities. The evaluator will also prepare his/her final report in the form of:

- (a) A concise summary (4 pages);
- (b) A detailed evaluation report (about 30 pages) addressing sections II and III;
- (c) Rate the success of the implementation of the project on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the highest rating and 5 being the lowest. The following items will be considered for rating purposes:
 - (i) Timeliness: How the project met the schedules and the implementation timetable cited in the project document;
 - (ii) Achievement of the results/objectives;
 - (iii) Attainment of outputs;
 - (iv) Completion of activities;
 - (v) Project executed within budget;
 - (vi) Impact of the project;
 - (vii) Sustainability;
 - (viii) Major problems faced and resolved successfully by the project.

Each of the items should be rated separately and then an overall rating given. The following rating system is to be applied:

1 = Excellent	(90% -100% achievement)
2 = Very Good	(75% - 89% " " ")
3 = Good	(60% to 74% " " ")
4 = Satisfactory	(50% to 59% " " ")
5 = Unsatisfactory	(49% and below " ")

V. SCHEDULE OF THE EVALUATION

The first phase of monitoring should begin in August 2002 followed by evaluation of the project ending with the submission of the report by mid-November 2002. While conducting the evaluation, the consultant should communicate by telephone or e-mail with the UNEP Headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya to discuss the project with the relevant staff in UNEP, i.e. the Division for Policy Development and Law, the UNEP/GEF Co-ordination Unit and the UNEP Evaluation and UNEP/EOU.

The consultant will discuss aspects of the project with the national project coordinator at the Ministry of Environment, Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fisheries and collaborating organizations in the University of Bangui, the departments of industry, energy and transport, etc., the staff of the climate change project of the Central African Republic.

The consultant will submit the draft evaluation report by 21 October 2002. The UNEP Climate Change Enabling Activities in UNEP/DPDL and the UNEP/GEF Coordination Unit will provide written comments of the draft evaluation report to the consultant through UNEP/EOU to the consultant by 30 October 2002.

The consultant will incorporate these comments and present a final version of the evaluation report to UNEP in English by 15th November 2002. This report should be presented in written form and on diskette in MSWord format. The core report should not exceed 30 pages. All Annexes should be typed.

VI. THE CONSULTANT

The consultant should preferably be on the GEF/STAP Roster of Experts, have an advanced university degree in a relevant discipline and have demonstrated expertise in the area of climate change and GEF projects. Previous experience in the evaluation of United Nations programmes will be an advantage. The candidate should have at least ten years experience in the field of climate change or in a related environmental field.

Key contacts at UNEP-Gigiri, Nairobi:

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14th August 2002

Annex II

DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

A. Documents of the Project Coordination Unit

1. GHG Inventory Report/Rapport National sur l'inventaire des Gaz à Effet de Serre en République Centrafricaine (June 2000).
2. Rapport final du séminaire de validation des résultats des inventaires des gaz à effets de serre de la République Centrafricaine (May 2000)
3. Rapport final atelier régional de formation sur l'inventaire des GES (June 1998)
4. Final report of the seminar of validation of the results of the Central African Greenhouse Gas Inventory (20 May 2000)
5. Dossier: Enquête sur la consommation des combustibles ligneux à Bangui; la forêt comme puits de gaz à effets de serre, quel avenir? (November 1998)
6. Farming sector in the Central African Republic (Bangui, November 1998)
7. Electric energy sector in the Central African Republic (Bangui, October 1998)
8. Activité 4 et 5 du Groupe d'études nationale sur l'étude d'impacts de vulnérabilité et de l'adaptation - Rapport d'activités du secteur agricole.
9. Activité 4 et 5 du Groupe d'études nationale sur l'étude d'impacts de vulnérabilité et de l'adaptation - Rapport d'activités du secteur énergie électrique (October 1998)
10. Rapport de l'atelier de sensibilisation, d'information et d'éducation du public, des autorités politico-administratives et ONG de la Région du Sud-Ouest (Berberati, November 1999)
11. Rapport de la journée de la validation interne de l'inventaire national des gaz à effets de serre (June 1999)
12. Rapport de mission effectuée à Sibut, Prefecture de la Kemo dans le cadre du séminaire de sensibilisation et de formation du comité préfectoral, des comités sous-préfectoraux et communaux sur les mesures d'urgence à prendre par rapport aux changements climatiques (February 1999).
13. Report of the Sibut mission (27 to 29 December 1998)
14. Report of the Sibut mission within the framework of training and awareness seminar of prefectoral committee, sub-prefectoral and council committee of Kemo (February 1999)
15. Report of the mission relating to data collection in the Centrapalm of Bossongo and the farming lease of Boyali in Lobaye (February 1999)
16. Journées nationales d'information et de sensibilisation sur les changements climatiques (April 1998)
17. Compte rendu de l'atelier de formation sur les mesures de V/A (2001)
18. Compte rendu de la réunion de concertation sur le processus de validation de la communication initiale nationale sur les changements climatiques (January 2003)

B. Documents Commissioned by UNEP

1. UNEP evaluation guidelines
2. Central African Republic Enabling Activities for the Preparation of the Initial National Communication related to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) - Approved Project document (August 1997)
3. Guidelines of the Conference of the parties for the preparation of initial communications by Parties not included in annex I to the Convention
4. Operational guidelines for expedited financing of initial communications from Non-annex I Parties (GEF, 1997)
5. IPCC Guidelines for GHG Inventories, volume I, 1995.
6. Various project reports

Annex III

LIST OF PERSONS MET AND/OR INTERVIEWED

A. GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

Prime Minister: Martin Ziguèle
Ministry of Water, Environment, Forestry and Hunting, Fisheries
The Deputy Minister of Environment, Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fisheries
The Deputy Minister of International Cooperation

B. MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, WATER, FORESTRY, HUNTING AND FISHERIES

Permanent Secretary
Principal Private Secretary

C. UNFCCC PROJECT COORDINATION UNIT

Mr Gnapelet Lambert, Director of Environment, Project Coordinator
Koyagbali Lucienne, Secretary

D. EXPERTS

Yakara Henri Sylvain, Geographer, University of Bangui
Togbiambi David, Geographer, University of Bangui
Dimbele Kombe Michel, Hydro-geologist Head, Standards and Procedures, Ministry of Environment, Water, Forestry, and Fisheries
Baïkoua Léon, Socio-economist, Director of the Division of Development Cooperation, Ministry of the Economy, Planning and International Cooperation
Gothard Bassebe Ernest, Agricultural Engineer, Project leader in the Ministry of Rural Development
NGasse Georges, Forest Experts, Central Inspectors, Head of Department, Ministry of Environment, Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fisheries
Dazoua Zacharie, Energy Engineer, Directors of Energy, Ministry of Mining and Energy
Mayounga Aimé Christian, Economist – Civil Society
Gnapelet Mathurin, Lawyer, University of Bangui
Ganafeï Nestor, Computer Scientist, Ministry of Transport, Opening Up and Town Planning
Gonide François, Agricultural Engineer Operations Department Central African Agricultural Development Agency, Ministry of Rural Development
Oyele Minele Stévie, Forest Expert
Panou Martin, Geophysicist
Daouda David, Municipal Council
Gueza Dieudonné, Civil Engineer - Ministry of Transport, Opening Up and Town Planning