# Lessons Learned from previous GEF projects in Madagascar

The following document is a compilation of lessons learned from previous GEF projects in Madagascar. The lessons were extracted from midterm and terminal evaluations, implementation completion and results reports (ICRs), a GEF IEO review of the Madagascar portfolio and an analysis on community based management in Madagascar by the World Bank. This page has a summary of key takeaways and the following pages have more details from each project or document reviewed.

## Summary of key takeaways

* The Environment Program (EP) phase I and II was overly complex and ambitious. It also did not focus enough on building capacity of various levels of government. This led to poor results, poor adaptive management, low country ownership, and lack of sustainability.
* EP projects had tendency to report on plans drafted rather than what the results of the implementation of the plan would be, therefore was very output focused. Future projects should focus on what those synergistic outcomes would be from the achieved outputs.
* Many projects had monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plans that were too complex and not used by the project for evaluating progress or adaptive management purposes. Clear, simple and robust indicators are recommended. Guidelines, which include roles and responsibilities should be developed to enhance the function of the M&E plan.
* EP projects showed that it is better to strengthen existing institutions (agencies, platforms, committees) rather than create new donor-driven institutions. Building capacity of existing institutions reduces staffing issues, confusion over roles and responsibilities, turnover, brain drain, and increases ownership and government capacity to ‘keep up’ with project initiatives.
* The need for capacity development at all levels (national governments, local mayors, courts, communes, enforcement authorities, and communities) was repeated lesson with all projects.
* It was assessed that the Government tends to take a passive role in project development and instead relies on implementing agencies and NGOs. Government ownership and engagement is can be improved if the project is more participatory during design and implementation. Operational focal point could be involved in design and supervision (m&E activities) and national focal points could participate more in day-to-day project activities.
* In terms of policy development, there is a need to maximize consistency of different sectoral laws and policies, fill gaps and address conflicting policies.
* In cases where community groups are relied on to manage natural resources, incentives for sustainable natural resource management is key. So far, it has proven difficult to increase revenue generation of communities such that benefits of resource protection are greater than the opportunity costs for that resource protection and related restrictions. Ecotourism is a growing sector, but in the case of EP projects, the revenue from ecotourism was not enough and/or was not distributed to the right people. Other financial mechanisms are needed.
* *Dinas*, or traditional system of rules, can be effective for natural resource management when 1) there is high degree of community participation, 2) courts recognize *dina,* 3) local communities have increased capacity and 4) there is high degree of local pressure to adhere to *dina*.
* Natural resource management transfers to local community groups, such as *Vondron’Olona* *Ifotony (*VOIs) can take up to three years or longer to operationalize and for all to become aware of responsibilities. To increase chances of success should include: 1) participatory approach, 2) inter-commune monitoring, 3) involvement of conflict management and coordination platforms, 4) increased revenue/incentives for community and 4) three-way contract among community, municipality and owner of resource that is negotiated with objective mediator.
* Performance-based contracts are better than traditional disbursement contracts with service providers.

## UNDP/WB/GEF: The Environment Program Phase II Project

IA: UNDP/ WB. BD. Total cost at completion $123.78 million. Closed 6/30/2003

<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/300921474569760931/pdf/000020051-20140612135301.pdf>

Terminal Evaluation Review Form for EPII by Robert Varley, hard copy only

**Lessons and shortcomings:**

* Overly complicated and overambitious objectives, lacked realistic workplan and practical implementation arrangements. The goals were beyond the capacity of local agencies to implement.
* Transfers of management rights are more likely to be sustainable if they are linked to a process allowing for the generation of revenue for the local communities. If there is no adequate funding or capacity building to local communities, it is suggested to transfer management to private sector. Incentive structures should align to people’s needs to enhance ownership.
* More attention to building capacity and knowledge on biodiversity, enforcement, customs, and control.
* UNDP and WB had difficulties managing procurement for line ministries, which led to overuse of procurement methods (e.g. national shopping, failure to capture anticipated savings for international bidding of large procurement packages, e.g. vehicles)
* Results or performance based contracts simplify management of multiple implementers and enhance function as service providers rather than use of traditional disbursement contracts.
* Local populations that benefit from natural resource management-rights transfers should be involved in collection of statistics and data on the used resources
* M\*E plan had 113 indicators, reduced to 27 after MTR. Indicator information tended to track activities more than synergy that would have resulted from them (outcomes). Also, tendency to report on plans drafted, rather than implementation of the plan or what the impact of that implementation would be. Project did not seem to USE the M&E data for adaptive management purposes. M&E plan should provide guidelines for interpretation of monitoring results, responsibility for action and oversight. Also, a schedule for semi-annual or annual quality control by an independent reviewer. In addition to quantitative data, it would be helpful to complement with qualitative data to determine the quality of the outputs produced. Realistic objectives, counter-factuals, benchmarks and baselines can ensure accountability and lesson learning.
* Building capacity on conservation techniques alone is not enough. Equal attention needs to be given to land tenure security, ensuring undistorted and predictable markets for inputs/outputs and agricultural extension—all weak or missing in project.
* Do not put short-term expediency above longer-term building of government capacity. This project attempted to create and/or expand more government agencies, which then robs existing government agencies of their most able staff, lowering agency effectiveness. Better to strengthen existing agencies and increase their effectiveness and efficiency. Project implementation should be mainstream function of agency supported by private-sector consultants.
* Rate of expansion of protected areas outpaced government’s ability to provide adequate logistical support, so plan should be in place to provide this technical assistance with consultants, NGOs, or to build capacity and resources of government to do so. At time of this project, the government of Madagascar did not allocate sufficient resources to meet costs of doing EIAs (basic demands of the project) and relied heavily on donor funds and technical assistance. At time of report, 90% of environmental management costs were financed by foreign development agencies. Project did not plan enough economic instruments or mechanisms to ensure sustainability.
* Ecotourism was viable sector for expansion—annual income from tourism increased six fold and ecotourists doubled over the life of the project. However, there was still not enough revenue to maintain system of protected areas or enough to decrease rates of rural poverty around Pas. New financing mechanisms must be found to help cover operating and maintenance costs and expand sustainable tourism of Pas.
* Corruption, weak governance in forestry and biodiversity sectors. Illegal concessions granted that negatively affected project achievements. Madagascar noncompliant with CITES.
* Project was slowed by irregular and untimely provision of counterpart funding, reflection of govt’s failure to budget for needed public investments needed to comply with new EIA legislation.
* Weak government follow up on drafted policies. Only half became operational.
* Development and environmental agencies did not cooperate together leading to site selection issues such that theory of change could not work.
* Did not meet Safeguards standards or include adequate participation of women and marginalized groups. Further, gender seen as ‘lacking aspect’ in all economic and productive sectors in Madagascar.
* Introducing technologies for better practices did not work when they were knowledge intensive. For example, only 26% of households introduced to conservation technologies were using them after two years.

UNDP/GEF Support to Madagascar’s Environmental Programme- Phase III (EP III) – Support to the Protected Area Network and Strategic Zones

IA: UNDP/WB. BD. Total cost at completion: $5.25 million. Closed 12/31/14.

<https://www.scribd.com/document/294741855/UNDP-GEF-Madagascar-Mid-term-Evaluation-FINAL-DRAFT-230608>

<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/988621468328212136/text/ICR3742-P074235-P074236-P113976-Box396273B-OUO-9.txt>

<https://www.gefpmis.org/GEFProjectDocuments/MandE/EO_TEs_FY13/UNDP_TEs_APR2013/1884_UNDP_TE_EP3_UNDP_TE_Final_Report_07Dec2012_final_EN.pdf>

Lessons learned:

* *Dinas,* which are traditional Malagasy community regulations, can be effective if 1) there is great community participation when developed, 2) recognition by courts, such that enforcement is their responsibility, 3) capacity of local community groups to manage and follow through with legal proceedings, and 4) high level of local pressure.
* It takes time to transfer management to communities. It takes more than three years for management tools to be adopted and applied and for villagers to be aware of responsibilities and rules laid down in *dina*.
* In majority of cases, infringements tend to happen by people outside the community/village and are difficult for local community groups to deal with. Therefore, building capacity of courts of first instance is important to help with legal and penal measures of enforcement.
* For a transfer of management to be effectively transferred to a local community group, all key actors must be involved during all processes, such as community and commune), inter-commune monitoring, conflict management and coordination platforms, authorities, gendarmerie and courts of first instance. The communities MUST receive economic benefits from the natural resource management, so development of income generating activities is essential to success.
* Unfortunately, a WB ex-post analysis showed that the management transfer to communities did not make a difference in deforestation rates. May be due to lack of economic incentive to communities managing the PA. The ex-post analysis showed that even with community development activities and safeguards, there is not enough benefits to outweigh the opportunity costs of being denied access to the resources in the Pas (benefits being watershed protection, sustainable fuelwood and nontimber forest products (ntfps) and costs being forgone slash and burn, unsustainable extraction of fuelwood/ntfps.
* Government ownership and public-sector capacity is essential. Future projects should seek implementation arrangements that involve government structures directly, while strengthening their capacity.
* Local and regional governance structures are important, and community based organizations need systematic support backed by relevant legislation and government policy. In particular, government needs capacity and resources to support community livelihoods and poverty reduction as integrated approach to conservation. Regional chiefs and mayors’ capacities should be built and involved in project implementation. In EP2, building capacity in regional govt proved effective in implementing community level activities.
* Teaching and supplying improved fishing methods regarded by beneficiaries as effective and profitable, but fishermen still using traditional methods and equipment, which places strain on reefs, fisheries. Project should aim to create critical mass of fishermen (doesn’t say how).
* Support for sustainable fishing sector greater impact in north than the south, which might be because pressure from fishing effort is greater in the south due to tourism activity in Nosy.
* Inter-commune dispute and conflict support and resolution platforms are necessary to decentralized management of natural resources.
* Annual workplans must be validated and signed off earlier in the year, no later than the end of January, so project teams can implement activities by February at the latest. This will prevent delays.
* The number of performance indicators must be realistic to measure. A clear and practical system will have indicators that are simple, robust, easily measurable and continuously USED as a project management tool.
* Computerized database for knowledge management would be helpful as well as institutional agreements on the exchange and sharing of documents between different partners at the highest level. This will improve knowledge around management and conservation of resources. The project database was poorly operational due to institutional barriers and technological constraints.
* Very high turnover of staff was difficult and recruiting national or international technical assistance could have bridged the human resources gap and supported PMU.
* Projects should clearly identify narrow and well defined area of a government program to support (not be overly ambitious and all-encompassing or complex).
* If equipment is given, make sure that there are proper resources and capacity to maintain and repair. Otherwise, not utilized and becomes a waste! (example of speed boats that were damaged/underused)
* A survey of beneficiaries was conducted from Oct- Dec 2015 covering 32 Pas and 766 beneficiaries. Main recommendations from survey findings are: reinforce communication on environmental issues/benefits to strengthen beneficiary ownership, increase beneficiary involvement during project development, improve monitoring of service providers to ensure quality of services (beneficiaries very unhappy with choice of service providers), strengthen compensation and training of beneficiaries.
* Avoid brain-draining line ministries through project implementing agencies. Creating strong implementing agencies drains qualified staff and lowers morale in line ministries. Develop clear understanding of division of responsibilities among line ministries and implementing agencies to avoid staffing strain and turnover.

## Coral Reef Monitoring Network in Member States of the Indian Ocean Commission (CO) within the Global Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN)

IA: WB. PMIS 1051. Total project cost at completion $1.7 million. Closed 7/31/05.

<https://www.thegef.org/project/coral-reef-monitoring-network-member-states-indian-ocean-commission-coi-within-global-reef>

Lessons

* Technical assistance team should be within the region to resolve technical difficulties.
* Yearly meetings of focal points helpful for accountability
* National focal point should be directly involved in day to day activities, which improves country ownership.

## Irrigation and Watershed Management Project

IA: WB. Total project cost at completion $19.61 million. Closed 12/31/14.

<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/992501467998503451/Madagascar-Irrigation-and-Watershed-Management-Project>

Lessons:

* Objectives were achieved as a result of repetitive testing of approaches, intensive demonstration and capacity building.
* Use of strategic partners is helpful for working with beneficiaries, but this support should be progressively phased out of their interventions while building the capacity of beneficiaries and the Regional Directorate for Rural Development.
* Building ministry capacity at both central and regional level was key to success.
* Formal arrangements with communities for the maintenance and exploitation of local resources improves sustainability.
* Performance contracts, combined with upfront realistic contributions as well as *dina* are all useful tools to generate ownership.
* Water User Associations were successful and credible partners of Government in ensuring sustainable irrigation management. Giving decision-making abilities to WUAs proved successful.
* Communes (municipalities) should be engaged in systematic way, incentivized and held accountable for fulfilling their commitments. Responsibilities include: support to producers, conflict resolution, clarification of responsibilities for operation and maintenance of various investments, extension and lend tenure management.
* Adequate M&E system is necessary to define and correctly monitor useful output and outcome indicators and allow for adaptive management.

## Analysis of Community Forest Management (CFM) in Madagascar

WB. 9/24/2015

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/23348/Analysis0of0co000CFM00in0Madagascar.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

Lessons:

* Key ingredients of community forest management contracts include an agreement between individuals from the local community and the administration, clear terms of use for the resource, land tenure rights and the support of a mediator and of NGOs. Process starts with creation of local natural resource management group (Vondron’Olona Ifotony -VOI- or grassroots community). The VOI operates according to traditional set of rules (dina). Once crated, the VOI can request transfer of management of a given resource from its legal owner (state or local authority). Contract is signed by three parties: VOI, owner of resource and the municipality or commune (most decentralized institution of elected leaders). The mediator can ensure all needs and objectives are given equal weight.
* Build capacity of VOIs (grassroots groups) and build their network with peer-to-peer learning.
* VOIs need enough source of income to cover costs of patrolling. At municipal level, taxes (ristournes) from harvesting forest resources need to be collected and allocated to activities to control forest products (i.e. municipality have this in their development plan), and at national level, national forestry funds have to be sufficient to allow forest administration to cover forest patrolling.
* Decentralization of forest management to local communities did not at time of report show reduced deforestation except in cases of non-commercial community forest management. The non commercial CFM may have had more success because pure conservation sites have access to more finance (payments for environmental services to offset introduced interventions).
* Four main reasons for CFM policy ineffectiveness: The GELOSE law (law designed to transfer forestry management to local communities) never had required implementation decrees, so there was a regulatory gap. There were also internal contradictions with other laws, so inconsistency between different sectoral laws and policies. CFM actors also had different objectives that are not compatible. Finally, law enforcement is weak at local and national levels. Govt and partners need to maximize consistency between the various laws (land tenure law, management laws, etc). Need to build capacity of state and regional services. Capacity to improve rule of law in administration/judiciary/law enforcement and reduce corruption. Build traceability of forest products.
* Need for national sources of finance to support community management policy implementation on the ground ( e,g, use of local development fund)

## Country Portfolio Evaluation (CPE) Madagascar by GEF IEO, October, 2008

Includes review of EP II and III projects (UNDP/WB - MINEFT), Anjozorobe Forest Corridor Project (UNDP - Fanamby), and others

<http://www.gefieo.org/evaluations/country-portfolio-evaluation-cpe-madagascar>

Lessons:

* GEF portfolio results are at risk because of weak financial, institutional and socioeconomic sustainability.
	+ Despite $400 million of donor investment from 1990 to \_ ($36 million GEF grant funding) GEF has been unable to catalyze a sustainable protected area management system. Few protected areas can self-finance their operations through entrance fees and/or tourism revenues.
	+ Madagascar’s environment sector do not have sustainable financing via revenue generation or government budget lines.
	+ Ministry of Water, Forestry and Tourism (MINEFT), which has been main EA for UNDP/WB projects, is weak at national and local levels. Ministry representatives in the field lack skills to help environmental management in local govt and communities.
	+ Local population needs to participate, be involved and have alternative livelihoods/incentives to support biodiversity conservation. Also, there is a need to link environment with sectors involved in rural development, agriculture and reducing poverty.
* Donors and government created a multi-donor government steering committee, but has not met frequently and seen as donor rather than govt driven (in part a result of weaknesses and turnover in Ministry). GEF recommended to GoM to set up a permanent inter-ministerial and multi-donor environmental committee (don’t know if this exists now). Intersectoral coordination big recommendation from EP projects.
* Operational focal point under resourced and unoperational. Frequent turnover during this time period. The OFPs have inadequate understanding of GEF focal areas, review criteria and other guidelines. Government tends to take a passive role in project development and uses IA, international NGOs and consultants to assist with proposal development. Does not improve capacities or ownership of MINEFT. There is no GEF project database to provide information on project approval or implementation progress or M&E. OFP should be involved in M&E exercises and should receive more resources from GEF to be operational.
* At time of this review, no formal modality for exchange of lessons between GEF projects and programs.
* To increase country ownership, implementing agencies need to work more closely with GoM and other stakeholders and do the following:
	+ Involvement of IAs in permanent inter-ministerial and multi-donor committees to the government.
	+ IAs should provide TA to operational focal point to strengthen his or her role through involvement in project design, supervision and monitoring missions, sharing of info.
	+ Emphasize capacity development and allow all levels of government and communities to become involved in GEF interventions.
* Replication and catalytic effects hindered by weak financial sustainability, lack of govt funding for environment sector, low capacity and leadership, lack of incentives to individuals and communities
* Issues of food security, rural development and poverty cannot be ignored in biodiversity conservation in Madagascar.

Review of specific projects

**EP projects (BD) (UNDP/WB- MINEFT)**

* Environment Program projects created many institutions: National Association for the Management of Protected Areas (ANGAP), National Environment Office (ONE), Support to Environmental Management (SAGE) and Division for the Coordination of the Environmental Program (CELCO). There is diffusion of roles that lack clarity and coordination with other institutions. Reporting relationships to ministry unclear. Contributed to issues of ownership and capacity.
* Lessons from EP I did not transfer to EP II. Project continued to be overly ambitious, lack proper monitoring and evaluation system, did not emphasize enough the need to build capacity among government, overly complex projects, etc.
* National Association for the Management of Protected Areas (ANGAP) is not permitted by law to make arrests, that authority is reserved for Directorate of Water and Forests and gendarmerie, so enforcement can be tricky. Furthermore, community members and ANGAP can be at odds regarding use rights. Sometimes communities are permitted to use resources in protected areas, though not legally permitted, since those areas are degraded. Other communities are strictly forbidden, which is not understood by community members. Community member should be made aware of what protected area implications are, concept of a boundary and resource restriction.
* Arrival of international NGOs bringing attention to plough-shared tortoise supposedly increased the illicit trafficking of the tortoises, since the value was apparent with arrival of the NGOs.
* Mangrove management did lead to improved income generation via crab production, however only limited members of CBO benefit.
* Useless or incomplete donation items can affect trust. Providing plastic canoes without motors, or sewing machines without cost-recovery process, lead to those technologies not being used and trust reduced.

**Participatory Community-based Conservation in the Anjozorobe Forest Corridor : MSP, (BD) (UNDP—Fanamby)**

* Fananby communicated well and had good site presence. They also involved stakeholders in project design and implementation such that ownership of the corridor project was good and could be replicated. Use of fokontany and communes to take ownership, self-determination was important to success.
* Three-tier management approach: *Fokontany*, which is intercommunal and regional participation to promote local governance of natural resources. The committees outline their local management, development and protection decisions. The natural space management committees work at the level of intercommunal or inter-fokontany resource untis. Then the corridor’s management committee manages and coordinates conservation and development actions within and outside the corridor. Essentially local communities define their resource management plans and development priorities which link to intercommunal and regional planning

**Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (regional BD)**

* Has had success in monitoring coral reefs in the Western Indian Ocean. Their model is simple and has less formal institutional model. Has good monitoring activities.
* It’s important to raise environmental awareness of coral reefs in Madagascar, and coastal and marine areas require substantial investment in terms of integrated coastal zone management and implementation to safeguard resources and sustain benefits for the population.

**Western Indian Ocean Oil Spill Contingency Planning (IW)**

* Development of stakeholders responsibility charter enabled easier collaboration among govt, private sector and individuals on persistent organic pollutants