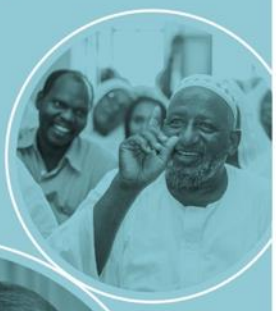
Corporate Unit Evaluation Central Project Evaluation

KNOWING WHAT WORKS



Central Project Evaluation

Conservation of biodiversity in the Eje Neovolcánico in Mexico

PN 2013.2161.1

Evaluation Report

On behalf of GIZ by *Henning Peter and Tajin Fuentes*

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The Evaluation Unit commissioned the evaluation to external independent evaluators. The evaluation report was written by these external evaluators. All opinions and assessments expressed in the report are those of the authors.

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List of abbreviations

BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
CAMe	Environmental Commission of the Megapolis (Comisión Ambiental Megapolitana)
CEPANAF	State Commission of Natural Parks and Fauna (Comisión Estatal de Parques Naturales y de la Fauna del Estado de México)
CONABIO	National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity (Comisión Nacional sobre el Conocimiento y Uso de la Biodiversidad)
CONANP	National Commission of Natural Protected Areas (Comisión Nacional de Áreas Naturales Protegidas)
CONEVAL	National Advisory Council for the Evaluation of Development Policy (Consejo Nacional de Evaluación de la Política de Desarrollo Social)
DRCEN	Regional Bureau of the Central and Eje Neovolcánico Region of CONANP (Dirección Regional Centro y Eje Neovolcánico de la CONANP)
ECB-CDMX	Strategy and Action Plan for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity of the CDMX (Estrategia y Plan de Acción para la Conservación y Uso Sustentable de la Biodiversidad de la Cuidad de México)
ENBIOMEX	National Biodiversity Strategy of the Government of Mexico (Estrategia Nacional sobre Biodiversidad de México)
EUR	Euro
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
IKI	International Climate Initiative (Internationale Klima Initiative) of the German Federal Ministry for Environment and Nuclear Safety
INAES	National Institute of Social Economy (Instituto Nacional de Economía Social)
INDC	Intended Nationally Determined Contributions
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Assistance Committee
PA	Protected Area
PROCODES	Conservation programme for sustainable development (Programa de Conservación para el Desarrollo Sostenible)
PROFAUNA A.C.	Environmental NGO Mexico
PROMARNAT	Sector Programme for Environment and Natural Resources of the Government of Mexico (Programa Sectorial de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales 2013 – 2018)

RCEN	Central and Eje Neovolcánico Region (Región Centro y Eje Neovolcánico)
SAGARPA	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food (Secretaría de Agricultura, Ganadería, Desarrollo Rural, Pesca y Alimentación)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SDS	Secretariat of Sustainable Development of the state of Morelos (Secretaría de Desarrollo Sustentable Morelos)
SEDEMA	Secretariat of Environment of the city of Mexico (Secretaría del Medio Ambiente de la Ciudad de México)
SEDESOL	Ministry of Social Development (Secretaría de Desarrollo Social)
SGPOA	General System of Annual Operational Programmes (Sistema General de Programas Operativos Anuales)
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
TC	Technical Cooperation
UAEM	Autonomous University of the State of Mexico (Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México)
UMA	University of the Environment (Unversidad del Medio Ambiente)
UNAM	National Autonomous University of Mexico (Universidad Autónoma de México)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

The project at glance

Mexico: Conservation of biodiversity in the Eje Neovolcánico

Project number	2013.2161.1
CRS-Code(s) (Creditor Reporting System Code)	41030
Project objective	The federal and federal state protected area authorities have improved the quality of biodiversity conservation in the Eje Neovolcánico region
Project term	17.06.2014 – 31.10.2018
Project volume	EUR 4,000,000
Commissioning party	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung – BMZ)
Lead executing agency	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
Implementing organisations (in the partner country)	National Commission of Natural Protected Areas (Comisión Nacional de Áreas Naturales Protegidas – CONANP) and federal authorities
Other development organisations involved	State Commission of Natural Parks and Fauna (Comisión Estatal de Parques Naturales y de la Fauna del Estado de México – CEPANAF), Secretariat of Sustainable Development of the state of Morelos (Secretaría de Desarrollo Sustentable Morelos – SDS), Secretariat of Environment of the city of Mexico (Secretaría del Medio Ambiente de la Ciudad de México – SEDEMA), Autonomous University of the State of Mexico (Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México – UAEM), PROFAUNA or La Mano del Mono (NGO)
Target group(s)	The target group was the rural population in the project region living in and around the protected areas and the urban population using the environmental services of the protected areas. In the main intervention area of the project region in the Eje Neovolcánico, the states of Mexico and Morelos as well as the federal district, more than 80% of the population live in cities, nationwide 77%. It is the most densely populated area in Mexico

Summary

The Technical Cooperation (TC) project ‘Conservation of Biodiversity in the Eje Neovolcánico in Mexico’ (PN 2013.2161.1) was implemented between 17.06.2014 and 31.10.2018 with a funding volume of EUR 4,000,000 provided by the commissioning party, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung – BMZ).

The project was managed by the lead executing agency Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

The national counterpart and implementing organisations were the National Commission of Natural Protected Areas (Comisión Nacional de Áreas Naturales Protegidas – CONANP) and federal authorities.

Other partners involved were, for instance, the State Commission of Natural Parks and Fauna (Comisión Estatal de Parques Naturales y de la Fauna del Estado de México – CEPANAF), the Secretariat of Sustainable Development of the state of Morelos (Secretaría de Desarrollo Sustentable Morelos – SDS), the Secretariat of Environment of Mexico City (Secretaría del Medio Ambiente de la ciudad de Mexico – SEDEMA), the Autonomous University of the State of Mexico (Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México – UAEM) and NGOs such as PROFAUNA or La Mano del Mono.

The direct target group was the rural population in the project region living in and around the protected areas. The indirect target group was the urban population using the environmental services of the protected areas. In the main intervention area of the project region in the Eje Neovolcánico, the states of Mexico and Morelos as well as the federal district, more than 80% of the population live in cities – nationwide 77%. It is the most densely populated area in Mexico.

The project objective was that: ‘The federal and federal state protected area authorities have improved the quality of biodiversity conservation in the Eje Neovolcánico region.’

The project focused on improving coordinated cooperation between federal and federal state authorities in the protected area management sector. The approach included advice on planning, coordination, implementation and monitoring of existing programmes. Regional coordination platforms were created and allowed the main actors in the environmental sector to coordinate their programmes and to define and implement corresponding lines of action in a coordinated manner. The competencies of the participating government authorities at personnel and organisational level were strengthened by organisational development measures, in particular of the federal protected area authorities, and by staff training measures (Foc_Dis_6). Information and knowledge about protected areas and biodiversity were made accessible via an information portal (https://www.anpsestatales.mx/visor/html/visor.html). Existing information from federal and federal state authorities were systematised, and enhanced cooperation with the scientific community was promoted. Concrete project interventions to increase income were supported (sustainable livestock farming and sustainable tourism). To ensure that the projects are sustainable and ecologically compatible, criteria and guidelines were developed according to which the projects were implemented by different key actors. Women and indigenous groups were given special support.

The project was well embedded in the organisational structure of the Mexican government at federal level, serving as a facilitator of change processes. The main counterpart organisation was CONANP at the federal level. At the federal state level, the organisations responsible for environmental management and the conservation and sustainable management of protected areas were, for example, SDS, SEDEMA, CEPANAF. The project mainly supported capacity development within the counterpart organisations and other key stakeholders.

The direct target group was the rural population in the project region living in and around the protected areas, in particular poor livestock farmers. The urban population in the area, as an indirect target group, utilises the environmental services of the protected areas. In the project’s main intervention area – the Eje Neovolcánico, the

states of Mexico and Morelos as well as Mexico City – more than 80% of the population live in cities. It is the most densely populated area in Mexico.

The final evaluation of the project was based on assessing the performance and results the project rendered according to the five OECD/DAC criteria: relevance, effectiveness, impact, efficiency and sustainability.

The design of the evaluation was based on the evaluation dimensions and followed the guiding questions, provided by GIZ central evaluation unit (Excel tool). In addition to that, the criterion 'efficiency' was mainly assessed by using the analytical tool 'Efficiency Tool' (Excel tool).

The different evaluation methods used, were:

- Document review: analysed the documents detailed in section 3.1 to be in a position to address the evaluation questions in an appropriate manner. Analysing documents also included taking notes of salient and important aspects, as well as both evaluators discussing critical points. Also comparing data and information of different written sources was part of the document review.
- Guided, semi-structured interviews: these kinds of interviews were done mainly by one evaluator and individual interviewees. The interviews were based on a set of guiding questions formulated by the evaluators beforehand but conducted as a conversation, not a formal survey.
- Focus group discussions: for many purposes, e.g. scenario development, it was best to interview stakeholders in a group setting. This allowed actors to discuss different perspectives, exchange and verify information and data and conclude common perceptions, as, for instance, 'unintended results of the project'.
- Using triangulation: each evaluation question was responded, using information from: (a) different documents; (b) different interviewees; and (c) based on the opinion/point of view of both evaluators. This process ensured that common pitfalls by relying on one information source only were avoided.
- Scenario development: exploring the hypotheses developed for analysing the 'theory of change' of the project at hand.

The evaluation was carried out by a team of two evaluators, one international and one national.

After having provided an inception report at mid-January 2019, the on-site evaluation mission took place between 4–11 March 2019 in Mexico.

The major findings of the evaluation are summarised as follows.

Criterion relevance:

- The original project concept was relevant during the project implementation and aligned to national and BMZ strategic priorities.
- The hypotheses for the project results chain were plausible and their validity could be proven by the evaluation.
- The project responded to the major needs and demands of the target group.
- The project concept was appropriately designed to achieve the planned project objective.

Criterion effectiveness:

- The project achieved the planned objective and 100% or more of the planned target values related to the indicators at project objective (outcome level).
- Nearly all activities carried out, contributed significantly to having achieved the project objective.
- No project-related negative results have occurred.

Criterion impact:

- The project contributed to several overarching development results, as e.g.: (1) Sustainable Development Goals – SDG); (2) Aichi targets; (3) INDC; (4) PROMARNAT; (5) ENBIOMEX; (6) National Plan of Protected Areas.
- The project generated significant impact at the level of counterpart organisation CONANP: strengthening

staff capacities and competencies related to strategic planning.
- Positive, unintended results occurred during project implementation: development of communities of practice, team work spirit with CONANP working teams, paradigm shift of CONANP personnel regarding livestock farming.

Criterion efficiency:

- The project was implemented with the funding foreseen at the planning stage.
- The counterpart organisations contributed significant resources to the project: in kind, funding for small-scale projects.

Criterion sustainability:

- The project was embedded in the operational and strategic framework of CONANP and contributed to improving its organisational capacities.
- The project has developed and/or carried out different measures that ensure sustainability in the medium and long term, as: (1) capacity building of partners (*diplomado*) in project planning and target group; (2) established learning and knowledge exchange networks; (3) SGPOA (including monitoring of project area effectivity; (4) sustainable livestock farming.
- The project contributed innovative instruments and approaches for working on the wider topic of biodiversity conservation and sustainable management: diplomado (training course) for impact-oriented project planning, method for environmental education ('Learning from the Tree'), monitoring of priority species.
- Advisory contents, approaches and methods were anchored/institutionalised in the partner systems.

Further factors and findings of the evaluation are detailed below:

Factors that supported the project achieving its planned goals and being implemented to the satisfaction of key stakeholder, were:

- Flexible project planning framework that allowed minor changes at the level of activities being planned and implemented, without losing sight of the project objective;
- Responding to the needs and demands of the principle counterpart organisation CONANP at different levels (national, regional and local level) and to the needs of the target population, in particular livestock farmers;
- Having applied a multi-stakeholder approach, involving key stakeholders of government, academia and civil society;
- Applying participatory processes, involving actors actively in the development of approaches and measures, as well as in the decision-making;
- Clear understanding of the role of the GIZ project team as advisers. Interviewed stakeholders stated that the GIZ project team was an excellent facilitator accompanying the processes of CONANP and establishing contacts and collaborations between different sectoral actors.

The GIZ project team comprised a small number of six full-time experts, coming from different disciplines, male and female advisers. The team covered all topics related to the different outputs, for instance organisational development, inter-institutional coordination, knowledge and information management, management of natural resources or sustainable livestock farming. The full-time expert team was supported by short-term experts, mainly Mexican citizens and by services rendered by NGO, academia and national consulting services. Two advisers in the full-time expert team were also contracted as consultants, based on a contract with a German consulting company. The composition of the team, as well as the combination of the different 'instruments' was appropriate, according to the evaluators opinion.

Concerning cooperation management, according to Capacity WORKS, the subsequent success factors are highlighted (examples):

- **Strategy:** clear strategic orientation of the implementation of the project (implementation strategy) and flexibility to react to changes of framework conditions and/or partner priorities.

- **Cooperation:** the project concentrated on strengthening the project's main counterpart organisation (CONANP) and on strengthening strategic partners, topic-wise.
- **Coordination structure:** the project owned a board of directors (CONANP and GIZ) and coordination platforms according to priority themes. Both coordination structures were considered appropriate by stakeholders to steer the project.
- **Processes:** the project defined six strategic advisory processes to achieve the project objective, which have been strengthened: (1) regional coordination mechanisms; (2) information systems; (3) regional strategic planning; (4) capacity building; (5) sustainable livestock farming; and (6) adaptive management.
- **Learning and innovation:** the project facilitated so-called 'learning communities' and focused capacity development of counterparts on adaptive management.

Evaluators concluded with a number of recommendations based on an in-depth assessment of all relevant aspects of the project. As the project was concluded in October 2018, the recommendations could be considered in the context of the follow-on measures, already being implemented:

1. Developing a biodiversity conservation agenda or strategy for the RCEN at federal and federal state level.
2. Considering federal states' biodiversity strategies within the framework of policies orienting the objectives of the follow-on measure.
3. Linking the monitoring system of priority species in the RCEN with the national biodiversity monitoring system that CONABIO is managing.
4. Taking the strategic planning system developed for and with the CONANP DRCEN to the national level of CONANP (up-scaling).
5. Looking at how a system for strengthening CONANP personnel can be institutionalised (based on the experiences of the diplomado and other trainings).
6. Exploring options to support the development/strengthening of organisational capacities of state environmental secretariats and their natural protected areas.
7. Putting the sustainable management of RCEN's biodiversity on a broader stakeholder base: various institutions from central government, state governments, civil society and the private sector.
8. Verifying the need and feasibility of having two interactive map systems for protected areas.

Criterion	Score	Rating
Relevance	92 of 100 points	Very successful
Effectiveness	100 of 100 points	Very successful
Impact	90 of 100 points	Successful
Efficiency	100 of 100 points	Very successful
Sustainability	85 of 100 points	Successful
Overall score and rating for all criteria	93 of 100 points Average score of all criteria (sum divided by 5, max. 100 points see below)	Very successful

100-point-scale	6-level-scale (Rating)
92-100	Level 1 = very successful
81-91	Level 2 = successful
67-80	Level 3 = rather successful
50-66	Level 4 = rather unsatisfactory
30-49	Level 5 = unsatisfactory
0-29	Level 6 = very unsatisfactory

1 Evaluation objectives and questions

The central evaluation is a final evaluation of the project module. The evaluation is part of the Evaluation Unit's random sample. GIZ is planning to centrally evaluate 50% of all projects being financed by BMZ.

1.1 Objectives of the evaluation

The central evaluation took place while the follow-on measure of the project had already started (in November 2018). Thus, the evaluation results could not be used for planning the follow-on measure, but had to adapt specific aspects to an implementation and conceptual focus. Apart from at the project level, the evaluation results can be used:

- by the GIZ biodiversity cluster in Mexico
- at meta-level by GIZ and BMZ to improve the planning and design of similar development measures.

As stated above, because the evaluation took place after the follow-on measures had started, this significantly limits the possibility of using the evaluation results for planning the follow-on measure. Nonetheless, the preliminary recommendations of the evaluation mission have been presented to and discussed with representatives of CONANP, GIZ COBEN II project staff (WS_1), as well as with the GIZ country director (Foc_Dis_19) and GIZ biodiversity cluster coordinator (WS_1 and Foc_Dis_19).

The main focus of the final evaluation is on improving the measurement of results (in contrast to prognosis) and system-level learning, e.g. using synthesis.

1.2 Evaluation questions

The project is assessed on the basis of standardised evaluation criteria and questions to ensure comparability by GIZ. This is based on the OECD/DAC criteria for the evaluation of development cooperation and the evaluation criteria for German bilateral cooperation: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. Aspects regarding the criterion coherence, complementarity and coordination are included in the other criteria.

Specific evaluation dimensions and analytical questions are drawn from this given framework by the GIZ, which are the basis for all central project evaluations in GIZ and can be found in the Evaluation Matrix (annex 1). In addition, the contributions to Agenda 2030 and its principles (universality, integrative approach, Leave No One Behind, multi-stakeholder partnerships) are taken into account as well as cross-cutting issues such as gender, the environment, conflict sensitivity and human rights. Also, aspects regarding the quality of implementation are included in all OECD/DAC criteria.

Table 1: Main stakeholder groups of evaluation

Main stakeholder groups of evaluation	Knowledge interests and requirements for making decisions	Being considered in the following OECD/ DAC criteria
BMZ	Feasibility of project planning Relevance of project for national partners Impact of the project on the ground' Lessons learnt for future development interventions Use of (financial) resources Performance of GIZ staff (implementation of planned	Relevance Impact Efficiency Sustainability

	measures)	
GIZ central evaluation unit	Feasibility of project planning Relevance of project for national partners Lessons learnt for future development interventions Use of (financial) resources Performance of GIZ staff (implementation of planned measures)	Relevance Efficiency Sustainability
GIZ project team	Relevance of project for national partners (government organisations at different levels, NGOs, academia) Impact of the project on the ground' (mainly for target group) Lessons learnt for future development interventions (e.g. the follow-on project) Performance of GIZ staff (implementation of planned measures)	Relevance Impact Efficiency
Primary national stakeholders: CONANP and federal authorities (e.g. CEPANAF, SDS, SEDEMA CORENA)	Results of project on regional planning (beyond planning for protected areas) Effects on improving coordination between federal and state authorities in the field of protected area management Effects on improving intersectoral coordination (protected areas management, tourism, cattle ranching, agriculture) Effects on improving protected area planning (focus on strategic planning) Effects on strengthening of institutional capacities of CONANP and federal state authorities	Effectiveness, Impact
Secondary Stakeholders: E.g. FUNDECO, PROFAUNA A.C., UAEM, UMA or La Mano del Mono	Effects on improving land use practices in buffer zones of protected areas Focus on sustainable tourism Improving protected area management Positive impacts on livelihoods in the project region	Effectiveness, Impact
Target group	Positive impacts on livelihoods in the project region Contribution to gender equality Improving environmental services provided by protected areas for surrounding populations (e.g. provision of drinking water or water for irrigation)	Impact, Relevance

During the inception phase, interviewed stakeholders raised the following issues to be considered during the project's evaluation:

- Review the project's impacts at regional level.
- Review the project's impacts at institutional level (benefits for CONANP) asking: (1) What mechanisms and methods have facilitated the application of the vision of regional planning in other regions of the country? (2)

What did the project contribute to institutional work?

- Assess the ability of ranchers to apply technical principles to innovate or resolve situations beyond what they have learnt in training workshops.
- Address the transformation of the perception of livestock among different actors, not only CONANP.
- Emphasise the evaluation of gender inclusion in livestock projects.
- Include in the evaluation the formation of interdisciplinary and intersectoral networks resulting from the project.
- What went well, what did not work very well and what does that mean for the follow-on measure regarding 'learning'.
- What is the relevance of the project for the Agenda 2030 (SDG): how is it linked to the national Agenda 2030; to which indicators of the national Agenda 2030 the project is linked?
- The evaluation should also focus on the 'success factors' of Capacity WORKS.
- Special attention must be paid to the varying realities of the target groups (urban vs rural).
- As the government of Mexico disposes of relevant financial resources and development programmes, the question is what can a project like this achieve with relatively modest financial resources – describe the leverage effect the project had in the partner system.
- What did the project contribute in the context of the GIZ biodiversity cluster in Mexico? What was the project's added value, focusing on anchoring the topic of biodiversity conservation in the cluster and also in the government system?
- Verify, based on this concrete project, the meaningfulness of combining content-wise and a commercial approach of project evaluation.
- Has the project positively influenced, and to what extent, national sector policies?

These assessment questions and aspects, which were raised by the interviewed stakeholders during the inception phase, seemed to be relevant and were incorporated in the evaluation design. The emphasised aspects did all fit to the different OECD/DAC criteria.

Only the question: 'verify, based on this concrete project, the meaningfulness of combining content-wise and commercial approach of project evaluation' did not fit the any of the OECD/DAC criteria. The question was outside the scope of the evaluation and could not be assessed/answered.

2 Object of the evaluation

For the central evaluation of the project 'Conservation of Biodiversity in the Eje Neovolcánico in Mexico' it was crucial to precisely define the object of the evaluation. Thus, in the following the object of evaluation will be identified by describing the project in a way that allows the reader to understand the basic characteristics and the context in which the project is embedded. In addition, the results hypotheses, which the project design is built upon, are explored.

2.1 Definition of the evaluation object

The main object of the evaluation is the Technical Cooperation Measure[1] 'Conservation of Biodiversity in the Eje Neovolcánico' (PN 2013.2161.1). The project was implemented from 17 June 2014 to 31 October 2018. Thus, it was finalised before the evaluation started. The project's financial budget was EUR 4,000,000. There was no co-financing by other donors. The principal counterpart organisation at the national level, CONANP, provided significant resources in kind (staff, offices, workshop co-financing) and funding for small-scale projects, amounting to

1 This term will be replaced by the term 'project' in the report.

EUR 1,000,000 for the entire project period. There was no predecessor project. The follow-on project, also named 'Conservation of Biodiversity in the Eje Neovolcánico' (PN 2017.2139.8), has been implemented since 1 November 2018 and will run until 31 October 2021. The project's geographical focus is the Eje Neovolcánico region in the centre of Mexico.

In the following the evaluators outline a short summary of the project, describing its political and sectoral context, the framework conditions in which it is implemented, cross-cutting issues such as gender, the environment, conflict sensitivity and human rights, the position and role within the stakeholder structure and the target group:

Mexico is one of the 12 countries on earth with the highest biodiversity. It is home to between 10% and 12% of biodiversity on only 1.5% of the planet's total terrestrial surface. Mexico adopted a national biodiversity strategy in 2000 as a ratifying state of the Convention on Biological Diversity (1992). The National Development Plan 2013-2018, published in May 2013, contained strategies for the conservation of natural resources and biodiversity in Mexico. The Mexican government made its contribution to implementing the Aichi goals (2010 to 2020) of the Convention on Biological Diversity. This includes the expansion and consolidation of the national system of protected areas.

The government of Mexico developed and implemented different incentive programmes fostering sustainable management of protected areas such as the conservation programme for sustainable development (Programa de Conservación para el Desarrollo Sostenible – PROCODES).

Nearly 30 million people live in the Eje Neovolcánico region, which is also called the 'Megalópolis'. The large cities of Mexico City, Toluca and Cuernavaca etc. are surrounded by a wide ring of federal, federal state and municipal protected areas. More than 50 million Mexicans in this region, about 45% of the population, still live below the poverty line, with almost 10% of the population living in extreme poverty. Therefore, environmental and biodiversity protection issues are always seen against the background of economic and social problems and potential.

The protected areas and adjacent natural areas of the Eje Neovolcánico region are threatened in general by legal and illegal settlements, legal and illegal logging and livestock-keeping, intensive land use, fires and overuse of land. This affects important environmental services, in particular the provision of drinking water in the region. There is an increasing fragmentation of protected areas and a degradation of natural resources (sources: SERMANAT, Biodiversidad Mexicana www.biodiversidad.gob.mx/region/areasprot/enmexico.html).

Uncoordinated and often incongruent policies, strategies, projects and programmes between the government authorities at federal and federal state level lead to an inadequate quality of biodiversity conservation in the Eje Neovolcánico region (core problem).

Illegal settlements, illegal logging and the presence of drug-related crime, violence and crime are regionally differentiated risks in Mexico that could have jeopardised the project implementation but did not significantly affect it (Foc_Dis_1).

The project focused on improving coordinated cooperation between federal and federal state authorities in the protected area management sector. The approach included advice on the planning, coordination, implementation and monitoring of existing programmes. Regional coordination platforms were created to allow main actors in the environmental sector to coordinate their programmes and to define and implement corresponding lines of action in a coordinated manner. The aim was to strengthen the personnel and organisational competencies of the participating government authorities by organisational development measures. Information and knowledge about protected areas and biodiversity should be provided and existing information from federal and federal state authorities was planned to be systematised. It was planned to increase income of the target group by concrete project interventions. Women and indigenous groups should be given special support.

The project was embedded in the organisational structure of the Mexican government at federal level, serving as a facilitator of change processes with CONANP being the main counterpart organisation. Various state-level organisations were responsible for environmental management and the conservation and sustainable management of protected areas (e.g. SDS, SEDEMA, CEPANAF). Capacity development was focused on improving individual

and organisational capacities of the counterpart organisation CONANP and other primary stakeholders, as well as in embedding the importance of biodiversity conservation in the region's population.

The direct target group was the project region's rural population living in and around the protected areas, in particular poor livestock farmers. As an indirect target group, the urban population in the area utilises the environmental services of the protected areas. In the main intervention area of the project region – in the Eje Neovolcánico, the states of Mexico and Morelos as well as Mexico City – more than 80% of the population live in cities. It is the most densely populated area in Mexico.

2.2 Results model including hypotheses

The project's results model was developed in October 2018, based on the project proposal and the results matrix, agreed on with BMZ.

The original project concept was not updated during project implementation. The project outcome and outputs with all related indicators were not adapted at any time. The technical topics 'tourism' and 'cattle ranching' on which the project focused, were identified by key stakeholders as very important issues, based on consultations and workshops.

The results model was elaborated by the GIZ project team in October 2018. Only the numbering of results, e.g. 'Result B3.1' was added by the international evaluator.

The narrative text of the results hypothesis was worked out by the international evaluator based on the results model.

In order to achieve the project's objective (outcome level) 'the federal and state administrations have improved the quality of conservation in the Eje Neovolcánico', four outputs were identified:

- Output A (result A5) 'The federal and state institutions responsible for biodiversity, protected areas and natural resources in the project region involve civil society'.
- Output B (result B6) 'The administrations of the protected areas (federal and state) are competent in project planning, implementation and monitoring'.
- Output C (result C4) 'In cooperation with other institutions, those responsible at CONANP have set up a knowledge and information system on protected areas and their connectivity'.
- Output D (result D3) 'The federal and state protected area authorities have jointly developed recommendations, criteria and guidelines for gender-differentiated planning, implementation and monitoring of natural resource management and biodiversity conservation projects'.

The hypotheses underlying the project's concept are described subsequently:

Achieving output A: in order to achieve that federal and state government institutions involve civil society (result A5) in participating on an institutionalised inter-institutional and regional coordination platform in which decisions are taken quarterly on policies, guidelines and initiatives that contribute to biodiversity conservation (indicator M[2]1), there is a results logic. First, priority topics for conservation are identified (result B1.1), based on which areas of dialogue with and areas for participation of different actors (on conservation and biodiversity topics) are created (result A1). These actors are organised into groups which interact in the frame of four participation and consultation processes (result A3 and indicator A[3]1)). These participation and discussion mechanisms are expected to only work and generate tangible results if they have clear rules and structures (result A2). Once the mechanisms are accepted, transparent and actively used, this finally leads to coordinated planning of actors in protected areas at the regional level (result A4) in the framework of an inter-institutional and regional platform (result A4.1).

Achieving output B: for achieving that the administrations of the protected areas (federal and state level) are

[2] Indicator 'M' refers to indicators at the module objective (outcome) level of the results matrix (Modulzielindikatoren).

[3] Indicator 'A' (B, C, D) refers to indicators at the output level.

competent in project planning, implementation and monitoring (result B6), the results logic is as follows: starting with having identified priority topics for conservation (result B1.1), capacity development and training needs for different actors are identified (result B2.1), and training objectives that focus on 'training-on-the-job' are carried out (result B3.1). Only if stakeholders' capacities are strengthened by training measures, can they apply planning, implementation and monitoring instruments (result B4). Stakeholders can also integrate impact orientation in project planning (result B6). This is measured by 40% of all new projects and programmes formulated by the protected areas administrations (CONANP, CEPANAF, SEDEMA and SDS) for the conservation of biodiversity and the use of natural resources (indicator M2). Apart from identifying priority topics for conservation (result B1.1), planning needs for the regional level (result B1.2) are also identified. These result in improving the General System of Annual Operational Programmes (Sistema de General de Programas Operativos Anuales – SGPOA Fortalecido) of CONANP (result B2.2), based on strengthened capacities of 60% of the staff of CONANP, CEPANAF, SEDEMA and SDS working on the issue (result B3.2, indicator B1).

Achieving output C: having established a knowledge and information system on protected areas, their connectivity (result C4) can only be achieved if information gaps and homogeneity between federal and state are identified (result C1), which are then plugged by generating data and making them accessible in information systems (result C2); minimum level is 90% of basic data on federal protected areas (32 of 36) and 50% of state protected areas (57 of 114) are accessible in the information system. Finally, the data and information are placed on an improved state platform (result C3), which is used by a minimum of 60% of key stakeholders (indicator M3).

Achieving output D: the federal and state protected area authorities having jointly developed recommendations, criteria and guidelines for gender-differentiated planning, implementation and monitoring of natural resource management and biodiversity conservation projects (result D3) is assumed to be achieved by having analysed the experiences of pilot projects (result D2), which are implemented in the project region (result D1). 30% of these projects should consider gender-differentiated activities (indicator M4).

These pilot projects also generate several results, outside the area of influence of the project, due to the wide interest and acceptance of other key stakeholders, namely: (1) financing by other government programmes (result D1.3), (2) major participation of women ranchers (result D1.1) or (3) improvement of the linkages between touristic activities and protected areas (result D1.2).

As possible impacts, beyond the control of the project, the following are identified:

- Further key actors use the planning, implementation and monitoring systems, supported by the project, as a basis for decision-making (result C5).
- The model for regional planning is replicated within CONANP (result A4.1).
- Government programmes adopt biodiversity conservation measures, based on the experiences of the project (result B4.1).

What is lacking in the results model, developed by the project team in October 2018, are results at the impact level (overarching development results) to which the project objectives contributed.

Result B6.1 'reengineering in CONANP for institutional strengthening' clearly contributes to output B but does not have any logical connection to all other results related to the output.

The focus of the project was on improving methods of planning and information systems related to the protected areas of the region. Technical topics embraced mainly sustainable tourism and cattle ranching. The project supported steps for capacity development at different levels. The project focused on advising key federal and state actors to establish concerted strategies, policies and programmes to ensure sound protected area management. GIZ advised and strengthened the authorities involved at both the organisational and personnel levels. The aim was to improve the processes of planning, implementation, monitoring of programmes and evaluation of results. The active involvement of the local population is vital for the success of these processes. In addition, the project supported partners in knowledge management by transforming research results into recommendations for natural resource management, thus strengthening the linkage and exchange between theory and practice. The system boundary, therefore, includes improvements in planning and information management for protected areas by

governmental agencies (CONANP, CEPANAF, SEDEMA and SDS), actively involving civil society organisations in planning and improving of biodiversity conservation and management of natural resources in the RCEN, and pilot implementation of biodiversity conserving measures, regarding sustainable tourism and sustainable livestock farming, by tourist service providers and farmers respectively. The project was not designed for large-scale implementation of biodiversity conserving measures on the ground, involving the local population,

There were no potential unintended negative or positive results identified, at the time of project planning in 2013.

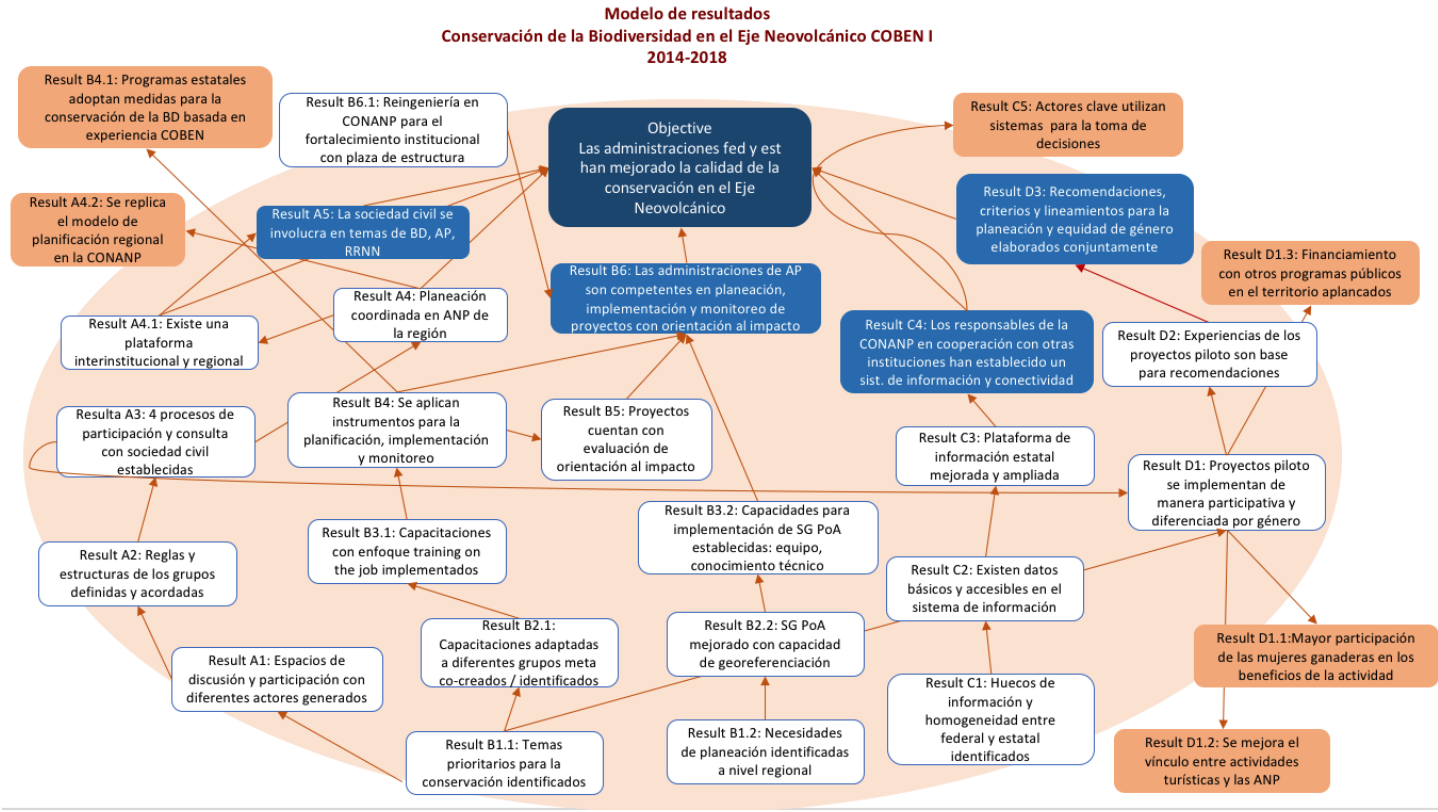
The risks for the planned results model are stated in the project proposal, section B.3.6.3, as: (1) illegal settlement, illegal logging and the presence of drug crime, combined with a high level of violence; and (2) potential changes in political interest and development priorities regarding will for coordination. Cooperation and transparent provision of information and participation of civil society in decision-making processes.

Originally the project foresaw to work strongly in the framework of the Environmental Commission of the Megapolis (Comisión Ambiental Megapolitana – CAMe), which comprises the region of Mexico City and six neighbouring states. After the project started, it came out that the institutionality of the CAMe was very weak. Therefore, the project focused on working with CONANP and the state commissions directly.

Interactions between social, economic and environmental results are explained in detail in the documentation on lessons learnt (Lecciones Aprendidas del Proyecto Conservación de la Biodiversidad en el Eje Neovolcánico, 2018) in section 2 (Síntesis: Alineación con Contratos Internacionales, pages 32–38). There is a description of the linkages of project activities and results with Agenda 2030 (Sustainable Development Goals) of the United Nations and the Aichi targets of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, for example:

- SDG 15: goals 15.2, 15.4 and 15.9
- Aichi target 7: capacity building on sustainable livestock farming practices; working group on sustainable livestock farming
- Aichi target 11: capacity building measures regarding impact-oriented project planning and evaluation.

Figure 1: Results model



3 Evaluability and evaluation process

3.1 Evaluability: data availability and quality

The following data and information were available to evaluators, during the evaluation:

Table 2: Availability of basic documentation for the evaluation

Basic document	Is available *(Yes/No)*	Estimation of actuality and quality	Relevant for OECD/ DAC criterion
Projects proposal and overarching programme/fonds proposal (etc.) and the 'Ergänzende Hinweise zur Durchführung' / additional information on implementation	Yes	The project proposal (offer to BMZ) is available in German and Spanish language	Relevance
Contextual analyses, political-economic analyses or capacity assessments to illuminate the social context	Yes	The project has at its disposal the following documents: • Capacity assessment (as part of the capacity development strategy) • Contextual analyses (as part of the project proposal and the annual project progress reports)	Relevance

Basic document	Is available *(Yes/No)*	Estimation of actuality and quality	Relevant for OECD/ DAC criterion
		• Political context analyses (as part of chapters A of the annual project progress report)	
Peace and Conflict Assessment (PCA Matrix), gender analyses, environmental and climate assessments, safeguard and gender etc.	Yes	The following documents are available: • Environmental and climate assessment (2017) • Gender analyses (2013, 2017, 2018)	Impact
Annual project progress reports and, if embedded, also programme reporting	Yes	All annual project progress reports are available (2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018)	Effectiveness Impact
Country strategy BMZ	Yes	BMZ country strategy for Mexico (2017)	Relevance
National strategies	Yes	The following national strategies are available: • National Development Plan 2013-2018 • National Biodiversity Strategy 2016-2030 • National strategy for sustainable development of tourism in protected areas • National strategy for social sustainable businesses • National strategy for climate change in protected areas	Relevance Sustainability
Sectoral/ technical documents (please specify)	Yes	There is a number of sectoral and technical documents available: • Strategy 2040 of CONANP • Education strategy for protected areas in the Central y Eje Volcánico region • Joint strategy for sustainable forest development in protected areas • Integration strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in tourism sector • Integration strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the agricultural sector (2016-2022) • National Development Plan 2013-2018, sectoral programme for environment and natural resources	Sustainability Relevance
Results matrix	Yes	The results matrix is available in German and Spanish language	Impact
Results model	Yes	A results model of the project is available	Relevance, Impact, Effectiveness

Basic document	Is available *(Yes/No)*	Estimation of actuality and quality	Relevant for OECD/ DAC criterion
Data of the results-based monitoring system (WoM)[4]	Yes	The project has reported monitoring results through the "GIZ results monitor" online tool	Effectiveness Efficiency
Map of actors[2]	Yes	An actor map is available	Relevance
Capacity development strategy/overall strategy[2]	Yes	The project owns a capacity development strategy	Sustainability
Steering structure[2]	Yes	A graph delineating the project's steering structure is available	Efficiency
Plan of operations[2]	Yes	The operational plans of the project are available for the years	Effectiveness, Efficiency
Cost data (at least current cost commitment report / Kostenträger-Obligo Bericht). Also available: cost data assigned to outputs	Yes	Cost unit commitment report provided, but without having assigned costs to outputs. Thus, a retrospective assessment was applied during the evaluation	Efficiency
Excel sheet assigning working-months of staff to outputs	Yes	The Excel sheet was provided to evaluators in an appropriate quality	Efficiency
Documents regarding follow-on project: offer to BMZ, results matrix	Yes	For the follow-on measure	Follow-on project

Baseline and monitoring data, including partner data

The project has used the 'results monitor' (Wirkungsmonitor), which is an online tool, developed by GIZ from 2017 onwards, using their result-based monitoring system. The information was updated annually, and the last entries were done mid-2018. The degree and level of achievement was documented, with explanatory notes, for each indicator at the outcome and output level. For the more complex indicators, the project staff worked out detailed descriptions, including a strategy on how to achieve the indicator, project inputs and results: M1, M3, A1, B1 and D1.

The evidences for the achievement of the indicators are stored in a specific folder of the GIZ DMS, to which the evaluators had access. In addition, the project results relating to the indicators, are reported in detail in the framework of the annual project progress report. The last report covered the period 01.07.2017 to 31.10.2018 that is until the end of the project.

The indicators in the monitoring system are SMART.[5]

Outcome level indicators

Indicator M1: An inter-institutional, regional and institutionalised coordination platform exists within which decisions on policies, guidelines and initiatives contributing to the conservation of biodiversity are taken on a quarterly basis.

Indicator M2: 40% (90 out of 225) of all newly formulated projects and programmes of the protected area administrations (CONANP, CEPANAF, SEDEMA and SDS) for the conservation of biodiversity and the use of

[4] Mandatory for all projects based on "Quality Assurance in Line (Qsil)"

[5] Specific, Measurable, Achieveable, Realistic and Timely

natural resources have been evaluated in an impact-oriented manner.

Indicator M3: 60% of the main actors interviewed (federal) confirm the use of the knowledge and information system for decision-making.

Indicator M4: 30% of biodiversity conservation projects include gender-differentiated measures.

Base value: Gender-differentiated measures have not been elaborated.

Target value: 30% (12 out of 40) of biodiversity conservation projects include gender-differentiated measures.

Output-level indicators

Indicator A1: Four participation and consultation processes with civil society for the planning and evaluation of initiatives in the field of biodiversity conservation and management of natural resources have been established.

Indicator B1: 60% (80 out of 134) of the project managers of the participating protected area authorities (CONANP, CEPANAF, CORENA and SDS) use instruments for effective planning, implementation and monitoring.

Indicator C1: Basic data of 90% (32 out of 36) of federal protected areas and 50% (57 out of 114) of federal states protected areas are accessible in an information system.

Indicator D1: Participatory developed gender-differentiated recommendations, criteria and guidelines for the planning, implementation and monitoring of projects in the field of resource management and biodiversity conservation are available (one package of recommendations, criteria and guidelines).

Quality-related aspects of the project work were monitored by analysing special aspects of implemented activities in form of studies, project workshops, GIZ project team meetings and joint reflections with partners (see bibliography).

Tools such as SWOT analysis, semi-structured interviews and ranking methods for workshops were used, in order to capture information to show the level of achievement of indicators (e.g. interviews for indicator 3 at the outcome level). Stakeholders' opinions and perceptions were captured by GIZ advisers in the day-to-day work with partners (Foc_Dis_5, Foc_dis_3, Foc_Dis_6, Int_15).

The project's monitoring system was not embedded in or based on the monitoring system of partners, namely CONANP, but contributed additional information to the partners' systems (Foc_Dis_2, Int_15). The government of Mexico's national monitoring system is based on the National Development Plan. The project's indicators focus on the developing and strengthening capacities. The national system indicators relate to a higher-results level, which was not addressed by the project. That means that the project indicators have a different focus and cannot be directly linked to the national monitoring system indicators.

The baseline for each indicator was defined before the project started or during its first year of implementation. No specific baseline studies were needed, due to the fact that the baseline, as well as the target value, were agreed between the project staff and CONANP and approved by BMZ for those indicators whose baseline and target value had to be defined (see also first annual project progress report 2015).

For analysing the quality of project results, the written documents were used during the project evaluation. These documents were stored in a specific GIZ DMS folder, to show evidence of the level of achievement of indicators. They contained all data and information needed for the evaluation.

Other and secondary data

Other data used for the project evaluation included the following:

- Information on federal state protected areas for the state of Mexico
- Information on federal state protected areas for the state of Morelos
- Information on the system of environmental management of Mexico City (SEDEMA)
- Information about CEPANAF
- Information on federal protected areas of CONANP
- Information about the national biodiversity monitoring system (CONABIO)

- Information on sustainable livestock farming
- Information about Agenda 2030 / SDG for Mexico

Information about Mexico's INDC:

3.2 Evaluation process

The following stakeholders participated in the evaluation:

Table 3: List of stakeholders of the evaluation and selected interviewees

Organisation/ company/ target group[6] (Please do not list persons or functions)	**Overall number of persons involved in evaluation** (*gender disaggregation)	**Participa-tion in interview** (no. of persons)	**Participa-tion in FGD** (no. of persons)	**Participation in workshops** (no. of persons)	**Partici-pation in survey** (no. of persons)
Donors	1 (1 woman)	1			
BMZ					
GIZ	8 (5 women)	2	7	6	
GIZ project team, GIZ staff of other projects, GIZ partner country staff					
Partner organisations (direct target group)	20 (8 women)	3	17	3	
CONANP, CONANP / DRCEN, SEDEMA, PROBOSQUE, CEPANAF, SDS					
Other stakeholders (public actors, other development projects, etc.)	2 (1 woman)	2			
CONABIO					
Civil society and private actors	4 (1 woman)	4			
'La Mano del Mono' (NGO), PROFAUNA A.C (NGO), Quetzalcóatl Temachchtiani (NGO), FUNDECO (NGO), UNO (private sector)					
Universities and think tanks	8 (1 woman)	3	5		
UNAM, UNA, UAEM, ICAR, Universidad del Medio Ambiente					
Final beneficiaries (indirect target groups)					
Livestock farmers of protected area 'Corredor Biológico Chichinautzin'	5 (2 women)		5		
Livestock farmers of the village 'Capilla Vieja'	10 (5 women)		10		

The selection of the stakeholders and stakeholder groups was proposed by the auditor team to the GIZ project team. The stakeholders to be interviewed were finally selected in a close dialogue interaction between GIZ project team and evaluators. GIZ project staff recommended changes regarding the stakeholder composition, adding new ones. Adaptations were necessary, because recently there occurred many staff changes at the level of federal state agencies (e.g. SDS or SEDEMA), due to government elections. The evaluators decided to interview former staff of these federal state agencies, who have been actively involved in the project, instead of new responsible staff, who do not know what the project is about and have not had been involved.

Although there were also federal-level elections in 2018, these have not been followed by significant government-level agency staff changes such as CONANP or CONABIO.

On 4 March 4 2019 the international and national evaluator had a first meeting with the GIZ project team, together

[6] Please do not mention the organisation(s)/institution(s) by name in the case they wish not to be named or their explicit naming is endangering their security, work or staff.

with the GIZ biodiversity cluster coordinator, carrying out a focal group discussion around central questions regarding the OECD/DAC indicators. From the afternoon of 4 March 2019 onwards, according to the agenda (see annex 2), evaluators interviewed national stakeholders at physical meetings in their agencies' offices, in the field (target group members), by telephone calls and at other agreed places. To ensure confidentiality of information, GIZ staff did not participate in the interviews and focal group discussions, except for the meetings with the target group. On 11 March 2019 the preliminary results of the evaluation mission were presented to and discussed with GIZ project staff and CONANP staff at CONANP offices. Afterwards there was a debriefing meeting with the GIZ country director, and a telephone debriefing call with the secretary of the German Embassy for Development Cooperation in Mexico on 14 March 2019.

While the international evaluator guided the interviews and focal group discussions, the national evaluator took notes and added particular questions. The national evaluator took the lead during the field visits with target group members, conducting vital discussions with the local people because they might have problem fully understanding the international evaluator. Nonetheless, the international evaluator also participated in discussions. On 10 March 2019 the national evaluator and the international evaluator jointly discussed the findings of the evaluation mission and prepared a PowerPoint presentation of the mission's preliminary results. This was presented on 11 March 2019 by both the national and international evaluators.

The standard language for central project evaluations is English. Since most stakeholders in this case do speak English, and this was one of the first central project evaluations in Spanish, it was decided to stick to the English report format and guidelines and translate the central results into Spanish after finalisation. Nevertheless, the interviews were conducted in Spanish.

The GIZ project team will present the final findings to CONANP and other selected stakeholders at a brief workshop, expected to be held in July 2019.

4 Assessment of the project according to OECD/ DAC criteria

4.1 Findings regarding follow-on project

The Mexican and German governments took the decision for a follow-on phase to better anchor and deepen the results of the project. The successor project was prepared at the beginning of 2018 and could start immediately after the project was concluded in October 2018. The follow-on phase also named 'Conservation of Biodiversity in the Eje Neovolcánico' (PN 2017.2139.8) commenced on 1 November 2018 and will run until 31 October 2021.

The follow-on project was developed for 3 years (11/2018–10/20121) with a budget of EUR 2,500,000.

The conceptual focus is similar to the project. Several results of the original project will be widened and some new elements are considered, based on the lessons learnt from the first phase. The conceptual framework of the successor project is as such:

Module objective (outcome)

The management of protected areas in the centre and Eje Neovolcánico region is improved.

Module indicators

1. In 12 of the 36 federal protected areas in the project region, standardised management instruments or

processes for planning, implementation and M&E are applied.

2. 90% of the 80 main actors interviewed (federal and federal state nature conservation, forestry and water authorities) confirm the use of knowledge and information systems for decision-making.
3. Approaches for sustainable use of biodiversity in protected areas and their buffer zones have been incorporated into 10 additional projects, half of which have inclusion and equal rights as secondary objectives.
4. Three initiatives derived from the CONANP Regional Action Plan will be implemented jointly with civil society and/or the private sector.

In comparison to the project evaluated, the follow-on phase widened the focus in the following way:

- Regarding indicator M1, the focus is on widening the results of the project that achieved improved management of six protected areas.
- The use of knowledge and information systems for decision-making is planned to be applied by 90% of main actors interviewed, instead of 60% for the original project. Also, the basis of interviewed actors has widened from 47 to 80.
- The approaches for the sustainable use of biodiversity in protected areas was increased by 10 more projects, having an explicit focus on the topics of inclusion and equal rights.
- The fourth indicator (M4) embraces a new focus, being derived from the results of the project at hand. The indicator's target is that CONANP will implement sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity initiatives jointly with civil society and/or private sector organisations. During the project implementation 2014-2018, it became obvious that civil society and the private sector have huge potential and interest in being actively involved in the mentioned topics. In particular livestock farmers and tourist service providers were very active regarding sustainable livestock farming and sustainable tourism, respectively.

Therefore, the follow-on measure is a logical and meaningful continuation of the project, which takes up lessons learnt and builds on the results of the evaluated project.

Based on the final evaluation findings of the project at hand, the successive recommendations for the successor project will be rendered. Most of them can also be found in section 5.3 'Conclusions and Recommendations' of this report:

- Indicator M2: Not all of the organisations mentioned between brackets '(federal and federal state nature conservation, forestry and water authorities)' are actors the project works or will work with. The project will concentrate on federal and federal state nature conservation authorities. Forestry and water authorities are not project priorities.
- All other recommendations for the follow-on phase can be found in section 5.3 and will therefore not be repeated here.

4.2 Relevance

In this section the OECD/DAC criterion 'relevance' is examined.

We describe what the evaluation basis is, which evaluation design and methods were used, followed by a detailed analysis and assessment of each evaluation dimension; we conclude by a scoring and rating of each evaluation dimension and of the whole criterion.

4.2.1 Evaluation Dimension 1 (The project concept is in line with the relevant strategic reference frameworks)

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 1 – Evaluation Basis

The basis for the assessment of the evaluation dimension, the relevant partner strategies related to the sectors'

conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and protected area management (including intervention areas) and national priorities were examined. The main documents that form the basis of evaluation regarding evaluation dimension 1 are the following:

- Strategic reference framework of Mexico: National Development Plan 2013-2018, national programme for protected areas, sectoral programme for environment and natural resources, national biodiversity strategy, national strategy for sustainable tourism development, national strategy for climate change in protected areas, national strategy for social sustainable businesses, strategy 2040 of CONANP, education strategy for protected areas in the region RCEN, joint strategy for sustainable forest development in protected areas, integration strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in tourism sector, integration strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the agricultural sector (2016-2022), SDG Mexico 2018 report (http://agenda2030.mx/#/home), SDG ( )
- BMZ sector strategies: BMZ country strategy for Mexico, BMZ Strategy 166 on Biological Diversity, BMZ document 'Committed to Biodiversity', BMZ Strategy for Interlinkages between Water, the Environment and Climate Change, BMZ Development Action Plan on Gender Equality 2016-2020.
- In addition, information found in the following documents was used for the analysis:
    - CONAP-GIZ (2018c), Lecciones Aprendidas del Proyecto Conservación de la Biodiversidad en el Eje Neovolcánico 2014-2018, Comisión Nacional de Áreas Naturales Protegidas, México.
    - CONANP (2018f): Fortalecimiento del Sistema General de Programas Operativos Anuales (Memoria Documental), 2018, unpublished document.

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 1 – Evaluation Design and Methods

The analysis of the criterion relevance follows the evaluation questions provided by the GIZ unit for central evaluations. No specific evaluation design was applied other than using different empirical evaluation methods. The particular method that was applied depended on the subject of evaluation, i.e. what was required to respond best to the evaluation questions. Thus, subsequently the evaluation methods (data and information collection and analysis) which were used are:

- Document review: analysed the documents being identified above in detail. Analysing documents also included taking notes of salient and important aspects, as well as both evaluators discussing critical points. Also comparing data and information of different written sources, was part of the document review. Particular checklists were prepared before analysing documents and adapting them during the review process. This helped to better organise the information gathered.
- Guided, semi-structured interviews: these kinds of interviews were mainly carried out by one evaluator and individual interviewees. The interviews were based on a set of guiding questions formulated beforehand by the evaluators but conducted in form of a conversation, not a formal survey (see annex 3). The interviews were carried out by both evaluators, one leading the interview and the other taking notes. The semi-structured format put the interviewee much more at ease, compared to filling out questionnaires; thus, the likelihood that valuable information could be gathered was much higher. For the guided, semi-structured interviews, it was very important to select the right interviewees, who seemingly could best provide the required information and explain to the interviewee the reason for having the interview. Interviewees were selected by evaluators and GIZ project staff jointly.
- Focus group discussions: for many purposes (e.g. scenario development) it was the best way to interview stakeholders in a group setting. This facilitated the discussion of actors' different perspectives, exchange and verify information and data between them, and conclude common perceptions, as for instance 'unintended results of the project'. The discussions were mostly facilitated by the international evaluator, while the national evaluator took notes. Focus group discussions took place in a meeting format (few participants), a workshop format (more than 10 participants) and as site-visit walks (with target group representatives).
- Using triangulation: each evaluation question was responded to, using information from: (a) different documents; and (b) different interviewees This proceeding ensured to avoid common pitfalls by relying on

one information source only.

1. After having identified all relevant documents related to the strategic reference framework for Mexico, at the international level and related to sector strategies of BMZ, the most important issues within these documents were identified by the evaluators and compared to written project conclusions.
2. Guided, semi-structured interviews were carried out with GIZ project staff and the GIZ cluster coordinator to ascertain to what extent project staff are aware of the strategic reference framework and its importance for the project (the GIZ project staff are still working on the follow-on phase and were therefore available for interviews). The hypothesis was that only if the major part of the GIZ project staff is aware of the importance of the strategic reference framework, this ensures that it was considered during project implementation.
3. Having concluded this initial step, related to question 1 of evaluation dimension 1, the extent to which the project concept is linked to and based on the strategic reference framework was assessed. This was done by responding to evaluation questions 2 to 6, which focus on particular aspects of the strategic reference framework, such as the project concept being in line with BMZ sector strategies and country strategy (question 4) or the project concepts linkages to SDG (question 5).

All data and information sources needed for assessing the criterion, were available or were found by the evaluators via internet web search.

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 1 – Analysis and Assessment

Question 1.1: which strategic reference frameworks exist for the project? (e.g. national strategies including a national implementation strategy for Agenda 2030; regional and international strategies; sectoral, cross-sectoral change strategies; if bilateral, project (especially partner) strategies; internal analysis frameworks, e.g. safeguards and gender)

The strategic reference framework for the project is explained in detail in table ‘availability of basic documentation for the evaluation’, of section 3.1 of this report. All GIZ project staff members interviewed were completely aware of the national and international (Aichi targets) strategic reference framework of the project (Foc_Dis_5, Int_4, Int_5).

Question 1.2: to what extent is the project concept in line with the relevant strategic reference frameworks?

The project concept is in line with 77% of the relevant strategic reference frameworks.

Partner strategy	Project in line?
National development plan 2013-2018	YES
National programme for protected areas	YES
Sectoral programme for environment and natural resources	YES
National biodiversity strategy	YES
National strategy for sustainable tourism development	YES
National strategy for climate change in protected areas	YES
National strategy for social sustainable businesses	YES
Strategy 2040 of CONANP	YES
Education strategy for protected areas in the Central and Eje Volcánico region	YES
Joint strategy for sustainable forest development in protected areas	NO
Integration strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in tourism sector	YES

There is a national system on the monitoring of biodiversity, managed by CONABIO (https://monitoreo.conabio.gob.mx/). The project did not link to this system, but, instead, developed a regional approach of biodiversity monitoring. Thus, the project concept was mostly in line with the relevant strategic reference frameworks.

Question 1.3: to what extent are the interactions (synergies/trade-offs) of the intervention with other sectors reflected in the project concept – also regarding the sustainability dimensions (ecological, economic and social)?

The following were identified as 'other sectors' by the evaluators: 1. Agriculture; 2. Economy, 3. Water; 4. Rural Development; 5. Governance. The following interactions with these sectors could be identified in the project concept: governance – participation of civil society (result A3); improved planning and monitoring (result B4); gender orientation (result D1); rural development – projects with impact orientation (result B5); the linkages between biodiversity and water are also mentioned in the project concept (section B.3.4.1). Considering that three out of five 'other sectors', which are relevant in the project context, have been considered in the concept, it can be stated that the aspect of interactions of the project with other sectors is partly fulfilled (60%).

Question 1.4: to what extent is the project concept in line with the Development Cooperation (DC) programme (If applicable), the BMZ country strategy and BMZ sectoral concepts?

The project concept is in line with 100% of the BMZ sector strategies and the BMZ country strategy (regarding the BMZ sector strategies, see table 'availability of basic documentation for the evaluation' in section 3.1 of this report). There is still no German Development Cooperation programme approved by BMZ for Mexico. Thus, it can be stated that the project was in line with all BMZ sector strategies and the country strategy.

Question 1.5: to what extent is the project concept in line with the (national) objectives of the Agenda 2030? To which Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is the project supposed to contribute?

The project publication 'Lessons Learnt' (CONANP – GIZ 2018c, pp. 32–34) summarises the linkages of the project to Agenda 2030 and the SDG. The project and its underlying concept contributed to the SDGs 1, 2, 5, 8, 10, 12, 13 and in particular 15. Therefore, the project concept was largely in line with Agenda 2030 and contributed to SDG.

Question 1.6: to what extent is the project concept subsidiary to partner efforts or those of other relevant organisations (subsidiary and complementarity)?

The project concept was subsidiary/complementary to the partner efforts regarding the following (examples): (1) it focused on improving the quality of the planning and monitoring system for federal and federal states protected

areas (e.g. SGPOA); (2) it supported partners in strengthening the core capacities of staff, in particular those managing protected areas; (3) it contributed to better organisation and availability of information on protected areas; (4) it contributed to improving the quality of investment projects (e.g. PROCODES) of partners by focusing on the project's strategic and impact orientation during design.

Based on the assessment, detailed above, evaluators came to the conclusion that the project has reached 25 out of 30 points for dimension 1.

4.2.2 Evaluation Dimension 2 (The project concept* matches the needs of the target group(s))

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 2 – Evaluation Basis

The basis for the assessment of the evaluation dimension were the following documents:

- Project proposal (chapter 2 'problem – and potential analysis')
- Project proposal (sections B.3.2 target group and other parties involved, B.3.6 Impacts and risks of the TC-measure)
- The project's and other gender analyses

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 2 – Evaluation Design and Methods

Over the course of the analysis of the project's target groups, the latter were explored in detail, utilising evaluation questions 1 to 4 of this evaluation dimension 2.

The direct and indirect target groups are described in section 2.1 of this report.

Also, after having concluded the on-site evaluation, it could be stated that the indirect and direct target groups were well defined. The project objective[7] addressed rather general results (improved quality of biodiversity conservation) in a bigger geographical area (Eje Neovolcánico). This means that the impacts of improved quality of biodiversity conservation in and around protected areas (e.g. the ecosystem service drinking water) will benefit the entire population living in the identified geographical area. This is a logical consequence of the project's focus. In this sense, it is right that the indirect target population identified is not differentiated by gender, ethnicity or wealth.

At the time the project concept was developed in 2013, the Agenda 2030 and the concept of 'Leave No One Behind' had not yet become a central reference framework. Again, because the entire population of the project area will benefit from its results, it also applies for both genders, young and old people, people with disabilities, poor and rich people, as well as all ethnic groups, living in the area.

Two federal states were visited during the on-site project evaluation mission. These 'field visits' also embraced meetings with different groups of the target population and its organisations. Thus, there was enough space and time allowed to explore all questions related to the target group.

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 2 – Analysis and Assessment

Question 2.1: to what extent is the chosen project concept geared to the core problems and needs of the target group(s)?

The problem analysis (project proposal section B.2) describes well the problems and challenges the target group is facing. Although there are no direct activities identified in the project concept geared towards the core problems of the target group, the improvement of investment projects (results B.5 and D.1) directly benefits the target group, as these projects are largely oriented towards addressing the target group's core problems (e.g. income generation through sustainable land management). The chosen project concept was indirectly geared towards the core problems and needs of the target population.

[7] The federal and state protected area authorities have improved the quality of biodiversity conservation in the Eje Neovolcánico region.

Question 2.2: how are the different perspectives, needs and concerns of women and men represented in the project concept?

The different needs and concerns of women and men are considered in the following parts of the project concept, for instance: (1) indicator M4 at the module objective level states: 30% of biodiversity conservation projects include gender-differentiated measures; (2) indicator D1: Participatory developed gender-differentiated recommendations, criteria and guidelines for the planning, implementation and monitoring of projects in the field of resource management and biodiversity conservation are available (one package of recommendations, criteria and guidelines); (3) project proposal section 3.6: Development policy impact – 'gender equality is promoted by strengthening the role of women in the planning and implementation of projects for the protection and sustainable use of natural resources'. Or (4) project proposal section 3.6.1: Gender equality – due to traditional structures, women take little part in local-level decision-making processes; for example, they often have no voting rights within the communities and take on a far greater share of unpaid work in the families. Through productive means and the promotion of participatory processes, women and women's groups in particular are addressed and encouraged to participate in the processes. Identifier: GG-1. Gender was therefore appropriately considered.

Question 2.3: to what extent was the project concept designed to reach particularly disadvantaged groups (Leave No One Behind – LNOB) principle, as foreseen in the Agenda 2030)? How were identified risks and potential for human rights and gender aspects included in the project concept?

Disadvantaged groups were only considered indirectly in the project concept, as LNOB was not an approach developed at the time of project design. Disadvantaged groups in the project context were indigenous people and women of the target groups, living in or around the protected areas. Therefore, LNOB principles were only partly considered in the project concept.

Question 2.4: to what extent are the intended impacts realistic from today's perspective and the given resources (time, financial, partner capacities)?

The planned results are determined by the four outputs, as well as the target values of the indicators at the module objective level. Interviewed stakeholders stated that the results being planned or intended were realistic, also from today's point of view (Foc_Dis_5, 6 and 8; Int_14, 15 and 13). As a consequence, it can be stated that 100% of the planned results were realistic.

Based on the assessment detailed above, evaluators came to the conclusion that the project has reached 27 out of 30 points for dimension 2.

4.2.3 Evaluation Dimension 3 (The project concept is adequately designed to achieve the chosen project objective); and Evaluation Dimension 4 (The project concept was adapted to changes in line with requirements and re-adapted where applicable)

Assessing Evaluation Dimensions 3 and 4 – Evaluation Basis

The basis for the assessment of the evaluation dimension were the following documents:

- Project proposal (section B.3.4.1 methodological approach)
- Project proposal (sections A.2.1 Goals and strategies of the cooperation country in the focal area, and B.3.4.1 methodological approach)
- The project's results matrix
- The project's results model
- All annual project progress reports

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 3 and 4 – Evaluation Design and Methods

The underlying hypotheses of the project concept were developed by the evaluators based on the results model and examined in detail.

The strategic orientation of the project was examined by evaluators with respect to changes in its framework conditions, by checking the different indicators.

Together with GIZ project staff and partner representatives (CONANP) changes in the framework conditions and the adaptation done by the project were identified and finally assessed by evaluators.

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 3

Question 3.1: assessment of current results model and results hypotheses (theory of change, ToC) of actual project logic: (1) to what extent is the project objective realistic from today's perspective and the given resources (time, financial, partner capacities)?; (2) to what extent are the activities, instruments and outputs adequately designed to achieve the project objective?; (3) to what extent are the underlying results hypotheses of the project plausible?; (4) to what extent is the chosen system boundary (sphere of responsibility) of the project (including partner) clearly defined and plausible?; (5) are potential influences of other donors/organisations outside of the project's sphere of responsibility adequately considered?; (6) to what extent are the assumptions and risks for the project complete and objective?

From today's perspective and given resources, the project objective seems realistic. Activities (in results matrix), instruments (in section B.3.4.1 of project concept) and outputs (results matrix and section B.3.4.1) were adequately designed to achieve the project objective. The chosen system boundary (sphere of responsibility) of the project (including partner) is clearly defined in sections B.3.3 and B.3.4 of the project concept and mostly plausible. Section A.2.2 of the project concept sets out the roles and responsibilities of other development partners. Assumptions are stated in the results matrix and risks are described in section B.3.6 of the project concept. They seem to be complete and plausible.

The underlying hypotheses of the project concept were developed by the evaluators, based on the results model and are presented in section 2.2 of the evaluation report. When the activities and outputs, being implemented by the project actors, contributed to having achieved or not the project objective, they were examined in detail under evaluation dimension 2 of the OECD/DAC criterion 'effectiveness'. Hence, the project concept is adequately designed to achieve the chosen project objectives.

Question 3.2: to what extent does the strategic orientation of the project address changes in its framework conditions?

The strategic orientation addresses changes in its framework conditions as follows

Table 4: Changes in framework conditions addressed by project

Aspects of project design	Changes in framework conditions addressed (how)
Indicator M1: inter-institutional coordination platform	The platform is flexible regarding the number of government institutions participating in and thus can react to political changes, i.e. does not depend on the participation and interest of certain institutions
Indicator M2: addressing improvement of projects and programmes of administrations of protected areas (federal and federal states)	Flexibility regarding the projects and programmes. Does not depend on one or another specific project/ programme and thus can react to political changes
Indicator M3: focus on gender-differentiated measures	The indicator keeps it open what gender-differentiated measures are meant and thus permit to react flexibly to windows of opportunities and specific interests of actors
Indicator A1: Four participation and consultation processes with civil society	Keeps it open how these processes could look like and therefore can react flexibly to windows of opportunities and specific interests of actors

In addition, also at the activity-level, these were formulated in a general way, so that the project team could flexibly react to changes and address stakeholders' specific needs and demands. This is an outstanding advantage of the

project design!

Hence, to a great extent, the project design allows for changes in the framework conditions.

Question 3.3: how is/was the complexity of the framework conditions and guidelines handled? How is/was any possible overloading dealt with and strategically focused?

Improving the quality of biodiversity conservation in a region like the Eje Neovolcánico with a population of 30 million people is a very complex task. The complexity was reduced by having agreed a planning framework with the national partner organisation CONANP, which focused on very specific and achievable goals for a project with limited funds (EUR 4 million) and a limited time frame (4.5 years). It was therefore very clear right from the outset for both sides, the Mexican government partners (CONANP and federal states agencies) as well as GIZ what the focus of the project was and what were the project goals. This clear design avoided false expectations and possible overloading and handled complexity in a feasible way. That means that complexity was appropriately handled/reduced by the project concept and a clear planning framework avoided possible overloading.

Based on the assessment detailed above, evaluators came to the conclusion that the project has reached 20 out of 20 points for dimension 3.

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 4

Question 4.1: what changes have occurred during project implementation (e.g. local, national, international, sectoral, including state of the art of sectoral know-how)?

During the project implementation, three significant changes occurred: (1) change of priorities of CAM; (2) significant budget shortages of CONANP in 2016; (3) change of technical priorities regarding biodiversity conservation of criollo maize.

Question 4.2: how were the changes dealt with regarding the project concept?

Changes regarding the project concept were dealt with in the following way:

Table 5: Changes in the project concept

Changes in framework conditions	Adaptation by project
Priorities and interest (in biodiversity conservation) of CAMe changed in 2016 towards nearly exclusively improving air quality; staff dedicated to biodiversity conservation was removed	The project continued building sector strategies with CONANP and regarding selected technical topics (e.g. monitoring of key species) with federal state administrations
Significant budget shortages of CONANP and federal states agencies from 2016 onwards (environmental sector)	Strategic concentration of the project's advisory services and funds on CONANP – e.g. capacity building
Due to priority changes (2016 and 2017) of the counterpart organisation CONANP, the project did not continue with activities related to criollo maize (***maíz criollo***) management and biodiversity conservation	Instead of continuing working on criollo maize, the project developed activities related to sustainable tourism and sustainable livestock farming around the protected areas of the Eje Neovolcánico The results of these activities were widely accepted as 'success stories' by different stakeholders They were also co-financed by development programmes of the Mexican government (e.g. PROBOSQUE incentives)

In general, the project has appropriately reacted to the changes that occurred. However, the project could have continued working on developing a regional biodiversity conservation strategy with CONANP and the responsible federal state administrations (e.g. SDS or SEDEMA), although it was not possible in the context of the CAMe (for details, see annex 6).

Based on the assessment, detailed above, evaluators came to the conclusion that the project has reached 20 out of 20 points for dimension 4.

Criterion	Assessment dimension	Score and rating
Relevance	The project concept* is in line with the relevant strategic reference frameworks	25 of 30 points
	The project concept* matches the needs of the target group(s)	27 of 30 points
	The project concept* is adequately designed to achieve the chosen project objective	20 of 20 points
	The project concept* was adapted to changes in line with requirements and re-adapted where applicable	20 of 20 points
Overall score and rating		Score: 92 of 100 points Rating: very successful

4.3 Effectiveness

The OECD/DAC criterion 'effectiveness' is examined in this section.

We describe what the evaluation basis is, which evaluation design and methods were used, followed by a detailed analysis and assessment of each evaluation dimension. This section concludes by a scoring and rating of each evaluation dimension and of the entire criterion.

4.3.1 Evaluation Dimension 1 (The project achieved the objective (outcome) on time in accordance with the project objective indicators)

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 1 – Evaluation Basis

The achievement of the project objective would be measured by the following indicators:

Outcome-level indicators

Indicator M1: An inter-institutional, regional and institutionalised coordination platform exists within which decisions on policies, guidelines and initiatives contributing to the conservation of biodiversity are taken on a quarterly basis.

Indicator M2: 40% (90 out of 225) of all newly formulated projects and programmes of the administrations of the protected areas (CONANP, CEPANAF, SEDEMA and SDS) for the conservation of biodiversity and the use of natural resources have been evaluated in an impact-oriented manner.

Indicator M3: 60% of the main actors interviewed (federal) confirm the use of the knowledge and information system for decision-making.

Indicator M4: 30% of biodiversity conservation projects include gender-differentiated measures.

Base value: Gender-differentiated measures have not been elaborated.
Target value: 30% (12 out of 40) of biodiversity conservation projects include gender-differentiated measures.

Table 6: Assessment of project objective indicators

Project objective indicator according to the offer/original indicator	Assessment according to SMART criteria/ assessment	Adapted project objective indicator
1. An inter-institutional, regional and institutionalised coordination platform exists within which decisions on policies, guidelines and initiatives contributing to the conservation of biodiversity are taken on a quarterly basis. *Base value:* An inter-institutional coordination platform does not exist. *Target value:* Coordination platform is in place. In the regional coordination platform, decisions are taken quarterly. *Source:* Protocols of the working groups and the coordination platform, organigram and coordination mechanism.	The indicator refers to the specific existence of a coordination platform. It is clearly stated what are the quality criteria of the platform and what they will be used for (relevant). The existence of the coordination platform could easily be measured (whether it exists or not). The functionality of the platform was measured by different stakeholders using it. Base and target values are clear. The target value (one coordination platform in place) is achievable within the given project time frame. The achievement can be measured at the moment of final evaluation.	No need to adapt
2. 40% of all newly formulated projects and programmes of the protected area administrations (CONANP, CEPANAF, SEDEMA and SDS) for the conservation of biodiversity and the use of natural resources have been evaluated in an impact-oriented manner. *Base value:* Projects and programmes are not impact oriented, and the results are not systematically tracked. *Target value:* 40% (90 out of 225) of all newly formulated biodiversity projects and programmes of the protected area management are evaluated in an impact-oriented way. *Sources:* Elaborated documents and monitoring reports.	The indicator refers to the specific impact evaluation of newly formulated projects and programmes. It is very relevant that newly formulated projects / programmes generate impact, which improves the quality of projects / programmes significantly. The number of projects, which have generated impact can be measured and put into relation to the entire number of projects / programmes regarding biodiversity conservation and use of natural resources. Which projects and programmes form part of the 'basic population' that will be considered, was agreed between the project management and CONANP. Given a project time frame of four years, it seems to be realistic and achievable that 40% of the projects are impact oriented.	No need to adapt
3. 60% of the main actors interviewed (federal and federal state nature conservation, forestry and water authorities) confirm the use of the knowledge and information system for decision-making. *Base value:* Existing information from different institutions is not shared. *Target value:* 60% (28 out of 47) of the main actors interviewed confirm the use of the knowledge and information system for decision-making. *Sources:* Survey of the project, information system.	The indicator refers to the specific use of the knowledge and information system, where development was supported by the project and by key stakeholders. The relevance of the indicator is specified by the use of information and knowledge for decision making. As it was difficult to measure the change of behaviour of key actors, the option to consult selected stakeholders was chosen. It was important to agree on who (which actors) was interviewed. The reference value was 'no share of existing information'. As a main focus of the project was on strengthening capacities of key stakeholders, it seems realistic and achievable to reach a level of 60% of interviewees confirming positively in the given time frame.	No need to adapt
4. 30% of biodiversity conservation projects include gender-differentiated measures.	The indicator refers to specific gender-differentiations of measures of projects and	No need to adapt

Base value: Gender-differentiated measures have not been elaborated. *Target value:* 30% (12 out of 40) of biodiversity conservation projects include gender-differentiated measures. *Sources:* Documents for the planning and implementation of the projects and, if necessary, a supplementary study.	programmes implemented in the region. There is a clear base value (no gender-differentiated measures) and a 30% target of new projects related to biodiversity conservation having gender-differentiated measures seems to be realistic, measurable and achievable in the given time frame. Addressing gender in project planning and implementation is very relevant, because men and women play equally important roles in managing resources (e.g. land, agriculture, etc.) in the vicinity of the protected areas of the Eje Neovolcánico region.	

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 1 – Evaluation Design and Methods

The analysis of the criterion 'effectiveness' follows the evaluation questions provided by the GIZ unit for central evaluations.

The analysis was carried out by using different empirical evaluation methods. The particular methods applied depended on the subject of evaluation, i.e. what was required to get the best response from the evaluation questions. Most evaluation methods are the same as described for the OECD/DAC criterion 'relevance' in section 4.2 and are therefore not explained again here. Only evaluation methods specific for exploring the criterion 'effectiveness' are described as follows:

Scenario development: exploring the evaluation question. 'what would have happened without the project' (counterfactual situation) of dimension 2 of this criterion required consulting the key stakeholder in a focus group discussion meeting format. The evaluators, together with key stakeholders, developed the fictive scenario of a situation, without project intervention.

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 1 – Analysis and Assessment

Question 1.1: to what extent has the agreed project objective (outcome) been achieved (or will be achieved by the end of the project), measured against the objective indicators? Are additional indicators needed to reflect the project objective adequately?

The project was expected to achieve the project objective, measured by four indicators at the outcome level. In the following table the indicators, its basic values, target values and finally achieved values are delineated:

Table 7: Achievement of indicator target values

Indicator – narrative description	**Base value**	**Target value**	**Final (achieved) value** **According to las project progress report (01.07.2017–31.10.2018) 'result matrix'**	**Evidences for having the target value achieved**
1. An inter-institutional, regional and institutionalised coordination platform exists within which decisions on policies, guidelines and initiatives contributing to the conservation of biodiversity are taken on a	An inter-institutional coordination platform does not exist	Coordination platform is in place. In the regional coordination platform, decisions are taken quarterly	The Megalópolis Environmental Commission (CAMe) has been strengthened in its mandate as a regional coordination platform for environmental issues and has included biodiversity conservation and restoration as one of four priorities in its mission. From 2016 onwards,	07/14 – 06/15: 7 meetings (CAMe) 07/15 – 06/16: 2 meetings (CAMe) 07/16 – 06/17: 3 meetings (regional) 07/17 – 10/18: 5 meetings (regional) Evidence for meetings being held: CAMe (2016), GIZ (2019b) Evidence for coordination platform of

quarterly basis			the meetings took place at regional level with federal and federal state actors, since CAMe focused on other issues	CAMe: https://www.gob.mx/comisionambiental/que-hacemos
2. 40% of all newly formulated projects and programmes of the protected area administrations (CONANP, CEPANAF, CORENA and SDS) for the conservation of biodiversity and the use of natural resources have been evaluated in an impact-oriented manner	Projects and programmes are not impact oriented, and the results are not systematically tracked	40% (90 out of 225) of all newly formulated biodiversity projects and programmes of the protected area management are evaluated in an impact-oriented way	44% (99) out of the 225 projects from PROCODES were evaluated in 2017 in an impact-oriented way	Evidence of the projects evaluated: GIZ (2019g), CONANP (2017a), Sarmiento, María José y de la Cadena, Mauricio (2017)
3. 60% of the main actors interviewed (federal and federal state nature conservation, forestry and water authorities) confirm the use of the knowledge and information system for decision-making	Existing information from different institutions is not shared	60% (28 out of 47) of the main actors interviewed confirm the use of the knowledge and information system for decision-making	60% (28 out of 47) of the main actors from CONANP and federal states institutions confirm the use of knowledge and information systems for decision-making in their area of responsibility (monitoring and evaluation)	Evidence of the results of actors' interviews and analysis of these interviews: CONANP (2018l, 2018m, 2018 n), GIZ (2019d, 2019g)
4. 30% of biodiversity conservation projects include gender-differentiated measures	Gender-differentiated measures have not been elaborated	30% (12 out of 40) of biodiversity conservation projects include gender-differentiated measures	75% (29 out of 40) of biodiversity projects include gender-differentiated measures	Evidence of the projects that have included gender-differentiated measures: GIZ (2019f), INAES (2017), SAGARPA (2017), SEDESOL (2018)

All indicators of the outcome level have been achieved. No additional indicators are necessary to measure the achievement of the project objective.

Question 1.2: to what extent is it foreseeable that unachieved aspects of the project objective will be achieved during the current project term?

All aspects were achieved.

Based on the assessment detailed above, evaluators came to the conclusion that the project has reached 40 out of 40 points for dimension 1.

4.3.2 Evaluation Dimension 2 (The activities and outputs of the project contributed substantially to the project objective achievement (outcome))

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 2 – Evaluation Basis

The following hypotheses from the project's results model were chosen for examining evaluation dimension 2 of this criterion:

- **Hypothesis 1:** In order for federal and state government agencies to involve civil society (result A5) in participating on an institutionalised inter-institutional and regional coordination platform in which decisions are taken quarterly on policies, guidelines and initiatives that contribute to biodiversity conservation (indicator M1), there is a logic line of results. First, priority topics for conservation are identified (result B1.1), based on which areas for dialogue with and areas for participation of different actors, such as federal and federal states government agencies, NGOs, representatives of direct target group (on conservation and biodiversity topics) are created (result A1). These actors are organised into groups that interact within the frame of four participation and consultation processes (result A3 and indicator A1)). These participation and discussion mechanisms can only work and generate tangible results if they have clear rules and structures (result A2). The mechanisms being accepted, transparent and actively used, this finally leads to agreements on coordinated planning of actors in protected areas at the regional level (result A4) in the framework of an inter-institutional and regional coordination platform (result A4.1).
- **Hypothesis 2:** For achieving that the administrations of the protected areas (federal and state level) are competent in project planning, implementation and monitoring (result B6), the results chain logic is as follows: starting with key stakeholders having identified priority topics for conservation (result B1.1), capacity development and training needs for different actors are identified (result B2.1) and training sessions with a focus on 'training-on-the-job' are carried out (result B3.1). Only if stakeholders' capacities are strengthened by training measures, can they then apply planning, implementation and monitoring instruments (result B4) and integrate impact orientation in project planning (result B6), measured by 40% of all new projects and programmes formulated by the protected areas administrations (CONANP, CEPANAF, SEDEMA and SDS) for the conservation of biodiversity and the use of natural resources (indicator M2). Apart from having identified priority topics for conservation (result B1.1), planning needs for the regional level (result B1.2) are also identified. These result in the improvement of the General System of Annual Operational Programmes (Sistema de General de Programas Operativos Anuales – SGPOA) of CONANP (result B2.2), based on strengthened capacities of 60% of the staff of CONANP, CEPANAF, SEDEMA and SDS working on the issue (result B3.2, indicator B1).
- **Hypothesis 3:** Establishing a knowledge and information system on protected areas and their connectivity (result C4) can only be achieved if information gaps and homogeneity between federal and state are identified (result C1), which are then plugged by generating data and making them accessible in information systems (result C2). The minimum level is 90% of basic data on federal protected areas 90% (32 of 36) and 50% of state protected areas 50% (57 of 114) are accessible in the information system (internet based). Finally, the data and information are placed on an improved and amplified state platform of CONANP (result C3), which are used by a minimum of 60% of key stakeholders (indicator M3).

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 2– Evaluation Design and Methods

The analysis of evaluation dimension 2 follows the evaluation questions provided by the GIZ unit for central evaluations. Apart from following the guiding questions of the Evaluation Matrix, regarding the criterion 'effectiveness', Contribution Analysis was also part of the evaluation design. A deeper hypothesis-based analysis is required to determine if the project activities and outputs have substantially contributed to having achieved the project objective. Thus, based on the Contribution Analysis methodology, three hypotheses were examined in depth, looking to explain the causal relationships between projects activities, outputs and outcomes. Only steps 1 to 4 of the Contribution Analysis were applied (Step 1: Set out the attribution problem to be addressed; Step 2: Describe the theory of change; Step 3: Gather the existing evidence on the theory of change; Step 4: Present the contribution story) because applying steps 5 and 6 was too time consuming and not a viable option in the context of this specific evaluation. Hence, for steps 5 and 6 (Step 5: Seek out additional evidence; Step 6: Strengthen the contribution story – additional data collection regarding alternative hypotheses) were replaced by formulating and assessing

alternative hypotheses already from the beginning of the evaluation.

The analysis was carried out by using different empirical evaluation methods. The particular methods applied, depended on the subject of evaluation, i.e. what was required to respond best to the evaluation questions. Most evaluation methods are the same as described for the OECD/DAC criterion 'relevance' in section 4.2 and are therefore not explained again here. Only evaluation methods specific to exploring the criterion 'effectiveness' are described as follows:

Scenario development: exploring the evaluation question 'what would have happened without the project' (counterfactual situation) of dimension 2 of this criterion, required consulting key stakeholders in a focus group discussion meeting format. The evaluators, together with key stakeholders developed the fictive scenario of a situation, without project intervention.

In order to be in the position to examine the above three hypotheses, first all relevant documents related to the project implementation (see section 4.3.1) were analysed, regarding the information that is necessary to verify the hypotheses. Based on this analysis, it became clear that further documents and secondary (not project specific) data were needed. Because not all casual linkages between the project results at the different level could be verified based on written information, it was necessary to interview key persons for completing the information. In particular, the scenario development, mentioned above, was done together with key actors.

Checking if any unintended positive and negative results have occurred was done by analysing project progress reports, project synthesis reports (e.g. the project documentation on 'lessons learnt'), special reports (e.g. on gender, conflicts), monitoring data and evidence, and by interviewing key staff of CONANP, the involved federal states agencies and GIZ project staff.

Therefore, explorative evaluation methods embraced quantitative and qualitative data mining, site visits in the project region (visits to two states and two target group villages) and semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders.

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 2 – Analysis and Assessment

Question 2.1: to what extent have the agreed project outputs been achieved (or will be achieved by the end of project), measured against the output indicators? Are additional indicators needed to reflect the outputs adequately?

All output-level indicators have been achieved (details please check final project 'results matrix' in the annex). No additional indicators are necessary to reflect the outputs adequately.

Question 2.2: how does the project contribute via activities, instruments and outputs to the achievement project objective (outcome) (contribution analysis approach)?

With regard to having verified the above identified three hypotheses, the results of the assessment are as explained as follows.

Contribution Analysis of Hypothesis 1

The selected hypotheses 1 could be fully confirmed.

The project generated a logic line of results so that federal and state government agencies such CONANP, SDS or SEDEMA involve civil society (result A5) in participating on an institutionalised inter-institutional and regional coordination platform in which decisions are taken quarterly on policies, guidelines and initiatives that contribute to biodiversity conservation (indicator M1). First, priority topics for conservation were identified in workshops, organised by the GIZ project team (GIZ 2019a) and attended by CONANP staff (mainly from protected areas), different *ejidos* (Mexican collective property tenure groups), agricultural producer groups (livestock farmers, beekeepers), local governments, local NGOs and local private sector companies. There were also organised meetings of the CAMe (CAMe 2014, GIZ 2017b) to identify priority topics for conservation (result B1.1). The priority topics being identified were: (1) a regional vision for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of the Eje Neovolcánico region; (2) a monitoring system for biodiversity of the region; (3) viable, environmentally friendly forms

of land use and income generation; (4) improved planning for protected areas, among others. Based on these identified topics, the project created time and areas for dialogue and the participation of different actors, such as federal and federal states government agencies, NGOs, representatives of direct target groups (on conservation and biodiversity topics) (result A1). This resulted in five participation and consultation processes: (1) the process of developing of a proposal for a regional biodiversity strategy for the Megalópolis region (CAMe 2015); (2) a council established for sustainable livestock farming (GIZ–GFA 2016, 2017a, 2017b, 2018a, 2018b); (3) a series of workshops with local communities for a process of developing a programme on adaptation to climate change with an approach to reduce social vulnerability and risk (CONANP–GIZ 2018a, GIZ 2017d); (4) coordination committee for sustainable tourism award (GIZ–GFA 2018a); (5) working group on adaptive management centred in soil conservation (result A3 and indicator A1)). These participation and discussion mechanisms worked well (Foc_Dis_12, 6, 8 and Int_14, 13, 19, 18) and were based on simple rules and structures (SEGOB 2013, SEDEMA 2017, GIZ 2017a) (result A2). Finally, these participation mechanisms also contributed to the Megalópolis Environmental Commission (CAMe), which has been strengthened in its mandate as a regional coordination platform for environmental issues and has included biodiversity conservation and restoration as one of four priorities in its mission (result A4.1). However, as CAMe has changed its thematic priorities, regional-level coordination has been facilitated by the GIZ project team joining the federal states agencies (SDS, SEDEMA, CEPANAR, PROBOSQUE) and CONANP finally (SEDEMA 2018, PROBOSQUE 2018, GIZ 2017e, GIZ 2017d).

Contribution Analysis of Hypothesis 2

The selected hypotheses 2 could be fully confirmed.

For having achieved that the responsible administrations of the protected areas (e.g. CONANP or CEPANAF) are competent in project planning, implementation and monitoring (result B6), the results logic was as follows: first key stakeholders identified priority topics for conservation (see hypothesis 1; result B1.1), which allowed for identifying capacity development and training needs related to planning for CONANP, CEPANAF, SDS, PROBOSQUE and SEDEMA (Foc_Dis_8, 3, 11, 9 and GIZ 2015, 2016, CONANP–GIZ 2018c) (result B2.1).

Training sessions, organised by the GIZ project team were carried out. They focused on the following topics, for instance: (1) licensed course (*diplomado*) on 'design and management of projects for sustainable development' (UMA 2017); (2) monitoring and management of protected areas for park rangers (GIZ 2019c, CONANP 2016a, 2018l, Foc_Dis_6, 8); training on Capacity WORKS (CONANP 2018n); training in the methodology 'Learning from the Tree' in cooperation with PROFAUNA (CONANP 2018m); training CONANP staff in SGPOA (CONANP 2018h). These stakeholders, being strengthened in their capacities, applied their knowledge to planning, implementation and monitoring instruments such as the General System of Annual Operational Programmes (SGPOA)[8] or monitoring of biodiversity (CONANP 2018c, f, g, h, I and GIZ f, g) (result B4). They also integrated impact orientation in project planning (result B6), measured by 40% of all new projects and programmes developed by government investment programmes, as, for instance PROCODES (CONANP 2018b) or FAPPA (SGARPA 2017) for topics related to the conservation of biodiversity and the use of natural resources (indicator M2) (Sarmeinto and de la Cadena 2017, SAGARPA 2017, INAES 2017, SEDESOL 2018, CONANP 2018j). Apart from having identified priority topics for conservation (result B1.1), regional-level planning needs (result B1.2) were identified by CONANP. These resulted in the improvement of CONANP's SGPOA system (result B2.2) (CONANP 2018f, g, h, i), based on strengthened capacities of 60% of CONANP staff working on the issue (result B3.2, indicator B1) (GIZ 2019c, g, CONANP 2018h, Foc_Dis_2, 6 and Int_13).

Contribution Analysis of Hypothesis 3

The selected hypotheses 3 could be fully confirmed.

With project support, the knowledge and information system directly related to protected areas was set up by (result C4): (1) an interactive map of federal and federal states protected areas, called '*visor de mapas'* (CONANP 2018e); and (2) information published on the CONANP website (CONANP 2018b, d) called '*Prontuario Estadístico*

[8] Sistema de General de Programas Operativos Anuales.

Regional'. The project also supported CONANP and federal states staff in making use of the CONABIO digital information platform (Nasheli 2018 a, b and SDS 2018) for information and decision-making and trained CONANP staff in managing the SGPOA system (CONANP 2018f, h, I and GIZ 2019d). Regarding the knowledge system directly relating to protected areas, at the outset information gaps regarding protected area of the federal (CONANP) and federal state level (e.g. CEPANAF, SDS) were identified (Foc_Dis_10, 11, 6) (result C1). These were then plugged by generating information and data, such as the category of the protected area, size in hectares, federal state and municipalities it is situated in and making them accessible on the above-mentioned websites (result C2). 100% of the basic data and information on federal protected areas (36) and 100% of federal state protected areas (114) are accessible in the internet-based information system (CONANP 2018e). 28 CONANP staff stated that they used digital information platform of CONABIO and the SGPOA for decision-making, which corresponds to 60% of the interviewed staff members (indicator M3) (García Nasheli 2018 a, b, CONANP 2018h, GIZ 2019d, e).

Question 2.3: implementation strategy: which factors in the implementation contribute successfully to or hinder the achievement of the project objective (e.g. external factors, managerial setup of project and company, cooperation management)?

There are various examples on how the project contributed to having achieved the project objective. There was clear evidence of project contributions to the achievement of its objective, based on the indicators target values (e.g. CAMe 2016, CONANP 2016b, 2018a, 2018h, 2018m, CONANP–GIZ 2018c, García Nasheli 2018 a, b and GIZ 2017b, d, e).

There are several factors, which form part of the implementation strategy, successfully contributing to the achievement of the project objective, for instance (1) flexibility of the project management and project team to react to changes of the framework conditions and of partner demands (e.g. change from criollo maize to sustainable livestock farming and sustainable tourism); or (2) the GIZ project team acting as an 'honest broker', not taking the position of any party. This helped to mediate between PA staff and livestock farmers, for example, but also between CONANP and the federal states agencies.

There were several factors related to the implementation strategy, which contributed to the project objective having been achieved.

Question 2.4: what other/alternative factors contributed to the objective being achieved or not achieved?

Other factors that contributed to the project objectives having been achieved: (1) very high interest of CONANP managers at central level and level of the DRCEN in the project; (2) need to resolve conflicts between livestock farmers and PA administrations; (3) need to adapt the management (planning and M&E) system of the DRCEN of CONANP; (4) the project's Executive Council (*Consejo Directivo*) working well.

There were several factors that contributed to the project objective having been achieved.

Question 2.5: What would have happened without the project?

When asked: 'what would have happened without the project' (Foc_Dis_2, Int_15, Foc_Dis_8 and Foc_Dis_6) the stakeholders stated that CONANP would probably have achieved its organisational goals anyway, but much later and maybe not as well. Other stakeholders were not asked the question, but the evaluators, who were in a position to reflect on the question and answer it sensibly, assumed that this was only possible for partners who had been deeply involved in the project implementation. The project played a facilitator and accelerator role for core partner CONANP in having achieved the organisation's strategic goals (improvement of planning and monitoring system of the organisation at regional level).

Question 2.6: Which negative or positive unintended results does the project produce at output and outcome level and why?

The following risks were managed by the project team: (1) security situation: the project staff did not work in areas where serious security problems were known; (2) the risk of changing the partner organisations' priorities, which happened in the case of the CAMe. The project team adapted the form of cooperation, shifting towards CONANP

and federal states agencies (SEDEMA, PROBOSQUE, CEPANAF, SDS). Risks have been addressed very appropriately.

Based on the assessment, detailed above, evaluators came to the conclusion that the project has reached 30 out of 30 points for dimension 2.

4.3.3 Evaluation Dimension 3 (No project-related negative results have occurred – and if any negative results occurred the project responded adequately. The occurrence of additional (not formally agreed) positive results has been monitored and additional opportunities for further positive results have been seized.)

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 3 – Evaluation Basis

In this section it was assessed whether negative results occurred, and how the project dealt with unexpected results (positive or negative).

The basis for assessment was:

- Information derived from the project's monitoring system
- Annual project progress reports
- Project documentation on 'lessons learnt'

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 3 – Evaluation Design and Methods

The assessment was done by reviewing and analysing the above-mentioned documents and by having interviewed GIZ project staff.

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 3

Question 1: Which negative or positive unintended results does the project produce at output and outcome level and why?

There were no negative unexpected results identified by stakeholders. As positive unexpected results, the following were identified: (1) Development of 'communities of practice' related to sustainable tourism and sustainable livestock farming (GIZ–GFA 2017b, 2018a, b); (2) Spirit of 'team work' within the team of CONANP DRCEN (Foc_Dis_6 and 8); (3) Paradigm shift of protected area staff regarding livestock farmers. They are no longer seen as 'enemies' (Foc_Dis_16 and 17).

There were some positive unintended results generated by the project intervention.

Question 2: How were risks regarding unintended negative results at the output and outcome level assessed in the monitoring system (e.g. compass)? Were risks already known during the concept phase?

There were no risks regarding unintended negative results identified during the concept phase and also during the project implementation phase.

Question 3: What measures have been taken by the project to counteract the risks and (if applicable) any negative results that occurred? How far were these measures adequate?

See answer to question 6 of evaluation dimension 2 of this criterion

Question 4: To what extent were potential unintended positive results at outcome level monitored and exploited?

The only unintended positive outcome-level result is the aforementioned 'communities of practice' related to sustainable tourism and sustainable livestock farming. This result was not planned at the concept phase of the project but developed due to the needs and demands expressed by the stakeholders related to the respective topic. Thus, the results were not monitored, as they were not planned, but exploited. Stakeholders' interest in setting-up 'communities of practice' evolved due to their expressed need for establishing a permanent experience and knowledge exchange mechanism on the respective topics to continue learning about and developing action on the

issues at hand.

Based on the assessment, detailed above, evaluators came to the conclusion that the project has reached 30 out of 30 points for dimension 3.

Criterion	Assessment dimension	Score and rating
Effectiveness	The project achieved the objective (outcome) on time in accordance with the project objective indicators*	40 of 40 points
	The activities and outputs of the project contributed substantially to the project objective achievement (outcome)*	30 of 30 points
	No project-related negative results have occurred – and if any negative results occurred the project responded adequately The occurrence of additional (not formally agreed) positive results has been monitored and additional opportunities for further positive results have been seized	30 of 30 points
Overall score and rating		Score: 100 of 100 points Rating: very successful

4.4 Impact

The OECD/DAC criterion ‘impact’ is examined in this section.

We describe what the evaluation basis is, which evaluation design and methods were used, followed by a detailed analysis and assessment of each evaluation dimension. This section concludes by a scoring and rating of each evaluation dimension and of the entire criterion.

4.4.1 Evaluation Dimension 1 (The intended overarching development results have occurred or are

foreseen)

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 1 – Evaluation Basis

There first had to be a common understanding of what exactly is understood by 'overarching development results' between GIZ project management and evaluators. This defined the evaluation basis, that is, how impact was measured. As the project was not part of a German Development Corporation programme, but a was a 'stand-alone measure', the only two references to such results could be found in section B.3.6.2 'developmental effectiveness at the level of the TC-measure', developmental impact (entwicklungspolitische Wirkung) and section 3.6.1 'macroeconomic, socioeconomic, socio-cultural, political and ecological considerations' of the project proposal, which also partly refers to overarching development results. But there are no references in the results matrix and results model.

At the time of project planning, instead of the present SDGs, the former Millennium Development Goals (MDG) were the reference framework for development. However, the analysis of the criterion 'impact' examined the project's contribution to special SDG and Aichi targets, which were determined at the beginning of the on-site evaluation mission.

The following national planning frameworks were used for analysing the project contribution to overarching development results: PROMARNAT, ENBIOMEX, National Plan for Protected Areas and the INDC.

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 1 – Evaluation Design and Methods

After having achieved an agreement on what constitute 'overarching development results', the second step of the analysis consisted in reviewing all relevant project documents (see above), regarding available information about project contributions. Based on the level of information obtained by document reviews, key actors at a higher hierarchical level of government organisations (mainly CONANP and federal state agencies) were interviewed and asked if they are aware of or could identify project contributions to overarching development results and at the level of the target groups, from the perspective of Mexican government. By having this information at hand, the evaluators concluded under evaluation dimension 2 if and what were the contributions of the project to overarching development results.

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 1

Question 1.1: To which overarching development results is the project supposed to contribute (cf. module and programme proposal, if no individual measure; indicators, identifiers, link to national strategy for implementing 2030 Agenda, link to SDGs)? Which of these intended results at the level of overarching results can be observed or are plausible to be achieved?

The project contributed significantly to the following overarching development results (CONANP 2018h, CONANP–GIZ 2018c, GIZ 2017f, GIZ 2018j): (1) SDG; (2) Aichi targets; (3) INDC; (4) PROMARNAT; (5) ENBIOMEX; (6) National Plan of Protected Areas.

The project contributed substantially to the **Aichi targets of the Convention on Biological Diversity**, in particular to the targets 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 12 and 19. Details and examples of the project contribution to the Aichi targets can be found in the project publication 'Lecciones Aprendidas del Proyecto Conservación de la Biodiversidad en el Eje Neovolcánico' (GIZ–CONANP 2018c, pp. 36–37).

The project also contributed to achieving the national **SDG**, most notably SDG 15.1 that states to 'protect, restore and promote the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems' and specifically with target 15.4: 'ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biological diversity, in order to enhance their ability to provide essential benefits for sustainable development'. In addition, the project contributed to other SDG 15 targets such as the sustainable management of all types of forests (15.2) or the integration of ecosystem values into local planning (15.9). More details and examples of the project contribution to the other SDGs can be found in the project publication 'Lecciones Aprendidas del Proyecto Conservación de la Biodiversidad en el Eje Neovolcánico' (GIZ–

CONANP 2018c, pp. 32–33).

The project has also contributed and was aligned to the following more national overarching development results:

PROMARNAT: objective 1: promote and facilitate sustained and sustainable low-carbon growth with equity and social inclusion; objective 4: to recover the functionality of watersheds and landscapes through the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of natural heritage; objective 6: to develop, promote and apply policy instruments, information, research, education, training, participation and human rights to strengthen environmental governance.

ENBIOMEX: 1.1: generation, documentation and systematisation of knowledge; 1.4: development of tools for access to information; 2.1: in situ conservation; 2.3: restoration of degraded ecosystems; 3.1: sustainable use of biodiversity; 3.2: generation, strengthening and diversification of production and value chains; 4.1: prevention and reduction of ecosystem degradation and loss; 5.2: environmental education for society; 5.3: environmental communication and dissemination; 6.2: consolidation of the institutional framework and public policies for integration and transversability; 6.3: social participation for biodiversity governance; 6.4: strengthening cooperation and compliance with international commitments.

National Plan for Protected Areas: integrated landscape management; biodiversity conservation and management; conservation economy; strengthening intra-industry strategic coordination; strengthening of intersectoral coordination; institutional strengthening of CONANP; communication, education, culture and social participation for conservation.

INDC: Ecosystem-based adaptation: achieve a 0% deforestation rate by 2030 and improve ecosystem carbon sequestration; sustainable technification of the agricultural sector; increase pasture restoration.

The evaluators conclude therefore that the project has contributed significantly to overarching development results.

Question 1.2: Target group and 'Leave No One Behind' (LNOB): Is there evidence of results achieved at target group level/specific groups of population? To what extent have targeted marginalised groups (such as women, children, young people, the elderly, people with disabilities, indigenous peoples, refugees, IDPs and migrants, people living with HIV/AIDS and the poorest of the poor) been reached?

The LNOB approach was not applied by the project as such, because it is relatively new and was not considered in the project design. Nevertheless, there was a strong focus on gender equality and also involving indigenous people (GIZ 2017b, GIZ 2017d, GIZ–GFA 2017a). Results achieved at the target group level are as follows:

- Target group local population: (1) inclusion of women and making apparent their contribution in measures related to sustainable livestock farming; (2) clear economical and organisational benefits of sustainable livestock farming (lower costs, more income, less work); part of the local population are also indigenous people (CONANP–GIZ 2018c, GIZ–GFA 2017a, GIZ 2017a, Foc_Dis_16 and Foc_Dis_17).
- Target group counterpart organisations, in particular CONANP: (1) improved capacities related to regional-level impact-oriented planning (DRCEN), up-scaled to the national level or other regions (CONANP 2016c, 2018 g, 2018h, 2018i, 2018n, Foc_Dis_8, Foc_dis_6, Foc_dis_2, Int_15).

Based on the assessment, detailed above, evaluators concluded that the project has reached 35 out of 40 points for dimension 1.

4.4.2 Evaluation Dimension 2 (The outcome of the project contributed to the occurred or forseen overarching development results)

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 2 – Evaluation Basis

As stated above, the project was not embedded in a development programme. The most tangible overarching development results were planned in the project (module) proposal in section B.3.6.2 'developmental effectiveness at the level of the TC-measure', developmental impact (entwicklungspolitische Wirkung). Nonetheless, the 'developmental impact' that the project was supposed to achieve was not defined by clear and intended results, but was rather descriptive as 'contributions to…'. They are not mentioned in any part of the project results matrix or

results model. The project's achievements were attributed to what could be called 'overarching results', as e.g. the SDG or the Aichi targets nearly by the end of the project. The linkages or 'contributions to…' were not based on concise planning.

For assessment purposes, the evaluation questions 1 to 5 in the attached Excel matrix for dimension 2 of the criterion were followed. The basis for analysing the contributions of the project outcome to overarching development results is the above agreement on what is understood by 'overarching development results'. It was possible to respond to the questions on the contributions of the outcome, influence of the framework conditions, alternative explanation of results, contributions to widespread impact and what would have happened without the project by reviewing documents, interviewing stakeholders and drawing up a scenario based on the three following hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1: Due to contributions of the project (outcome level), land users in the Eje Neovolcánico region apply land use management measures that conserve biodiversity and improve their socioeconomic situation at the same time.

Hypothesis 2: Owing to key stakeholders' capacity development measures (namely of federal and state-level government employees), development projects (which have been approved for the Eje Neovolcánico region) demonstrate stronger impact orientation after evaluation.

Hypothesis 3: By having improved the conservation of biodiversity in the Eje Neovolcánico region, the project rendered a contribution to Mexico achieving SDG 15 'Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss'.

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 2 – Evaluation Design and Methods

The analysis of dimension 2 also follows the evaluation questions provided by the GIZ unit for central evaluations. Apart from following the guiding questions of the Evaluation Matrix, regarding the criterion 'impact', Contribution Analysis was part of the evaluation design. For being in the position to determine if the project activities and outputs have substantially contributed to long-term impact, called for a deeper, hypothesis-based analysis. Thus, based on the Contribution Analysis methodology, three hypotheses were examined in depth, looking for explaining the causal relationships between projects activities, outputs and outcomes with a particular focus on impact. Only steps 1 to 4 of the Contribution Analysis were applied, because applying steps 5 and 6 was considered being too time consuming and not a viable option in the context of this specific evaluation. Hence, steps 5 and 6 (additional data collection regarding alternative hypotheses) were replaced by formulating and assessing alternative hypotheses already in place since the beginning of the evaluation.

The principle challenge of examining the impact of a project-based intervention is related to the so-called attribution gap. A project intervention is embedded in a sector or several sectors, where many other factors influence if something happens or not: macro-level country or international politics, economic development, social phenomena (e.g. changing interests, crisis, movements), other actors' interventions, etc. Therefore, it is very difficult, especially in the long term, to attribute to one single project intervention one particular impact. This fact was considered while evaluating the OECD/DAC criterion 'impact' and was addressed when depicting the evaluation results.

The analysis was carried out by using different empirical evaluation methods. The particular method to be applied, depended on the subject of evaluation, i.e. what was required to respond best to the evaluation questions. All methods, which had already been used are described in the respective sections 4.2.2 and 4.2.3 and therefore will not be described here again.

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 2

Question 2.1: To what extent is it plausible that the project's outcome-level results (project objective) contributed or will contribute to the overarching results (contribution analysis approach)?

Contributions of the outcome level to the overarching results are for example:

- The Megalópolis Environmental Commission (CAMe) has been strengthened in its mandate as a regional coordination platform for environmental issues and has included biodiversity conservation and restoration as one of the four priorities in its mission (indicator M1) contributed to ENBIOMEX 6.2, Aichi target 2;
- 60% (28 out of 47) of the main actors from CONANP and federal states institutions confirm the use of knowledge and information systems for decision-making in their area of responsibility (monitoring and evaluation) (indicator M3) contributed to PROMARNAT objective 6, Aichi targets 1 and 19, ENBIOMEX 1.1.

Hence, it is largely plausible that the results of the project on outcome level contributed to the overarching results.

Question 2.2: What are the alternative explanations/factors for the results observed (e.g. the activities of other stakeholders, other policies)?

There are no other explanations.

Question 2.3: What would have happened without the project?

The evaluators asked the stakeholders 'what would have happened without the project' (Foc_Dis_2, Int_15, Foc_Dis_8 and Foc_Dis_6). They responded that CONANP would have achieved its organisational goals anyway, but much later and maybe not as well, had the project not supported the organisation. Other stakeholders were not asked the question, because the evaluators assumed that being in the position to reflect on the question and by sensibly answering it, this was only possible for partners who have been deeply involved in the project implementation. The project played a facilitator and accelerator role for the core partner CONANP in having achieved the organisation's strategic goals (improvement of planning and monitoring system of the organisation at regional level).

Question 2.4: To what extent is the impact of the project positively or negatively influenced by framework conditions, other policy areas, strategies or interests (German ministries, bilateral and multilateral development partners)? What are the consequences of the project?

There was no stated or reported evidence of positive or negative influences due to framework conditions related to German or international development cooperation.

Question 2.5: To what extent has the project made an active and systematic contribution to widespread impact (four dimensions: relevance, quality, quantity, sustainability; scaling-up approaches: vertical, horizontal, functional or combined)? If not, could there have been potential? Why was the potential not exploited?

The project contributed actively to the positive environmental, economic and social correlation widespread impact in measures related to sustainable livestock farming:

- Produce more (meat, sheep) in less time and with fewer resources or inputs;
- Reduction of negative environmental impacts related to livestock farming (Foc_Dis_16, Foc_Dis_17, GIZ 2017a, GIZ 2017c, GIZ 2018c).

Although only five relatively small livestock farmer groups have been supported by the project, each having 10–15 members, nonetheless, the approach for sustainable livestock farming developed by the project is well accepted by farmers and attracts other livestock farmers to get involved and apply the promoted techniques and management measures. Also livestock experts from the private sector and civil society (Int_22, Int_21), research institutes (Foc_Dis_12, Int_23) and government agencies (Foc_Dis_17, Foc_Dis_6, Foc_Dis_8) confirmed that the approach is innovative and will be widely taken up by livestock farmers.

Finally, the hypotheses developed to verify different aspects relating to the criterion 'impact' were explored and the evaluators came to the following results:

Hypothesis 1: The hypothesis 'owing to contributions of the project (outcome level), land users in the Eje Neovolcánico region apply land use management measures that conserve biodiversity and improve their socioeconomic situation at the same time' is proven, based on the subsequent findings:

- Livestock farmers apply sustainable animal husbandry, for example, producing silage to feed sheep in their

stables, instead of only feeding them by grazing on pastures situated in protected areas. This allows natural pastures in protected areas and endangered plant species to regenerate, reduces the erosion potential on pastures and has significantly reduced forest fires during the last two years of 2017 and 2018 (Foc_Dis_8, Foc_Dis_16, GIZ–GFA 2018c, CONANP–GIZ 2018c, Foc_Dis_1, CONANP 2018j);

- Improved livestock-keeping techniques reduced the time-span required to produce a sheep ready for sale at the market place from originally 18 months, to 9 months on average. Shortening the production time saves farmers resources (fodder, farmers' time to keep animals, etc.) (Foc_Dis_17, Foc_Dis_16, CONANP–GIZ 2018c, Int_21, Foc_Dis_12, Int_23, CONANP 2018j);
- Sowing improved wheat near their homesteads as fodder for sheep, improves the fodder quality and saves farmers' time. Before applying these techniques, they had to make hay further away from their homesteads and/or keep animals longer on pastures in protected areas. All these activities implied additional costs (Foc_Dis_17, Foc_Dis_16, CONANP–GIZ 2018c, Int_21, Foc_Dis_12, Int_23; Foc_Dis_1, CONANP 2018j).

Hypothesis 2: The hypothesis 'due to capacity development measures of key stakeholders (namely federal and federal state-level government employees), development projects that have been approved for the Eje Neovolcánico region demonstrate, after evaluation, stronger impact orientation' is proven, based on the subsequent findings:

- Monitoring results of the target value of indicator 2 at the outcome level (module objective) showed that 44% (99) of the 225 projects from PROCODES were evaluated in 2017 in an impact-oriented way. The projects were not just evaluated in an impact-oriented way, but themselves impact on the projects through their design (GIZ 2019g, CONANP 2017a, Sarmiento, María José y de la Cadena, Mauricio 2017).
- Two groups totaling 84 technicians from government and non-government organisations participated at a course for project design and management for sustainable development (UMA 2017), called 'Diploma en Diseño y Gestión de Proyectos para el Desarrollo Sostenible'. The technicians interviewed during the on-site evaluation, stated that the course was of great use to them for better designing and managing projects in the wider context of sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity. According to their statements, the course had improved their capacities substantially (Int_13, Foc_Dis_6, Foc_Dis_8, Foc_Dis_11, Foc_Dis_9, Foc_Dis_14, Foc_Dis_10, CONANP 2016a, CONANP 2017b, CONANP 2018l).

Hypothesis 3: The hypothesis 'by having improved the conservation of biodiversity in the Eje Neovolcánico region, the project rendered a contribution to Mexico achieving SDG 15 "Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss"' is proven, based on the following findings:

- The project contributed specifically to target 15.4: 'ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biological diversity, in order to enhance their ability to provide essential benefits for sustainable development'.
- In addition, the project contributed to other SDG 15 targets such as 15.2 'the sustainable management of all types of forests'.
- Or target 15.9 'the integration of ecosystem values into local planning' (CONANP 2016, CONANP–GIZ 2018c, CONANP 2018i, CONANP–GIZ 2018d, PROBOSQUE 2018).

Based on the assessment detailed above, evaluators concluded that the project has reached 25 out of 30 points for dimension 2.

4.4.3 Evaluation Dimension 3 (No project-related negative results at impact level have occurred – and if any negative results occured the project responded adequately. The occurrence of additional (not formally agreed) positive results at impact level has been monitored and additional opportunities for further positive results have been seized)

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 3 – Evaluation Basis

The basis for the assessment of the evaluation dimension, were the following documents:

- Annual project progress reports
- Project documentation on ‘lessons learnt’
- Data and information from project monitoring system

Together with GIZ project staff and representatives of CONANP, the evaluator identified unexpected results over the course of guided interviews.

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 3 – Evaluation Design and Methods

To explore the occurrence of unintended impact-level positive and negative results, first evaluators verified if there were unintended results, based on the review of documents and guided, semi-structured interviews of key stakeholders, namely representatives of CONANP. Evaluators then assessed whether the results were positive or negative, shared and discussed their findings with key people and adjusted the methodology if needed. The assessment was based on the evaluators’ understanding and opinion (outsiders’ perspective) and was supported by a sound argumentation. Finally, the question with respect to monitoring and exploitation of potential unintended positive results and synergies between ecological, economic and social dimensions of impact was responded to by analysing provided documentations. This was documented by a short description of unintended positive results and synergies.

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 3

Question 3.1: Which positive or negative unintended results at impact level can be observed? Are there negative trade-offs between the ecological, economic and social dimensions (according to the three dimensions of sustainability in the Agenda 2030)? Were positive synergies between the three dimensions exploited?

Stakeholders did not identify any negative unexpected results. However, the following positive unexpected results were identified: (1) development of ‘communities of practice’ related to sustainable tourism and sustainable livestock farming (Ganadería Sustentable 2019, CONANP–GIZ 2018c); (2) spirit of ‘team work’ within the team of CONANP DRCEN (Foc_Dis_6, Foc_Dis_8); (3) paradigm shift of protected area staff regarding livestock farmers. They are no longer seen as ‘enemies’ (Foc_Dis_16, Foc_Dis_17, Foc_Dis_, CONANP–GIZ 2018c, GIZ–GFA 2018b).

Question 3.2: To what extent were risks of unintended results at the impact level assessed in the monitoring system (e.g. compass)? Were risks already known during the planning phase?

There were no negative trade-offs between the ecological, economic and social dimension identified during the evaluation.

Question 3.3: What measures have been taken by the project to avoid and counteract the risks/negative results/trade-offs?

As no negative unintended results were identified, there was therefore no need to monitor risks. Risks were known during the project planning phase, but not any related to unintended negative results.

Question 3.4: To what extent have the framework conditions for the negative results played a role? How did the project react to this?

No unintended negative results identified.

Question 3.5: To what extent were potential unintended positive results and potential synergies between the ecological, economic and social dimensions monitored and exploited?

Please check evaluation criterion ‘effectiveness’, evaluation dimension 3, guiding question 4 for a full answer to this question.

Based on the assessment detailed above, evaluators concluded that the project reached 30 out of 30 points for dimension 3.

Criterion	Assessment dimension	Score and rating
Impact	The intended overarching development results have occurred or are foreseen	35 of 40 points
	The outcome of the project contributed to the occurred or foreseen overarching development results	25 of 30 points
	No project-related negative results at impact level have occurred – and if any negative results occurred the project responded adequately. The occurrence of additional (not formally agreed) positive results at impact level has been monitored and additional opportunities for further positive results have been seized	30 of 30 points
Overall score and rating		Score: 90 of 100 points Rating: successful

4.5 Efficiency

The OECD/DAC criterion ‘efficiency’ is examined in this section.

It is described what is the evaluation basis, which evaluation design and methods were used, followed by a detailed analysis and assessment of each evaluation dimension and concluded by a scoring and rating of each evaluation dimension and of the entire criterion.

4.5.1 Evaluation Dimension 1 (The project’s use of resources is appropriate with regard to the outputs achieved – Production efficiency: Resources/Outputs)

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 1 – Evaluation Basis

Predetermined evaluation indicators for efficiency (in the Evaluation Matrix), which are going to be piloted, were used as the basis for assessment. These indicators embraced the following aspects:

- The project used its financial resources as planned
- Overhead costs are in a reasonable ratio compared to the costs of the outputs
- The project reflected if it could achieve with the planned financial resources the planned results
- The instrument concept (staff) planned in the project concept could be implemented by the provided financial resources as planned
- The partner constellation could be implemented as planned
- The risks described in the project concept could be handled with the provided financial resources

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 1 – Evaluation Design and Methods

The analysis of the criterion 'efficiency' followed the evaluation questions provided by the GIZ unit for central evaluations. No specific evaluation design was applied; that is, the evaluation followed the evaluation questions in the Evaluation Matrix (Annex 1) and assigned costs to the output and outcome level, as foreseen in the efficiency tool. Assigning costs to the different outputs was only possible from a retrospective perspective, as the project was not planned according to the newly developed design format. For this, the Excel sheet assigning working-months of staff to outputs was also used, which was provided by the project.

Thus, data analysis was done using the efficiency tool, and following the analytical questions in the Evaluation Matrix, which are based on the follow-the-money approach, depicting where financial resources were spent/invested. Evaluators also analysed if and to what degree, results could be or were maximised with the given financial resources.

The analysis was carried out by using different empirical evaluation methods. This was mainly done by reviewing and assessing the final project cost unit commitment report and by carrying out qualitative interviews, in particular with the current project manager and administrative staff of GIZ.

All data and information sources needed for assessing the criterion were available.

The assessment of the criterion 'efficiency' according to the methodology foreseen by GIZ, namely the Excel efficiency tool for data collection and assigning costs to project outputs', faces a fundamental challenge. The project was planned and implemented according to the former planning and implementation framework, agreed between BMZ and GIZ. But, the tools to be used are part of the new design of planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluation technical cooperation projects, after the so-called Joint Procedural Reform. As the project financial costs have not been differentiated in the planning and implementation phase by outputs, this assignment was done retrospectively and as an estimate.

The Excel efficiency tool for data collection and assigning costs to project outputs demands a high level of detail. Most data could be filled out, but the tool did not foresee putting 5 years' information in the sheet 'Entry budget – actual & residual'. Thus, the project data for 2018 could not be added, which distorts the results regarding the criterion.

First, the project's cost data were extracted from the final cost unit commitment report and assigned to the relevant place in the Excel efficiency tool. Based on the results, provided by the Excel efficiency tool, and comparing these with the narrative descriptions of the annual project progress reports, we respond to the evaluation questions 1 to 4 of the attached Excel matrix.

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 1

Question 1.1: To what extent are there deviations between the identified costs and the projected costs? What are the reasons for the identified deviation(s)?

The project used the resources as planned. No additional resources were needed for project implementation.

Question 1.2: Focus: To what extent could the outputs have been maximised with the same amount of resources and under the same framework conditions and with the same or better quality (maximum principle) (methodological minimum standard: Follow-the-money approach)?

Figure 2: Project's Efficiency Table

Modulziel	Die föderalen und bundesstaatlichen Schutzgebietsbehörden haben die Qualität des Biodiversitätserhalts in der Region Eje Neovolcanico verbessert.				
BMZ Kosten (Summe Einzelkosten)	1.349.671,67 €				
Ko-Finanzierungen	0,00 €				
Partnerbeiträge	0,00 €				
Gesamtkosten	**1.349.671,67 €**				
Restwert (BMZ Kosten und Kofinanzierung)	4.000.000,00 €				
Modulziel Indikatoren	Es existiert eine inter-institutionelle, regionale und insti-tutionalisierte Koordinationsplattform in deren Rahmen vierteljährlich Entscheidungen über Politiken, Richtlinien und Initiativen, die zum Erhalt der Biodiversität beitragen, getroffen werden.	40 % aller neu formulierten Projekte und Programme der Verwaltungen der Schutzgebiete (nationale Schutzgebietsbehörde - CONANP, Schutzgebietsbehörde des Bundesstaats Mexiko - CEPANAF, Behörde für natürli-che Ressourcen des Bundesdistrikts - CORENA und	60 % der interviewten Hauptakteure (föderale und bun-desstaatliche Naturschutz-, Forst- und Wasserbehörden) bestätigen die Nutzung des Wissens- und Informationssystems zur Entscheidungsfindung.	30 % (12 von 40) der Projekte zum Erhalt der Biodiversität beinhalten genderdifferenzierte Maßnahmen. Die Wertbestückung erfolgt mit dem ersten Projektfort-schrittsbericht.	0
Zielerreichung	0%	0%	0%	0%	

	Output A	**Output B**	**Output C**	**Output D**	
Outputs	Die föderalen und bundesstaatlichen Institutionen, die für Biodiversität, Schutzgebiete und natürliche Ressourcen in der Projektregion zuständig sind, beteiligen die Zivilgesellschaft	Die Verwaltungen der Schutzgebiete (föderal und bundesstaatlich) sind kompetent in der Projektplanung, -durchführung und -monitoring.	Die Verantwortlichen der CONANP haben in Kooperation mit anderen Institutionen ein Wis-sens- und Informationssystem zu Schutzgebie ten und dessen Konnektivität aufgebaut.	Die föderalen und bundesstaatlichen Schutz-gebietsbehörden haben gemeinsam Empfeh-lungen, Kriterien und Richtlinien zur genderdiffe-renzierten Planung, Durchführung und Monito-ring von Projekten zum Management der natür-lichen	0
Kosten inkl. Obligo	285.200,21 €	292.464,45 €	206.682,26 €	89.441,82 €	0,
Ko-Finanzierungen	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,
Partnerbeiträge	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,
Gesamtkosten	**285.200,21 €**	**292.464,45 €**	**206.682,26 €**	**89.441,82 €**	**0,**
Gesamtkosten in %	**21%**	**22%**	**15%**	**7%**	**0%**
BMZ Gesamtkosten in % ohne Kofi	**21%**	**22%**	**15%**	**7%**	**0%**

In each of the annual project progress reports there was a section reflecting on the use of financial resources needed to achieve the committed results (GIZ 2015, 2016, 2017f and 2019g). The overarching costs of the project were 5%. This is a sound figure in relation to the costs of the outputs. All ZAS notations totalled 6.22% of the total project costs. ZAS were mainly related to services provided by the GIZ country office towards consultant contracts and procurement of goods/materials needed for project implementation.

Question 1.3: Focus: To what extent could outputs have been maximised by reallocating resources between the outputs (methodological minimum standard: Follow-the-money approach)?

GIZ project staff (Foc_Dis_1, Foc_Dis_5) stated in interviews that during the project implementation the provided financial resources were sufficient to achieve the planned goals in the context of each output. In several cases, the target values of indicators could also be over-fulfilled (for details see final project 'results matrix').

Thus, evaluators came to the conclusion that the provided financial resources were sufficient for achieving all goals.

Question 1.4: Were the output/resource ratio and alternatives carefully considered during the design and implementation process – and if so, how (methodological minimum standard: Follow-the-money approach)?

Implementation of the instrumental concept was carried out as planned, regarding related costs. Working with partners (partnerships and at all levels) was carried out as planned, regarding related costs. The originally proposed technical topics were implemented as planned regarding costs, and changes in technical topics (e.g. minor change of shifting from criollo maize conservation to sustainable livestock farming) were possible with available funds. The

project staff managed risks as planned in relation to costs. The project was implemented in the geographical regions as originally planned. The approach described in the original project concept, regarding the outputs, was relevant during project implementation (Int_13, Foc_Dis_2, Int_15, Foc_Dis_6, Foc_Dis_11, Foc_Dis_10, Foc_Dis_9).

Based on the assessment, detailed above, evaluators came concluded that the project reached 70 out of 70 points for dimension 1.

4.5.2 Evaluation Dimension 2 (The project's use of resources is appropriate with regard to achieving the projects objective (outcome.) [Allocation efficiency: Resources/Outcome])

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 2 – Evaluation Basis

Predetermined evaluation indicators for efficiency (in the Evaluation Matrix), which will be piloted, were used as the basis for assessment. These indicators embraced the following aspects:

- Was the selected approach the most convenient one regarding the topic?
- The financial resources have been well managed to best achieve the project objective
- The project reflected on whether it could achieve the planned results with the planned financial resources
- The instrument concept (staff) planned in the project concept could be implemented by the provided financial resources as planned, for achieving the project objective
- The partneships could be implemented as planned to achieve the project objective
- The project looked for synergies with other German Development Cooperation projects
- The partner contributions were appropriate.

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 2 – Evaluation Design and Methods

First, the project's cost data were extracted from the final obligo report and assigned to the relevant place in the Excel efficiency tool. Based on the results provided by the Excel efficiency tool and comparing these with the narrative descriptions of the annual project progress reports, we responded to the evaluation questions 6 and 7 of the attached Excel matrix. Afterwards, evaluation question 8 was examined, i.e. if and to what degree the project could have achieved more results by collaborating or coordinating with the projects of other bilateral and multilateral donors and organisations. The assessment was mainly done by analysing documents, but also by qualitative interviews with the GIZ project manager and administrative staff.

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 2

Question 2.1: To what extent could the outcome have been maximised with the same or better amount and quality of resources (maximum principle)?

Based on the interviews with GIZ project staff and key stakeholders (CONANP, SDS, CEPANAF, SEDEMA), these stated that they think the project design and implementation was the best approach regarding the topic (Int_13, Foc_Dis_1, Int_14, Foc_Dis_2, Int_15). The outcome of the project was fulfilled, based on the achieved target values of the objective-level indicators. The achieved project results are very good, especially regarding input-output ratio (Int_13, Foc_Dis_2, Int_15, Foc_Dis_6, Foc_Dis_11, Foc_Dis_10, Foc_Dis_9).

Question 2.2: Were the outcome-resources ratio and alternatives carefully considered during the conception and implementation process – and if so, how? Were any scaling-up options considered?

The module objective was achieved as planned. The outputs contributed to having achieved the module objective. The originally proposed instruments concept was implemented as planned, regarding costs and contributed to having achieved the module objective. The partner partnerships proposed in the module proposal and the associated levels of intervention could be easily realised in terms of the estimated costs in relation to the project's intended module objective, provided financial resources were sufficient to implement the project according to its thematical scope as planned to help achieve the module objective. Risks could be managed with the provided financial resources. The approach described in the original project concept, regarding the outcome, was relevant

during project implementation.

Question 2.3: To what extent were more results achieved through synergies and/or leverage of more resources, with the help of other bilateral and multilateral donors and organisations (e.g. Kofi)? If so, was the relationship between costs and results appropriate?

The project coordinated activities with the BMZ project MIP (technical cooperation) (Int_12) and the GIF-financed project implemented by UNDP. Via the GIZ biodiversity cluster in Mexico, the project also exchanged with other biodiversity-related German Development Cooperation projects (e.g. IKI projects) (Foc_Dis_1). There was no loss of economic efficiency due to insufficient coordination (Int_12, Int_14, Foc_Dis_1). The partner contribution was estimated at EUR 1,000,000 (in kind and financial resources), that is, 25% of the amount of BMZ funding (GIZ 2015, 2016, 2017f and 2019g).

Based on the assessment, detailed above, evaluators concluded that the project reached 30 out of 30 points for dimension 2.

Criterion	Assessment dimension	Score and rating
Efficiency	The project's use of resources is appropriate with regard to the outputs achieved. [Production efficiency]	70 of 70 points
	The project's use of resources is appropriate with regard to achieving the projects objective (outcome). [Allocation efficiency]	30 of 30 points
Overall score and rating		Score: 100 of 100 points Rating: very successful

4.6 Sustainability

The OECD/DAC criterion 'sustainability' is examined in this section.

We describe what the evaluation basis is, which evaluation design and methods were used, followed by a detailed analysis and assessment of each evaluation dimension; the section concludes by a scoring and rating of each evaluation dimension and of the entire criterion.

4.6.1 Evaluation Dimension 1 (Prerequisite for ensuring the long-term success of the project: Results are anchored in (partner) structures.)

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 1 – Evaluation Basis

The assessment of the OECD/DAC criteria 'effectiveness' and 'impact' also embraces aspects of sustainability (see above sections 4.3 and 4.4). Regarding the criterion 'effectiveness', in particular the question 'what would have happened without the project?' addressed aspects of sustainability. Evaluation questions 5 'To what extent has the

project made an active and systematic contribution to widespread impact?' (Four dimensions: relevance, quality, quantity, sustainability; scaling-up approaches: vertical, horizontal, functional or combined.) 'If not, could there have been potential? Why was the potential not exploited?' (evaluation dimension 1) and 1 'Which positive or negative unintended results at impact level can be observed? Are there negative trade-offs between the ecological, economic and social dimensions (according to the three dimensions of sustainability in the Agenda 2030)? Were positive synergies between the three dimensions exploited?' (evaluation dimension 2) of the criterion 'impact' focus on exploring sustainability of project interventions.

These aspects of sustainability were also examined and linked to the evaluation questions of the criterion 'sustainability', in order to develop a complete picture of how sustainability was ensured by project activities or focus. As the project was concluded by 31 October 2018 and the evaluation was carried out half a year later, the assessment of sustainability is limited. Whether project measures were sustainable or not can only be judged hypothetically in most instances, making use of interviewed key stakeholders' opinions and experiences with project design and measures of similar development interventions.

The following documents provided the basis for the evaluation dimension assessment:

- Project proposal (chapter B.3.6.2 Developmental effectiveness at the level of the TC-measure, sustainability)
- Annual project progress reports
- Project documentation on 'lessons learnt'
- Project document 'Reflection on DAC criteria in the project'
- Technical project documents related to the topics 'tourism' and livestock farming'.

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 1 – Evaluation Design and Methods

The analysis of the criterion 'sustainability' followed the evaluation questions provided by the GIZ unit for central project evaluations. No specific evaluation design was applied.

The analysis was carried out by using different empirical evaluation methods. The particular method that was applied depended on the subject of evaluation, that is, what was required to respond best to the evaluation questions. All methods used are already described in the respective sections 4.2.1.2 and 4.3.1.2 and therefore will not be described again here.

All data and information sources needed for assessing the criterion were available.

Apart from having analysed project documents and having identified clear examples for project results, which were anchored in the partner system (mainly CONANP and federal states procedures/structures), it was of particular importance for assessing the evaluation dimension 1 to interview key actors and to collect further information related to partner country organisations (government and civil society organisations at target group level). In the case of this criterion it was also vital to know partners' opinions, particularly of CONANP staff.

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 1

Question 1.1: What has the project done to ensure that the results can be sustained in the medium to long term by the partners themselves?

The project has developed and/or carried out different measures that ensure sustainability in the medium and long term, such as: (1) capacity building of partners (*diploma*) in project planning and target group; (2) established learning and knowledge exchange networks; (3) SGPOA (including monitoring of effectivity of PA); (4) sustainable livestock farming; (5) map visor of protected areas (visor de mapas). In general, the measures undertaken by the project ensure medium and long-term sustainability of project implementations.

Question 1.2: In which way are advisory contents, approaches, methods or concepts of the project anchored/ institutionalised in the (partner) system?

Advisory contents, approaches and methods were anchored/institutionalised in the following ways (examples) in the

partner systems: (1) capacity building of partner staff (project planning and monitoring, Capacity WORKS); (2) embedding results in the partner system: (e.g. planning system of CONANP (SGPOA); (3) proposed and implemented solutions did not require high financial resources or high technology, which the partners could not afford, but were based on the realities and possibilities of the partner system; (4) sustainable livestock farming was taken up by PROBOSQUE, to be implemented as one subsidised land use measure in the federal state of Mexico; (5) paradigm shift regarding livestock farming in federal and federal states institutions: livestock farmers are no longer seen as 'enemies' for PA, but as neighbours and partners, PA staff have to work with and search for answers to socioeconomic and environmental challenges. Thus, the project grounded most advisory contents, approaches and methods well in the partner systems.

Question 1.3: To what extent are the results continuously used and/or further developed by the target group and/or implementing partners?

Many project results are continuously used by the different target groups of the project, for example:

- Improved planning method SGPOA is continuously used by CONANP DRCEN and at national level
- CONANP staff continuously use knowledge developed with regard to impact-oriented project planning
- Sustainable livestock farming methods/techniques are continuously used by farmers, and new farmers are interested in making use of these methods/techniques
- PROBOSQUE: option for agro-silvo-pastoral livestock farming is officially approved by the federal state government of Mexico, and allows for provision of future financial and advisory support to livestock farmers
- Regional plan (RCEN) for sustainable tourism in the Eje Neovolcánico region provides the strategic framework regarding the topic of 'sustainable tourism' and is used for project development and tourism activities
- Environmental education methodology 'Aprendiendo del Árbol' is continuously used by PA staff.

Thus, the project results are continuously used by the different target groups of the project.

Question 1.4: To what extent are resources and capacities at the individual, organisational or societal/political level in the partner country available (longer term) to ensure the continuation of the results achieved?

There are several resources and capacities available to ensure the continuation of project results, for instance: (1) financial resources for development projects provided by the Mexican government at federal and federal state level (PROCODES, subsidies of PROBOSQUE, FAPPA, INAES); (2) CONANP and federal state agencies (SEDEMA, CEPANAF, PROBOSQUE, SDS) dispose of qualified, well-educated staff that were trained by the project and will mostly continue in their jobs, applying new knowledge acquired; (3) CONANP is using improved planning and monitoring capacities developed by project trainings in their institutional planning system (SGPOA).

Question 1.5: What is the project's exit strategy? How are lessons learnt prepared and documented?

The project's lessons learnt were synthesised and documented together with major stakeholders (CONANP–GIZ 2018c)

Based on the assessment, detailed above, evaluators concluded that the project reached 45 out of 50 points for dimension 1.

4.6.2 Evaluation Dimension 2 (Forecast of durability: Results of the project are permanent, stable and long-term resilient)

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 2 – Evaluation Basis

The analysis and assessment of the dimension is based on only information provided by guided interviews of CONANP, federal state agencies and GIZ project representatives.

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 2 – Evaluation Design and Methods

What is stated for evaluation dimension 1 also, and even stronger, applies to the evaluation of dimension 2.

Forecasting the durability of the results generated by the project can only be done by key stakeholders. Therefore, in order to get a substantiated projection, these were interviewed in the context of the project on-site evaluation. This was also done by comparing risks to and potentials for durability from the perspective of different stakeholders.

Assessing Evaluation Dimension 2

Question 2.1: To what extent are the project results (outcome and impact) durable, stable and resilient in the long term under the given conditions?

Key stakeholders could not estimate 'how' stable or resilient the project results will be in the long-run, but stated that because most results are embedded in the partner systems, this increases the likelihood that these will be applied and used in the future. Thus, it was difficult to assess the durability of project results, but key stakeholders guessed what factors, considered by the project, could support durability.

Question 2.2: What risks and potentials are emerging for the durability of the results (outcome and impact) and how likely are these factors to occur? What has the project done to reduce these risks?

The most important risks that could negatively affect the project results are:

- Too frequent staff rotation within partner organisations
- Change of political priorities of the Mexican government, negatively affecting biodiversity conservation.

In order to reduce risks relating to staff changes, the project worked with a broad array of organisations, not just governmental, but also academia, civil society and the private sector. The project also strengthened the capacities of many different stakeholders, not just government staff.

Regarding changes in political priorities, it was almost impossible for the project to positively influence. Instead, this political work was done by the BMZ and GIZ biodiversity cluster coordinator with representatives of the Mexican government, emphasising the importance of biodiversity conservation for the country and the global level, and expressing the interest and will of the German government to support Mexico in its efforts related to this topic.

The project was aware of risks related to the durability of project results in the long term, but, as far as possible, handled them appropriately.

Based on the assessment, detailed above, evaluators concluded that the project reached 40 out of 50 points for dimension 2.

Criterion	Assessment dimension	Score and rating
Sustainability	Prerequisite for ensuring the long-term success of the project: Results are anchored in (partner) structures	45 of 50 points
	Forecast of durability: Results of the project are permanent, stable and long-term resilient	40 of 50 points
Overall score and rating		Score: 85 of 100 points Rating: Successful

4.7 Key results and overall rating

The results of the evaluation are based on guided, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with representatives of government agencies, NGO, academia, the private sector and target groups; the analysis and assessment of written information (project documents, documents provided by partners, other sources); interviews with GIZ project staff; and the evaluation team's own observations. The evaluation team comes to the conclusion that the project was 'very successful'.

The project was very relevant regarding responding to the major needs and demands of the target group, it generated significant results at the level of counterpart organisation CONANP (strengthening of capacities and competencies of staff related to strategic planning) and contributed innovative instruments and approaches for working on the wider topic of biodiversity conservation and sustainable management.

The project's concept was relevant during the project implementation and responded to national and BMZ sector strategies. The hypotheses for the project results chain were plausible and their validity could be proven by the evaluation. The project achieved the planned objective and 100% or more of the planned target values related to the indicators at project objective (outcome level) with the given financial resources. The counterpart organisations, in particular CONANP, contributed significant resources to the project: in kind, funding for small-scale projects. The project was also embedded in the operational and strategic framework of CONANP and contributed to improving its organisational capacities.

Criterion	Score	Rating
Relevance	92 of 100 points	Very successful
Effectiveness	100 of 100 points	Very successful
Impact	90 of 100 points	Successful
Efficiency	100 of 100 points	Very successful
Sustainability	85 of 100 points	Successful
Overall score and rating for all criteria	93.4 of 100 points Average score of all criteria (sum divided by 5, max. 100 points see below)	Very successful

100-point scale (score)	6-level scale (rating)
92-100	Level 1 = very successful
81-91	Level 2 = successful
67-80	Level 3 = rather successful
50-66	Level 4 = rather unsatisfactory
30-49	Level 5 = unsatisfactory
0-29	Level 6 = very unsatisfactory

5 Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Factors of success or failure

With respect to the project results, there were no failures as such. Due to changes of priorities in CAMe, the process of development of a regional strategy on biodiversity conservation of the RCEN was halted (CAMe 2014, 2015, 2016, Foc_Dis_1, Foc_Dis_11).

This section will delineate the major success factors of the project. It comprises an analytical summary of major successes, which are explored in detail in section 4 of this report. Therefore, no detailed evidence for the summarising statements will be provided here.

Factors that supported the project achieving its planned goals and being implemented to the satisfaction of key stakeholder, were the following:

- Flexible planning framework of the project that allowed minor changes at the level of activities being planned and being implemented, without losing sight of the project objective
- Responding to the needs and demands of the principal counterpart organisation CONANP at different levels (national, regional and local level) and to the needs of the target population, in particular livestock farmers
- Having applied a multi-stakeholder approach, involving key stakeholders of government, academia and civil society
- Applying participatory processes, involving actors active in the development of approaches and measures, as well as in the decision-making
- Clear understanding of the role of the GIZ project team as advisers. Interviewed stakeholders stated that the GIZ project team was an excellent facilitator accompanying the processes of CONANP and establishing contacts and collaborations between different sectoral actors (Int_13, Foc_Dis_2, Foc_Dis_6, Foc_Dis_11).

The GIZ project team was composed of six full-time expert advisers, coming from different disciplines, male and female. The team covered all topics related to the different outputs, for instance organisational development, inter-institutional coordination, knowledge and information management, management of natural resources or sustainable livestock farming. The full-time expert team was supported by short-term experts, mainly Mexican citizens, and by services rendered by NGOs, academia and national consulting services. Two advisers in the full-time expert team were also contracted as consultants, based on a contract with a German consulting company. The composition of the team, as well as the combination of the different ‘instruments’ was appropriate, according to the evaluator’s opinion.

Concerning cooperation management, according to Capacity WORKS, the subsequent success factors are highlighted (examples):

- **Strategy:** clear strategic orientation of the project implementation (implementation strategy) and flexibility to react to changes of framework conditions and/or partner priorities
- **Cooperation:** the project concentrated on strengthening the project’s main counterpart organisation (CONANP) and on strengthening strategic partners, topic-wise
- **Coordination structure:** the project had a board of directors (CONANP and GIZ) and coordination platforms according to priority themes. Both coordination structures were considered appropriate by stakeholders to steer the project
- **Processes:** the project defined six strategic advisory processes to achieve the project objective, which have been strengthened: (1) regional coordination mechanisms; (2) information systems; (3) regional strategic planning; (4) capacity building; (5) sustainable livestock farming; and (6) adaptive management
- **Learning and innovation:** the project facilitated ‘learning communities’ and focused capacity development of counterparts on adaptive management.

5.2 Conclusions and recommendations

5.2.1 Conclusions

The final conclusions regarding the project Conservation of Biodiversity in the Eje Neovolcánico, Mexico project can be summarised as follows:

- The original project concept was relevant during the project implementation and aligned to national and BMZ strategic priorities
- The hypotheses for the project results chain were plausible and their validity could be proven by the evaluation
- The project responded to the major needs and demands of the target group
- The project achieved the planned objective and 100% or more of the planned target values related to the indicators at project objective (outcome level)
- There occurred some positive, unintended results during project implementation: development of communities of practice, team work spirit with CONANP working teams, paradigm shift of CONANP personnel regarding livestock farming
- The project was implemented with the funding foreseen at the planning stage
- The counterpart organisations contributed significant resources to the project: in kind, funding for small-scale projects
- The project generated significant results at the level of counterpart organisation CONANP: strengthening of capacities and competencies of staff related to strategic planning
- The project was embedded in the operational and strategic framework of CONANP and contributed to improving its organisational capacities
- The project contributed innovative instruments and approaches for working on the wider topic of biodiversity conservation and sustainable management: diplomado (training course) for impact-oriented project planning, method for environmental education (‘Learning from the Tree’), monitoring of priority species.

5.2.2 Recommendations

The final evaluation concludes with a number of recommendations provided by the evaluators, based on an in-depth assessment of all relevant aspects of the project. As the project was concluded in October 2018, the recommendations could be considered in the context of the follow-on phase, already being implemented:

1. Developing a biodiversity conservation agenda or strategy for the RCEN

The integrated landscape management approach in the context of biodiversity conservation in the RCEN requires the active and constructive involvement of state governments, civil society (organised), the private sector and academia. The project initially supported the development of a biodiversity strategy for the RCEN in the context of CAMe (CAMe 2014, 2015, 2016). Because of changes in CAMe’s thematic priorities, the process was put on hold. Nonetheless, during the on-site evaluation, federal states representatives in particular emphasised their interest and need for continuing the process, actively involving all above-mentioned actors (Foc_Dis_9, Foc_Dis_10, Foc_Dis_11).

2. Considering federal states’ biodiversity strategies within the framework of policies guiding the objectives of the follow-on project

As the representative of the federal state of Mexico, not only CONANP has developed a national biodiversity strategy, but also different federal states have developed such policies (Ciudad de México 2019, Estado de México 2019, Estado de Morelos 2019). As the federal states are important actors for conserving and sustainably managing biodiversity in the RCEN, these policies should also guide the strategic orientation of the follow-on phase (COBEN II).

3. Linking the monitoring system of priority species in the RCEN with the national biodiversity monitoring system that CONABIO is managing

The project supported the development of monitoring systems of priority species in the RCEN (GIZ 2017e, 2018f, SEDEMA 2018, González *et.al* 2016). These systems are important for monitoring biodiversity in the RCEN region. CONABIO has developed and is the responsible state authority to monitor biodiversity at the national level: 'Sistema Nacional de Monitoreo de Biodiversidad' (CONABIO 2019, Gacía Nasheli 2018a, b). The national system is very professional and according to statements of CONABIO experts (Int_ 17) it is open and viable to integrating/considering data from other sources. In order to have monitoring information available and professionally processed and stored on a digital platform, it is recommended to verify if and to what degree the locally/regionally developed monitoring systems for priority species could be combined and entered into the national system for biodiversity monitoring.

4. Taking the strategic planning system developed for and with the CONANP DRCEN to the national level of CONANP (up-scaling)

The project supported the regional directorate for the RCEN of CONANP (DRCEN) by capacity development and other supporting measures, to develop a planning and monitoring system, which is based on a strategic orientation (2016a, b, c, 2017c, 2018d, f, g, h, i). According to DRCEN management, nowadays the directorate is much better at planning and monitoring their goals and tasks, including all federal protected areas and their management teams (Foc_Dis_6, Foc_Dis_8). The system is viable for implementing in other directorates of CONANP and would substantially improve the organisation's planning and monitoring processes. This potential is recognised by CONANP managerial staff at the federal level (Int_ 15, Foc_Dis_2) and the organisation is interested to scale it up.

5. Looking at how a system for strengthening CONANP personnel can be institutionalised (based on the experiences of the diplomado and other trainings)

All CONANP managerial staff being interviewed during the on-site evaluation (Int_13, Foc_Dis_2, Int_15, Foc_Dis_6, Foc_Dis_8) stated the training of CONANP personnel substantially improved their skills on strategic planning, monitoring (including monitoring of priority species), communication with stakeholders, project development and other topics. Although CONANP staff are highly qualified in educational terms (university degrees, technicians, etc.), nonetheless the requirements for the workplaces require additional skills to perform the job better, which has not been developed by formal educational processes. Thus, it is recommended that the project supports CONANP in developing a system for regular strengthening of core skills of the organisation's personnel on topics that have not been covered by formal education.

6. Exploring options to support the development/strengthening of organisational capacities of state environmental secretariats and their natural protected areas

The project mainly concentrated on strengthening organisational capacities of CONANP, in order to better manage federal protected areas. As the RCEN not only encompasses federal protected areas (36), but also a large number of federal state protected areas (114), these are also very important for conserving biodiversity of the region and are significant cornerstones of a coherent, integrated biodiversity conservation strategy for the RCEN. The capacities of the responsible federal state authorities (e.g. CEPANAF, SDS, SEDEMA) are not sufficient for an efficient and impact-oriented management of the states' protected areas (Foc_Dis_11, Foc_Dis_9, Foc_Dis_10). Hence, the evaluators recommend that CONANP and GIZ explore options in the context of the project supporting the strengthening/development of federal state organisations responsible for protected area management.

7. Putting the sustainable management of RCEN's biodiversity on a broader stakeholder base: various institutions from central government, state governments, civil society and the private sector.

The project supported CONANP by different means: capacity development of staff, improvement of planning and monitoring system, improvement of the knowledge and information system related to federal protected areas, etc. Without doubt, CONANP is the most important state authority related to biodiversity conservation in RCEN protected areas. However, to work at a large scale having significant broad-based impact, biodiversity conservation should encompass federal and federal states protected areas, as well as the areas between these (buffer zones and biodiversity corridors). This somewhat landscape level focus on biodiversity conservation calls for an approach involving actors who have a stake or interest in biodiversity conservation and sustainable management. Thus, it is

recommended that the project involves more stakeholders in biodiversity conservation, for both strategy development as well as in capacity development and implementation of concrete measures, putting emphasis on civil society and private sector involvement.

8. Verifying the need and feasibility of having two interactive map systems for protected areas.

CONANP owns an internet-based platform with interactive maps of all federal protected areas (CONANP 2019). There is also a '*visor de mapas*', an internet-based platform with interactive maps of all federal, federal state, municipal and private protected areas (Red Nacional de Sistemas Estatales 2019), whose development was supported by the project. When searching for information related to protected areas in Mexico, it is confusing for interested people having two digital platforms with similar information. Therefore, it is recommended that GIZ and CONANP verify if it is possible (or not) to merge/combine the two platforms, so that any interested public when looking for information regarding natural protected areas in Mexico, only needs to access one information source.

Annexes

Annex 1: Evaluation matrix

Relevance

	Assessment dimension	Evaluation questions (pilot phase, work in progress)	Evaluation indicator	Available data sources	Additional data collection	Evaluation strategy (evaluation design, method, procedure)	Expected evidence strength (narrative)
Relevance	**RELEVANCE (max. 100 points)**						
	1.1 The project concept* is in line with the relevant strategic reference frameworks Max. 30 points	1. Which strategic reference frameworks exist for the project? (e.g. national strategies incl. national implementation strategy for 2030 agenda, regional and international strategies, sectoral, cross-sectoral change strategies, if bilateral project especially partner strategies, internal analysis frameworks e.g. safeguards and gender**)	Awareness of project staff, in particular project management, regarding the project's linkages to relevant partner strategies	National development plan 2013-2018, national programme for protected areas, sectoral programme for environment and natural resources, national biodiversity strategy, national strategy for sustainable tourism development, national strategy for climate change in protected areas, national strategy for social sustainable businesses, strategy 2040 of CONANP, Strategy 2040 of CONANP, education strategy for protected areas in the region Región Central y Eje Volcánico, joint strategy for sustainable forest development in protected areas, integration strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in tourism sector, integration strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the agricultural sector (2016-2022)	SDG for Mexico, GIZ safeguards and gender checklist for follow-on measure	Semi-structured interviews with GIZ project staff and GIZ cluster coordinator, review of partner strategies and project proposal	GIZ project staff is to 80 % aware of the project's strategic reference framework.

	Assessment dimension	Evaluation questions (pilot phase, work in progress)	Evaluation indicator	Available data sources	Additional data collection	Evaluation strategy (evaluation design, method, procedure)	Expected evidence strength (narrative)
		2. To what extent is the project concept in line with the relevant strategic reference frameworks?	Project concept is to 80 % in line with partner strategies	Project proposal, results matrix, results model, actors map, capacity development strategy, annual project progress reports	No need	Semi-structured interviews of representatives of CONANP and state agencies related to protected areas, development of simple checklist regarding main issues out of partner strategies, review of key project conceptual documents (using checklist)	80 % of the checklist points have been achieved.
		3. To what extent are the interactions (synergies/trade-offs) of the intervention with other sectors reflected in the project concept – also regarding the sustainability dimensions (ecological, economic and social)?	No. of identified interactions	Project proposal, annual project progress reports, technical project reports	Determine what are "other sectors", identification of interactions with other sectors	Review and analysis of project concept related documents	Interactions of the project with other sectors are identified in the project concept.
		4. To what extent is the project concept in line with the Development Cooperation (DC) programme (If applicable), the BMZ country strategy and BMZ sectoral concepts?	Project concept is to 80 % in line with BMZ strategies	BMZ country strategy, BMZ Stratgy 166 on Biological Diversity, BMZ "Committed to Biodiversity", BMZ Strategy for Interlinkages between Water, the Environment and Climate Change, BMZ	No need	Development of simple checklist regarding main issues out of BMZ strategies,	80 % of the checklist points have been achieved.

	Assessment dimension	Evaluation questions (pilot phase, work in progress)	Evaluation indicator	Available data sources	Additional data collection	Evaluation strategy (evaluation design, method, procedure)	Expected evidence strength (narrative)
				Development Action Plan on Gender Equality 2016-2020,		review of key project conceptual documents (using checklist)	
		5. To what extend is the project concept in line with the (national) objectives of the 2030 agenda? To which Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) is the project supposed to contribute?	No. of project links to SDG targets	Project document 'lessons-learnt', report of SDG Mexico 2018 (http://agenda2030.mx/#/home), SDG (https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org)	No need	Comparison of project goals and activities with SDG	Description of clear linkages between project activities and SDG.
		6. To what extend is the project concept subsidiary to partner efforts or efforts of other relevant organisations (subsidiary and complementarity)?	List of subsidiary activities of project	Annual project progress reports, project's 'Lessons-learnt' document, technical project documents	No need	Semi-structured interviews of representatives of CONANP and state agencies related to protected areas, semi-structured interviews of GIZ project staff, document review and analysis	Subsidiary activities of project are known to representatives of CONANP and state agencies.
	1.2 The project concept* matches the needs of the target group(s) Max. 30 points	1. To what extent is the chosen project concept geared to the core problems and needs of the target group(s)?	Logical connection between problem analysis and identification of target group	Project proposal (chapter 2 'problem- and potential analysis')	Secondary literature about population of project area	Review of project proposal (offer to BMZ)	Project proposal depicts the logical connection / coherence regarding problem analysis and

	Assessment dimension	Evaluation questions (pilot phase, work in progress)	Evaluation indicator	Available data sources	Additional data collection	Evaluation strategy (evaluation design, method, procedure)	Expected evidence strength (narrative)
							target group identified.
		2. How are the different perspectives, needs and concerns of women and men represented in the project concept?	Descriptions of needs and concerns of women and men	Project proposal (chapters B.3.2 target group and other parties involved, B.3.6 Impacts and risks of the TC-measure), project's and other gender analyses	No need	Review of project proposal (offer to BMZ)	Project proposal clearly shows needs and concerns of women and men.
		3. To what extent was the project concept designed to reach particularly disadvantaged groups (LNOB principle, as foreseen in the Agenda 2030)? How were identified risks and potentials for human rights and gender aspects included into the project concept?	List of special aspects and explanation if, if not and/or how considered	Project proposal (chapters B.3.2 target group and other parties involved, B.3.6 Impacts and risks of the TC-measure), project's and other gender analyses	No need	Review of project proposal (offer to BMZ)	Project proposal delineates the consideration of disadvantaged groups, human rights and gender aspects
		4. To what extend are the intended impacts realistic from todays perspective and the given resources (time, financial, partner capacities)?	Opinion of interviewed key actor regarding the closeness to reality of intended impacts.	None	No need	Guided interviews of CONANP and GIZ project staff	80 % of the intended impacts seem realistic to interviewes.

	Assessment dimension	Evaluation questions (pilot phase, work in progress)	Evaluation indicator	Available data sources	Additional data collection	Evaluation strategy (evaluation design, method, procedure)	Expected evidence strength (narrative)
	1.3 The project concept* is adequately designed to achieve the chosen project objective Max. 20 points	1. Assessment of current results model and results hypotheses (theory of change, ToC) of actual project logic: - To what extend is the project objective realistic from todays perspective and the given resources (time, financial, partner capacities)? - To what extend are the activities, instruments and outputs adequately designed to achieve the project objective? - To what extend are the underlying results hypotheses of the project plausible? - To what extend is the chosen system boundary (sphere of responsibility) of the project (including partner) clearly defined and plausible? - Are potential influences of other donors/organisations outside of the project's sphere of responsibility adequately considered? - To what extend are the assumptions and risks for the project complete and plausibe?	Logical coherence (common thread) of proposed concept	Project proposal (chapter B.3.4.1 methodological approach), results matrix, results model	No need	Review / qualitative analysis of project concept	Quality of the project concept assessed possitively by evaluators, based on their well-founded opinion.
		2. To what extent does the strategic orientation of the project address changes in its framework conditions?	List with aspect of project proposal which address changes in framework conditions	Project proposal (chapters A.2.1 Goals and strategies of the cooperation country in the focal area, B.3.4.1 methodological approach), results matrix, results model	No need	Review / qualitative analysis of project concept	Description of how changes in framework conditions were addressed by project concept.
		3. How is/was the complexity of the framework conditions and guidelines handled? How is/was any possible overloading dealt with and strategically focused?	Aspects of handling complexity and possible overloading	Project proposal (chapters A.2.1 Goals and strategies of the cooperation country in the focal area, B.2 'Problem- and potential analysis', B.3.4.1 methodological approach), results matrix, results model	No need	Review / qualitative analysis of project concept	Written explanation on handling complexity of framework conditions and possible overloading (elaborated by evaluators)

	Assessment dimension	Evaluation questions (pilot phase, work in progress)	Evaluation indicator	Available data sources	Additional data collection	Evaluation strategy (evaluation design, method, procedure)	Expected evidence strength (narrative)
	1.4 The project concept* was adapted to changes in line with requirements and re-adapted where applicable. Max. 20 points	1. What changes have occurred during project implementation? (e.g. local, national, international, sectoral, including state of the art of sectoral know-how)	List of changes identified	Annual project progress reports	Analyses of political and economic framework conditions	Review of annual project progress reports, semi-structured interviews with selected CONANP and GIZ project staff	Changes which occurred during project are documented in project progress reports.
		2. How were the changes dealt with regarding the project concept?	List of changes identified and related project adaptation	Annual project progress reports	No need	Review of annual project progress reports, semi-structured interviews with selected CONANP and GIZ project staff	Changes lead to adapting project concept at implementation or even concept level.

* The 'project concept' encompasses project objective and (ToC***) with outputs, activities, instruments and results hypotheses as well as the implementation strategy (e.g. methodological approach, CD-strategy, results hypotheses).

** In the GIZ safeguards system risks are assessed before project start regarding following aspects: gender, conflict, human rights, environment and climate. For the topics gender and human rights not only risks but also potentials are assessed. Before introducing the new safeguard system in 2016 GIZ used to examine these aspects in separate checks.

*** Theory of change = GIZ results model = graphic illustration and narrative results hypotheses.

Effectiveness

	Assessment dimension	Evaluation questions (pilot phase, work in progress)	Evaluation indicator	Available data sources	Additional data collection	Evaluation strategy (evaluation design, method, procedure)	Expected evidence strength (narrative)
Effectiveness	2.1 The project achieved the objective (outcome) on time in accordance with the project objective indicators.* max. 40 points	1.To what extent has the agreed project obective (outcome) been achieved (or will be achieved until end of project), measured against the objective indicators? Are additional indicators needed to reflect the project objective adequately?	Level of achievement of project indicators at outcome level (% achieved, content)	Annual project progress reports, Indicator sheets of the GIZ results monitor, evidences (documentation) of indicator achievments	Project's final report (if available at evaluation mission date)	Review of documents	Do the identified indicators fully allow to measure the achievement of the project objective?
		2. To what extent is it foreseeable that unachieved aspects of the project objective will be achieved during the current project term?	Not applicable, because project is finalized.	Not applicable, because project is finalized.	Not applicable, because project is finalized.	Not applicable, because project is finalized.	Not applicable, because project is finalized.
	2.2 The activities and outputs of the project contributed substantially to the project objective achievement (outcome).* max. 30 points	1. To what extent have the agreed project outputs been achieved (or will be achieved until end of project), measured against the output indicators? Are additional indicators needed to reflect the outputs adequately?	Level of achievement of project indicators at output level (% achieved, content)	Annual project progress reports, Indicator sheets of the GIZ results monitor, evidences (documentation) of indicator achievments	Project's final report (if available at evaluation mission date)	Review of documents, interviews with GIZ project staff (regarding answering the question if all what the project has achieved is reflected by the outputs and its indicators)	Were the project outputs achieved by at least 90%?
		2. How does project contribute via activities, instruments and outputs to the achievement project objective (outcome)? (contribution-analysis approach)	Clear logical and cause-effect related linkages between the actions implemented by the project and the achievement of the project objective depicted in project progress reporting.	Project proposal, results matrix, results model, actors map, capacity development strategy, annual project progress reports, project documentation on 'lessons-learnt'	Project's final report (if available at evaluation mission date)	Review of documents.	There must be clear logical and cause-effect related linkages between the actions implemented by the project and the achievement of the project objective.

	Assessment dimension	Evaluation questions (pilot phase, work in progress)	Evaluation indicator	Available data sources	Additional data collection	Evaluation strategy (evaluation design, method, procedure)	Expected evidence strength (narrative)
		3. Implementation strategy: Which factors in the implementation contribute successfully to or hinder the achievement of the project objective? (e.g. external factors, managerial setup of project and company, cooperation management)	Success and hinderance factors identified and described.	Annual project progress reports	Project's final report (if available at evaluation mission date)	Review of documents, guided, semi-structured interviews of key stakeholders and GIZ project staff	Clear description of factors which influenced the project achievments.
		4. What other/alternative factors contributed to the fact that the objective was achieved or not achieved?	Other factors for having achieved the objective are described	Annual project progress reports	Project's final report (if available at evaluation mission date)	Consultation of stakeholders and GIZ project staff in workshop format meetings	Clear description of other factors which influenced the project achievments.
		5. What would have happened without the project?	Description of scenario of situation without project intervention	None	No need	Consultation of core stakeholders / partners by semi-structured interviews in focus group discussion format.	Brief description of at least one scenario what would have happened without the project.
		6. To what extent have risks (see also Safeguards & Gender) and assumptions of the theory of change been addressed in the implementation and steering of the project?	List of risks that were relevant during project implementation and description of how these were relevant (if this applies)	Project proposal, results matrix, annual project progress reports	Project's final report (if available at evaluation mission date)	Review of documents	Description of risks/assumptions that were addressed during project implementation.
	2.3 No project-related negative results have occured – and if any negative results occured the project responded adequately. The occurrence of additional (not formally agreed) positive results has been monitored and additional opportunities for further positive results have	1. Which negative or positive unintended results does the project produce at output and outcome level and why?	List and description of negative and positive unintended results	Annual project progress reports, project documentation on 'lessons-learnt'	Special reports regarding unintended results	Guided, semi-structured interviews of CONANP staff and other stakeholders, site visits	Description of unintended positive and negative results of the project.
		2. How were risks regarding unintended negative results at the output and outcome level assessed in the monitoring system (e.g. compass)? Were risks already known during concept phase?	Consideration of risks in project's monitoring system	Project monitoring system	No need	Review of evidences of project monitoring system, site visits	Identification of how risks were addressed in the project monitoring system.

	Assessment dimension	Evaluation questions (pilot phase, work in progress)	Evaluation indicator	Available data sources	Additional data collection	Evaluation strategy (evaluation design, method, procedure)	Expected evidence strength (narrative)
	been seized. max. 30 points	3. What measures have been taken by the project to counteract the risks and (if applicable) occured negative results? How far were these measures adequate?	List of measures that counteracted risks, analysis of adequacy of undertaken measures.	Project monitoring system, annual project progress report	Special reports on risk management (if available)	Review of documents, guided interviews of GIZ project staff	If measures to counteract risks were undertaken, these should had been adequate to a large extent.
		4. To what extend were potential unintended positive results at outcome level monitored and exploited?	Description of unintended positive results at the outcome leval	Project monitoring system, annual project progress reports, project documentation on 'lessons-learnt'	No need	Review and analysis of documents.	If there were unintended positive results, these should had been monitored and exploited by the project management.

* The first and the second evaluation dimensions are interrelated: if the contribution of the project to the objective achievement is low (2nd evaluation dimension) this must be considered for the assessment of the first evaluation dimension also.

Impact

	Assessment dimension	Evaluation questions (pilot phase, work in progress)	Evaluation indicator	Available data sources	Additional data collection	Evaluation strategy (evaluation design, method, procedure)	Expected evidence strength (narrative)
	IMPACT (max. 100 points)						
Impact	3.1 The intended overarching development results have occurred or are foreseen.* Max. 40 points	1.To which overarching development results is the project supposed to contribute (cf. module and programme proposal, if no individual measure; indicators, identifiers, link to national strategy for implementing 2030 Agenda, link to SDGs)? Which of these intended results at the level of overarching results can be observed or are plausible to be achieved?	Overarching development results identified and contributions of project attributed	Project proposal (chapter B.3.6.2 Developmental effectiveness at the level of the TC-measure, dvelopmental impact), annual project progress reports	Project's final report (if available at evaluation mission date)	Agreement on 'overarching development results' between evaluators and GIZ project management; review of documents; guided interviews of high-level CONANP and other government agencies' representatives	Clear identification of 'overarching development results' and the related project contributions.
		2. Target group and 'Leave No One Behind' (LNOB): Is there evidence of results achieved at target group level/specific groups of population? To what extent have targeted marginalised groups (such as women, children, young people, the elderly, people with disabilities, indigenous peoples, refugees, IDPs and migrants, people living with HIV/AIDS and the poorest of the poor) been reached?	Collection of results at target group level	Annual project progress reporst, project documentation 'lessons-learnt', technical reports related to cattle ranching	Project's final report (if available at evaluation mission date)	Review of documentation, guided interviews of high-level CONANP and other government agencies' representatives	Clear description of impacts on target group.
	3.2 The outcome of the project contributed to the occured or forseen overarching development results.* Max. 30 points	1. To what extent is it plausible that the results of the project on outcome level (project objective) contributed or will contribute to the overarching results? (contribution-analysis approach)	Overarching development results identified and contributions of project attributed	Project proposal (chapter B.3.6.2 Developmental effectiveness at the level of the TC-measure, developmental impact), annual project progress reports	Project's progress report 2018 (end of project)	Semi-structured guided interview of CONANP staff and other stakeholders, document review	Clear identification of 'overarching development results' and the related project contributions.

	Assessment dimension	Evaluation questions (pilot phase, work in progress)	Evaluation indicator	Available data sources	Additional data collection	Evaluation strategy (evaluation design, method, procedure)	Expected evidence strength (narrative)
		2. What are the alternative explanations/factors for the results observed? (e.g. the activities of other stakeholders, other policies)	Identification and description of alternative explanations/factors	None known	Partner documents: e.g. monitoring data	Guided interviews of key stakeholders	Alternative explanations/factors for results identified and described.
		3. What would have happened without the project?	Description of scenario of situation without project intervention	None	No need	Consultation (scenario development) of stakeholders in workshop format meetings	Brief description of at least one scenario what would have happened without the project.
		4. To what extent is the impact of the project positively or negatively influenced by framework conditions, other policy areas, strategies or interests (German ministries, bilateral and multilateral development partners)? What are the consequences of the project?	Description of the framework conditions which influenced the project impact	Annual project progress reports, project documentation on 'lessons-learnt'	Project's final report (if available at evaluation mission date)	Review of documents, guided interviews of key stakeholders and GIZ project staff	
		5. To what extent has the project made an active and systematic contribution to widespread impact? (4 dimensions: relevance, quality, quantity, sustainability; scaling-up approaches: vertical, horizontal, functional or combined)? If not, could there have been potential? Why was the potential not exploited?	Contributions of the project to widespread impact identified and described.	Annual project progress reports, project documentation on 'lessons-learnt'	Project's final report (if available at evaluation mission date)	Review of documents, guided interviews of key stakeholders and GIZ project staff	At least 2 contributions of the project to widespread impact identified and described, if there are any.
	3.3 No project-related negative results at impact level have occured – and if any negative results occured the project responded adequately.	1. Which positive or negative unintended results at impact level can be observed? Are there negative trade-offs between the ecological, economic and social dimensions (according to the three dimensions of sustainability in the Agenda 2030)? Were positive synergies between the three dimensions exploited?	List and discription of negative and positive unintended results	Annual project progress reports, project documentation on 'lessons-learnt'	Special reports regarding unintended results	Semi-structured guided interviews of CONANP staff and other stakeholders, document review	Description of unintended positive and negative results of the project.

	Assessment dimension	Evaluation questions (pilot phase, work in progress)	Evaluation indicator	Available data sources	Additional data collection	Evaluation strategy (evaluation design, method, procedure)	Expected evidence strength (narrative)
	The occurrence of additional (not formally agreed) positive results at impact level has been monitored and additional opportunities for further positive results have been seized. Max. 30 points	2. To what extent were risks of unintended results at the impact level assessed in the monitoring system (e.g. compass)? Were risks already known during the planning phase?	Consideration of risks in project's monitoring system	Project monitoring system	No need	Review of evidences of project monitoring system	Identification of how risks were addressed in the project monitoring system.
		3. What measures have been taken by the project to avoid and counteract the risks/negative results/trade-offs**?	List of measures that counteracted risks, analysis of adequacy of undertaken measures.	Project monitoring system, annual project progress report	Special reports on risk management (if available)	Review of documents, guided interviews of GIZ project staff	If measures to counteract risks were undertaken, these should had been adequate to a large extent.
		4. To what extent have the framework conditions for the negative results played a role? How did the project react to this?	Description of unintended negative results at the outcome level	Project monitoring system, annual project progress reports, project documentation on 'lessons-learnt'	No need	Review and analysis of documents.	If there were unintended positive results, these should had been monitored and exploited by the project management.
		5. To what extend were potential unintended positive results and potential synergies between the ecological, economic and social dimensions monitored and exploited?	Description of unintended positive results and synergies	Project monitoring system, annual project progress reports, project documentation on 'lessons-learnt'	No need	Review and analysis of documents.	If there were unintended positive results and synergies, these should had been monitored and exploited by the project management.

* The first and the second evaluation dimensions are interrelated: if the contribution of the project outcome to the impact is low or not plausible (2nd evaluation dimension) this must be considered for the assessment of the first evaluation dimension also.

** risks, negative results and trade-offs are separate aspects and are all to be discussed here.

Efficiency

	Assessment dimension	Evaluation questions	Evaluation indicators	Evaluation indicator achievement	Available data sources	Additional data collection	Evaluation strategy (evaluation design, method, procedure)	Expected evidence strength (narrative)
Efficiency	**EFFICIENCY (max. 100 points)**			**0%, 25%, 50%, 75% 100%**				
	4.1 The project's use of resources is appropriate with regard to the outputs achieved. [Production efficiency: Resources/Outputs] Max. 70 points	1 To what extent are there deviations between the identified costs and the projected costs? What are the reasons for the identified deviation(s)?	Das Vorhaben steuert seine Ressourcen gemäß des geplanten Kostenplans (Kostenzeilen). Nur bei nachvollziehbarer Begründung erfolgen Abweichungen vom Kostenplan.		Obligo report of the project by the end of the project, annual project progress reports	Project's final report (if available at evaluation mission date)	Review of documents	The project used the resources as planned and substantiated changes and communicated these to GIZ headquarter and BMZ
		2 Focus: To what extent could the outputs have been maximised with the same amount of resources and under the same framework conditions and with the same or better quality (maximum principle)? (methodological minimum standard: Follow-the-money approach)	Das Vorhaben reflektiert, ob die vereinbarten Wirkungen mit den vorhandenen Mitteln erreicht werden können.		Annual project progress report, Obligo report of the project by the end of the project, annual project progress reports Obligo report of the project by the end of the project	Minutes meetings GIZ project management group, minutes meetings GIZ project management with GIZ country director, project's final report (if available at evaluation mission date) Project's final report (if available at evaluation mission date) Project's final report (if available at evaluation mission date)	Review of documents Review of documents Define what means 'reasonable relation' (evaluators in consultation with central evaluation unit of GIZ), calculation of relation of overall costs to the costs related to the outputs	Regular reflections of GIZ project management/team on efficient use of project funds are documented. The project used the resources as planned and substantiated changes and communicated these to GIZ headquarter and BMZ The overall costs did not exceed XX% of the entire project cost.
			Das Vorhaben steuert seine Ressourcen gemäß der geplanten Kosten für die vereinbarten Leistungen (Outputs). Nur bei nachvollziehbarer Begründung erfolgen Abweichungen von den Kosten.					
			Die übergreifenden Kosten des Vorhabens stehen in einem angemessen Verhältnis zu den Kosten für die Outputs.					

	Assessment dimension	Evaluation questions	Evaluation indicators	Evaluation indicator achievement	Available data sources	Additional data collection	Evaluation strategy (evaluation design, method, procedure)	Expected evidence strength (narrative)
			Die durch ZASS Aufschriebe erbrachten Leistungen haben einen nachvollziehbaren Mehrwert für die Erreichung der Outputs des Vorhabens.		Obligo report of the project by the end of the project		Review of documents, guided interview with GIZ project management team (meeting)	For each ZASS notation there is at least one tangible benefit for the output level
		3 Focus: To what extent could outputs have been maximised by reallocating resources between the outputs? (methodological minimum standard: Follow-the-money approach)	Das Vorhaben steuert seine Ressourcen, um andere Outputs schneller/ besser zu erreichen, wenn Outputs erreicht wurden bzw. diese nicht erreicht werden können (Schlussevaluierung).		Obligo report of the project by the end of the project, annual project progress reports	Project's final report (if available at evaluation mission date)	Review of documents	Description and rationale of changes in financial resources assignment to outputs (if viable)
		4 Were the output/resource ratio and alternatives carefully considered during the design and implementation process – and if so, how? (methodological minimum standard: Follow-the-money approach)	Das im Modulvorschlag vorgeschlagene Instrumentenkonzept konnte hinsichtlich der veranschlagten Kosten in Bezug auf die angestrebten Outputs des Vorhabens gut realisiert werden.		Project proposal (offer to BMZ), obligo report of the project by the end of the project, annual project progress reports	Project's final report (if available at evaluation mission date)	Review of documents	Implementation of the instruments concept was possible as planned, regarding related costs; or changes of the instruments concept were possible with available funds
			Die im Modulvorschlag vorgeschlagene Partnerkonstellation und die damit verbundenen Interventionsebenen konnte hinsichtlich der veranschlagten Kosten in Bezug auf die angestrebten Outputs des Vorhaben gut realisiert werden.		Project proposal (offer to BMZ), obligo report of the project by the end of the project, annual project progress reports	Project's final report (if available at evaluation mission date)	Review of documents	Working with partners (constellation and levels) was possible as planned, regarding related costs; or changes in the partner landscape were possible with available funds

	Assessment dimension	Evaluation questions	Evaluation indicators	Evaluation indicator achievement	Available data sources	Additional data collection	Evaluation strategy (evaluation design, method, procedure)	Expected evidence strength (narrative)
			Der im Modulvorschlag vorgeschlagene thematische Zuschnitte für das Vorhaben konnte hinsichtlich der veranschlagten Kosten in Bezug auf die angestrebten Outputs des Vorhabens gut realisiert werden.		Project proposal (offer to BMZ), obligo report of the project by the end of the project, annual project progress reports	Project's final report (if available at evaluation mission date)	Review of documents	Implementation of the originally proposed technical topics was possible as planned, regarding related costs; or changes of technical topics were possible with available funds
			Die im Modulvorschlag beschriebenen Risiken sind hinsichtlich der veranschlagten Kosten in Bezug auf die angestrebten Outputs des Vorhabens gut nachvollziehbar.		Project proposal (offer to BMZ), obligo report of the project by the end of the project, annual project progress reports	Project's final report (if available at evaluation mission date)	Review of documents	The management of risks was possible as planned, regarding related costs; or changes with respect to risks (new risks, higher level) were possible with available funds
			Die im Modulvorschlag beschriebene Reichweite des Vorhabens (z.B. Regionen) konnte hinsichtlich der veranschlagten Kosten in Bezug auf die angestrebten Outputs des Vorhabens voll realisiert werden.		Project proposal (offer to BMZ), obligo report of the project by the end of the project, annual project progress reports	Project's final report (if available at evaluation mission date)	Review of documents	The implementation of the project was possible in the regions as originally planned, regarding related costs; or changes of the implementation areas were possible with available funds
			Der im Modulvorschlag beschriebene Ansatz des Vorhaben hinsichtlich der zu erbringenden Outputs entspricht unter den gegebenen Rahmenbedingungen dem state-of-the-art.		Project proposal (offer to BMZ), obligo report of the project by the end of the project, annual project progress reports	Project's final report (if available at evaluation mission date)	Review of documents	Implementation of the instruments concept was possible as planned, regarding related costs; or changes of the instruments concept were possible with available funds
	4.2 The project's use of resources is appropriate with regard to achieving the projects objective (outcome). [Allocation efficiency:	6 To what extent could the outcome have been maximised with the same amount of resources and the same or better quality (maximum principle)?	Das Vorhaben orientiert sich an internen oder externen Vergleichsgrößen, um seine Wirkungen kosteneffizient zu erreichen.					

	Assessment dimension	Evaluation questions	Evaluation indicators	Evaluation indicator achievement	Available data sources	Additional data collection	Evaluation strategy (evaluation design, method, procedure)	Expected evidence strength (narrative)
	Resources/Outcome] Max. 30 points	7 Were the outcome-resources ratio and alternatives carefully considered during the conception and implementation process – and if so, how? Were any scaling-up options considered?	Das Vorhaben steuert seine Ressourcen zwischen den Outputs, so dass die maximalen Wirkungen im Sinne des Modulziels erreicht werden. (Schlussevaluierung)					
			Das im Modulvorschlag vorgeschlagene Instrumentenkonzept konnte hinsichtlich der veranschlagten Kosten in Bezug auf das angestrebte Modulziel des Vorhabens gut realisiert werden.					
			Die im Modulvorschlag vorgeschlagene Partnerkonstellation und die damit verbundenen Interventionsebenen konnte hinsichtlich der veranschlagten Kosten in Bezug auf das angestrebte Modulziel des Vorhaben gut realisiert werden.					
			Der im Modulvorschlag vorgeschlagene thematische Zuschnitte für das Vorhaben konnte hinsichtlich der veranschlagten Kosten in Bezug auf das angestrebte Modulziel des Vorhabens gut realisiert werden.					
			Die im Modulvorschlag beschriebenen Risiken sind hinsichtlich der veranschlagten Kosten in Bezug auf das angestrebte Modulziel des Vorhabens gut nachvollziehbar.					
			Die im Modulvorschlag beschriebene Reichweite des Vorhabens (z.B. Regionen) konnte hinsichtlich der					

	Assessment dimension	Evaluation questions	Evaluation indicators	Evaluation indicator achievement	Available data sources	Additional data collection	Evaluation strategy (evaluation design, method, procedure)	Expected evidence strength (narrative)
			veranschlagten Kosten in Bezug auf das angestrebte Modulziel des Vorhabens voll realisiert werden.					
			Der im Modulvorschlag beschriebene Ansatz des Vorhaben hinsichtlich das zu erbringenden Modulziels entspricht unter den gegebenen Rahmenbedingungen dem state-of-the-art.					
		8 To what extent were more results achieved through synergies and/or leverage of more resources, with the help of other bilateral and multilateral donors and organisations (e.g. Kofi)? If so, was the relationship between costs and results appropriate?	Das Vorhaben unternimmt die notwendigen Schritte, um Synergien mit Interventionen anderer Geber auf der Wirkungsebene vollständig zu realisieren.		Project proposal (offer to BMZ), annual project progress reports, project documentation 'lessons-learnt'	Information regarding donor projects in sector / geographical area	Identification of synergies with projects of other donors (evaluators and GIZ project staff), guieded interviews of GIZ project staff, as well as CONANP and federal states representatives	There are at least 2 coordination/cooperation measures with other donor projects in the area (geographical or thematic), if relevant
			Wirtschaftlichkeitsverluste durch unzureichende Koordinierung und Komplementarität zu Interventionen anderer Geber werden ausreichend vermieden.	This indicator is not possible to measure!				
			Das Vorhaben unternimmt die notwendigen Schritte, um Synergien innerhalb der deutschen EZ vollständig zu realisieren.		Project proposal (offer to BMZ), annual project progress reports, project documentation 'lessons-learnt'	No need	Document review	Synergies with at least 1 project of the German development cooperation are achieved and described.

	Assessment dimension	Evaluation questions	Evaluation indicators	Evaluation indicator achievement	Available data sources	Additional data collection	Evaluation strategy (evaluation design, method, procedure)	Expected evidence strength (narrative)
			Wirtschaftlichkeitsverluste durch unzureichende Koordinierung und Komplementarität innerhalb der deutschen EZ werden ausreichend vermieden.		Project documentation 'lessons-learnt, annual project progress reports, BMZ country strategy	Project proposals of other projects of German development cooperatin (eventually)	Identification of possible economic losses due to unefficient coordination with other projects of German development cooperation are identified and analysed (by evaluators)	At least 2 possible losses are identified and assessed (if relevant)
			Die Kombifinanzierung hat zu einer signifikanten Ausweitung der Wirkungen geführt bzw. diese ist zu erwarten.	No co-financing	No co-financing	No co-financing	No co-financing	No co-financing
			Durch die Kombifinanzierung sind die übergreifenden Kosten im Verhältnis zu den Gesamtkosten nicht überproportional gestiegen.	No co-financing	No co-financing	No co-financing	No co-financing	No co-financing
			Die Partnerbeiträge stehen in einem angemessenen Verhältnis zu den Kosten für die Outputs des Vorhabens		Project proposal (offer to BMZ), annual project progress reports, project documentation 'lessons-learnt'	No need	Define what means 'reasonable relation' (evaluators in consultation with central evaluation unit of GIZ), calculation of relation of partner contributions to the BMZ funding.	Partners' financial and in-kind countributions to the project sum to at least 10 % of the amount of BMZ funding.

Sustainability

	Assessment dimension	Evaluation questions (pilot phase, work in progress)	Evaluation indicator	Available data sources	Additional data collection	Evaluation strategy (evaluation design, method, procedure)	Expected evidence strength (narrative)
Sustainability	5.1 Prerequisite for ensuring the long-term success of the project: Results are anchored in (partner) structures Max. 50 points	1. What has the project done to ensure that the results can be sustained in the medium to long term by the partners themselves?	List with description of measures ensuring sustainability	Project proposal (chapter B.3.6.2 Developmental effectiveness at the level of the TC-measure, sustainability), annual project progress reports, project documentation on 'lessons-learnt', project documentation 'lessons-learnt', project document 'reflection on DAC criteria in the project'	No need	Consultation of CONANP representatives in workshop format meeting, review and analysis of documents	Clear identification and description on how the project results will be sustained in the medium to long term.
		2. In which way are advisory contents, approaches, methods or concepts of the project anchored/institutionalised in the (partner) system?	List with linkages between advisory contents, etc. and evidences of their anchorage in partner systems (CONANP and federal state agencies)	Project documentation 'lessons-learnt', annual project progress reports	Partner documents: e.g. planning and monitoring procedures, etc.; project's final report (if available at evaluation mission date)	Review and analysis of documents, guided interviews of selected CONANP and state agencies staff	There are clear, evidence-based examples on how the advisory contents, approaches, methods or concepts of the project anchored/institutionalised in the partner system, in particular CONANP and federal state agencies?
		3. To what extent are the results continuously used and/or further developed by the target group and/or implementing partners?	List with examples of project results which are continuously used and/or further developed by target group or implementing partners	Project documentation 'lessons-learnt', technical project documents related to the topics 'tourism' and 'cattle ranching'	Information of use and further development of project results provided by target group organisations or implementing partners closely working with the target group.	Evaluators identify issues of relevance for target group together with representatives of key stakeholders, consultation of target group representatives (group interviews), guided interviews of representatives of implementing partners	X examples of project results which are continuously used and/or further developed by target group or implementing partners
		4. To what extent are resources and capacities at the individual, organisational or societal/political level in the partner country available (longer-term) to ensure the	Description of availability of resources and capacities in Mexico to ensure the continuation of the project results achieved	Annual project progress reports,	Information on resources and capacities provided by Mexican partner organisations, project's final report (if available at evaluation mission date)	Guided interviews of CONANP, federal state agencies and GIZ project representatives	There are at least 3 examples on how resources and capacities provided by Mexican partner organisation will ensure the continuation of project results

	Assessment dimension	Evaluation questions (pilot phase, work in progress)	Evaluation indicator	Available data sources	Additional data collection	Evaluation strategy (evaluation design, method, procedure)	Expected evidence strength (narrative)
		continuation of the results achieved?					
		5. What is the project's exit strategy? How are lessons learnt prepared and documented?	There is a clear description of the project's lessons-learnt	Project documentation 'lessons-learnt', workshop documentation	Project's final report (if available at evaluation mission date)	Document review, interviews of key stakeholders	The description of the project's lessons-learnt was presented to and discussed with key stakeholders
	5.2 Forecast of durability: Results of the project are permanent, stable and long-term resilient. Max. 50 points	1. To what extent are the results (outcome and impact) of the project durable, stable and resilient in the long-term under the given conditions?	Rapid assessment by key actors state to which extent the project results are sustainable in the long run	None	No need	Guided interviews of CONANP, federal state agencies and GIZ project representatives	Key actors state that at least 30 % the project results are sustainable in the long run.
		2. What risks and potentials are emerging for the durability of the results (outcome and impact) and how likely are these factors to occur? What has the project done to reduce these risks?	Rapid assessment by key actors state future risks and potential for the project results	None	No need	Guided interviews of CONANP, federal state agencies and GIZ project representatives	Risks and potentials for the durability of the project results are identified.

Predecessor, other questions

	Assessment dimension	Evaluation questions (pilot phase, only available in German so far)	Evaluation indicator	Available data sources	Additional data collection	Evaluation strategy (evaluation design, method, procedure)	Expected evidence strength (narrative)
Predec							

	Assessment dimension	Evaluation questions (pilot phase, only available in German so far)	Evaluation indicator	Available data sources	Additional data collection	Evaluation strategy (evaluation design, method, procedure)	Expected evidence strength (narrative)
	Sustainability and impact of predecessor project	1. Overview of the effects of the project over time (predecessor)	The project did not have a predecessor project.				
		2 a) What effects are still there, have been further developed on-site? b) Which effects have been integrated into the current phase?					
		3 Success / failure factors					
		4 How were results contributed to improvements in partner structure? (Sustainability)					
	Follow-on project	1. To what extent did the follow-on project consider lessons-learnt, also regarding critical aspects, of the project in its concept (project proposal, results matrix, results logic)?	Consideration of lessons-learnt / conclusions of project in project planning of follow-on project	Project proposal (offer to BMZ), results matrix, results model of predecessor; project documentation 'lessons-learnt' (in particular 'conclusions')	Project's final report (if available at evaluation mission date)	Document review, consultation of key stakeholders and GIZ project staff in workshop format meetings	At least 3 lessons-learnt/conclusions of the project have been considered in the planning of the follow-on project.
		2. Does the follow-on measure build on the results of the project?	Consideration of major project achievements in project planning of follow-on project	Project proposal (offer to BMZ), results matrix, results model of predecessor; project documentation 'lessons-learnt' (in particular 'conclusions')	Project's final report (if available at evaluation mission date)	Document review, consultation of key stakeholders and GIZ project staff in workshop format meetings	The concept of the follow-on project have been built at least on 2 major achievements of the project.

	Assessment dimension	Evaluation questions (pilot phase, only available in German so far)	Evaluation indicator	Available data sources	Additional data collection	Evaluation strategy (evaluation design, method, procedure)	Expected evidence strength (narrative)
		3. Which changes in the framework conditions are taken into account by the follow-on project?	Changes of framework conditions are identified and considered in follow-on project	Project proposal (offer to BMZ), results matrix, results model of predecessor; project documentation 'lessons-learnt' (in particular 'conclusions'), annual project progress reports	Project's final report (if available at evaluation mission date)	Document review	All relevant changes in framework conditions are considered in the concept of the follow-on measure.
	Additional Questions	Emphasize the evaluation of gender inclusion in livestock projects. The evaluation should also focus on the 'success factors' of Capacity WORKS. Special attention shall be paid to the varying realities of the target groups (urban vs. rural). As the government of Mexico disposes of relevant financial resources and development programmes, the question is what a project like the subject at hand could achieve with relatively modest financial resources – describe the leverage effect the project had in the partner system. What did the project contribute in the context of the GIZ biodiversity cluster in Mexico? What was the added value of the project, focusing on anchoring the topic of biodiversity conservation in the cluster and also in the government system? Verify, based on this concrete project, the meaningfulness of combining content-wise and commercial approach of project evaluation.					

	Assessment dimension	Evaluation questions (pilot phase, only available in German so far)	Evaluation indicator	Available data sources	Additional data collection	Evaluation strategy (evaluation design, method, procedure)	Expected evidence strength (narrative)
		Had the project and, if affirmative, which significance to positively influence national sector policies?					

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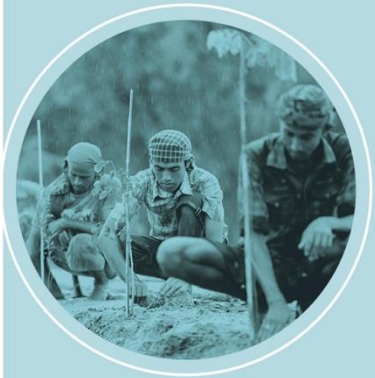

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