



Monitoring Report

Monitoring reference MR-146999.01
Report date 11/04/2014
Project title Guiana Shield Facility (GSF)

I. Intervention data

Status	FINAL
Report final date	11/04/2014
Report finalised by user	KELEMENIS ALECOS
Monitoring Report Type	Ongoing
Aid Modality	Project approach
Project	Multi Country / Regional Project - Consolidated/Horizontal Report
Project Management	Project managed by HQ (Brussels)
Financed via a thematic budget line	Yes
CRIS Number	C-242905
Project Title according to Financing Agreement/Financing Decision	Guiana Shield Facility (GSF)
Domain	Development - Environment
DAC - CRS Sector	31200 - FORESTRY
Additional DAC - CRS code	41010 - Environmental policy and administrative management
Geographical zone	All Countries
Keyword (for innovative interventions)	Environment Mainstreaming
Date Financing Agreement/Financing Decision/Contract signed	12/08/2010
Person responsible at HQ	
Person responsible at Delegation	TATO SERRANO SONIA
Monitor	NOT APPLICABLE NOT APPLICABLE
Project Authority	COLL MORELL JOSEP MARIA
Type of implementing partner	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
Start date - planned	UN family organizations (incl. WB)
End date - planned	13/08/2010
Start date - actual	31/12/2014
End date - likely	13/08/2010
Monitoring visit date	31/12/2014
	from 17/03/2014 to 21/03/2014

II. Financial data

Primary commitment (EC funding)	1,500,000
Budget allocated for TA	Not Available
Secondary commitment (funds contracted of EC contribution)	1,500,000
Other funding (government and/or other donors)	3,198,477
Total budget of operation	4,698,477
Total EC funds disbursed	1,406,250
Financial data on	11/04/2014

III. Grading

Relevance and quality of design	B
Efficiency of Implementation to date	C
Effectiveness to date	C
Impact prospects	B
Potential sustainability	C

IV. Summary of conclusions

Relevance and quality of design

The Guiana Shield eco-region (GS) is one of the areas with the greatest biological diversity on the planet. It covers 270 million hectares of mostly intact, pristine tropical forests, grassland savannahs, highlands and fresh waters, is affluent in natural resources and home to 8 million people (including multi-ethnic indigenous communities with a large cultural diversity). The area covers Guyana, Suriname and French Guyana, all three falling completely within the GS, as well as Venezuela, Colombia and Brazil, which share part of their territory with the eco-region. The environmental conservation of the GS is seriously threatened by uncontrolled economic development. GS being less known than the Amazon basin, and less accessible, deforestation in it is rapidly progressing to a total 5% of the region (7% in South America). Its main drivers are the proliferation of extractive industries (gold, oil etc.), illegal logging, and construction of physical infrastructures (roads). In this context, the Guiana Shield Facility (GSF) not only constitutes the single comprehensive regional initiative that recognises the value of the biodiversity of GS, but, most importantly, seeks to support the development and implementation of conservation and sustainable development strategies across the hosting countries. To this aim, GSF aims to become the long-term vehicle, forum and funding delivery mechanism in the region. Another element that renders the intervention very relevant is that it leverages the objectives laid out in Multilateral Environmental Agreements (Convention on Biological Diversity and Aichi Targets, UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020, UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples) through the support of national policies and initiatives that are designed to reinforce environmental commitments. The intervention logic is coherent and sustained in a complete and results-oriented Logframe. A very good element of the design is that it draws upon previous successful initiatives (Guyana Shield Initiative I and II) in compiling relevant biodiversity information and designing monitoring systems for forestry management. Other strong points of the design are its grounding on a thorough formulation phase with participatory consultation with key multi-stakeholders at local, national and regional level, which assigned a strong governance orientation to GSF, and its holistic approach to mainstreaming cross-cutting issues as core values particularly regarding vulnerable communities, such as respect for forest-dependent and indigenous communities rights and cultural traditions, gender equality and women empowerment. On the other hand, the design presents important weaknesses: (i) the time frame for the initial formulation phase and the call for proposals seems relatively short given the ambitious goals of involving high political support and launching relevant national initiatives; (ii) there is no well-detailed sustainability strategy linked to the financial feasibility of output/outcome 2; (iii) there is no risks / assumptions plan with clear mitigation measures; and (iv) at the level of results the intervention focuses on outputs and not on intended effects. The application of UNDP monitoring and evaluation procedures (e.g. the Atlas financial closure system) is capitalised in the coordination, management and financing arrangements.

Efficiency of Implementation to date

Inputs are being made available timely and activities are being implemented largely according to the work plan. Nevertheless, although it built a strong multi-stakeholder platform, the formulation phase produced a quite significant delay in launching the call for proposals and starting the implementation of the national projects. The first projects took off in May 2012 (Colombia), June 2012 (Guyana and Suriname) and November 2013 (Brazil). In Venezuela and French Guyana (both covering circa 20% of the GS surface) there are no projects. The former has not formally endorsed the GSF for political issues (it is not a priority for the Government), whereas the latter, as a province of France, lacks political autonomy. The GSF management reacted flexibly concerning the delays by re-scheduling and downsizing the duration of projects to be deployed within the overall time frame of the initiative, thus allowing proper monitoring mechanisms to take effect. The delivery of outputs is progressing well, in accordance with the pace of implementation of the projects at national level. The GSF coordinator (i.e. GSF Secretariat) is in charge of outputs resulting from centrally implemented activities at regional level (i.e. report on the III International Congress on Biodiversity

of the GS). GSF delivers scientific-based outputs of good quality in the areas of information relevance, scope, scientific rigor and value for policy-making, and project-based academic use. Assessment studies on gold mining, gender and environment, and hydro-morphologic mapping are allowing national policy making and provision of programmes to design policies based on sound evidence in each partner country. Of utmost importance is the interdisciplinary database that brings and standardises into a single platform multi-dimensional information related to the GS. The development of this tool is completed, it is currently in a testing phase and its launching is foreseen within 2014. The product will be able to generate outputs on demand. The website and a social media campaign through Facebook and Twitter contribute to picturing and disseminating outputs to national partners, mainly government agencies, NGOs and research institutions. However, this is insufficient for reaching forest-dependent and indigenous communities (the final beneficiaries) who would need outputs translated and adapted to their cultural coordinates. A good example to follow are outputs disseminated by the Institute von Humboldt (one of the partners in Colombia) to indigenous communities at the Matavén Forest, with posters and flyers translated to their local languages and distributed to their communities. Partners in Colombia (Institute von Humboldt and UNDP), Guyana (Guyana Forestry Commission), Brazil (Amapá State Government and Federal University of Amazonas) and Suriname (Climate Change Compatible Agency) are responsively contributing to the monitoring of the GSF activities and a result-oriented implementation.

Effectiveness to date

GSF is proving effective for outcomes 1 and 3, regarding its establishment as a long-term forum and vehicle for GS conservation, and a platform for knowledge sharing and capacity development. There is sound evidence that national projects are yielding palpable effects at the policy and community level. In Guyana, monitoring, review and verification systems (MRVS) supported by GSF are used as robust data to design methodologies and programmatic lines for REDD+ preparations for the Guyana Forestry Commission. The development of a REDD+ Readiness Project Proposal in Suriname has facilitated the Climate Compatible Development Agency to ensure financial support from the WB to set up new environmental policies. In Colombia and Brazil, capacity development targeted at indigenous communities is reinforcing their governance structures and promoting the development of entrepreneurial activities focused on livelihood improvement and community well-being. The communication strategy has contributed substantially to positioning GSF as a catalyst initiative in promoting GS conservation and advocating its value at the national and regional level. The user-friendly and content-rich website, along with the Facebook page, enable the dissemination of outputs for policy, capacity development and research purposes (around 3,000 monthly visits and +200,000 friends respectively). Against this positive setting, a longer period for national projects implementation would have reflected on the achievement of stronger results. Likewise, the III Congress on Biodiversity played a key role in raising awareness on GSF and positioning the initiative as an environmental point of reference in South America and beyond. The principal factor that hampers a complete achievement of the GSF Purpose lays on the inability, to date, to raise funding for securing that GSF becomes a sustainable financial vehicle (outcome 2). GSF has not been able yet to raise any of the pending funding (EUR 1.7 million) that was foreseen in the Description of the Action, in view of: (i) lack of a provision for a feasible and well-targeted fundraising campaign; (ii) absence of financial capacity of partner governments for direct support; and (iii) difficulty of the initiative to promote the visibility of outcomes and impacts. In the same vein, the partnership with the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organisation (ACTO), with big funding capacities, has not yet been formalised.

Impact prospects

It is early to assess whether the promising results yielded by the intervention to date are translated into a tangible impact for improved conservation across the GS. Nonetheless, there are factual indications that GSF might succeed in fostering sustainable environmental management at policy and community level: (i) The capacity development work in Colombia proves to be very appropriate for changing dynamics towards the introduction of participatory processes in governance structures that allow greater inclusivity of indigenous communities. The active participation of women is introducing a more holistic and value-driven attitude towards conservation and a sustainable entrepreneurial agency for improving local livelihoods. The cooperation is equipping communities with higher self-esteem, motivation and technical instruments to face the exploitative threats of extractive industries and illegal logging. GSF has become a pilot reference at national level with high prospects to scale up. The initiative is not only proven effective in fostering conservation industries, but also in claiming local cultural and value systems. (ii) The MRVS designed in Guyana are linking normative standard data with policy-making. Besides referencing REDD+ schemes' levels, the information is used for monitoring forest resources and land use in FLEGT and EITI processes. (iii) GSF

is being established as the custodian initiative solely targeting the eco-region. The University of Guyana has recently requested GSF support to set up a GS monitoring centre, and the Universidad Nacional Experimental de Guayana from Venezuela is asking for collaboration, although Venezuela has not formally joined GSF. However, all these impact prospects are highly vulnerable to the pervasive presence of miners, prospectors for minerals (garimpeiros), loggers and hunters that rapidly race towards the exploitation of the rich natural resources of the region. The remoteness and isolation of wealthy hot spots is often their best ally to continue expanding their destructive operations.

Potential sustainability

Sustainability is directly linked to the capacity of GSF to ensure financial support. The initiative will only prosper if it is able to bring additional funding that can allow the facility to further support GS initiatives. The strategy envisioned by the GSF Secretariat provides for the transition from the current GS Facility to a future GS Fund. To do so, the Secretariat plans to develop the following action during 2014: (i) persuading GSF partner countries to directly apply to the Secretariat of Convention on Biological Diversity for funding to be allocated for GS actions. This fundraising campaign will take place during the regional high-level workshop 'Transboundary protected areas' in May; (ii) applying at the BNDES Amazon Fund through a project aimed at detecting deforestation drivers; (iii) advocating financial support in EU countries, by building upon the interests that the EC and countries such as Germany, Norway, France, and the UK, have in the region. Overall, GSF expects raising up to USD 15 million. Given the disappointing record of fundraising in the past 3 years, this goal seems unlikely to be achieved. The ROM mission allowed to collect evidence on arguments that may explain the failure at this point: 1) there was limited time and resources allocated for fundraising activities; 2) there has been limited progress in setting up a partnership with ACTO, which is critical for ensuring the financial sustainability of GSF; 3) GSF has suffered the consequences of not including a robust sustainability strategy built around GSF values. However, bearing in mind that the EC commitment is up to the end of 2014, there is still time for actions aiming at the survival of the initiative. Drawing upon the relevance and positive effects of GSF, the strong management capacity, the robust partnerships developed, and the local ownership ensured at national level, the continuation of such a mechanism represents an opportunity. However, consolidating GSF as the regional delivery mechanism that safeguards conservation and promotes sustainable development in the region is a major challenge.

Key observations and recommendations

GSF is well implemented and proceeds with the achievement of its expected outcomes apart from outcome 2. It is recommended to the GSF Secretariat: 1) Develop a coherent and feasible sustainability strategy including a fundraising campaign. Consider starting with the benchmarking of other environmental conservation initiatives deployed across the Amazon basin. This exercise could help in pointing out GSF differential components compared to fund-based competitive initiatives, assessing potential coordination and building synergies. Consider a SWOT analysis and a comparative positioning assessment for modelling a targeted approach for potential donors (including ACTO); 2) Ensure high political support from UNDP HQ, thereby contributing to raising awareness and approaching donors at higher level; 3) Develop focal points in financial decision centres such as New York, Brussels and Beijing, for systematic advocacy and targeted lobbying to key decision-makers. Use the increasing flow of Chinese investment in extractive industries across the eco-region to approach companies for investing in conservation industries (as part of corporate social responsibility and environmental policies and programmes); 4) Try to avoid the call-for-proposals approach for further initiatives; leveraging on existing partnerships and policy priority settings would reduce time, save resources and optimise outcomes achievement; 5) Decentralise the GSF management structure to a multi-partner implementing platform at national level, with the GSF Secretariat as the administrator, curator and quality controller of a potential GS Fund. Consider the segmentation of partnerships according to ownership criteria (i.e. full or partial GS countries) and institutional nature (to facilitate a closer and more effective cooperation with institutions in French Guyana and Venezuela); 6) Design an output-outcome-impact visibility strategy, with the mapping of outcomes and a technical capacity development module for training on how to translate outputs into outcomes and intended impacts. The output-impact traceability can be helpful for communicating the GSF value to stakeholders and attract potential donors (using the case study method for codifying and disseminating qualitative data); 7) Strengthen the cooperation with the mining sector (business associations, companies and government bodies). To the EC: 1) Consider enhancing coordination mechanisms through the EU Delegations for systematic alignment of priority programmes and monitoring; 2) Consider linking further financing conditioned to: (i) the application of corrective measures and (ii) the joint participation in a multi-donor platform with prior written commitment of the other donors.