Piloting AI in Climate Change Evaluations

Synthesis Report on Forestry Interventions

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The findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Adaptation Fund, Climate Investment Funds, Green Climate Fund, or Global Environment Facility, nor their evaluation offices/units.

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This report was published prior to the finalization of the Green Climate Fund's updated branding and logo.

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Preface

This report presents an AI learning and stocktaking exercise jointly commissioned by the evaluation offices of the Adaptation Fund, the Climate Investment Funds, the Green Climate Fund and the Global Environment Facility. Building on a previous study carried out by evaluators on forestry work across the funds this study used AI to explore existing evaluation material on the four funds' forestry and sustainable forest management interventions. It demonstrates how AI can be applied to extract and organise findings from a large and varied body of documents.

As a first attempt of its kind, the exercise is primarily an exploration of method. Its value lies in showing what AI can do (and can't do) with a large and diverse evidence base, and in laying groundwork for future evaluative work. It was not designed to answer a defined evaluative question, or to synthesize the recommendations of the underlying evaluations. Nor does it assess or compare the funds' performance. This preface offers some guidance for reading the material and highlights opportunities to build on it.

Reading the material

The four funds support forestry through different mandates, instruments and types of intervention, and their portfolios vary considerably in scale and scope. The portfolio information in Table 2 is drawn from different sources and reporting bases, and is not available in the same form for every fund. It is intended as context rather than as a basis for comparison.

The exercise draws on 191 documents published from 2018 onward that the funds identified as forestry-related. These comprise 165 project-level reports, 22 aggregate reports such as thematic and portfolio evaluations, and four other documents. The 11,564 findings mentioned in the report are text excerpts identified by the AI model and tagged against the OECD DAC criteria, and the number per document varies widely.

The documents also differ in methodology, scope, timing and type, so the underlying data are not fully comparable. The mix of documents differs across funds; the GCF and CIF material, for example, consists mainly of aggregate reports or programmatic evaluations whereas GEF and AF material was more focused on individual projects. The volume of findings on a given criterion or theme largely reflects what the evaluations examined rather than relative performance. This applies, for example, to the larger number of findings on effectiveness than on coherence, and on adaptation than on mitigation. Throughout, statements about results are best read as describing what the evaluations report – for example, that the evaluations reviewed predominantly report positive findings on relevance.

Reflections on the approach

The exercise offers useful pointers for refining the method. Findings were coded as positive or negative. Future applications could also capture the mixed or qualified judgements that are common in evaluation reports. Co-financing and scaling, presented here under efficiency, might in future be treated as a distinct financing dimension, with efficiency aligned more closely to the OECD DAC definition. The report documents how the method was adapted as the work progressed, including the addition of a coding step to support quantification. The exercise suggests that AI is well suited to identifying and organising evidence at a scale that manual review could not match, while the interpretation, weighting and contextualisation of that evidence continue to rest with evaluators. Future exercises could build on this by setting out more fully what AI adds relative to a conventional synthesis, and the human validation and quality assurance applied.

Building on this work

The evidence brought together here opens promising avenues for future evaluative work. Sustainability stands out as an area worth deeper examination, particularly what distinguishes interventions whose results are sustained. Likely factors include financing, institutional capacity, country ownership, exit strategies, and mechanisms for replication and scaling. Recurring factors such as implementation timeframes, stakeholder engagement, coordination and project design could also be synthesized systematically, together with the recommendations of the underlying evaluations. Such work could help answer a broader question of shared interest: when, why and under what conditions do climate-financed forestry interventions achieve and sustain results?

The experience also offers practical lessons for commissioning. Future AI-assisted work could be framed around a defined evaluative question from the start. It could also build the evaluation units' standards, terminology and reporting conventions into the terms of reference, contractor selection and inception phase. Further attention needs to be given to the framing and refinement of prompts in order to generate more relevant outputs. This was exactly the learning that we sought to generate through this piece of work and has highlighted the costs, skills, ethical considerations, and governance structures needed to do this kind of work well. Together, these lessons will help the next generation of such exercises deliver both methodological innovation and evaluative insight.

We welcome this report as a valuable first step that will inform our individual and collective work on using AI to support evaluative work and the way we synthesize insights and recommendations across very large data sets. This has been an important opportunity to learn together and we share this experience not as conclusive results but as a site for engagement and learning with others interested in this topic.

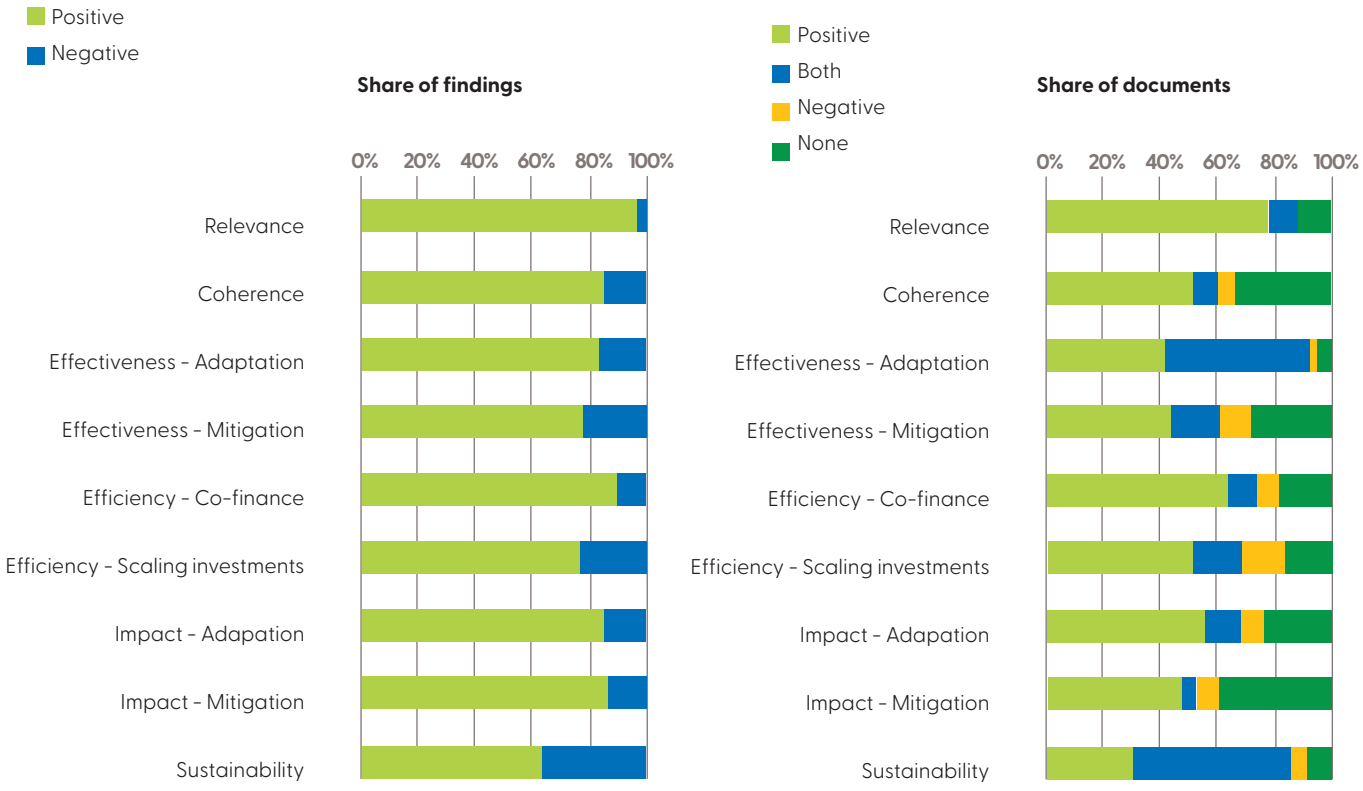
Executive summary

This report synthesizes evidence from evaluation reports related to forestry interventions funded by the four climate funds – Adaptation Fund (AF), Climate Investment Funds (CIF), Green Climate Fund (GCF), and Global Environment Facility (GEF). The four funds have compiled a body of recent evaluation reports related to their forestry projects. This report is the result of a pilot exercise exploring the potential for using artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) to synthesize these evaluation reports. The objective of the synthesis evaluation is to extract, organize, and analyse findings from existing evaluations to identify patterns, lessons, and insights. The objective is not to compare performance across the four funds. This report is accompanied by a second report: "Lessons learned from the use of AI in synthesis evaluation" (not publicly available).

Findings

The synthesis summarizes 11,564 individual findings extracted from 191 forestry-related evaluation documents. This report does not assess forestry programmes directly but rather synthesizes what 191 existing evaluations say about those programmes. A "finding" corresponds to an evaluation finding made in an evaluation report, corresponding to one of six OECD DAC criteria (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability) and their sub-metrics. Findings are classified as either positive or negative. On an overarching level, most findings identified are of a positive nature; in fact, most documents include only positive findings for many of the criteria examined. For all criteria, a sizable portion of documents reviewed did not have any findings related to the criteria, but with variations across criteria. Figure 1 summarizes all findings and documents.

Figure 1: Summary overview (share of findings n = 11,564) (share of documents n = 191)



Summary per criteria (see Annex I: Methodology for detailed metrics and definitions)

Relevance (To what extent are projects aligned with local needs?). Across the portfolio, forestry interventions are consistently judged relevant to country contexts. Of 1,081 relevance findings, 1,039 are positive, reflecting clear alignment with national strategies (NDCs, NAPs, forest policies), priority agendas such as food and water security, and livelihood and resilience needs. The relatively few negatives point to familiar pitfalls: designs that were too ambitious for the time frame or capacity available, thin preparatory analysis, and gaps in stakeholder inclusion – particularly around gender and Indigenous Peoples.

Coherence (To what extent are projects coherent with other climate fund projects?). Evidence on coherence is largely favourable. Out of 467 coherence findings, 399 highlight complementarities with other climate fund programmes and donor initiatives, plus instances of aligned planning and coordination platforms. Where coherence falters (68 negatives), the issues tend to be structural rather than technical: institutional silos that limit collaboration, misaligned implementation schedules across programs, and linkages between actors that remain on paper rather than in practice.

Effectiveness (To what extent are projects achieving their intended outcomes?). Effectiveness is the largest evidence block (5,961 findings), and the balance is positive (4,925). Most verified results are on the adaptation side (4,953 findings, 4,144 positive), including improved livelihoods, adoption of sustainable forest/land practices (SFM/SLM), strengthened ecosystem services, and institutional and community capacities. Meanwhile, mitigation outcomes are relatively more rare (1,008 findings, 781 positive) – e.g., avoided deforestation, increased carbon stocks, and improved measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) capacity. These appear less frequently than under adaptation and are more often associated with verification challenges. Where effectiveness is weaker, explanations include short implementation windows, design and management constraints, and contexts where mitigation was not a primary objective.

Efficiency (To what extent are funds scaling up in investments in the forestry sector?). Efficiency evidence (1,330 findings) shows a positive tilt (1,090), especially around co-financing (688 total; 606 positive), with contributions from governments and multilateral development banks (MDBs) in both cash and in-kind forms. However, consistency and verification of co-financing commitments are recurring concerns, and "booked" versus "mobilized" finance is not always clear. The picture on scaling up investments is mixed (642 total; 484 positive; 158 negative). Projects frequently report replication, supportive policy/regulatory changes, follow-on finance, and geographic expansion, but these gains are offset by limited extension/market linkages, short project durations, and uncertain longer-term financing models.

Impact (What are the impacts (mitigation, adaptation) of projects?). Impact findings (977) are mostly positive (832). Adaptation impacts (703 total; 595 positive) are commonly described as emerging or likely, reflecting the short time period between project completion and review. Mitigation impacts (274 total; 237 positive) are documented where robust MRV or results-based mechanisms (e.g., REDD+) are in place, though verification approaches differ across documents and settings.

Sustainability (How likely are impacts to be sustained after completion of projects?). Sustainability presents a more mixed picture (1,748 findings; 1,153 positive and 595 negative). Estimates of durable results are associated with strong community ownership, capable institutions, stable financing mechanisms (e.g., trust funds, revolving funds, payment for ecosystem services (PES), and policy/legal lock-in – supported by knowledge management and multi-agency collaboration. Risks cluster around absent exit strategies, fragile financing, weak coordination/governance, limited pathways for replication, and exposure to external shocks (climate and political).

Acronyms

AF	Adaptation Fund
AF TERG	Technical Evaluation Reference Group of the Adaptation Fund
AI	Artificial Intelligence
CIF	Climate Investment Funds
CIF E&L	Climate Investment Funds – Evaluation and Learning (Initiative)
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GCF IEU	Green Climate Fund – Independent Evaluation Unit
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEF IEO	Global Environment Facility – Independent Evaluation Office
IDAS	International Development Advisory Services
IPLC(s)	Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
KM	Knowledge Management
LLM	Large Language Model
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDB	Multilateral Development Bank
ML	Machine Learning
MRV	Measurement, Reporting and Verification
NAPA	National Adaptation Programme of Action
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
OECD DAC	Organisation for Economic Co operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee
PES	Payment for Ecosystem Services
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (plus conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks)
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Table of Contents

1. Introduction 1

1.1 Introduction 1

1.2 Background 1

1.2.1 Four climate funds 1

1.2.2 Forestry portfolio 2

1.3 Objectives 3

1.3.1 Evaluation questions 4

1.4 Methodology 4

2. Portfolio overview 5

2.1 Sampling frame 5

2.2 Overview of evidence 7

3. Findings 9

3.1 Relevance 9

3.1.1 Positive alignment 9

3.1.2 Challenges 12

3.2 Coherence 14

3.2.1 Positive coherence 14

3.2.2 Challenges 15

3.3 Effectiveness 17

3.3.1 Adaptation 17

3.3.2 Mitigation 20

3.3.3 Challenges 22

3.4 Efficiency 25

3.4.1 Co-financing 25

3.4.2 Scaling up investments 27

3.5 Impact 31

3.5.1 Adaptation impact 31

3.5.2 Mitigation impact 34

3.6 Sustainability 38

4. Conclusions 42

Annex I: Methodology 44

I) Methodology overview 44

II) Use of artificial Intelligence (AI) overview 46

III) Step 1 – Evaluation framework 47
IV) Step 2 – Collect and map documents 47
V) Step 3 – Classification framework 48
VI) Step 4 – Document pre-processing / code metadata 48
VII) Step 5 – Code evidence 48
VIII) Step 6 – Synthesis 49
IX) Step 7 – Re-coding of findings 49
X) Step 8 – Reporting 49
XI) Limitations and challenges 50

Annex II: Detailed frameworks 51
A) Evaluation framework 51
B) Classification framework 53
C) Synthesized framework 55
D) List of documents 64

Annex III: Terms of Reference 76

List of tables

Table 1: Overview of the funds 2
Table 2: Summary of forestry portfolio by fund 2
Table 3: Evaluation criteria, questions and metrics 4
Table 4: Overview of documents assessed (n=191) 5
Table 5: Overview of 11,564 findings 7
Table 6: Overall methodology pre-AI enhancement 44
Table 7: Methodology with and without AI-enhancement 45
Table 8: Final methodology with AI-enhancement 45
Table 9: Example of evidence-coding process 49

List of figures

Figure 1: Summary overview (share of findings n = 11,564) (share of documents n = 191) iii
Figure 2: Portfolio of documents: Activities 6
Figure 3: Portfolio of documents: Intervention types 6
Figure 4: Portfolio of documents: Thematic focus 6
Figure 5: Number of findings for 191 individual documents 8
Figure 6: Number of findings by document type 8
Figure 7: Number of findings per sub-category – Alignment with country needs (positive) 10
Figure 8: Number of findings per sub-category – Alignment with national priorities (positive) 11
Figure 9: Number of findings per sub-category – Alignment with national strategies (positive) 12
Figure 10: Number of findings per sub-category – Alignment with country needs, priorities, strategies (negative) 13
Figure 11: Number of findings per sub-category – Evidence of coordination, complementarity, overlap or conflict with other climate funds (positive) 15
Figure 12: Number of findings per sub-category – Evidence of coordination, complementarity, overlap or conflict with other climate funds (negative) 16
Figure 13: Number of findings per sub-category – Achievement of intended adaptation outcomes (positive) 20
Figure 14: Number of findings per sub-category – Achievement of intended mitigation outcomes (positive) 22

Figure 15: Number of findings per sub-category – Achievement of intended adaptation and mitigation outcomes (negative) 24
Figure 16: Number of findings per sub-category – Evidence of co-financing (negative) 26
Figure 17: Number of findings per sub-category – Scaling up investments in forestry (positive) 28
Figure 18: Number of findings per sub-category – Scaling up investments in forestry (negative) 30
Figure 19: Number of findings per sub-category – Evidence of impact: Adaptation (positive) 33
Figure 20: Number of findings per sub-category – Evidence of impact: Adaptation (negative) 34
Figure 21: Number of findings per sub-category – Evidence of impact: Mitigation (negative) 35
Figure 22: Number of findings per sub-category – Evidence of impact: Mitigation (positive) 37
Figure 23: Number of findings per sub-category – Factor conducive to sustainability (positive) 39
Figure 24: Number of findings per sub-category – Factor conducive to sustainability (negative) 41
Figure 25: Summary overview (share of findings n = 11,564) (share of documents n = 191) 42
Figure 26: Revised steps 5-7, inductive and deductive reasoning 46
Figure 27: AI integration overview 47

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This report represents a synthesis of evidence from evaluation reports related to forestry interventions funded by the four climate funds. The four climate funds (Adaptation Fund (AF), Climate Investment Funds (CIF), Green Climate Fund (GCF), and Global Environment Facility (GEF)), have compiled a body of evaluation reports related to their forestry projects. This report is the result of a pilot exercise exploring the potential for using artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) to support the implementation of a synthesis evaluation based on these evaluation reports. The report is accompanied by a second, internal, report: "Lessons learned from the use of AI in synthesis evaluation" (not publicly available).

As a synthesis evaluation, the report synthesizes existing evidence. This research has been desk based, and all findings are secondary, based on the findings of the existing evaluations. The evidence base consists of a mix of project-level evaluations and reports (e.g., midterm and terminal evaluations of individual projects) and aggregate-level evaluations and studies (e.g., thematic, portfolio, and cross-country reviews). The evaluation is guided by a set of evaluation questions reflecting the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) evaluation framework, grouped by the metrics relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. The objective of the synthesis evaluation is to extract, organize, and analyse findings from existing evaluations to identify patterns, lessons, and insights. The objective is not to compare performance across the four funds.

1.2 Background

1.2.1 Four climate funds

The four climate funds form the backbone of the multilateral climate finance system, channeling billions of dollars of funding towards a broad range of climate-related activities annually. The funds share the overarching goal of supporting developing countries in responding to climate change but differ in their timing, structures, and mandates. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) is the oldest and broadest in scope, the Green Climate Fund (GCF) is the largest and directly linked to the Paris Agreement on climate change, the Climate Investment Funds (CIF) operate through multilateral development banks to drive transformational change, and the Adaptation Fund (AF) focuses solely on adaptation (Table 1).

Table 1: Overview of the funds

	Fund	Established/ Operationalized	What it is	Mandate
ADAPTATION FUND	**Adaptation Fund (AF)**	2001/2009	A fund created under the Kyoto Protocol, financed by carbon market revenues and donor contributions Since 2019, the AF also serves the Paris Agreement.	"Finances projects and programmes that help vulnerable communities in developing countries adapt to climate change."[1]
CIF	**Climate Investment Funds (CIF)**	2008/2009	A partnership between donor and recipient countries, implemented through multilateral development banks.	"Through large-scale, low-cost, long-term financing we lower the risk and cost of climate investment, helping to get first-of-their-kind projects off the ground and contribute to transformational change."[2]
GREEN CLIMATE FUND	**Green Climate Fund (GCF)**	2010/2015	The operating entity of the financial mechanism of the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement; currently the world's largest dedicated climate fund.	"Support developing countries raise and realize their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) ambitions towards low-emissions, climate-resilient pathways."[3]
gef	**Global Environment Facility (GEF)**	1991/1994	The operating entity of the financial mechanism for six UN environmental agreements. A global partnership of governments, international institutions, civil society, and the private sector.	"Support developing countries' work to address the world's most pressing environmental issues. We organize our work around five focal areas – biodiversity loss, chemicals and waste, climate change, international waters, and land degradation."[4]

1.2.2 Forestry portfolios

Each of the four climate funds engages with forestry in different ways, reflecting their institutional mandates and financing modalities. For some, forestry is embedded as part of broader ecosystem – or land-use approaches – while for others it is treated as a dedicated thematic programme or a core strategic focus. The table below provides an overview of how each fund approaches forestry within its portfolio, including the scale of financing and projects involved.

Table 2: Summary of forestry portfolio by fund

Fund	Forestry focus	Scale (Approx)
Adaptation Fund (AF)	**Integrated/cross-cutting:** Although forestry exists as a separate sector, forestry interventions are embedded as a cross-cutting theme across portfolios (e.g. social forestry, mangrove restoration, forest conservation in watershed projects).	Around **68 forestry-related projects,** with activities expected to restore or preserve **0.7 million hectares** of forests and related ecosystems
Climate Investment Funds (CIF)	**Dedicated programme:** The Forest Investment Program (FIP) is a standalone forestry window.	Approximately **59 projects** in 13+ countries, financed with **US$ 675 million** under the Forest Investment Program (FIP), covering more than **30 million hectares** of forest landscapes.
Green Climate Fund (GCF)	**Integrated result area:** Forestry part of "Forests & Land Use" result area (not a stand-alone programme).	**Nearly US$ 1.4 billion** approved for this area, including about US$ 500 million in REDD+ results-based payment pilots.
Global Environment Facility (GEF)	**Core theme:** Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) integrated across biodiversity, climate, and land.	More than **379 projects** completed (at the time of the study), backed by over **US$ 3.5 billion** in cumulative forest-related grants.

1. https://www.adaptation-fund.org/about/
2. https://www.cif.org/how-we-work
3. https://www.greenclimate.fund/about
4. https://www.thegef.org/what-we-do

1.3 Objectives

The purpose of the synthesis evaluation is to pilot a practical application of generative AI and application of large language models (LLMs) in climate evaluations. Based on the findings from a scoping study on the use of AI in evaluations commissioned by the four funds[5] , synthesis evaluations were highlighted as a promising area for the use of AI technology going forward. This synthesis evaluation of forestry projects is an exploratory step, moving from a theoretical assessment of the applicability of AI technology for evaluations to a practical application.

The objective of the study is to synthesize and summarize findings from evaluations of activities and projects of the four funds targeting the forestry sector. This synthesis evaluation is guided by a set of evaluation questions, categorized into OECD DAC Criteria (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability; see 1.3.1 below). The evaluation is strictly based on secondary evidence and does not make any independent assessments of the activities and projects.

The synthesis evaluation:

Synthesizes evidence from existing evaluations and documentation.

Identifies trends and patterns in the data.

Identifies gaps in the underlying evidence.

The study is a synthesis evaluation rather than a meta-review. The focus is on extracting, organizing, and analysing findings from existing evaluations to identify patterns, lessons, and insights. Unlike a meta-review, the assessment does not reassess the methodological rigour or assign relative weight to the evidence in each report; instead, we take the findings as presented while applying an analytical framework to ensure comparability and coherence.

On a second level, the objective is to pilot the use of AI technology to support synthesis evaluations. Throughout the evaluation, the team has applied AI technology to attempt to improve the quality and efficiency of the evaluation. The findings related to the use of AI are described in the second accompanying report (not publicly available): "Lessons learned from the use of AI in synthesis evaluation."

1.3.1 Evaluation questions

The synthesis evaluation was guided by a set of evaluation questions. The evaluation takes as a starting point the OECD DAC evaluation criteria (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability). These criteria have been translated into a set of evaluation questions and metrics to enable synthesis. Table 3 summarizes the evaluation questions and metrics considered.

5. AF-TERG, GEF IEO, CIF, GCF IEU. Scoping Study on the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Climate Change Evaluations. Washington, D.C. and Songdo, South Korea, February 2025

Table 3: Evaluation criteria, questions and metrics

OECD DAC Criteria	Evaluation question	Metric
Relevance	To what extent are projects aligned with local needs?	Interventions are aligned with local needs, national strategies and/or national priorities (e.g., NDCs, forest strategies)
Coherence	To what extent are projects coherent with other climate fund projects?	Projects are complementary with other climate funds, and do not conflict or overlap
Effectiveness	Integrated result area: Forestry part of "Forests & Land Use" result area (not a stand-alone programme).	Projects have achieved their intended adaptation outcomes
		Projects have achieved their intended mitigation outcomes
Efficiency	To what extent are funds scaling up in investments in the forestry sector?	Projects have co-financing from other sources
		Projects have contributed to scaling up investments in forestry sector
Impact	To what extent are funds scaling up in investments in the forestry sector?	Projects have contributed to an adaptation impact
		Projects have contributed to a mitigation impact
Sustainability	How likely are impacts to be sustained after completion of projects?	Project design contains a factor that is conducive to long-term sustainability

1.4 Methodology

The evaluation follows a common methodology for conducting synthesis evaluations, through tagging evidence and categorizing findings into groups. The team constructed frameworks to systematize findings from the evaluation reports, both in terms of descriptions of activities/projects and in terms of findings related to evaluation questions/metrics. AI/ML technology has been used to enhance the study, mainly through automating the process of tagging findings and to synthesize findings based on the body of evidence.

A more detailed methodology is presented in Annex I.

2. Portfolio overview

2.1 Sampling frame

The scope of the study was defined by the Terms of Reference[6] as documents related to forestry. The term "forestry" can encompass a wide range of interventions from forest protection and restoration to agroforestry, watershed management, land-use governance and more. For this study, the climate funds have self-selected documents that they classify as related to forestry – the study team has not imposed an external definition. [7] The sampling frame was thus provided by the four funds and consists of documents they identified as within scope. The evaluation team received 485 documents, of which 294 were outside of scope due to date of publication (older than 2018). The final number of documents reviewed is 191 (full list in Annex II (D)).

Documents reviewed include both project specific documents and aggregate documents. Project-specific documents include both midterm reviews and final evaluations (the phrasing varies by fund), and a mix of externally and internally authored reports. Reports typically follow a semi-standardized format internal to each fund, but there is little standardization across the funds. Aggregate documents are not project-specific and cover a broad set of activities, such as related to a theme, geographic region, or instruments. The level of involvement and quality assurance from the funds' evaluation departments varies, which means the content of evaluation reports is not directly comparable. Some documents are just summaries or abridged versions of longer reports. Table 4 summarizes the universe of documents assessed[8]. The evaluation covers 165 project-specific reports, 22 aggregate reports and four other/unclassified documents. Note that aggregate documents can cover projects that are also covered by project-specific documents, implying a risk of double counting.

Table 4: Overview of documents assessed (n=191)

	Project level report: final evaluation	Project level report: final evaluation	Project level report: midterm evaluation	Project level report: midterm evaluation			
Fund	**(External)**	**(Internal)**	**(External)**	**(Internal)**	**Aggregate report**	**Other**	**Total**
AF	11		5		1		**17**
CIF	3	25	1		4	3	**36**
GCF	2	2	3		15		**22**
GEF	80	33			2	1	**116**
Total	**96**	**60**	**9**		**22**	**4**	**191**

6. See Annex II
7. The funds apply different definitions when identifying forestry-related projects: the GEF/GEF IEO aligns its Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) portfolio with the UNFF global forest objectives; the GCF classifies forestry under its "Forests and Land Use" result area, covering natural forests, restoration, and agroforestry; the CIF's Forest Investment Program (FIP) defines scope around REDD+, sustainable forest management, and landscape approaches; and the Adaptation Fund lists "Forests" as one of its project sectors, treating forestry as an integrated and cross-cutting theme within ecosystem-based adaptation.
8. As classified by the AI model. See classification framework in Annex I (V)
9. Project completion or monitoring reports that do not meet the framework's definition of internal or external evaluations

Because of the variation in documents covered from each fund, comparisons between categories of documents, including the fund is avoided. Because documents vary in content, style, scope, rigour, and more, it is difficult to make comparisons between documents. Owing to this challenge, the synthesis deliberately avoids making comparisons between funds or types of projects.

Figures 2–4 illustrates the activities, intervention types and thematic focus area of the documents (and thus underlying activities) assessed. The data illustrates the range of projects that are included in the scope, and how they relate to "forestry" in a number of ways. Most documents cover multiple activities and types of interventions.

Figure 2: Portfolio of documents: Activities

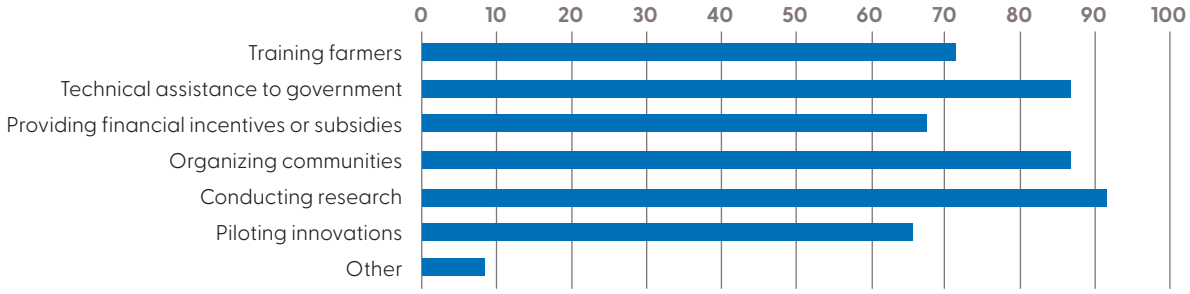


Figure 3: Portfolio of documents: Intervention types

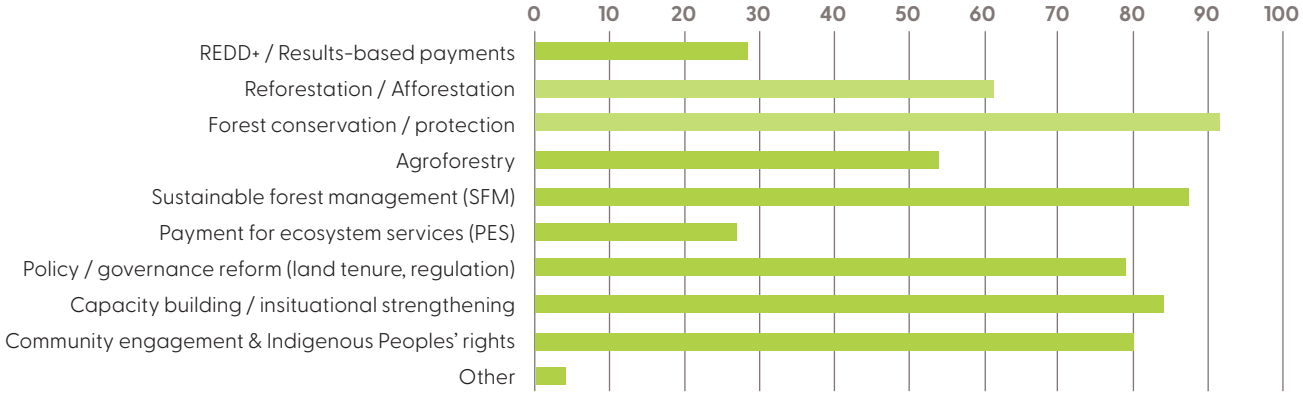
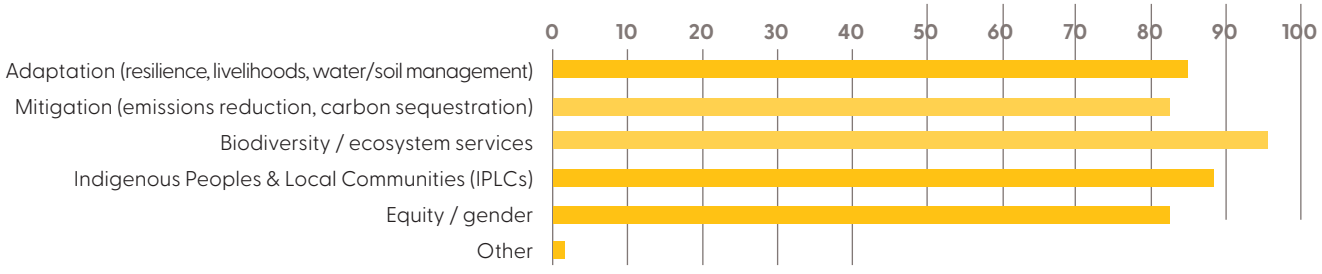


Figure 4: Portfolio of documents: Thematic focus



2.2 Overview of evidence

From the 191 documents, the AI model tagged 11,564 findings, which constitutes the evidence base for the synthesis. Findings are text excerpts – typically paragraphs, but sometimes shorter or longer – including data from tables in the documents. Table 5 illustrates the breakdown of tagged findings by evaluation criteria and metric[10]. Each finding corresponds to a single evaluation finding identified within an evaluation report. This figure does not, however, reflect the relative magnitude or significance of any given finding. While a single document may contain the same finding on more than one occasion, the model has been configured to exclude executive summaries, annexes, and similar supplementary sections, with a view to reducing the risk of overcounting.

Table 5: Overview of 11,564 findings

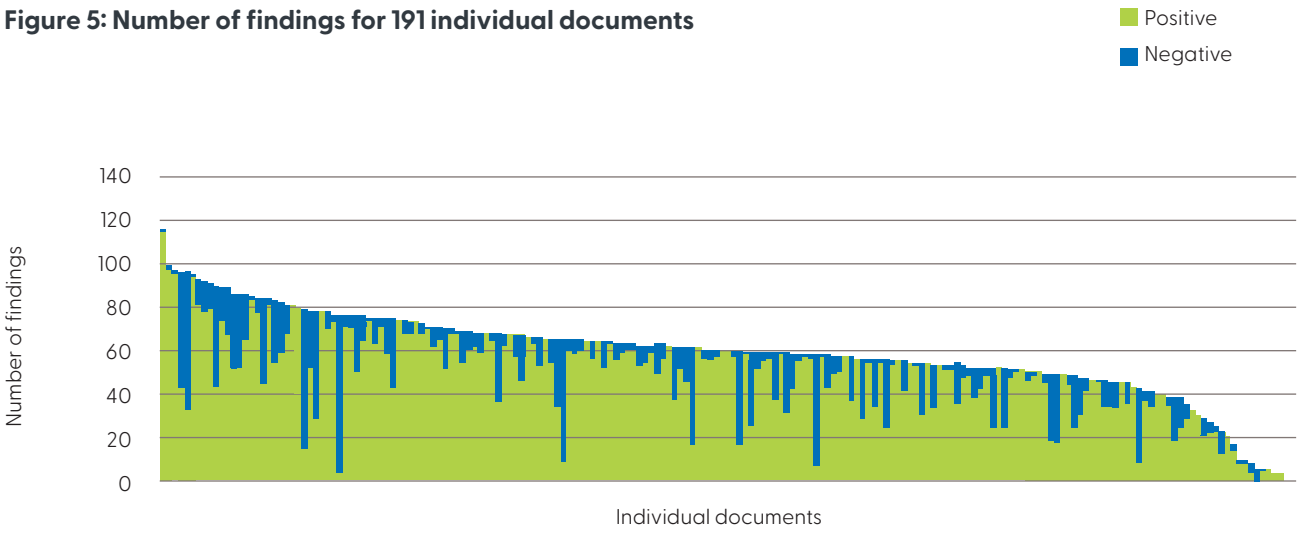
Row Labels	Positive	Negative	Total
Relevance	**1,039**	**42**	**1,081**
Alignment with country needs	311	31	342
Alignment with national priorities	267	8	275
Alignment with national strategies	461	3	464
Coherence	**399**	**68**	**467**
Evidence of coordination, complementarity, overlap or conflict with other climate funds	399	68	467
Effectiveness	**4,925**	**1,036**	**5,961**
Achievement of intended adaptation outcomes	4,144	809	4,953
Achievement of intended mitigation outcomes	781	227	1008
Efficiency	**1,090**	**240**	**1,330**
Evidence of co-financing	606	82	688
Scaling up investments in forestry	484	158	642
Impact	**832**	**145**	**977**
Evidence of impact: Adaptation	595	108	703
Evidence of impact: Mitigation	237	37	274
Sustainability	**1,153**	**595**	**1,748**
Factor conducive to sustainability	1,153	595	1,748
Total	**9,438**	**2,126**	**11,564**

More than half of the findings are found under the criteria effectiveness. First, this partly reflects the emphasis of the evaluation reports examined – most reports cover effectiveness, and they cover it extensively. Second, it also reflects the relatively wide scope of the metrics used under effectiveness compared to the other criteria; while "achievement of intended outcomes" is broad and captured most of what evaluation reports cover under their effectiveness sections, for "relevance" this is perhaps less the case. There could for example be more evidence that reflects "relevance" in the documents as defined by the respective authors, but which isn't captured under our metrics for relevance. Finally, in evaluation reports the unique "findings" per document tends to be higher for effectiveness, because the model treats achievement of individual outcomes or indicators as separate findings, while sustainability, for example, relates to larger components of projects (and thus covered by a smaller number of findings).

A preliminary assessment of the findings illustrates variation across the documents. The number of tagged findings per document varies from four to 117, and the prevalence of positive compared with negative findings varies considerably between documents (Figure 5). This reflects the large variation of documents included in the scope.

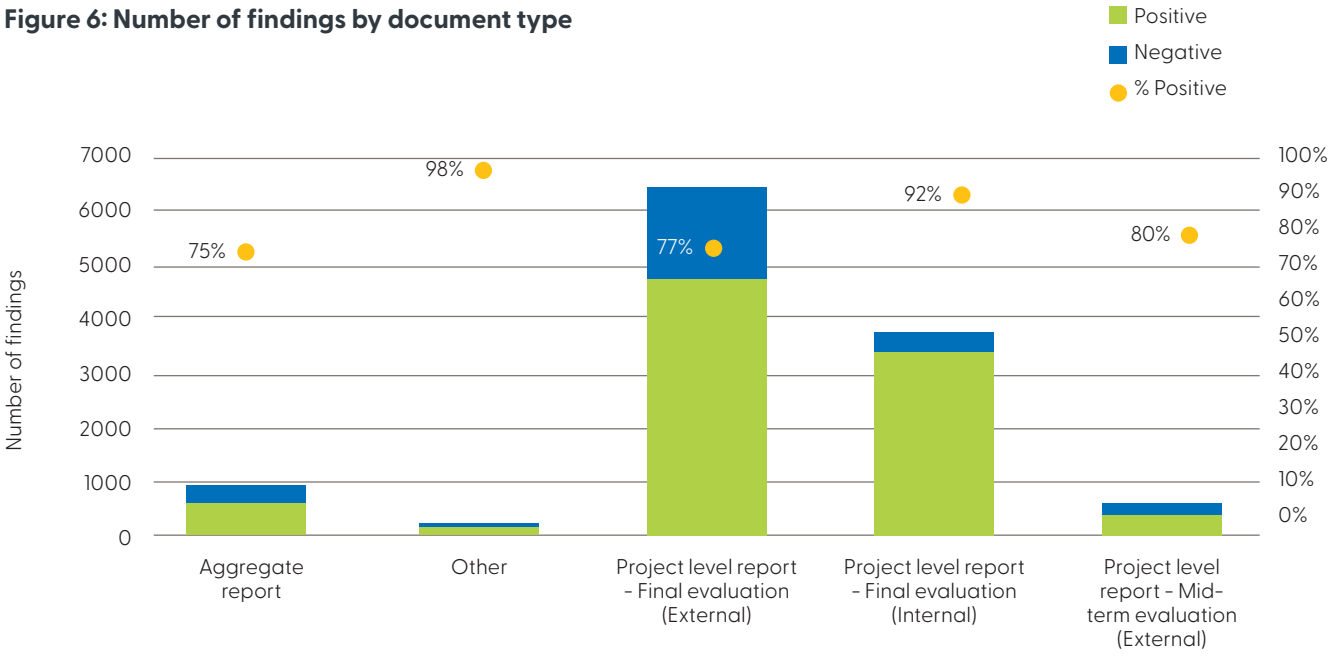
10. See Annex I: Methodology for definitions of positive and negative tags

Figure 5: Number of findings for 191 individual documents



External documents are more likely to include critical findings. Assessing positive and negative findings across document types, we find that for project level final evaluations, internal reports include a higher share of positive findings (92 per cent) than external reports (77 per cent) (Figure 6). While this gives an indication, it should again be noted that there are large variations between the documents that makes comparison difficult.

Figure 6: Number of findings by document type



3. Findings

3.1 Relevance

Evaluation framework

1. Alignment with country needs

2. Alignment with national priorities

3. Alignment with national strategies

Evaluation reports largely find that forestry projects are well aligned with country needs, strategies and official documents. Relevance in terms of alignment with countries is well documented in the evaluation reports, with only 23 out of 191 reports not including any findings (12 per cent). For the ones with findings, a large majority (96 per cent) of findings are positive. These involve explicit alignment with a range of country needs, national strategies and national priorities, often much broader than strictly forestry-related; many projects are related to economic elements such as livelihoods and food security, and the projects relate to economic plans, institutional strengthening, and so on. Because of the uneven distribution of findings (very few negative), it is not possible to see any patterns in terms of types of projects exhibiting positive or negative findings.

No. of evidence	Alignment with country needs	Alignment with national priorities	Alignment with national strategies	TOTAL
Positive	311	267	461	1039
Negative	31	8	3	42

Number of documents (% share of all documents)								
Positive	123	64%	139	73%	150	79%	148	77%
Negative	2	1%	1	1%	1	1%	0	0%
Both	15	8%	5	3%	2	1%	20	10%
None	51	27%	46	24%	38	20%	23	12%

3.1.1 Positive alignment

3.1.1.1 Alignment with country needs

The main types of alignment with country needs identified include:

a) Vulnerable livelihoods and rural development. Projects cite high alignment with addressing the needs of poor, rural, and indigenous communities, especially regarding resilience to climate threats and sustainable livelihoods.

Example: "The project's objective was to enhance the adaptive capacity and develop resilience of small-scale family farming producers to impacts deriving from climate change and climate variability..." [5][11]

b) Biodiversity and ecosystem protection. Countries with critical biomes and biodiversity concerns prioritize ecosystem-based adaptation, conservation, and forest resilience.

Example: "Project objectives, outcomes, and achievements were regarded as highly relevant to beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' and donors' policies..." [3]

c) Climate change and disaster risk reduction. Many projects explicitly respond to national climate change adaptation plans (NAPAs, NDCs) and disaster mitigation needs.

Example: "GCF responds to priorities set out in the NDCs of countries in the region, but the region's financing needs exceed GCF's current financing. IEU analysis overlaying the GCF result areas financed by each project and the NDC priorities revealed that 73 per cent of all the support areas outlined in NDCs in all countries in the LAC region have been supported so far through GCF financing." [63]

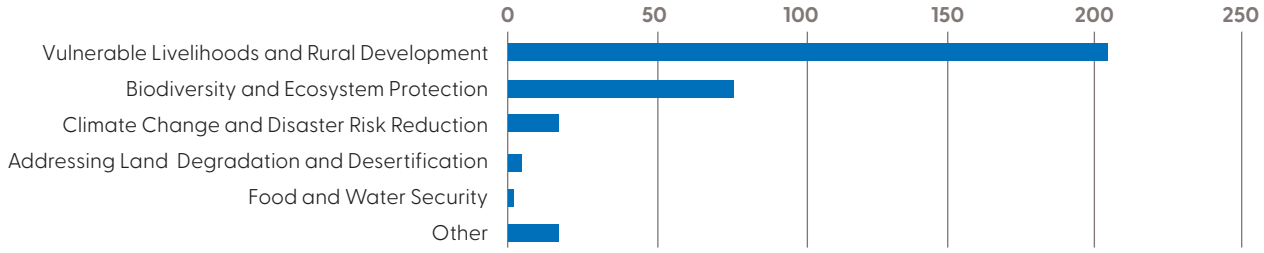
d) Addressing land degradation and desertification. Particularly present in dryland countries and projects focusing on sustainable land management.

Example: "The project made direct contributions towards achievement of the 2018 national Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) Target Setting Program..." [140]

e) Food and water security. Tackling threats to agricultural productivity and water access (drought mitigation, water resource management).

Example: "The project is aligned with the priorities of the National Food Security Policy... The project objectives respond to the challenges in terms of the adaptation of rural communities to climate shocks." [8]

Figure 7: Number of findings per sub-category – Alignment with country needs (positive)



11. Reference numbers reflect the list of documents in Annex II D – List of Documents

3.1.1.2 Alignment with national priorities

The main types of alignment with national priorities identified include:

a) Sustainable natural resource management and forest conservation. Nearly all countries emphasized policies to support sustainable forest management, biodiversity, and ecosystem services. The majority of projects explicitly cited alignment to national forest laws, biodiversity action plans, or national REDD+ strategies.

> Example: "For the most part, these projects align with the countries' NAPs, NDCs and other national and regional climate change policies. … All evaluations conducted by the IEU have concluded that, for the most part, GCF projects are relevant to the respective national priorities." [66]

b) Climate change mitigation and adaptation (NDCs, NAPs, Climate Strategies). Strong presence of projects aligning with nationally determined contributions (NDCs), climate change strategies, or national adaptation plans.

> Example: "The PDO remains highly relevant to the objectives of the [Country Partnership Strategy] FY13-FY18 for Ghana, particularly the objective aimed at "Addressing climate change issues through support for REDD+ and programs focused on attention to water management and land degradation"" [34]

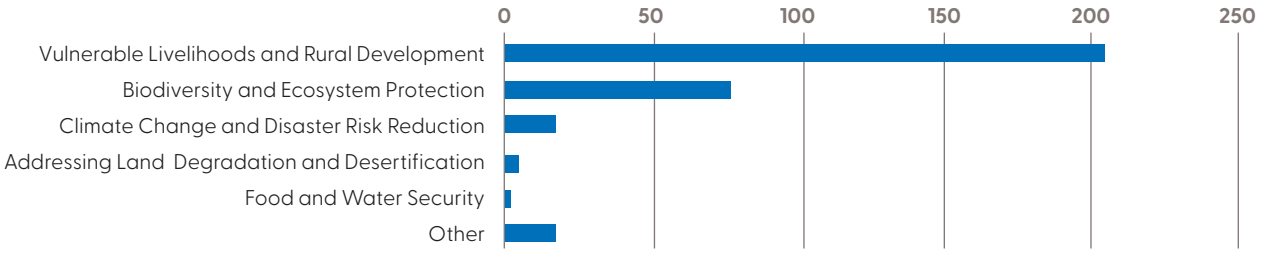
c) Livelihood/economic development and poverty alleviation. Projects consistently linked sustainable resource management with rural development, poverty reduction, or livelihood resilience.

> Example: "The project also contributed to the World Bank Group's corporate goals of ending extreme poverty and boosting shared prosperity by improving the quality of life and resilience of the most vulnerable..." [177]

d) Decentralization and institutional strengthening. Many projects explicitly aligned with national priorities for decentralization, local governance, and community or local government capacity-building (e.g. Niger, Burkina Faso).

> Example: "These interventions were timely and highly relevant to the on-going process of decentralization of the forest management in Mongolia." [118]

Figure 8: Number of findings per sub-category – Alignment with national priorities (positive)



3.1.1.3 Alignment with national strategies

The main types of alignment with national strategies identified include:

a) Forest laws and sector strategies. Explicit alignment to forest sector strategies, forestry master plans, or enabling legal frameworks (e.g., management plans, protected areas legislation).

> Example: "The Project has stayed continually relevant to Burkina Faso's strategic development priorities. First, Project achievements continue to provide targeted support to the priorities outlined in the Second National Economic and Social Development Plan (PNDESII) for 2021-2025. The PNDESII includes a commitment to reduce net carbon emissions by 15 million tCO2eq by 2025, with the forest sector as a significant contributor to the realization of this objective." [43]

b) Climate change strategies (NDCs, REDD+, National Climate Policies).

> Example: "The project's alignment with government priorities is highly satisfactory, particularly the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), the national REDD+ strategy and commitments under the Paris Climate Agreement as illustrated by the 2021 Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)." [148]

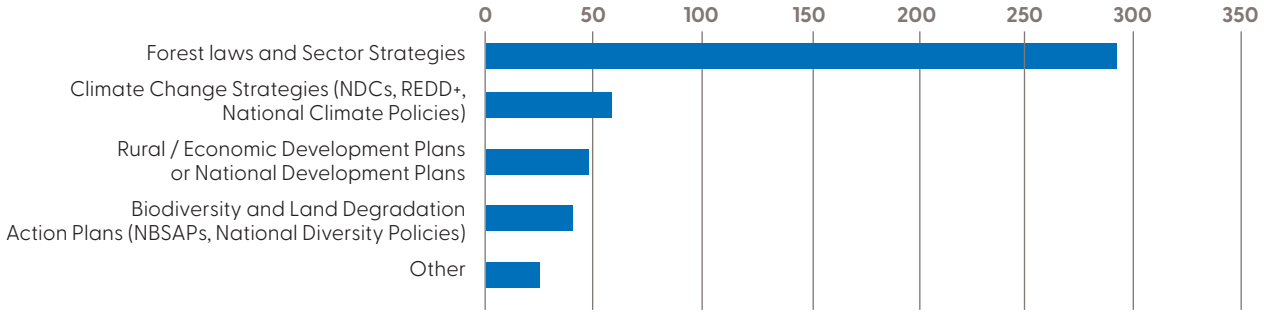
c) Rural/economic development plans or national development plans. Strategies connecting with rural development, poverty reduction, and sustainable livelihoods.

> Example: "Furthermore, the objectives of the project are in line with the Government's Growth and Employment Promotion Strategy (SCAPE, 2015-2019), which attaches a high importance to the achievement of these objectives, particularly, the fight against thirst and hunger through developing strategies for increasing arable land and rational water management ..." [8]

d) Biodiversity and land degradation action plans (NBSAPs, national biodiversity policies). Alignment with National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans, often meeting Aichi Targets and integrating multiple environmental objectives.

> Example: "The project is in harmony with the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP, 2007-2012)... The project contributed to the GEF-4 biodiversity strategy long term objective..." [122]

Figure 9: Number of findings per sub-category – Alignment with national strategies (positive)



3.1.2 Challenges

Challenges are identified where evaluation teams found projects were not aligned with country needs or strategies. Overall, challenges were mainly linked to lack of due diligence in design (overlooked capacity/ Indigenous Peoples/gender), misreading the policy context (drivers, institutions), or lack of participatory approaches. Common challenges cited in projects finding negative alignment include:

a) Overly ambitious or unspecific project design for institutional and capacity context

Example: "Based on interviews, the MTE team finds that the project design inadequately considered the capacity level and small pool of national consultants and local NGOS." [3]

b) Mismatch with country policy, gaps in theory of change, or weak institutional links

Example: "In particular, the logic model underpinning some FIP projects did not adequately consider other large-scale direct drivers of deforestation… and entrenched power dynamics and policy misalignments that underlie those drivers." [53]

c) Gaps in addressing gender, indigenous or vulnerable groups

Example: "However, gender equality, promotion of gender empowerment and addressing underlying barriers were not the primary objectives of this project. There was scant mention of gender in the project document…" [148]

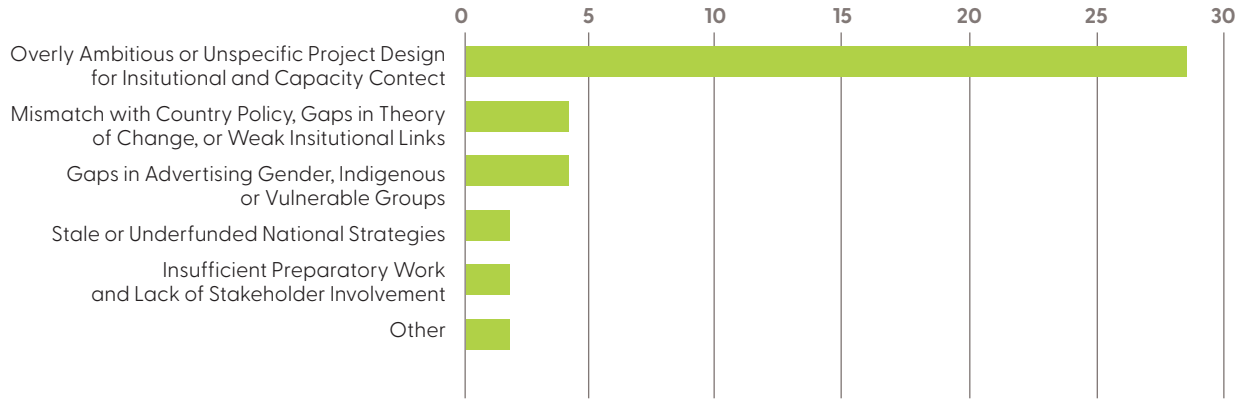
d) Stale or underfunded national strategies

Example: "Countries found limited value in the investment planning process alone… Investment plans grew stale as the sector evolved." [53]

e) Insufficient preparatory work and lack of stakeholder involvement

Example: "The objective of Component 2 was both vague and ambitious, which may not have been informed by solid preparatory work on what promoting forest landscape management would entail in the context of Lao PDR." [50]

Figure 10: Number of findings per sub-category – Alignment with country needs, priorities, strategies (negative)



3.2 Coherence

Evaluation framework
Evidence of coordination, complementarity, overlap or conflict with other climate funds

Two thirds of the documents mention coordination, complementarity, overlap or conflict with other climate funds. A significant majority of findings (399; 85 per cent) are of positive evidence of complementarity or coordination with other climate funds, while 68 point to negative evidence. It should be noted that the metric used explicitly looks at other climate funds only, which is a relatively narrow definition – evaluation documents are likely to report on other types of coherence.

No. of findings	Evidence of coordination, complementarity, overlap or conflict with other climate funds
Positive	399
Negative	68

Number of documents (% share of all documents)		
Positive	97	51%
Negative	11	6%
Both	18	9%
None	65	34%

3.2.1 Positive coherence

The evaluation reports find a large number of cases of positive coherence, where projects have actively achieved collaboration, coordination or complementarity with other forestry projects. The main ways evaluation reports highlight coherence are through:

a) Programmatic/strategic alignment. Alignment and integration under programmatic umbrellas (e.g., FIP, GEF, GCF Investment Plans).

> Example: "The Brazil FIP program is designed to generate synergies between different agencies and stakeholders at the biome level…" [52]

b) Knowledge/platform sharing. Joint platforms for learning, technical exchange, and monitoring.

> Example: "Creating opportunities for knowledge and experience exchange among projects significantly enhanced the overall impact and effectiveness…" [30]

c) Joint governance/committees. Cross-agency steering or technical committees, often at national or subnational levels.

> Example: "Shared execution arrangements, with common partners under a joint Project Steering Committee…" [9]

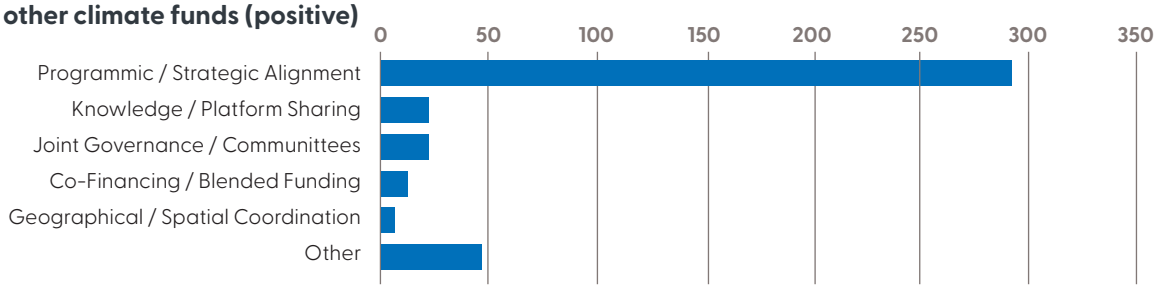
d) Co-financing/blended funding. Leveraging finance from multiple sources for larger impact or bridging funding gaps.

Example: "The project was able to (i) pilot an innovative approach at the territorial level that fosters multi-sectoral coordination (FIP and FCPF support); (ii) provide a strategic platform for engagements on sustainable and low-carbon rural development …" [45]

e) Geographical/spatial coordination. Deliberate design to avoid overlap and promote efficiency in field operations.

Example: "The geographic scope of both projects was also delineated to avoid overlap: …" [9]

Figure 11: Number of findings per sub-category – Evidence of coordination, complementarity, overlap or conflict with other climate funds (positive)



3.2.2 Challenges

Where evaluation reports have assessed coherence to be insufficient, they included references to the following challenges:

1. Institutional silos and fragmentation. Projects cited structural and coordination barriers between funds, ministries, and task leaders, leading to parallel efforts rather than integrated action.

Example: "Despite planned synergies among FIP, FCPF, and UN-REDD, structural constraints often hindered national and local coordination. Countries and World Bank partners faced barriers in coordinating operations given their separate institutional structures and different focal points and ministries involved." [53]

2. Lack of practical/operational collaboration. Joint planning or collaboration is envisioned, but not implemented.

"No evidence of project building linkages with other ongoing projects. The NGOs… replicated what they had been doing." [137]

3. Limited or ineffective stakeholder engagement. Lack of sustained, systematic engagement or follow-through – especially at sub-national levels or across MDBs.

Example: "…there were not specific implementation arrangements nor agreements. … NGOs replicated what they had been doing." [137]

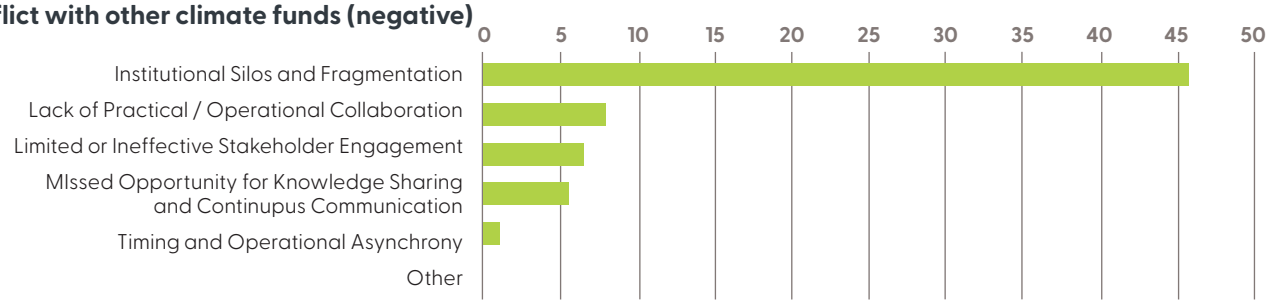
4. Missed opportunity for knowledge sharing and continuous communication. Projects operated in isolation without structured learning, shared platforms, or transparency.

"Learning generated by the project... not properly documented." [86]

5. Timing and operational asynchrony. Mismatched timelines make real collaboration and complementarity difficult.

Example: "World Bank and UNDP projects had already closed at the start ...and therefore no significant coordination was possible." [86]

Figure 12: Number of findings per sub-category – Evidence of coordination, complementarity, overlap or conflict with other climate funds (negative)



3.3 Effectiveness

Evaluation framework
1. Achievement of intended adaptation outcomes
2. Achievement of intended mitigation outcomes

Projects in the portfolio use forestry to achieve wider objectives, not always framed in terms of forestry. A considerable portion of intended outputs are conceptualized and realized through interventions that involve forest landscapes, trees, or related ecological systems. These outputs frequently manifest as concrete actions such as reforestation, the introduction of climate-resilient tree species, and the adoption of integrated land management practices that deliberately leverage forestry as an adaptation measure. However, it is notable that outcome targets are often framed in broader terms, where forests are a means to an end, rather than an end in itself. Indicators are often designed to capture overarching adaptation or mitigation goals, often without detailing the sectoral approach contributing to these results. For example, indicators may reference reduced soil erosion, improved agricultural resilience, or increased climate adaptation capacity – outcomes to which forestry activities meaningfully contribute, but which might not be labeled as "forest" outputs. For mitigation-based projects, the link to forests is more direct, while adaptation projects tend to be more indirect.

This pattern is confirmed by meta-reviews and systematic evidence gap maps across international evaluations. For example, the GCF IEU "Effectiveness of Forest Conservation Interventions" evidence gap map and protocol highlight that mitigation outcomes are most frequently reported as changes in forest cover, carbon stocks, and avoided deforestation – outcomes that are specific to forest interventions. In contrast, for adaptation, outcomes are more diverse (livelihoods, food security, vulnerability indices), and forestry interventions are often only one component among many.

3.3.1 Adaptation

Achievement of intended adaptation outcomes is the most commonly found type of finding in the evaluation reports. As mentioned in Section 2, this is a result of a number of factors, including broad definition, commonly reported metric, and the fact that evaluation reports tend to include multiple distinct findings for individual objectives for projects.

The analysis of project evaluations for forestry and climate adaptation initiatives reveals varying degrees of achievement regarding intended adaptation outcomes. Of around 5,000 findings of achievement of adaptation outcomes, 82 per cent relate to positive evidence of having achieved intended outcomes. However, 51 per cent of documents reviewed include a mix of positive and negative findings, reflecting the fact that findings under effectiveness are more disaggregated than the other criteria. Nine documents contained no findings related to the achievement of adaptation outcomes; five of these were projects tagged as not having adaptation as a thematic focus.

No. of findings	Achievement of intended adaptation outcomes
Positive	4144
Negative	809

Number of documents (% share of all documents)		
Positive	80	42%
Negative	5	3%
Both	97	51%
None	9	5%

The portfolios of the four funds demonstrate that adaptation interventions can deliver multidimensional and verifiable outcomes when well-integrated with community needs and robust implementation. Projects not only boost household incomes and job creation, but also foster adoption of sustainable land management practices, improve food security, increase women's participation and empowerment, and restore ecosystems – often all within a single intervention. These achievements are "verifiable" through robust monitoring of concrete indicators such as increases in crop yields, numbers of hectares reforested, percentage of women beneficiaries, households with improved water access, and survey-based measures of food security or livelihood change, as reported in multiple project evaluations.

Specifically, outcomes achieved include the following categories:

1. Institutional and community capacity strengthening: Refers to the improvement of skills, knowledge, organizational structures, and systems in both local communities and formal institutions to sustain adaptation gains. Example indicators:

- Number of stakeholders trained
- Number of new/strengthened community organizations
- Policy or institutional reforms adopted

Example: "More than 2,000 land users, farmers, FPUA and LAG members, municipal and ministry staff have received training in SLM practices, data management systems..." [167]

2. Adoption of sustainable land and forest management practices: This outcome captures the implementation of conservation agriculture, agroforestry, improved forest management, and land restoration practices by project beneficiaries. Example indicators:

- Number of land users adopting new practices
- Hectares of land under sustainable management
- Percentage of farmers applying sustainable techniques

Example: "Land users adopting sustainable land management practices as a result of the project: Baseline: 0, Target: 9,000 ha, Achieved: 12,320 ha" [167]

3. Ecosystem services, biodiversity conservation, and environmental outcomes: Measures positive impacts on natural habitats, such as increased forest cover, biodiversity, and ecosystem service delivery (e.g., erosion control, water purification). Example indicators:

- Hectares of land restored/reforested
- Number of species present or protected
- Increase in vegetation cover (%)

Example: “Forest cover is conserved or increased… Number of hectares reforested/restored; biodiversity indicators.” [58]

4. Improved livelihoods and income generation: This refers to enhanced economic opportunities, diversified income sources, and greater financial stability for communities – especially those vulnerable to climate change. Example indicators:

- Number/percentage of households reporting increased income
- Number of jobs created
- Proportion of beneficiaries with improved livelihoods

Example: “Improved livelihoods by providing monetary and non-monetary benefits to around 71,000 people…” [27]

5. Gender equity and social inclusion: Ensures women and marginalized groups not only participate but benefit equitably from adaptation interventions, gaining voice and economic power. Example indicators:

- Percentage of female project beneficiaries
- Women’s participation rate in committees or leadership
- Proportion of income-generating activities led by women

Example: “Women comprised 38 percent of land management and users trained, and 20 percent of beneficiaries participating in project consultations.” [167]

6. Water resource management and climate resilience: Refers to improved access to and management of water resources, reduction of climate-related risks, and building community or ecosystem resilience to climate impacts. Example Indicators:

- Number of water infrastructure projects completed
- Increase in dry-season water availability
- Community-level reduction in drought/flood risk

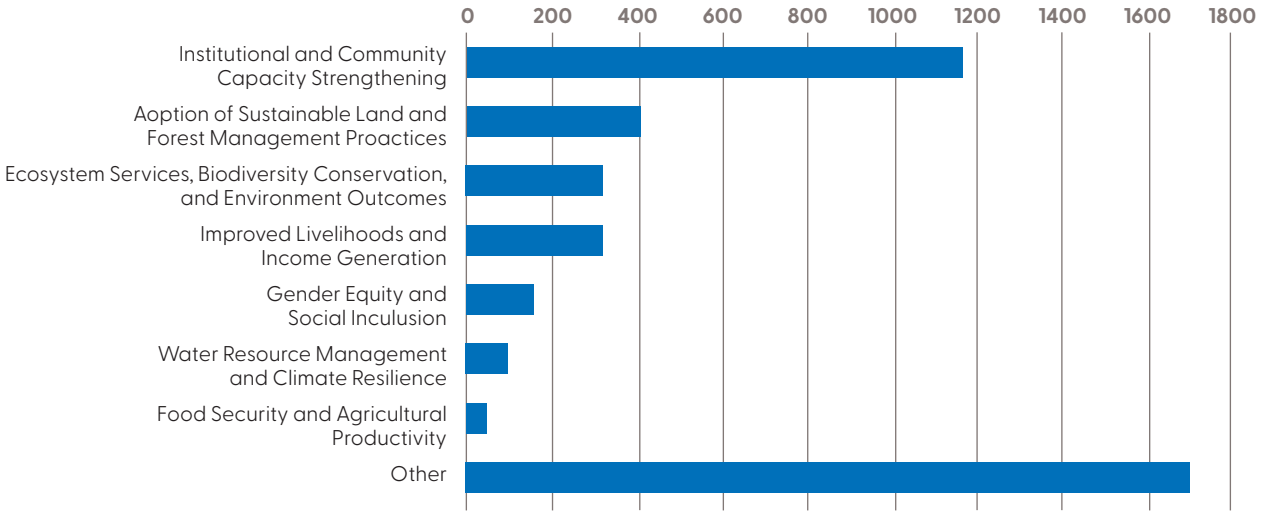
Example: “Significant enhancement of the natural habitat and water storage, with capacity equal to that of the second largest reservoir in Seychelles.” [3]

7. Food security and agricultural productivity: Refers to improved stable access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food and increases in crop yields or food production as a result of adaptive practices. Example indicators:

- Increases in staple crop yields (%)
- Households reporting improved food security status
- Food Security Index change

Example: “According to project reports, the average rice production among the targeted farmers was 2,15 T/ha in season 2013-2014. As a result of the adoption of improved varieties and other MIRR practices, average rice production increased to 4,75 T/ha in season 2014-2015, 6,25 T/ha in season 2015-2016 and 5,85 T/ha in 2016-2017. This represents increases of 121%, 191% and 172% as compared with the baseline for the three agricultural campaigns, respectively.” [11]

Figure 13: Number of findings per sub-category – Achievement of intended adaptation outcomes (positive)



3.3.2 Mitigation

Findings related to achievement of mitigation outcomes are largely positive. Among 1,008 reviewed mentions, 77 per cent provided positive findings of success in meeting mitigation targets. Out of the 191 documents reviewed, 62 (32 per cent) had no findings related to mitigation outcomes, suggesting that this outcome area is less common than adaptation.

No. of findings	Achievement of intended mitigation outcomes
Positive	781
Negative	227

Number of documents (% share of all documents)		
Positive	84	44%
Negative	13	7%
Both	32	17%
None	62	32%

Mitigation outcomes that were achieved chiefly belong in the following categories:

1. Institutional strengthening and policy improvements: Enhanced capacity for environmental monitoring (GHG inventories, deforestation tracking), improved policy environments, and strengthened land tenure and governance are reported as critical institutional outcomes.

Example: "The Project succeeded in improving institutional capacities in deforestation monitoring, fire risk/spread modeling and information dissemination, and in the measurement of GHG emissions by national agencies." [35]

Example: “Systematic reviews highlight that interventions tied to secure land tenure, PES schemes, and environmental certification all show evidence for delivering improved forest cover and GHG outcomes, with enabling policies as key factors.” [55]

2. Carbon stock enhancement and GHG mitigation: Projects have successfully contributed to increasing carbon sequestration (through afforestation, reforestation, agroforestry, and improved land management practices) and to reducing net greenhouse gas emissions.

Example: “The project reduced GHG emissions through avoided deforestation as a result of sustainable land use activities... total net emissions of -29,494,168 tCO2e, or 256 percent of the project target.” [42]

Example: “GHG mitigation was reported as an outcome or impact in 95 articles covering 103 studies...” [59]

3. Adoption of sustainable management practices: Adoption of climate-smart agriculture, sustainable forest harvesting, agroforestry, and alternative land use/energy practices are frequently noted.

Example: “Likelihood of adopting an ABC technology increased by 34.1 percentage points for producers exposed to both training and TA, and by 9 percentage points for those receiving only training.” [52]

4. Improvement in forest cover and ecosystem restoration: Restoration of degraded areas and expansion of forested land are frequently reported outcomes, often measured by increased forest canopy or recovery of ecosystem function.

Example: “The project also almost achieved the intermediate indicator EOP target on reducing poaching incidents and exceeded the EOP indicator target for [Human Wildlife Conflict]s (discussed above). Stable carbon sequestration in the project forest reserves over the lifetime of the project (core indicator).” [169]

Example: “The achievement of this objective is evidenced by... a clear improvement in the management effectiveness of the [Hwange National Park]. The main interventions... were support to anti-poaching activities, sustainable game water management, fire management and improved community participation.” [169]

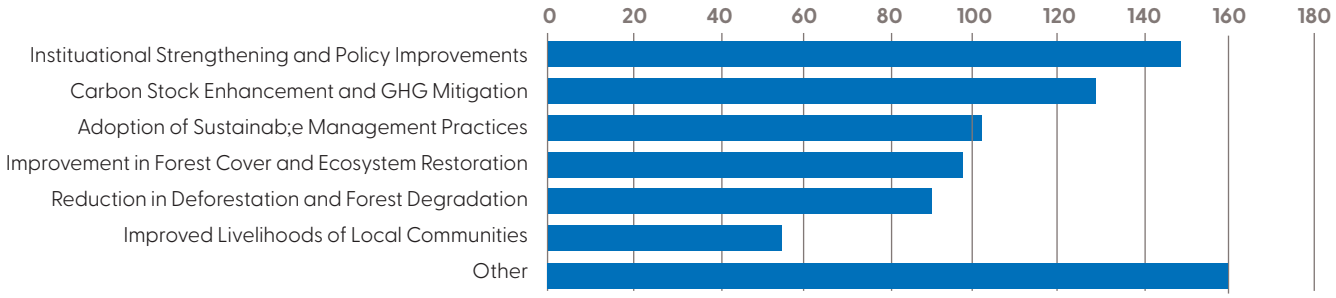
5. Reduction in deforestation and forest degradation: Many projects report significant decreases in deforestation rates and forest degradation, often as a result of expanded protected areas, improved forest management (including community-based management), and compliance/enforcement mechanisms.

Example: “Annual deforestation rates in project areas fell sharply from 3.2 per cent to 0.8 per cent between 2018 and 2023 due to community forest patrolling, reforestation activities, and a shift away from unsustainable activities.” [69]

6. Improved livelihoods of local communities: Mitigation outcomes are often accompanied by livelihood improvements, including increased income from sustainable forest use, alternative energy (cookstoves, biogas), agroforestry, and support for non-timber products; enhanced food and water security; and increased capacity to cope with environmental pressures.

Example: “The livelihood benefits reported... included dried springs restored to functionality, degraded areas restored, increased access to water, improved food security, increased capacity to protect community territory, improved incomes...” [29]

Figure 14: Number of findings per sub-category – Achievement of intended mitigation outcomes (positive)



3.3.3 Challenges

Forestry projects face a number of challenges that contribute to missed outcome objectives. These range from project management issues – such as insufficient reporting or difficulties in attributing, which make it difficult to determine effectiveness – to project design challenges and implementation challenges. The most common types of challenges documented in evaluation reports are:

1. Overly ambitious or unrealistic targets: Projects often set targets not aligned with context or baseline data, making them difficult to achieve.

Example: "The key challenge in this area is that some targets are much too ambitious and they will not be met by the project by May 2020. It is not clear how the project can reach out to 40,000 dekhan farmers to adopt adaptation measures, invest in greenhouses covering 20,000 ha, establish 10 cooperatives with a total number of 20,000 members and plant 70,000ha." [17]

2. Data gaps and measurement issues: Inability to accurately measure or verify outcome indicators, such as forest cover changes or carbon sequestration, especially when project data conflicts with independent/ global datasets.

Example: "The ICR commissioned an independent assessment to validate these two PDIs due to the significant difference between the project-reported results and global/national data sets on Ghana's forests. The project recorded a 50 percent increase in forest cover in targeted landscapes, conflicting with global reports on deforestation trends in the country, which showed a -0.1 percent to 5 percent change in forest cover. The assessment shows an increase in the forest area from 689,116 ha at appraisal to 697,585 ha at project closing, indicating a 1.2 percent increase (specifically 3 percent increase in closed forest and 0.1 percent decrease in open forest) in the project districts" [40]

3. Weak local capacity and ownership: Lack of training, technology transfer, or meaningful engagement with key local partners, leading to limited adoption and sustainability.

Example: "A robust supporting program for training, technology transfer and knowledge-sharing with local practitioners was lacking. As a result, there was only limited local ownership, capacity, and interest." [82]

4. Implementation delays and logistical barriers: Delays in starting activities, unexpected regulatory changes (like national logging bans), or project implementation obstacles (e.g., COVID-19, political crises).

Example: “The logging ban remained in effect throughout project life even after the PFA management plans were completed. At the time of this ICR, it remains uncertain whether… the logging ban will be lifted.” [50]

5. Limited scaling and sustainability: Achievements remained localized and did not lead to scalable or sustainable results.

Example: “Signals of scale were rarely observed in mature FIP countries, where project results are relatively localized and pathways for scaling are uncertain.” [53]

6. Difficulty in measuring or attributing outcomes: Problems linking interventions directly to outcomes, especially in settings where multiple overlapping policies or interventions exist.

Example: “Attributing observed GHG outcomes to a specific mechanism, such as credit generation, remains difficult and complicates efforts to map the evidence base…” [59]

7. Inadequate or misaligned project design: Fundamental design issues like unclear beneficiaries, underestimated complexity, or ignoring crucial stakeholders (local authorities, private sector).

Example: “The initial project design was ambitious and had overlooked fundamental issues, such as the exact beneficiaries and … underestimated the challenging context…” [79]

8. Insufficient financial resources or incentives: Lack of sustained funding for implementation, monitoring, or upscaling impacts; challenges in payment for environmental services (PES).

Example: “No strategy for mobilising and securing funds to deploy strategies and plans has been developed by the project.” [112]

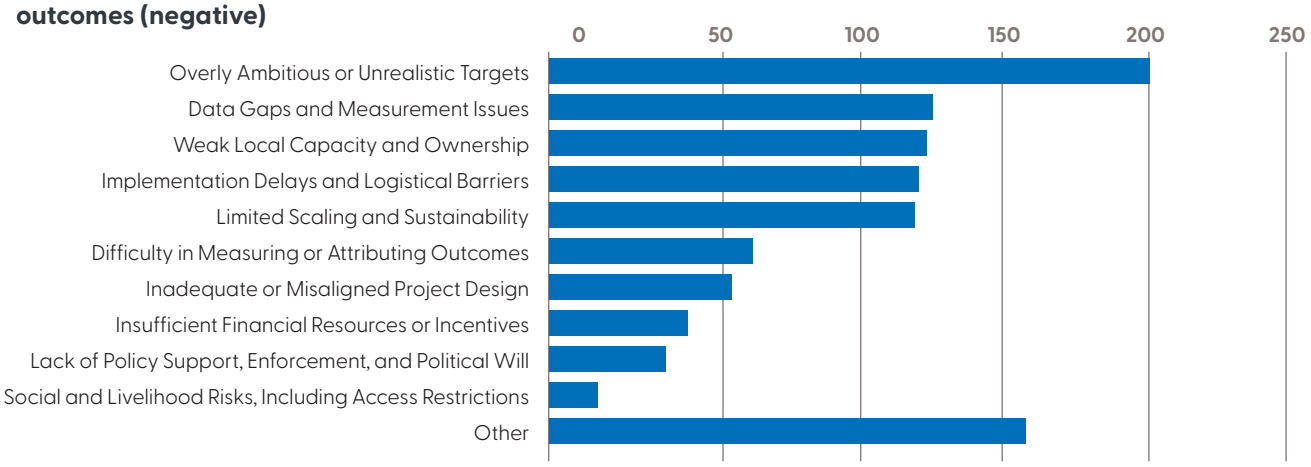
9. Lack of policy support, enforcement, and political will: Weak follow-up, insufficient policy/legal status, or limited funding to implement and enforce new biodiversity or forestry frameworks.

Example: “Due to inadequate follow-ups with local government and Ministry of Forestry, there is very limited impact for changes on the ground that the proposed new elephant reserve has not been declared …” [103]

10. Social and livelihood risks, including access restrictions: Conservation efforts sometimes restricted community access or failed to adequately consider social impacts.

Example: “The conservation of forests can inadvertently restrict local communities’ access to forest resources, posing social and livelihood risks…” [59]

Figure 15: Number of findings per sub-category – Achievement of intended adaptation and mitigation outcomes (negative)



3.4 Efficiency

Evaluation framework

1. Evidence of co-financing
2. Scaling up investments in forestry

3.4.1 Co-financing[12]

The portfolio shows that a majority of documents include findings related to co-financing, with evidence found in 154 documents (81 per cent). Eighty-eight per cent of the findings are positive, implying successful co-financing, while 12 per cent of the findings are related to challenges around co-financing. Note that co-financing does not necessarily imply an active leveraging or catalysing role by the climate funds.

No. of findings	Achievement of intended mitigation outcomes
Positive	606
Negative	82

Number of documents (% share of all documents)		
Positive	122	64%
Negative	11	6%
Both	21	11%
None	37	19%

Co-financing is the norm but varies in quality and reliability: Most forestry projects secured substantial co-financing (e.g. US$ 5 million–30 million ranges are common for larger projects), delivered both as cash and in-kind. National governments and MDBs are the largest providers, but actual realization sometimes falls short or is poorly documented. How co-financing is reported in evaluations varies, which makes aggregation difficult.

Example: "On the GEF grant of $9,401,000.00, a co-financing of 5 to 1 has been managed." [158]

Government and development banks dominate as providers: National governments are the most common and largest contributors, often providing both cash and extensive in-kind support (staff, facilities, land, etc.). The second largest category is multilateral development banks and agencies, both implementers of the climate funds' programmes, who are significant financial contributors, both directly (cash, project grants/loans) and as a leveraging source for mobilizing further resources. The private sector as a source is growing but is still limited compared to public and multilateral sources, often as "matching grants", CSR, or through PPPs. Other sources include bilateral agencies, foundations, and NGOs.

Example: "Recipient Country Government: Government of Ghana … recurrent expenditure … Amount (US$) 750,557" [10]

12. Editor's note from AF-TERG: "AF projects cover full cost of adaptation and IEs may opt to attract co-financing, but this is not a requirement for AF projects"

Example: " FIP has been most effective at leveraging additional finance from MDBs in terms of total volume (55 percent ...), committed co-financing from recipient governments makes up another 33 percent" [53]

Biggest types: cash, in-kind, grants, and community labor: Grants and recurring government expenditures (salaries, facilities) are dominant, with private sector and community contributions more common in specific contexts (e.g., eco-enterprise or landscape-approach projects).

Example: "Subcomponent 2a provided US$3,930,450 of matching grants to 48 private operators, who in turn invested US$4,032,050 in agroforestry plantations." [42]

Persistent challenges undermine effectiveness: In some projects, co-financing led to challenges and issues. First, many projects relied on optimistic or overstated commitments that were not realized – funds were promised but never delivered, reducing intended project scale and impact. Second, weak or inconsistent tracking and reporting of co-financing was a recurring obstacle. Third, in some cases co-financing was nominal or historically "booked" rather than genuinely mobilized for project goals, undermining the concept's functional value. Finally, delays in co-financing release, project startup, or timeline mismatches resulted in funds being unavailable when needed, sometimes after co-financiers' own programmes had already ended.

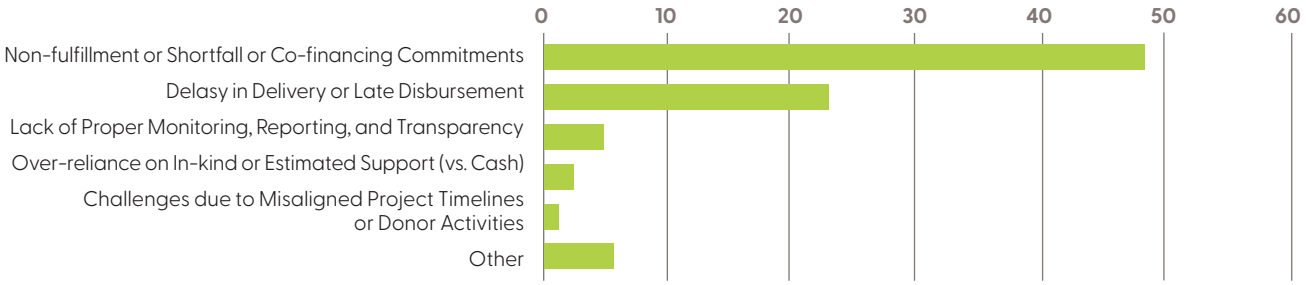
Example: "Much cofinancing is little more than an accounting exercise...absence of practical requirements or incentives for delivery of cofinancing-resulting in the near total absence..." [77]

Example: "Actual co-financing data were not collected...Transparency would be greatly improved if collection and reporting of co-financing contributions occurred throughout implementation..." [133]

Tracking and realism is essential: Successful projects have clear, realistic co-financing targets, robust tracking, and diversified sources with legal documentation and timetables. Unrealistic "paper" commitments undermine confidence and impact.

Example: "Unlike all other GEF projects that request cofinance letters at the beginning of the project, this project sought such cofinance letters on an annual basis...The project also monitored these substantial cofinance expenditures – and not the smaller contributions – such as monetised time or in kind contributions." [117]

Figure 16: Number of findings per sub-category – Evidence of co-financing (negative)



3.4.2 Scaling up investments

Eighty-four per cent of documents contain findings related to scaling up investments in forestry. Of the 642 findings, 75 per cent are positive, while 25 per cent relate to challenges with scaling up investments.

No. of findings	Scaling up investments in forestry
Positive	484
Negative	158

Number of documents (% share of all documents)		
Positive	101	53%
Negative	27	14%
Both	32	17%
None	31	16%

How scaling up is defined varies, but typically involves contributing to expanding forestry investments beyond initial project inputs. In more detail, scaling up investments has involved, in practice:

a) Replication and expansion of models/approaches: Successful pilots or models (e.g., landscape management, community conservation agreements, public-private partnership models) being replicated in new regions or integrated into government programming.

Example: "The five5-year ABDA state tree planting program is for 5.5 million ha… The model is now also being looked at regionally…" [7]

b) Knowledge, capacity, and institutional strengthening for replication: Building institutional capacity, developing and disseminating knowledge products, establishing training systems that allow practices to be transferred to other actors.

Example: "The project has continued to share experiences and educate the public about its conservation objectives and approaches…" [94]

c) Demonstration and evidence of results at scale: Projects showing quantifiable results in large areas or beneficiary numbers, providing proof-of-concept that supports expansion.

Example: "Some interim signals of scale were found in FIP. By the end of 2017… interventions had covered at least 9,437,831 hectares of forest, generating benefits to 551,006 people…" [19]

d) Leverage of additional or follow-up financing: Securing new or larger funding streams from national sources, international donors, or private sector investors as a result of project success, including direct co-financing or new projects adopting the same lines.

Example: "Three projects were approved with international funds (one from the AF, one from the GCF, and one from the WB) that sustain and broaden the Project's lines of action…" [5]

e) Expansion of project activities/geographic coverage: Projects scaling up the area or number of beneficiaries covered, e.g., from pilot districts to entire provinces or countries.

Example: "Expanded project area to the entire Zambezia Province… from 9 districts to all 16 districts…" [46]

f) Integration into national or regional programmes: Project concepts and methodologies being mainstreamed into national climate, forestry, or adaptation strategies, and leveraged for larger, government-led agendas.

Example: "The project helped to leverage other funding… and the bureaucracy of the country…" [136]

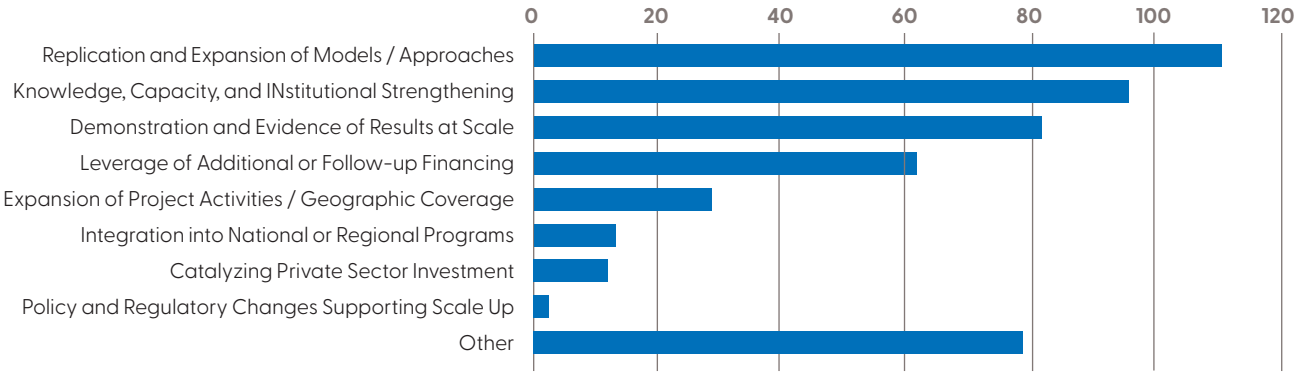
g) Catalyzing private sector investment: Early project success or enabling environment directly facilitating private sector investment in forestry or related activities.

Example: "Inclusive of grant and concessional funding that should be used to address the most significant constraints to private sector climate action, such as de-risk investments, provide technical assistance…" [53]

h) Policy and regulatory changes supporting scale up: Adoption of laws, decrees, or policy frameworks that institutionalize practices piloted by the projects and create enabling conditions for further investment.

Example: "The regulatory reform culminated in recent cases of private financing mobilization, including a 60,000ha eucalyptus plantation…" [50]

Figure 17: Number of findings per sub-category – Scaling up investments in forestry (positive)



However, not all attempts at scaling up have been successful. Challenges noted by evaluation reports include:

1. Consolidation and operational capacity: Projects may not be ready for scaling due to insufficient consolidation and operational inefficiencies.

Example: "… the expected outcomes around policy were influenced by the relationships enabled by the strategic role of the UNDP MCO in coordination. The project coordinator was there to create synergies for those deliverables but ultimately it was up to the policymaker to embed those documents within the vision

for the expected structural reforms and enact the recommended policy changes. However, for the project-supported policy and legal work, such deliverables needed to be technically vetted and then proceed through the requisite process. … [T]his required a stronger role from the government in implementation, to monitor and vet the document and provide the necessary guidance through open policy windows." [109]

2. Operational/capacity constraints for national scaling: Approaches successful at a pilot level cannot be scaled nationally without vastly increased resources and expert capacity.

Example: "Main shortcoming…is infeasibility of replicating integrated approach nationally… would require large increases in resources, more technical experts." [110]

3. Lack of lessons learned and documentation for replication: Failure to capture and share lessons prevents projects from providing replicable models elsewhere.

Example: "it was expected that the project, upon completion, would have documented all stages of the pilot intervention, and monitored its impacts including the perception of local stakeholders and other partners, thus generating useful lessons for PES projects in other areas with similar conservation issues and socio-economic context. Unfortunately, the project did not reach this stage and did not develop documentation of achievements, as there was no use extracting lessons applicable to other situations…" [154]

4. Ineffective financial mechanisms: Matching grant systems failed due to short implementation periods and unclear effectiveness as a funding tool for forest projects.

Example: "The matching grant system did not generate desired results…unsatisfactory performance is due to extremely short implementation period…" [46]

5. Unpredictable or insufficient financing: Lack of long-term clarity and predictability in mechanisms like GCF's RBP undermines scaling and partner confidence.

Example: "Clarity on the permanence or possible adjustments to the mechanism is crucial… certainty about future funding opportunities…" [70]

6. Limited pilot scale and representativity: Projects implemented on too small a scale with limited scope, excluding key regions (e.g., Africa, Amazon), which limits generalizability and scalability.

Example: "Project implemented only in ten pilot areas in four countries…did not include Africa or the Amazon… limits generalizability." [104]

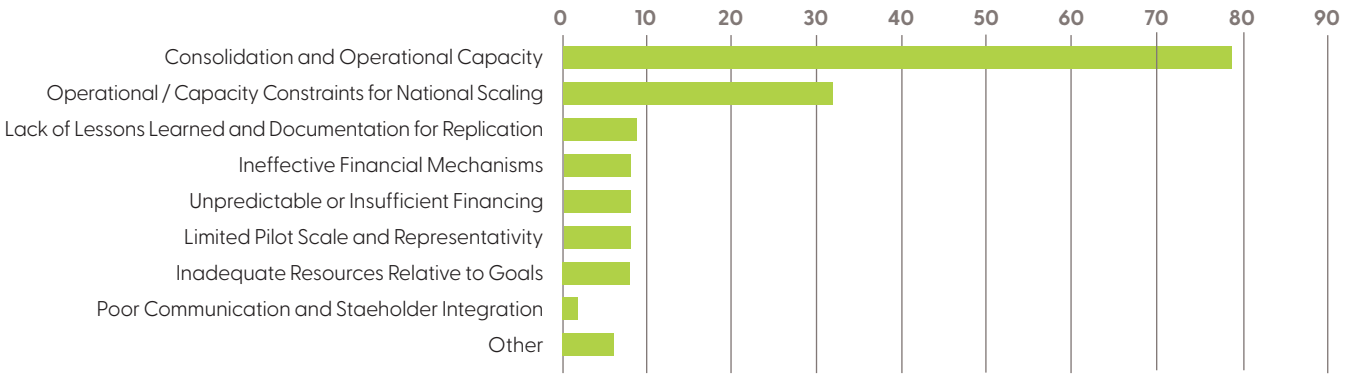
7. Inadequate resources relative to goals: Mismatch between project ambition and available resources.

Example: "A major reason why the impact…was limited is the mismatch between project goals and project resources." [98]

8. Poor communication and stakeholder Integration: Inadequate communication with stakeholders leads to a lack of support, integration, and sustainability of outputs.

Example: "...in the absence of any communication, very few stakeholders knew about the project... outputs died out at the end of the project..." [79]

Figure 18: Number of findings per sub-category – Scaling up investments in forestry (negative)



3.5 Impact

Evaluation framework
1. Projects have contributed to an adaptation impact
2. Projects have contributed to a mitigation impact

3.5.1 Adaptation impact

Out of 191 documents reviewed, 149 contain findings related to adaptation impact, most of which is positive. A majority of reports (58 per cent) have only positive findings, suggesting that most projects yield beneficial adaptation results according to the evaluation reports. Negative and/or mixed evidence of adaptation impact was identified in 20 per cent of the evaluation reports, indicating some challenges or shortcomings in achieving adaptation objectives. A notable minority (42 documents; 22 per cent) of documents contain no evidence regarding adaptation impact, 29 of which are nonetheless tagged as having adaptation as thematic area. This suggests limitations in reporting on impact level.

No. of findings	Scaling up investments in forestry
Positive	595
Negative	108

Number of documents (% share of all documents)		
Positive	111	58%
Negative	14	7%
Both	24	13%
None	42	22%

Adaptation impacts recorded include both forestry-related impacts and secondary or indirect impacts. We have categorized impacts as either direct, forestry-related adaptation impacts (e.g., forest restoration, agroforestry, forest-based livelihoods, forest ecosystem services) or secondary or indirect effects (e.g., poverty reduction, gender equity, institutional strengthening). A clear majority (likely >75 per cent) of reports with positive adaptation findings include both types of impacts – but virtually all stake their adaptation case on forest-related outcomes first. The secondary impacts (income, inclusion, policy, gender, local empowerment, etc.) are almost always discussed as "co-benefits" or as part of the pathway to achieving ecological goals, not as the sole or even the primary target.

Direct forestry-related adaptation impacts are results directly linked to forests, forestry management, or forest-dependent landscapes. These include

a. Forest restoration, conservation, and expansion: Projects conducted large-scale activities aimed at restoring degraded woodlands, conserving remaining forests, or expanding tree cover. In other projects coastal mangrove replanting and forest edge stabilization have reduced erosion and buffering settlements.

Example: "Restoration of 70,900 ha of forest in savannah and mountain ecosystems led to improved forest condition and greater resilience." [134]

Example: "Enhanced protection of mangroves and forested watershed areas..." [12]

b. Enhancement of forest ecosystem services: Projects led to improved hydrological regulation, erosion control, increased biodiversity, and microclimate benefits tied to forest cover and management. Other examples include natural forest regeneration benefiting pollinators and maintaining habitat connectivity.

Example: "Grassland and forest rehabilitation improved rainwater infiltration, reduced erosion, and protected ecosystem services for livestock and people." [2]

c. Forest-based livelihoods: New or improved forest-based income sources, such as non-timber forest products (e.g., beekeeping, mushroom production, tree nurseries), timber from managed plantations, and eco-tourism within reforested areas.

Example: "Beehive and tree nursery microenterprises generated income, supplementing on-farm agricultural activities." [40]

d. Agroforestry and sustainable land use: Promotion and adoption of agroforestry systems, such as mixed tree and crop planting, or integrating shade trees in cocoa systems, to provide both ecological and adaptation benefits. Sustainable management practices adopted across communal forest lands or buffer zones.

Example: "Agroforestry on 6,000 ha increased tree cover, improved soil moisture, and supported production." [40]

Secondary or spillover adaptation impacts are frequently linked to, but not exclusively or directly driven by, forestry interventions:

a. Institutional strengthening & local governance: Capacity-building for local communities and government agencies on resource management, project governance, financial management, and monitoring, often as a necessary step for sustaining forestry results but also with broader systemic benefits.

Example: "Associations in sixty IPTC communities were strengthened through training and subproject management..." [28]

b. Poverty reduction & household income: Broad increases in income, reduction in multidimensional poverty, and enhanced food security – often delivered by, but not limited to, forest or agroforestry interventions.

Example: "An increase in average annual income of US$840/ha/yr and US$420/ha/yr in female-headed households... mobilized and supported some of the most marginalized communities." [171]

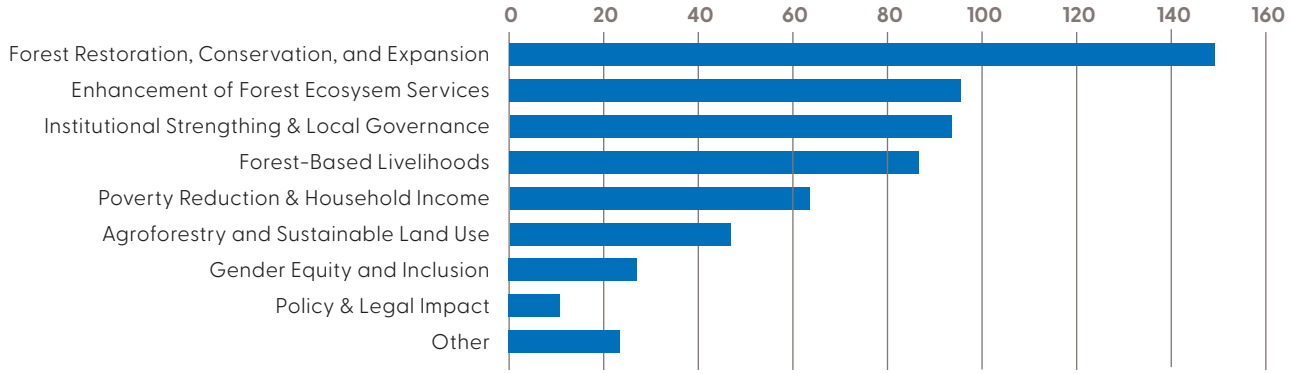
c. Gender equity and inclusion: Growth in women's participation and leadership in community groups, and targeted support for marginalized groups, with impacts sometimes cascading from forestry entry points.

Example: “Over 50 percent of leadership positions in group subprojects were held by women…” [32]

d. Policy and legal impact: Support for drafting or refining policies, by-laws, or laws influencing climate adaptation or land management, sometimes using model forest interventions as demonstration cases.

Example: “Finalizing the Water Bill is crucial, as this will provide the legal foundation for improved integrated and community engaged water resources management…” [13]

Figure 19: Number of findings per sub-category – Evidence of impact: Adaptation (positive)



Where evaluation reports are negative, it is chiefly because impacts are difficult to verify, either because insufficient time has passed or because data is insufficient. Projects often could not show measurable impacts by project close, mainly due to short timelines and the nature of interventions. Further, many evaluations found that appropriate systems to monitor and verify impact were lacking. Only a minority of the cases show project design- or implementation-related challenges that caused impact targets to not be achieved, including contextual constraints, such as inadequate budgets, weak frameworks, or factors outside project control.

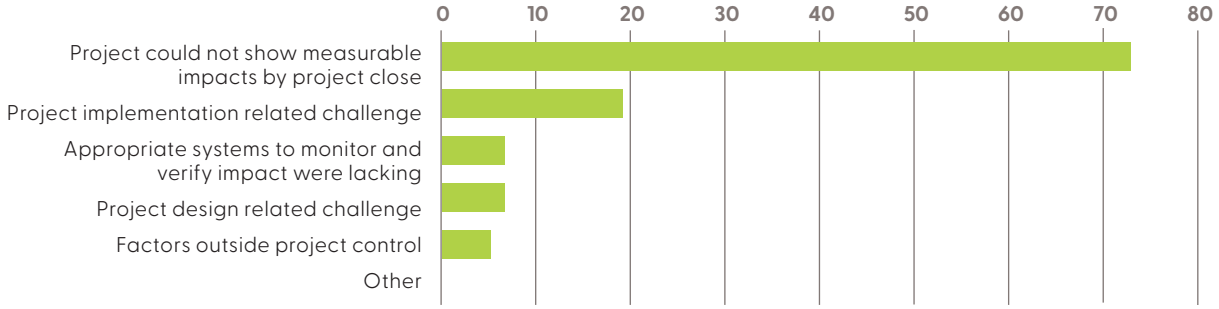
Example: “It is difficult to show any verifiable impact of project interventions … given the delivery timeline of project outputs.” [6]

Example: “Because the timeframe of the project is relatively short, when compared to the timeframe needed to bring about measurable biophysical changes in the natural environment, it is considered unlikely that this project, even if implemented to the highest level of effectiveness, would exhibit significant improvements in environmental status. Thus it is not possible to give a rating of Significant (S) for this criterion.” [82]

Example: “The likelihood of generating impacts … is challenged by external factors … beyond the project’s ability to influence.” [9]

Example: “The logging ban severely impacted the project’s poverty alleviation potential. The economic performance of the 25 PFA management plans prepared under the project and their potential impacts on poverty reduction remain to be tested.” [50]

Figure 20: Number of findings per sub-category – Evidence of impact: Adaptation (negative)



3.5.2 Mitigation impact[13]

Of the metrics, mitigation impact is the category with the fewest identified findings (274). While there are few overall mentions, 60 per cent of documents have some mention of mitigation impact. As mitigation impact is straightforward to report on, we surmise that this is because mitigation impact objectives are relatively rare. Where mitigation impact is reported on, findings are overwhelmingly positive (86 per cent), and there are few documents listing both positive and negative findings, suggesting that impact objectives per projects are few, and either achieved or not achieved (as opposed to under effectiveness/outcomes where there are often multiple objectives per project).

No. of findings	Scaling up investments in forestry
Positive	237
Negative	37

Number of documents (% share of all documents)		
Positive	90	47%
Negative	19	10%
Both	6	3%
None	76	40%

Mitigation impacts can be categorized as direct or indirect. Direct mitigation impacts have a measurable and immediate effect on emissions reduction or carbon sequestration. Indirect impacts affect policy, legal, economic or other context factors, that in turn are likely to affect mitigation – thus laying the groundwork for future mitigation benefits. Forest-related direct impacts (emissions reduction, SFM, avoided deforestation, landscape restoration) are the principal, most frequently evidenced achievements in mitigation-focused projects, featured in nearly every project. Indirect/secondary impacts appear in about 60 per cent to 80 per cent of projects but almost always as an adjunct to the direct forest interventions, not in isolation – it is uncommon for a project to report only indirect or secondary mitigation impacts without a core forest-related intervention. Quantitative figures (e.g., total emissions avoided, areas restored) and qualitative changes (e.g., policy shifts, empowerment) both feature prominently. Some projects achieved both direct and indirect impacts, often synergistically.

13. Editor's note from AF-TERG: "Although AF projects may result in certain mitigation benefits, the AF does not assess or take into consideration any mitigation impacts of its projects and programmes"

Mitigation impacts are sometimes, but not universally, independently verified. Where explicit independent verification is present, it is generally due to requirements for carbon finance or specialized partnerships (e.g., academics, certification standards). In other cases, verification is internal or semi-independent via terminal evaluation teams, using validated models and tools.

> Example: "...the assessment team of consultants partnered with the Colorado State University and their 'stock exchanges and GHG emissions measure, monitor and model software programme' to recreate a 2010 baseline and calculate that the project activities by 2017 had resulted in the sequestration of 44,773 tCO2e..." [89]

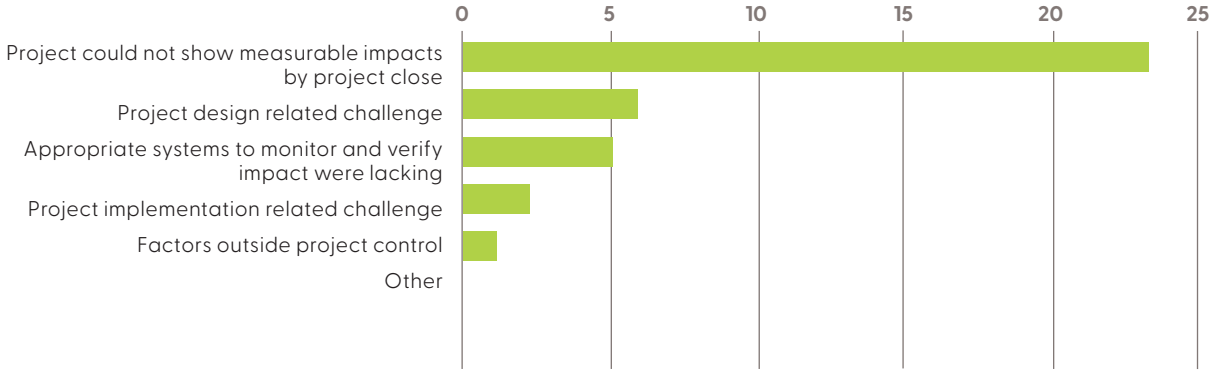
> Example: "The EX-ACT tool was used ... The baseline situation on annual carbon sequestration in the Project areas was carried out by the ecological monitoring center (CSE) involving the Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development (MEDD), the Ministry in charge of Agricultural (MAER), the research institutes and universities (UGB, UCAD/LTA, ISE, INP), the regional inspections of water and forests..." [183]

In the small number of evaluations that reported negative impact findings, this is mainly due to lack of monitoring or insufficient time. These projects often lacked effective systems or enough time to observe measurable carbon or mitigation outcomes. Benefits such as carbon sequestration from reforestation may not manifest in the short term. This means completion reports were not able to assess impact.

> Example: "...the initial years of a community forestry project might show little carbon benefit, or even a slight drop in measured carbon... forest regrowth takes time to manifest." [55]

> Example: "Significant changes in forest cover cannot be observed after three years. Also, the environmental and agronomic benefits of trees planted in farms will not be immediately apparent." [98]

Figure 21: Number of findings per sub-category – Evidence of impact: Mitigation (negative)



3.5.2.1 Direct mitigation impacts:

1. GHG emission reductions: Projects achieved measurable reductions in greenhouse gas emissions through avoided deforestation, forest restoration/management, improved agriculture, and sustainable land use.

Example: "Infrastructure improvements under FIP-1...including a reduction of 3.7 million tCO2e of GHG emissions..." [27]

2. Carbon sequestration/enhanced carbon stock: Increased carbon stored in biomass and soils due to reforestation, afforestation, and improved management.

Example: “The project resulted in 7,387 hectares of total area restored…contributing to the enhancement and restoration of carbon stock in forested areas.” [171]

3. Expansion of sustainable land management (SLM) and sustainable forest management (SFM): Adoption of restoration, conservation agriculture, pasture improvement, agroforestry, and related techniques at scale.

Example: “Land area where conservation and restoration practices have been adopted…Of the 22,526.08 ha reported…The most adopted restoration practices are Natural Regeneration…” [24]

4. Reduced deforestation & degradation: Efforts led to lower rates of forest loss and degradation within target areas.

Example: “During…FIP…2012-2018…a reduction of 5% of GHG emissions for deforestation and degradation…a reduction annual of 492.52 Gg CO2 eq/año.” [22]

3.5.2.2 Indirect mitigation impacts:

1. Co-benefits: biodiversity, watershed, and livelihood improvements: Projects reported ancillary benefits such as increased biodiversity, improved watersheds, restored ecosystem services, and enhanced incomes.

Example: “Increasing land cover and reducing the risk of flooding, landslides and food insecurity.” [89]

2. Policy, legal, and institutional strengthening: Influencing policy frameworks, developing enabling environments, and mainstreaming climate mitigation in governance and planning.

Example: “BIP was pivotal in elevating the importance of the Cerrado in policymaking and directly increasing the consideration given to this biome on the national stage.” [30]

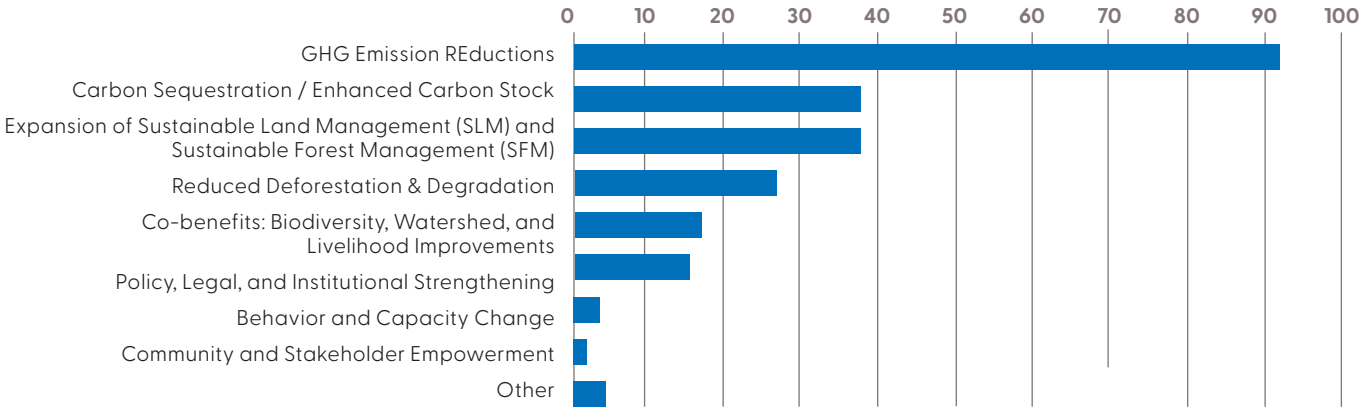
3. Behaviour and capacity change: Training, technical support, and extension services led to wider adoption of low-carbon practices and sustainable livelihoods (gender-differentiated impacts also noted).

Example: “…training, as well as training associated with technical and managerial assistance, enabled the adoption of ABC technologies.” [52]

4. Community and stakeholder empowerment: Engaged communities in management and decision-making, enabling participation in REDD+/carbon finance and improving local forest stewardship.

Example: “Its ejido system gives collective land rights…thousands of communities…own approximately 70% of Mexico’s forested land.” [25]

Figure 22: Number of findings per sub-category – Evidence of impact: Mitigation (positive)



3.6 Sustainability

Evaluation framework
Long-term sustainability of impact or outcomes achieved through the project

Evaluations find mixed evidence for long-term sustainability. Factors related to long-term sustainability was found in 176 documents (92 per cent). Compared to other evaluation criteria, this is the area with the highest share of negative findings identified. This could be related to the way the metric is identified, or because it's a metric that is harder for evaluators to assess (as it's more speculative – what will happen in the future?). Fifty-three per cent of documents find mixed evidence – both positive and negative findings.

No. of findings	Scaling up investments in forestry
Positive	1153
Negative	595

Number of documents (% share of all documents)		
Positive	62	32%
Negative	12	6%
Both	102	53%
None	15	8%

Because insufficient time has passed when evaluations are done to assess the actual long-term effects of projects, evaluation reports often refer to projects' likelihood of sustainability instead. This is done through highlighting elements of project design or implementation that are conducive or not conducive to long-term sustainability. Factors that are highlighted in evaluation reports include:

a) Institutional/capacity building: Evidence highlights sustainability when projects invest in building or strengthening the capacities of government agencies, community organizations, or local committees responsible for managing forests/natural resources.

Example: "The project made significant gains in first establishing a coordinated multisectoral institutional set-up and building the capacity of both national- and community-level institutions..." [187]

b) Community engagement & local ownership: Projects repeatedly stress that engaging local communities –through participatory planning, co-management, capacity development, and creation of local user organizations – fosters sustainability by increasing motivation, buy-in, and maintenance of project interventions.

Example: "Ownership of a project is equally crucial, lack of ownership often leads towards unsustainability." [150]

c) Knowledge management, M&E, and learning systems: Establishing knowledge management platforms, robust monitoring and evaluation systems, and channels for lesson-sharing supports continuity, adaptive management, and scaling.

Example: "The project achieved good results in terms of systematization and dissemination of lessons learned." [124]

d) Financial mechanisms & sustainable funding: Many projects note the establishment of dedicated funds, trust funds, revolving funds, PES (payment for ecosystem services), or strategies for attracting ongoing funding as key to long-term sustainability.

Example: "A noteworthy aspect was the creation of revolving funds, a tool highly valued by producers and technicians, despite some problems regarding their sustainability…" [2]

e) Legal, policy, and regulatory frameworks: Establishing, revising, or enforcing legal and policy frameworks is cited repeatedly as crucial, whether through the creation of new laws, management plans, or by institutionalizing new standards.

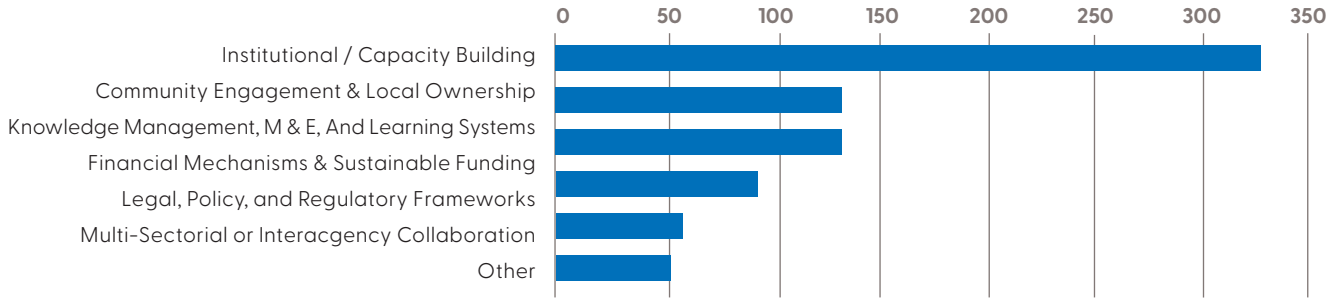
Example: "The implementation of Zambia's Forest Legislation … assisted the formalisation of a number of [plans], which will remain in place following the closing of the project." [134]

Example: "An emerging trend in the research is the growing recognition of land tenure security as a critical factor in implementing successful forest conservation. … Communities and individuals with secure tenure are more likely to invest in long-term conservation practices, reducing deforestation and degradation. This growing body of evidence supports the need for policies that strengthen land tenure as a precondition for effective forest conservation strategies." [59]

f) Multi-sectoral or interagency collaboration: Sustainability is often tied to forming ongoing coordination platforms across sectors or levels of government and with NGOs, the private sector, or technical agencies.

Example: "The work required in co-implementing the project activities across multiple ministries and agencies not only led to improved outcomes but also strengthened the institutions' abilities to work collaboratively across sectors. There was significant institutional collaboration…" [187]

Figure 23: Number of findings per sub-category – Factor conducive to sustainability (positive)



Factors associated with challenges to or risk factors of long-term sustainability include:

1. Lack of financial sustainability/resources: Projects often lack secure, long-term funding or strategies for resource mobilization after external funding ends. There may be no sustainable business model, dedicated budget, or financial incentives to maintain activities post-project.

Example: "The project has not put in place a real exit strategy based on a financial resource mobilisation plan for the post-AfDB financing period. One year after the end of the project, the REDD+ Training Centre (CENAFOR-REDD+) is still not functional... Financial viability is deemed unsatisfactory." [31]

2. Weak institutional frameworks and governance: Weaknesses in governance, poor coordination among institutions, lack of clear mandates, or delays in policy/legal reforms undermine the ability to sustain or scale up interventions.

Example: "The institutional and governance sustainability of the project... is most directly related to the uptake of the policy initiatives developed under the project... The lack of a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) policy, which accounts for climate change impacts, as well unregulated development... poses an important risk to the achievement of project outcomes in the long-term." [6]

3. Environmental risks and external shocks: Factors such as extreme weather, climate change, natural disasters, or continuing illegal activities threaten the longevity of project outcomes.

Example: "Environmental sustainability of reforestation activities... The plants should be protected and the resulting populations monitored. For instance, the evaluation team concluded... that no activity has been planned to protect the reforested areas. Currently, free-ranging seems to be the norm in areas where young pines have been transplanted." [151]

4. Limited community engagement and ownership: Projects struggle when there is insufficient community participation, empowerment, or buy-in. Top-down project designs, lack of capacity-building, or absence of incentives for local stakeholders limit sustainability.

Example: "Actual community engagement in regards to coastal adaptation remains ad hoc and lacks consideration of changes required at the community-level... Efforts to develop adaptation strategies which empower communities in decision-making and planning processes... are fundamental to ensuring the socio-economic sustainability of the project investments." [6]

5. No exit strategy/planning for transition: Projects often lack a well-defined exit or transition plan to ensure that benefits and activities continue post-project, leaving outcomes vulnerable when support ends.

Example: "... another key challenge for the current RFPs is a lack of business continuity or exit plan or strategy after the pilot programme ends." [66]

6. Insufficient capacity-building and human resources: Limited training of local staff, high turnover, and lack of sustained capacity development impede long-term maintenance or expansion of results.

Example: "There was no appropriate monitoring and evaluation mechanism during the implementation of the project since there was no dedicated monitoring and evaluation officer, and the weakness of the human resources of the PMU created a slight lack of visibility and responsiveness for carrying out certain activities." [8]

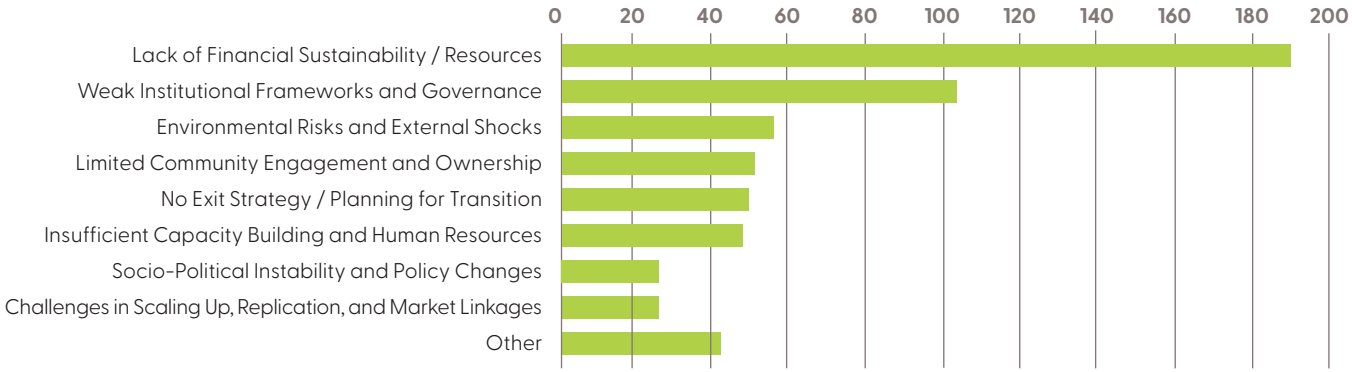
7. Socio-political instability and policy changes: Political instability, changes in government, shifting priorities, or lack of supportive policies may undermine sustainability.

Example: "Considering that the government is involved in the implementation of the project, long-term sustainability is always subjected to risks of political changes. ...there are no formal commitments to ensure the budget in the medium or long term and implementation will depend on the political willingness." [14]

8. Challenges in scaling up, replication, and market linkages: Pilot or demonstration activities aren't easily adopted or expanded due to poor extension models, limited market access, or lack of capacity for replication and scale.

Example: "The absence of large-scale financing to counteract existing economic incentives (and the challenges in removing them) remains a constraint to supporting scaling and sustainable change. The market and governance failures that underpin the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation are deeply entrenched. There are few ready opportunities that exist to promote technologies or innovative incentive structures that might correct for this in the short term" [19]

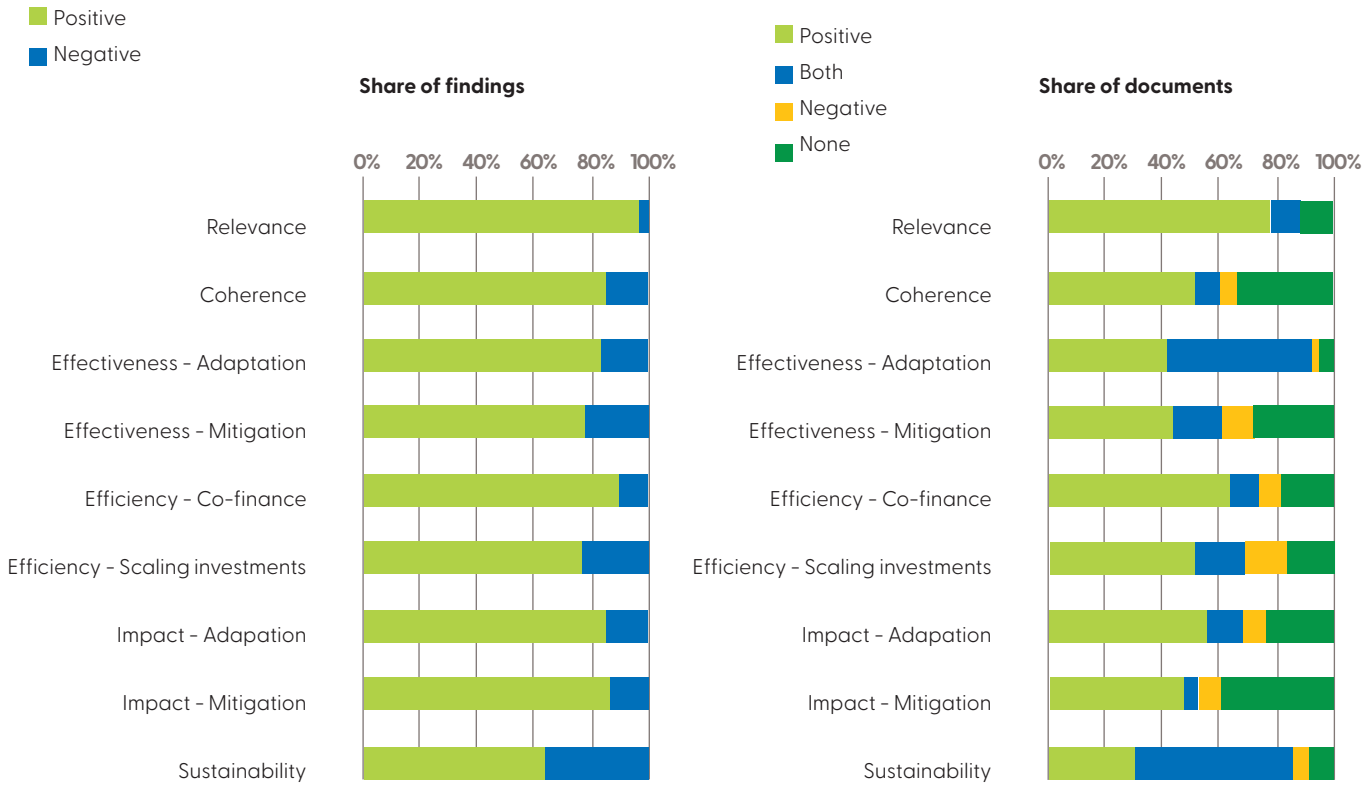
Figure 24: Number of findings per sub-category – Factor conducive to sustainability (negative)



4. Conclusions

The synthesis extracts information from 191 forestry-related evaluation documents and summarizes 11,564 individual findings. The evaluation has shown that the climate funds' activities related to forestry are heterogenous and have varying objectives and rationales while having a common thread: their relationship to forests. It should be noted that the evidence presented here tells us something about the evaluation reports – not necessarily the forestry activities themselves. On an overarching level, most findings identified are of a positive nature; in fact most documents include only positive findings for many of the criteria examined. All criteria are covered to a large extent in evaluation reports, although mitigation is generally less common than adaptation, both under effectiveness and impact. Figure 25 summarizes all findings and documents.

Figure 25: Summary overview (share of findings n = 11,564) (share of documents n = 191)



Relevance (To what extent are projects aligned with local needs?). Across the portfolio, forestry interventions are consistently judged relevant to country contexts. Of 1,081 relevance findings, 1,039 are positive, reflecting clear alignment with national strategies (NDCs, NAPs, forest policies), priority agendas such as food and water security, and livelihood and resilience needs. The relatively few negatives point to familiar pitfalls: designs that were too ambitious for the time frame or capacity available, thin preparatory analysis, and gaps in stakeholder inclusion – particularly around gender and Indigenous Peoples.

Coherence (To what extent are projects coherent with other climate fund projects?). Evidence on coherence is largely favorable. Out of 467 coherence findings, 399 highlight complementarities with other climate fund programmes and donor initiatives, plus instances of aligned planning and coordination platforms. Where coherence falters (68 negatives), the issues tend to be structural rather than technical: institutional silos that limit collaboration, misaligned implementation schedules across programmes, and linkages between actors that remain on paper rather than in practice.

Effectiveness (To what extent are projects achieving their intended outcomes?). Effectiveness is the largest evidence block (5,961 findings), and the balance is positive (4,925). Most verified results are on the adaptation side (4,953 findings, 4,144 positive), including improved livelihoods, adoption of sustainable forest/land practices (SFM/SLM), strengthened ecosystem services, and institutional and community capacities. Meanwhile, mitigation outcomes are relatively more rare (1,008 findings, 781 positive) – e.g., avoided deforestation, increased carbon stocks, and improved measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) capacity. These appear less frequently than under adaptation and are more often associated with verification challenges. Where effectiveness is weaker, explanations include short implementation windows, design and management constraints, and contexts where mitigation was not a primary objective.

Efficiency (To what extent are funds scaling up investments in the forestry sector?). Efficiency evidence (1,330 findings) shows a positive tilt (1,090), especially around co-financing (688 total; 606 positive), with contributions from governments and MDBs in both cash and in-kind forms. However, consistency and verification of co-financing commitments are recurring concerns, and "booked" versus "mobilized" finance is not always clear. The picture on scaling up investments is mixed (642 total; 484 positive; 158 negative). Projects frequently report replication, supportive policy/regulatory changes, follow-on finance, and geographic expansion, but these gains are offset by limited extension/market linkages, short project durations, and uncertain longer-term financing models.

Impact (What are the impacts (mitigation, adaptation) of projects?). Impact findings (977) are mostly positive (832). Adaptation impacts (703 total; 595 positive) are commonly described as emerging or likely, reflecting the short time period between project completion and review. Mitigation impacts (274 total; 237 positive) are documented where robust MRV or results-based mechanisms (e.g., REDD+) are in place, though verification approaches differ across documents and settings.

Sustainability (How likely are impacts to be sustained after completion of projects?). Sustainability presents a more mixed picture (1,748 findings; 1,153 positive and 595 negative). Estimates of durable results are associated with strong community ownership, capable institutions, stable financing mechanisms (e.g., trust funds, revolving funds, PES), and policy/legal lock-in – supported by knowledge management and multi-agency collaboration. Risks cluster around absent exit strategies, fragile financing, weak coordination/governance, limited pathways for replication, and exposure to external shocks (climate and political).

Annex I: Methodology

This annex presents the methodology as implemented by the evaluation team. The methodology was updated throughout the evaluation period, reflecting the experimental nature of the study. Challenges and adaptations implemented are presented in greater detail in the accompanying note.

I) Methodology overview

The starting point for the evaluation is a common methodology for synthesis evaluations that would have been used by human reviewers, based on Popay et al. (2006)[14] . This approach is divided into six distinct steps, starting from defining the criteria, sample frame and classification framework, then processing the documentation to be synthesized, coding the evidence, and finally drawing conclusions from the compiled findings (Table 6). The methodology combines an inductive approach, whereby a framework is constructed and the evidence fit into this methodology, and a deductive approach, whereby the frameworks are adapted throughout implementation, to ensure the frameworks fit the available evidence. The approach takes as a starting point the evaluation questions and organizes evidence to maximize the ease of synthesizing the information from the evidence base around each question. From this starting point, we then adapt steps where possible to replace human labor with the use of AI/ML.

Table 6: Overall methodology pre-AI enhancement

Step	Non-AI assisted workflow
1. Develop evaluation framework based on Evaluation Criteria	The construction of the framework starts with converting the evaluation criteria into evaluation questions that will be answered by the synthesis. This defines the information we are looking for in each document (such as Relevance and Effectiveness, etc.), represented by an evaluation matrix.
2. Collect and map documents	Based on the agreed upon scope of the synthesis, we consolidate all the documents that will be used, screen the documents, and store them cleanly in a file system.
3. Classification framework	A critical part of the synthesis is making a framework for classifying the evidence. This could, for example, be based on a theory of change for interventions in the forestry sector. The framework allows for classifying evidence according to types of interventions, funds, geography, instruments, cross-cutting areas, and document types, etc.
4. Document pre-processing / code metadata	Based on the framework from Step 3, we classify and tag documents by type, fund, and other metadata associated with each piece of evidence, including the fund involved, year of publication, and geographic coverage.
5. Code evidence	The largest step of the methodology is coding the text in each document according to the content (as defined in the frameworks from step 1 and 3): "This piece of text says something about 'relevance' and is related to 'community-based approaches'", etc.
6. Synthesis and analysis	Based on a complete set of coded evidence, we can draw conclusions about the evaluation questions (as per the evaluation framework from step 1), identify common trends across projects and documents, and identify where there are gaps in the evidence (based on the framework/theory of change), etc.

The AI enhancement of the methodology is applied primarily in steps 4 to 6, which covers the main analysis. In the traditional approach, these steps rely on manual review of documents; in this pilot, AI technology is introduced to automate and accelerate the process. An AI model is fed information on evaluation frameworks

14. Jennie Popay, Helen Roberts, Amanda Sowden, Mark Petticrew, Lisa Arai, Mark Rodgers, Nicky Britten, Katrina Roen, and Steven Duffy, Guidance on the Conduct of Narrative Synthesis in Systematic Reviews: A Product from the ESRC Methods Programme, Version 1 (Lancaster University, April 2006), https://doi.org/10.13140/2.1.1018.4643

and classification frameworks (from steps 1 and 3). The AI model digests the documentation (from Step 2) and tags it, with both metadata (Step 4) and a more comprehensive tagging line by line in each document (Step 5). The output is an AI model with all the knowledge of the documents (i.e. a database of all the findings with tags), which can then be queried to extract information for the synthesis (Step 6). The process is summarized in Table 7.

Table 7: Methodology with and without AI-enhancement

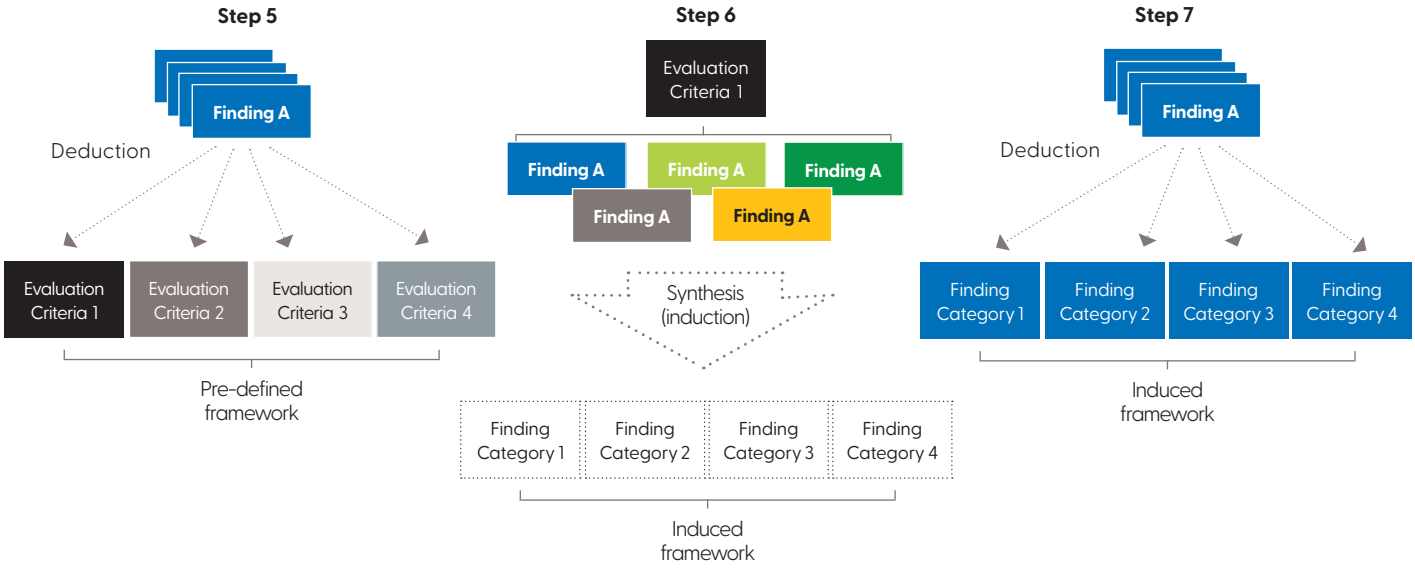
Step	Non-AI assisted workflow	AI-enhancement	Output
1. Develop evaluation framework based on evaluation criteria	Convert the evaluation criteria into evaluation questions that will be answered in the synthesis		Evaluation matrix with detailed questions and metrics
2. Collect and map documents	Consolidate all the documents that will be used and screen		Folder with all documents
3. Classification framework	Make framework for classification of evidence, descriptive and evaluation	Use unsupervised natural language processing to make suggestions on framework	Framework for classifying lines of evidence
4. Document pre-processing/code metadata	Classify and tag documents by type, Fund, etc.	Use a prompted LLM to tag documents with meta-data, make a full spreadsheet with all documents	List of documents with tags
5. Code evidence	Code the text in each document according to the content (i.e. the metrics)	Use prompted LLM to code evidence according to framework	Table of evidence (findings) across all data sources
6. Synthesis and analysis	Identify trends, identify gaps	Use AI to cluster findings across documents	Synthesis report

Because of challenges in the synthesis phase, two additional steps were added in order to provide quantitative data on findings. In Step 6, the AI model was unable to provide reliable quantitative data on its findings. Therefore, we took the categories of findings produced by the AI model under Step 6 and processed them with another round of tagging findings (Step 7) to produce a more detailed list of findings (including with granular categories). These were then summarized and compiled by human reviewers in Step 8 (Table 8). In practice, this amounts to a second round of deductive reasoning in the approach, whereby a framework is constructed based on the evidence. This is in contrast with the previous steps that build on an inductive reasoning, where the evidence is fitted to a pre-existing framework (Figure 26).

Table 8: Final methodology with AI-enhancement

Step	Non-AI assisted workflow	AI-enhancement	Output
6. Synthesis and analysis	Identify trends, identify gaps	Use AI to categorize findings	Categories of findings
7. Detailed re-coding of evidence		Use prompted LLM to code evidence according to detailed framework	Table of evidence (findings) across all data sources with detailed tags
8. Reporting	Drafting of report, quantitative analysis of results		Synthesis report

Figure 26: Revised steps 5-7, inductive and deductive reasoning

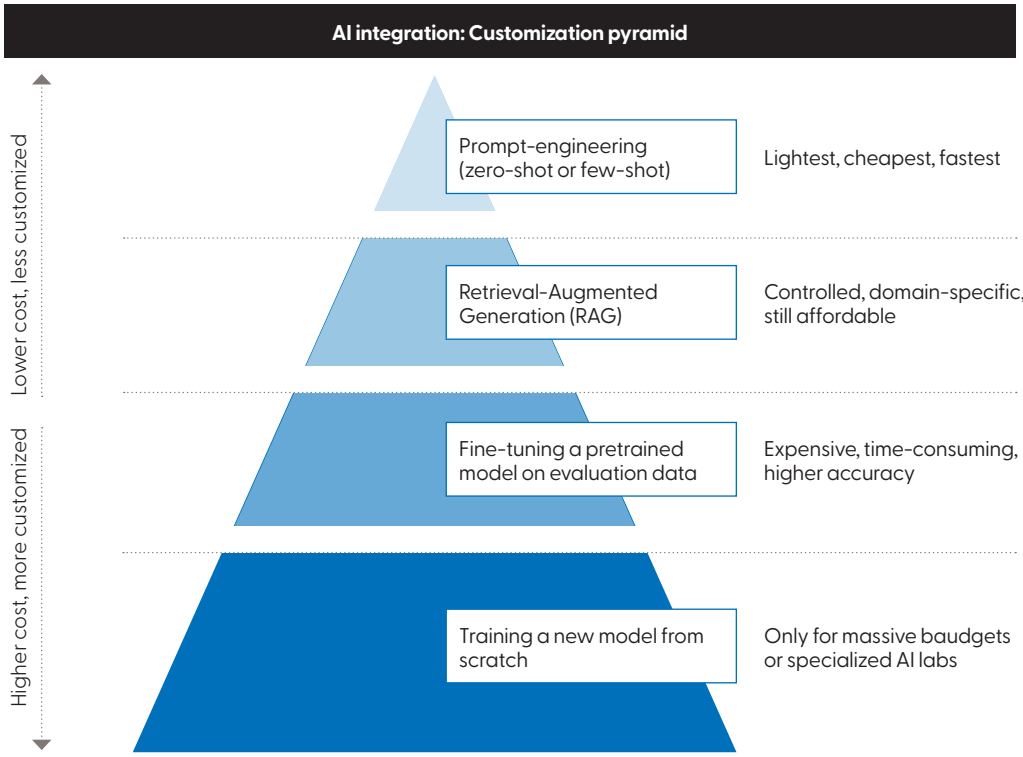


A fundamental principle throughout the process is transparency in the AI-enhanced steps to allow for human review. This means that each step will produce a tangible output that can be reviewed by human experts, such as tables of text. Having human evaluators reproduce the AI-enhanced step in parallel allows for a comparison of the AI's outputs with human outputs. While this is not strictly necessary for the production of the synthesis report, it will give the team the ability to assess the performance of the AI model along each step. This is done because this is a pilot exercise, and because documenting the performance and potential challenges of the AI tool is a core part of the assignment.

II) Use of artificial intelligence (AI) overview

In this methodology, tasks described as being "done by the AI" refer to complex processes carried out by large language models (LLMs) and supporting technologies. To ensure replicability and broader applicability, the approach is technology-agnostic: it does not rely on proprietary software unique to KPMG. However, between generic and specialized solutions there are trade-offs: "deeper" adjustments to AI tools offer more tailored solutions, but also larger investments in development. Owing to budget constraints for this assignment, a generic approach focusing on adjusting the "top" layers of the AI model is adopted; as illustrated by Figure 27 involving prompt-engineering and Retrieval-Augmented Generation (RAG).

Figure 27: AI integration overview



III) Step 1 – Evaluation framework

Evaluation questions were given in the terms of reference and adapted and refined to the synthesis evaluation. Evaluation questions were narrowed to be more specific, and metrics were developed by the evaluation team to ensure comparability across documents.

In order to make the assignment feasible within the budget and time constraints, the evaluation focuses on a small number of evaluation questions and metrics. This reflects the exploratory nature of the study, whose main emphasis was piloting the use of AI. Evaluation reports contain a broader set of evaluation questions that were not covered by this synthesis.

During implementation, the list of questions and metrics were narrowed further and additional instructions elaborated. During pilot runs of the AI model, the scope of questions was narrowed to make the scope more manageable. In addition, analysis of tags generated by the AI model revealed that some tags were applied? in error because the instructions and definitions were unclear. The metric definitions were therefore further elaborated to improve the AI model's tagging evidence. The final evaluation framework used is summarized in Annex II (A), which also contains instructions given to the AI model.

IV) Step 2 - Collect and map documents

Documents were shared by the four climate funds, cleaned and mapped. The evaluation team received 485 documents, of which 294 were outside of scope due to date of publication (older than 2018). The final total

number of documents within scope is 191. The mapping of documents and projects is described in Section 2 of the Synthesis Report.

The large variation in documents poses a methodological challenge as evidence cannot be equally weighted. Because the documents vary in scope, purpose and quality standards – with some focused on specific projects, some broader in scope, some external, and others internal – it is difficult to say that findings can be compared across documents. This is a limitation of the study. As a result, the original plan to compare findings across project or document types, particularly by fund, was abandoned.

V) Step 3 - Classification framework

The objective of the classification framework is to have a set of factors we can use to describe the contents of documents. The classification framework constitutes the analytical framework used to understand the evidence. The framework is based on a reading of climate funds' theories of change related to forestry projects. It provides a basis for the classification of interventions, activities, themes, and related elements.

The classification framework was updated based on assessments of the AI model's performance in tagging documents. Through an iterative process, additional instructions were added to help guide the AI model in making correct classifications. Assessments of what the AI model was tagging and not tagging helped improve the instructions. Annex II (B) presents the final version of the classification framework and AI instructions.

VI) Step 4 - Document pre-processing/code metadata

The step involves classifying documents using document-level descriptive tags from the classification framework. Where documents relate to individual projects – which applies to most of documents – tagging the documents is effectively equivalent to tagging the project itself. Categories are taken from the classification framework. The output is a table of documents with accompanying information in the form of classification framework tags.

VII) Step 5 - Code evidence

The step involves classifying text snippets – findings – with evaluative codes from the evaluation framework. The AI model reviews each document in detail and tags pieces of text in order to make a database of findings that are tagged as containing information on one of the metrics. A finding corresponds to an evaluation finding made in an evaluation report. In line with the evaluation framework, the finding is either coded as "positive" or "negative", depending on the text. The resulting database contains 11,564 findings (usually paragraphs).

Table 9 illustrates examples of findings coded with evaluative tags, alongside the descriptive tags that are based on the documents.

Table 9: Example of evidence-coding process

<table>
<tr><th>Finding</th><th>Evaluative Tag</th></tr>
<tr><td>In terms of sustainability of FIP-ABC results, the proven and demonstrated financial profitability of the ABC technologies, together with a high degree of training/TA content retention, speak to the high likelihood of continued adoption of low-carbon agriculture even after project closing on the part of project beneficiaries, who are already investing their own resources to pay for such technologies.</td><td>Factor conducive to sustainability (Positive)</td></tr>
<tr><td><table>
<tr><th>Indicator</th><th>Baseline Value</th><th>Original Target Values (from Approval Documents)</th><th>Formally Revised Target Values</th><th>Actual Value Achieved at Completion or Target Years</th></tr>
<tr><td>Indicator 1:</td><td colspan="4">Increase percentage of production forests under a forest management plan.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Value (quantitative or qualitative)</td><td>66</td><td>100</td><td></td><td>90</td></tr>
<tr><td>Date achieved</td><td>03/01/2005</td><td>12/31/2009</td><td></td><td>12/31/2011</td></tr>
<tr><td>Comments (incl. % achievement)</td><td colspan="4">Largely achieved. 83 of 92 assigned long-term forest management units (UFAs) have a management plan.</td></tr>
</table></td><td>Achievement of intended mitigation outcomes (Positive)</td></tr>
<tr><td>The matching grant system did not generate desired results ... unsatisfactory performance is due to extremely short implementation period...</td><td>Scaling up investments in forestry (Negative)</td></tr>
</table>

VIII) Step 6 - Synthesis

The objective is to synthesize a large number of findings into categories of "most common" findings for each criteria. At its core, synthesis involves identifying patterns and commonalities across a body of evidence. For each criteria, and for both positive/negative versions, this process develops a set of categories that is used to organize the findings. What this looks like in practice varies between evaluation criteria, depending on what elements are interesting. For example, under the Relevance criteria "alignment with national strategies," we might be interested in the types of national strategies with which projects are aligned or not aligned. Under the Sustainability criteria "factors conducive to sustainability," we might be interested in identifying which sustainability factors were mentioned. For all the criteria, we include a category for challenges, reflecting "negative" evaluation findings. While Step 6 applied an existing framework to interpret and map the data (deductive), this step develops a framework inductively from previously unidentified data.

The methodology was expanded to include additional steps because the AI model struggled with quantification. In the original methodology, the AI model was expected to produce the synthesis report at this stage, but the AI model had challenges in quantifying results, so an additional step of classifying findings using the framework developed by Step 6 was added (Step 7).

IX) Step 7 – Re-coding of findings

Based on the more detailed categories from Step 6, the AI model re-reviewed tagged findings from Step 5 and applied the new categories. In order to allow for quantitative analysis of the data, we needed to classify findings as belonging to the categories. The reviewer (the AI model) assessed each individual finding from Step 5 and applied the categorization developed in the synthesis step (Step 6). The output is an updated list of the same 11,564 findings, similar to Step 5, with additional information on which Step 6-category each finding relates to.

X) Step 8 – Reporting

The final step of the process is writing a document for dissemination. The structure of the findings for each of the criteria is to present:

The categorization of the findings found (Step 6): This is provided directly by the AI model.

Quantification of each category (based on Step 7): This is calculated in Excel using tables provided by the AI model. The main findings table is cross-tabulated with the list of documents and project attributes. Quantification results include the number of mentions, the number of projects associated with specific findings, and related measures.

Examples from each of the categories (based on Step 5): The main findings table consists of text snippets from the text that can be used as examples. This is provided directly by the AI model.

XI) Limitations and challenges

Please note that this synthesis report is accompanied by a lessons learned note on the use of AI (not publicly available), which provides further detail on the limitations and challenges encountered.

Annex II: Detailed frameworks

A) Evaluation framework

OECD DAC criteria	Evaluation question	Metric	Additional instruction	Positive	Negative
Relevance	To what extent are projects aligned with local needs?	Interventions are aligned with local needs, national strategies and/or national priorities (e.g., NDCs, forest strategies)	Only apply the tag "Alignment with country needs, strategies, official documents" if the project document or evaluation contains an explicit statement of alignment. This can be: A direct quotation or close paraphrase referencing a national policy, strategy, official document, or stated country need; Or, a clear statement by the author/evaluator that asserts the project is aligned or responds to specific country needs, priorities, or strategies. Do NOT apply this tag based solely on contextual evidence, sector statistics, or your own inference from background data. There must be a clear, attributable statement of alignment or reference in the text. If the text only presents facts or context (such as employment figures, deficits, vulnerabilities) without an explicit alignment claim, do not assign this tag.	Project design is based on the needs of the country; project is aligned with country strategies, plans or official documents; project design is based on analysis of country needs	Project design is not based on the needs of the country; project is not aligned with country strategies, plans or official documents; project design is not based on analysis of country needs
Coherence	To what extent are projects coherent with other climate fund projects?	Projects are complimentary with other climate funds, and do not conflict or overlap			
Effectiveness	Scaling up investments in forestry (Negative)	Projects have achieved their intended adaptation outcomes	Changes in capacity, behaviour or conditions due to outputs, for example improved practices adopted, income sources diversified, increased crop yields, improved food security, natural resource management strengthened	Project achieved its objectives and targets related to adaptation outcomes	Project did not achieve its objectives and targets related to adaptation outcomes
		Projects have achieved their intended mitigation outcomes	Changes in capacity, behaviour or conditions due to outputs, for example reduced deforestation, increased carbon sequestration, efficient stoves used, forest monitoring data reported	Project achieved its objectives and targets related to mitigation outcomes	Project did not achieve its objectives and targets related to mitigation outcomes
Efficiency	To what extent are projects achieving their intended outcomes?	Projects have co-financing from other sources			
		Projects have contributed to scaling up investments in forestry sector			

OECD DAC criteria	Evaluation question	Metric	Additional instruction	Positive	Negative
Impact	To what extent are projects aligned with local needs?	Projects have contributed to an adaptation impact	Long-term high-level changes, for example greater resilience, lower exposure, reduced poverty	Project achieved impacts related to adaptation; project is likely to achieve impacts related to adaptation;	Project did not achieve impacts related to adaptation; Project is not likely to achieve impacts related to adaptation
		Projects have contributed to a mitigation impact	Long-term high-level changes, for reduced greenhouse gas emissions, increased carbon sink capacity	Project achieved impacts related to mitigation; project is likely to achieve impacts related to mitigation	Project did not achieve impacts related to mitigation; Project is not likely to achieve impacts related to mitigation
Sustainability	How likely are impacts to be sustained after completion of projects?	Project design contained factor that is conducive to long-term sustainability	Long-term sustainability of impact or outcomes achieved through the project	Project design contained factor that is conducive to long-term sustainability	Project design contained factor that is non-conducive to long-term sustainability

B) Classification framework

Type	Category	Name	Additional instruction
Descriptive	Type of document	Project level report – End evaluation (Internal)	Document is a final evaluation, written after completion of one specific project. Sometimes referred to as terminal evaluation, end evaluation, end review, etc. Written internally by staff members of the organization that implemented the project
Descriptive	Type of document	Project level report – End evaluation (External)	Document is a final evaluation, written after completion of one specific project. Sometimes referred to as terminal evaluation, end evaluation, end review, etc. Written by an externally contracted author or company, NOT by the organization that implemented the project
Descriptive	Type of document	Project level report – Mid-term evaluation (Internal)	Document is a mid-term evaluation, written during implementation of one specific project. Sometimes referred to as mid-term review, mid-term evaluation, etc. Written internally by staff members of the organization that implemented the project
Descriptive	Type of document	Project level report - Mid-term evaluation (External)	Document is a mid-term evaluation, written during implementation of one specific project. Sometimes referred to as mid-term review, mid-term evaluation, etc. Written by an externally contracted author or company, NOT by the organization that implemented the project
Descriptive	Type of document	Aggregate report	Aggregate evaluation report that summarizes findings from more than one project
Descriptive	Type of document	Other	Other document type that does not fit with the other categories
Descriptive	Activities	Training farmers	Formal or informal training, workshops, or capacity-building sessions for farmers and local communities. Focus is on skills transfer.
Descriptive	Activities	Technical assistance to government	Support to ministries, agencies, or local authorities to improve policy, planning, monitoring, or governance.
Descriptive	Activities	Providing financial incentives or subsidies	Payments, subsidies, or grants to encourage adoption of sustainable practices (e.g., subsidies for seedlings, PES schemes).
Descriptive	Activities	Organizing communities	Establishment or strengthening of local organizations, cooperatives, or forest user groups for collective management or advocacy.
Descriptive	Activities	Conducting research	Studies, surveys, pilots, or monitoring activities to generate knowledge for decision-making.
Descriptive	Activities	Piloting innovations	Testing new technologies, approaches, or financial mechanisms (e.g., drone monitoring, new credit schemes, novel restoration techniques).
Descriptive	Activities	Other	Other type of activity that does not fit the categories of activities
Descriptive	Intervention type	REDD+/Results-based payments	Programmes aimed at reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, often linked to verified results-based finance.
Descriptive	Intervention type	Reforestation / Afforestation	Planting trees in previously forested (reforestation) or non-forested (afforestation) land.
Descriptive	Intervention type	Forest conservation / protection	Establishment of protected areas, enforcement measures, or community patrols to prevent deforestation.
Descriptive	Intervention type	Agroforestry	Integration of trees with crops or livestock systems for both production and ecological benefits.
Descriptive	Intervention type	Sustainable forest management (SFM)	Improving logging practices, certification, or forest management systems to balance production and conservation.
Descriptive	Intervention type	Payment for ecosystem services (PES)	Financial or in-kind incentives to landholders for maintaining or enhancing ecosystem services (e.g., watershed protection, carbon storage).
Descriptive	Intervention type	Policy / governance reform (land tenure, regulation)	Legal or regulatory changes (e.g., clarifying land tenure, reforming forest law, establishing MRV systems).

Type	Category	Name	Additional instruction
Descriptive	Intervention type	Capacity building / institutional strengthening	Developing institutional capacities (staffing, systems, planning, MRV) at local, national, or regional level.
Descriptive	Intervention type	Community engagement & Indigenous Peoples' rights	Activities explicitly aimed at strengthening rights, participation, and agency of local communities and Indigenous Peoples.
Descriptive	Intervention type	Other	Other category of intervention type that does not fit the categories of intervention type
Descriptive	Thematic focus	Adaptation (resilience, livelihoods, water/soil management)	Measures that help communities and ecosystems cope with climate impacts (e.g., resilient farming, soil and water management).
Descriptive	Thematic focus	Mitigation (emissions reduction, carbon sequestration)	Efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions or enhance carbon sinks (e.g., afforestation, avoided deforestation).
Descriptive	Thematic focus	Biodiversity / ecosystem services	Conservation of biodiversity, ecosystem integrity, or services like water regulation and soil fertility.
Descriptive	Thematic focus	Indigenous Peoples & Local Communities (IPLCs)	Interventions directly engaging IPLCs, supporting rights, participation, or cultural values in forest management.
Descriptive	Thematic focus	Equity/gender	Addressing social inclusion, gender equality, and distribution of benefits across different groups.
Descriptive	Thematic focus	Other	Other category of thematic focus that does not fit the categories of thematic focus
Descriptive	Fund	AF	Adaptation Fund
Descriptive	Fund	CIF	Climate Investment Funds
Descriptive	Fund	GCF	Green Climate Fund
Descriptive	Fund	GEF	Global Environment Facility
Descriptive	Fund	Other	
Descriptive	Implementing entity	World Bank	Implementing entity = the entity that receives funding from the climate fund
Descriptive	Implementing entity	UNDP	Implementing entity = the entity that receives funding from the climate fund
Descriptive	Implementing entity	UNEP	Implementing entity = the entity that receives funding from the climate fund
Descriptive	Implementing entity	FAO	Implementing entity = the entity that receives funding from the climate fund
Descriptive	Implementing entity	National entity (government)	Implementing entity = the entity that receives funding from the climate fund
Descriptive	Implementing entity	National entity (non-government)	Implementing entity = the entity that receives funding from the climate fund

C) Synthesized framework

Positive	Negative	Category	Additional instructions
RELEVANCE			
Alignment with country needs			
Project design is based on the needs of the country; project design is based on analysis of country needs		Vulnerable Livelihoods and Rural Development	Refers to efforts that support populations whose livelihoods are at risk due to poverty, natural resource dependence, or socio-economic marginalization – particularly in rural areas. Includes activities aiming to increase income, build resilience, and improve well-being for rural and vulnerable groups.
		Food and Water Security	Involves actions that ensure consistent, reliable access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food and clean water for all, especially those facing scarcity due to environmental or economic constraints.
		Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction	Encompasses initiatives to mitigate the effects of climate change, adapt communities and ecosystems to changing conditions, and reduce the risk and impact of natural disasters (such as floods, droughts, or wildfires).
		Biodiversity and Ecosystem Protection	Addresses the conservation and sustainable management of biological diversity, natural habitats, and ecosystem functions. Includes activities to prevent species loss, protect endangered habitats, and maintain ecological balance.
		Addressing Land Degradation and Desertification	Includes measures aimed at preventing, reducing, or reversing the loss of land productivity due to deforestation, unsustainable practices, or climate impacts – particularly in regions threatened by desertification.
	Project design is not based on the needs of the country; project design is not based on analysis of country needs	Overly Ambitious or Unspecific Project Design for Institutional and Capacity Context	The project design does not match the country's current institutional abilities or resources. It may be too complex, large, or vague without clear, actionable steps, making it unrealistic for the existing institutional or capacity context.
		Mismatch with Country Policy, Gaps in Theory of Change, or Weak Institutional Links	The project's goals or activities do not align with national policies or strategies. There may be unclear links between project actions and the intended results (a weak "theory of change"), or the project is poorly connected to key government agencies or institutions.
		Stale or Underfunded National Strategies	The project relies on outdated national strategies or policies that no longer reflect current realities, or it depends on government strategies or frameworks that lack adequate funding for effective implementation.
		Insufficient Preparatory Work and Lack of Stakeholder Involvement	The project lacked robust advance studies, analysis, or groundwork. There was limited consultation with relevant stakeholders (e.g., government, local communities, or partners) in project preparation or design.
		Cultural or Contextual Mismatch	The project design or selected interventions do not fit the cultural, social, or local realities of the country or target population, leading to poor local acceptance or effectiveness.
		Gaps in Addressing Gender, Indigenous or Vulnerable Groups	The project fails to adequately consider or involve women, indigenous populations, or other vulnerable groups, either in its objectives, activities, or intended benefits.
Alignment with national priorities			
Project is aligned with national priorities		Sustainable Natural Resource Management and Forest Conservation	Practices or policies focused on the long-term management and protection of forests and natural ecosystems to ensure their health, productivity, and biodiversity for current and future generations.
		Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation (NDCs, NAPs, Climate Strategies).	Initiatives that reduce greenhouse gas emissions or respond to climate risks, often within the framework of national climate commitments – such as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), or specific climate strategies.
		Livelihood/Economic Development and Poverty Alleviation	Actions that improve economic opportunities, increase incomes, or reduce poverty, especially for communities that depend on forests and natural resources.
		Decentralization and Institutional Strengthening	Measures that transfer authority and responsibility to local or regional levels and/or build the capacity, effectiveness, and governance of public or community institutions involved in forest and natural resource management.

Positive	Negative	Category	Additional instructions
RELEVANCE			
Alignment with national priorities (continued)			
	Project is not aligned with national priorities	Overly Ambitious or Unspecific Project Design for Institutional and Capacity Context	The project design does not match the country's current institutional abilities or resources. It may be too complex, large, or vague without clear, actionable steps, making it unrealistic for the existing institutional or capacity context.
		Mismatch with Country Policy, Gaps in Theory of Change, or Weak Institutional Links	The project's goals or activities do not align with national policies or strategies. There may be unclear links between project actions and the intended results (a weak "theory of change"), or the project is poorly connected to key government agencies or institutions.
		Stale or Underfunded National Strategies	The project relies on outdated national strategies or policies that no longer reflect current realities, or it depends on government strategies or frameworks that lack adequate funding for effective implementation.
		Insufficient Preparatory Work and Lack of Stakeholder Involvement	The project lacked robust advance studies, analysis, or groundwork. There was limited consultation with relevant stakeholders (e.g., government, local communities, or partners) in project preparation or design.
		Cultural or Contextual Mismatch	The project design or selected interventions do not fit the cultural, social, or local realities of the country or target population, leading to poor local acceptance or effectiveness.
		Gaps in Addressing Gender, Indigenous or Vulnerable Groups	The project fails to adequately consider or involve women, indigenous populations, or other vulnerable groups, either in its objectives, activities, or intended benefits.
Alignment with national strategies			
Project is aligned with country strategies, plans or official documents		Forest Laws and Sector Strategies	National or subnational legal frameworks, guidelines, and strategic plans specifically governing forests, forestry activities, and the forest sector (such as forest codes or sectoral strategies).
		Biodiversity and Land Degradation Action Plans (NBSAPs, National Biodiversity Policies).	Policy documents, plans, or strategies developed by countries to protect biodiversity and address land degradation, such as National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) or similar national biodiversity policies.
		Climate Change Strategies (NDCs, REDD+, National Climate Policies).	National-level commitments and policies aimed at addressing climate change, including Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), REDD+ strategies for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and other dedicated national climate action plans or strategies.
		Rural/Economic Development Plans or National Development Plans.	Broader economic or development strategies at the national or rural level that outline priorities and actions for economic growth, poverty reduction, and social development, which may include but are not limited to forestry and environmental issues.
	Project is not aligned with country strategies, plans or official documents	Overly Ambitious or Unspecific Project Design for Institutional and Capacity Context	The project design does not match the country's current institutional abilities or resources. It may be too complex, large, or vague without clear, actionable steps, making it unrealistic for the existing institutional or capacity context.
		Mismatch with Country Policy, Gaps in Theory of Change, or Weak Institutional Links	The project's goals or activities do not align with national policies or strategies. There may be unclear links between project actions and the intended results (a weak "theory of change"), or the project is poorly connected to key government agencies or institutions.
		Stale or Underfunded National Strategies	The project relies on outdated national strategies or policies that no longer reflect current realities, or it depends on government strategies or frameworks that lack adequate funding for effective implementation.
		Insufficient Preparatory Work and Lack of Stakeholder Involvement	The project lacked robust advance studies, analysis, or groundwork. There was limited consultation with relevant stakeholders (e.g., government, local communities, or partners) in project preparation or design.

Positive	Negative	Category	Additional instructions
RELEVANCE			
Alignment with national strategies (continued)			
		Cultural or Contextual Mismatch	The project design or selected interventions do not fit the cultural, social, or local realities of the country or target population, leading to poor local acceptance or effectiveness.
		Gaps in Addressing Gender, Indigenous or Vulnerable Groups	The project fails to adequately consider or involve women, indigenous populations, or other vulnerable groups, either in its objectives, activities, or intended benefits.
COHERENCE			
Evidence of coordination, complementarity, overlap or conflict with other Climate Funds			
Project coordinated activity with other donor-funded projects; project is complimentary to other donor-funded projects		Programmatic/ Strategic Alignment	Evidence that projects or activities are designed to support or reinforce each other's goals, priorities, or strategies –ensuring efforts are complementary rather than duplicative.
		Co-Financing/ Blended Funding	Evidence that funding from multiple sources (including other climate funds) is combined to support shared objectives in a coordinated manner, such as through joint investment or pooled financial mechanisms.
		Knowledge/Platform Sharing	Evidence of exchanging information, best practices, data, tools, or platforms between climate funds or their supported projects to enhance effectiveness or avoid redundancies.
		Joint Governance/ Committees	Evidence that decision-making, oversight, or management bodies involve multiple funds or stakeholders, promoting shared responsibility and coordination in project development or implementation.
		Geographical/ Spatial Coordination	Evidence that interventions are planned or adjusted to account for locations where other climate funds operate, minimizing overlap, addressing gaps, or targeting under-served areas for improved impact.
	Project did not coordinate activity with other donor-funded projects; project is not complimentary to other donor-funded projects; project is overlapping with other donor-funded projects; project is in conflict with other donor-funded projects	Institutional Silos and Fragmentation	Evidence that organizations or projects work in isolation, lack coordination, or have fragmented approaches –resulting in duplication, inefficiency, or missed synergies among climate funds.
		Limited or Ineffective Stakeholder Engagement	Evidence that key partners, agencies, or affected groups are not involved or are insufficiently consulted, leading to missed perspectives, buy-in, or opportunities for alignment with other climate funds.
		Timing and Operational Asynchrony	Evidence that activities or funding cycles are not aligned across projects or climate funds – causing missed coordination, scheduling conflicts, or inefficiencies.
		Lack of Practical/ Operational Collaboration	Evidence that, despite stated intentions, functional cooperation (e.g., joint actions, shared resources, or integrated planning) between projects or climate funds is minimal or absent.
		Missed Opportunity for Knowledge Sharing and Continuous Communication	Evidence that projects/funds do not regularly share information, lessons learned, or updates, hindering mutual learning or effective coordination.
EFFECTIVENESS			
Achievement of intended adaptation outcomes			
Project achieved its objectives and targets related to adaptation outcomes		Improved Livelihoods and Income Generation	Outcomes or actions that measurably enhance the income, employment opportunities, or financial security of targeted communities, such as job creation, diversification of income sources, or increased profitability from forestry and agriculture-related activities.
		Adoption of Sustainable Land and Forest Management Practices	The uptake and use of practices that promote the long-term health and productivity of land and forests, including agroforestry, reforestation, reduced deforestation, conservation agriculture, and sustainable harvesting of resources.
		Food Security and Agricultural Productivity	Results that contribute to better availability, accessibility, and utilization of food, as well as increased agricultural yields or improved resilience of food systems in project areas, particularly as an adaptation to climate risks.
		Gender Equity and Social Inclusion	Efforts or impacts that ensure equal participation, benefits, and opportunities for all social groups, especially women, Indigenous Peoples, youth, and marginalized communities, in project activities and decision-making processes.

Positive	Negative	Category	Additional instructions
EFFECTIVENESS			
Achievement of intended adaptation outcomes (continued)			
		Institutional and Community Capacity Strengthening	Activities or achievements that enhance the skills, knowledge, organizational structures, or governance capabilities of local institutions, government bodies, or community groups to plan, manage, and sustain adaptation initiatives.
		Ecosystem Services, Biodiversity Conservation, and Environmental Outcomes	Protection, restoration, or enhancement of ecosystem functions and biodiversity, such as improved soil stability, carbon sequestration, habitat conservation, and the maintenance of clean air and water.
		Water Resource Management and Climate Resilience	Implementation of measures that improve the availability, quality, conservation, or management of water resources, and/or strengthen the capacity of communities and ecosystems to withstand and adapt to climate variability and change.
	Project did not achieve its objectives and targets related to adaptation outcomes	Overly Ambitious or Unrealistic Targets	Targets or goals set by the project are too high, not grounded in local realities or baseline data, or are otherwise considered unachievable within the given context, time frame, or with available resources.
		Data Gaps and Measurement Issues	The project lacks reliable data or effective monitoring systems to track results, making it difficult to measure progress or success. This includes inconsistent, incomplete, or inaccessible data.
		Lack of Policy Support, Enforcement, and Political Will	Absence or weakness of government backing, legal frameworks, follow-up, or political commitment needed to implement and sustain project outcomes, including inadequate enforcement of relevant laws or regulations.
		Implementation Delays and Logistical Barriers	Project activities are held up due to slow processes, unexpected administrative hurdles, external events (such as pandemics or conflict), or logistical problems (like delays in procurement, staffing, or coordination).
		Weak Local Capacity and Ownership	Local stakeholders (communities, governments, institutions) lack the skills, training, resources, or motivation to support or continue project outcomes, or there is insufficient involvement in project design and implementation.
		Inadequate or Misaligned Project Design	The project's original structure or planning does not fit the actual needs, priorities, or conditions of the context, or critically overlooks important factors (such as stakeholder engagement or baseline analyses).
		Limited Scaling and Sustainability	Successful outcomes remain confined to small areas or pilot activities, without effective pathways for expanding benefits beyond the immediate project site or period.
		Insufficient Financial Resources or Incentives	Funding for project implementation, follow-up, or sustainability is lacking, insecure, or not aligned with needs; or incentive mechanisms for stakeholders (such as payment for ecosystem services) are missing or ineffective.
		Social and Livelihood Risks, Including Access Restrictions	Project actions, such as conservation or protection measures, negatively impact local communities' access to resources, land, or livelihoods, leading to social tension or reduced well-being.
		Difficulty in Measuring or Attributing Outcomes	It is unclear whether observed changes are directly due to the project's interventions, either because multiple influences are present or because indicators were not clearly linked to project activities.
Achievement of intended mitigation outcomes			
Project achieved its objectives and targets related to mitigation outcomes		Reduction in Deforestation and Forest Degradation	Evidence that project activities led to a decrease in the rate or extent of forest loss or damage, such as fewer trees being cut, less illegal logging, or improved forest protection.
		Carbon Stock Enhancement and GHG Mitigation	Project efforts resulted in increased storage or sequestration of carbon (e.g., through reforestation, agroforestry, or avoided deforestation) or led to measurable reductions in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.
		Improvement in Forest Cover and Ecosystem Restoration	Activities led to measurable increases in the area or health of forests, or the successful restoration of degraded lands, enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem function.
		Improved Livelihoods of Local Communities	The project brought economic, social, or well-being benefits to people living in or around forest areas, such as job creation, increased incomes, improved food security, or greater community resilience.

Positive	Negative	Category	Additional instructions
EFFECTIVENESS			
Achievement of intended mitigation outcomes (continued)			
		Institutional Strengthening and Policy Improvements	Project activities strengthened organizations or governance systems responsible for forest management, or contributed to improved laws, regulations, or policy frameworks that support mitigation goals.
		Adoption of Sustainable Management Practices	There is evidence that individuals, communities, or organizations have adopted practices that ensure long-term, environmentally friendly management of forests, such as sustainable harvesting, monitoring, or fire management.
	Project did not achieve its objectives and targets related to mitigation outcomes	Overly Ambitious or Unrealistic Targets	Targets or goals set by the project are too high, not grounded in local realities or baseline data, or are otherwise considered unachievable within the given context, time frame, or with available resources.
		Data Gaps and Measurement Issues	The project lacks reliable data or effective monitoring systems to track results, making it difficult to measure progress or success. This includes inconsistent, incomplete, or inaccessible data.
		Lack of Policy Support, Enforcement, and Political Will	Absence or weakness of government backing, legal frameworks, follow-up, or political commitment needed to implement and sustain project outcomes, including inadequate enforcement of relevant laws or regulations.
		Implementation Delays and Logistical Barriers	Project activities are held up due to slow processes, unexpected administrative hurdles, external events (such as pandemics or conflict), or logistical problems (like delays in procurement, staffing, or coordination).
		Weak Local Capacity and Ownership	Local stakeholders (communities, governments, institutions) lack the skills, training, resources, or motivation to support or continue project outcomes, or there is insufficient involvement in project design and implementation.
		Inadequate or Misaligned Project Design	The project's original structure or planning does not fit the actual needs, priorities, or conditions of the context, or critically overlooks important factors (such as stakeholder engagement or baseline analyses).
		Limited Scaling and Sustainability	Successful outcomes remain confined to small areas or pilot activities, without effective pathways for expanding benefits beyond the immediate project site or period.
		Insufficient Financial Resources or Incentives	Funding for project implementation, follow-up, or sustainability is lacking, insecure, or not aligned with needs; or incentive mechanisms for stakeholders (such as payment for ecosystem services) are missing or ineffective.
		Social and Livelihood Risks, Including Access Restrictions	Project actions, such as conservation or protection measures, negatively impact local communities' access to resources, land, or livelihoods, leading to social tension or reduced well-being.
		Difficulty in Measuring or Attributing Outcomes	It is unclear whether observed changes are directly due to the project's interventions, either because multiple influences are present or because indicators were not clearly linked to project activities.
EFFICIENCY			
Evidence of co-financing			
	Project was not co-financed by other source	Non-fulfillment or Shortfall of Co-financing Commitments	Co-financing promised or formally committed by partners was not fully delivered – either partially met or not provided at all – impacting project scope or results.
		Delays in Delivery or Late Disbursement	Funds or in-kind contributions eventually provided, but released later than scheduled, leading to project delays, slowed implementation, or postponed activities.
		Lack of Proper Monitoring, Reporting, and Transparency	Project lacked effective systems to track, document, or publicly report on co-financing contributions, resulting in unclear records and limited accountability.
		Over-reliance on In-kind or Estimated Support (vs. Cash)	Project substituted cash co-financing with non-monetary contributions (e.g., staff time, facilities, services), or relied on vague/uncalculated estimates, weakening financial support.
		Challenges due to Misaligned Project Timelines or Donor Activities	Original co-financing commitments became unavailable due to changes in donor priorities, project delays, or scheduling mismatches – funds expired or partners withdrew.

Positive	Negative	Category	Additional instructions
EFFICIENCY			
Evidence of co-financing (continued)			
		Non-materialization of Private Sector Financing	Expected contributions from private sector entities did not materialize, often because enabling conditions were missing or objectives for private investment were unclear or unrealistic.
		Overestimated or Unverified Pledged Contributions	Co-financing amounts were inflated, double-counted, or counted without adequate verification; in practice, the real value delivered was much lower than reported.
Scaling up investments in forestry			
Project contributed towards scaling up of forestry projects beyond the project inputs		Replication and Expansion of Models/ Approaches	Evidence that project methods, models, or approaches are being applied in new locations, sectors, or organizations beyond the original project.
		Leverage of Additional or Follow-up Financing	Instances where the project helped attract new funding – from donors, governments, or other sources – for similar or extended activities.
		Policy and Regulatory Changes Supporting Scale Up	Reference to new or reformed policies, laws, or regulations that facilitate broader adoption or mainstreaming of forestry investments or approaches.
		Expansion of Project Activities/ Geographic Coverage	Indications that project activities have increased in scope, reached new target groups, or spread to additional geographic areas.
		Integration into National or Regional Programmes	When project activities, approaches, or lessons are incorporated into official government programmes or broader regional strategies.
		Catalyzing Private Sector Investment	Cases where the project motivates, enables, or leads to investments from private or commercial actors in the forestry sector.
		Knowledge, Capacity, and Institutional Strengthening for Replication	Evidence that training, capacity-building, or institutional development enables others to implement similar projects or approaches elsewhere.
		Demonstration and Evidence of Results at Scale	Examples where measurable results have been achieved at a significant (larger-than-project) scale, or where the project visibly demonstrates what is possible for others to emulate.
	Project did not contribute towards scaling up of forestry projects beyond the project inputs	Consolidation and Operational Capacity	Limits or failures in solidifying project gains or lacking the organizational ability to manage, coordinate, or sustain scaled-up activities.
		Misalignment with Government Priorities and Lack of Integration	Project activities are not aligned with government strategies or have not been integrated into official plans or institutions.
		Ineffective Financial Mechanisms	Financing tools or arrangements are inadequate, inefficient, or fail to mobilize the necessary resources for scaling up.
		Unpredictable or Insufficient Financing	The project encounters unreliable funding or funding that does not meet the needs for expansion and sustainability.
		Lack of Lessons Learned and Documentation for Replication	Absence of systematized knowledge sharing or documentation, making it difficult for others to replicate or scale up project successes.
		Poor Communication and Stakeholder Integration	Weak outreach, engagement, or collaboration with stakeholders, resulting in poor buy-in or missed opportunities for broader impact.
		Limited Pilot Scale and Representativity	The project remains small in scale or not representative enough to be applicable or influential in broader contexts.
		Inadequate Resources Relative to Goals	Human, technical, or financial resources are insufficient to achieve intended scaling-up objectives.

Positive	Negative	Category	Additional instructions
EFFICIENCY			
Scaling up investments in forestry (continued)			
		Operational/ Capacity Constraints for National Scaling	Structural, technical, or organizational barriers hinder the ability to expand or institutionalize at a national scale.
		Barriers in Supply Chain, Affordability, and Private Sector Participation	Challenges related to logistics, costs, or insufficient involvement from the private sector that limit scale-up potential.
		Limited Replication Beyond Urban or Demonstration Areas	Scale-up remains restricted to project sites – such as demonstration plots or urban areas – without broader geographic or sectoral spread.
IMPACT			
Evidence of impact: Adaptation			
Project achieved impacts related to adaptation; project is likely to achieve impacts related to adaptation		Forest Restoration, Conservation, and Expansion	Actions or interventions that recover degraded forests, preserve existing forests, or increase forested areas through activities like reforestation, afforestation, and habitat protection.
		Agroforestry and Sustainable Land Use	The integration of trees and shrubs with crops and/or livestock in agricultural systems, or adoption of farming practices that maintain or improve ecological health over the long term.
		Enhancement of Forest Ecosystem Services	Measures that improve the benefits humans obtain from forests – including water regulation, carbon sequestration, soil protection, and biodiversity – beyond timber/hardwood production.
		Forest-Based Livelihoods	Support for, or diversification of, income-earning opportunities and subsistence activities that depend on forest resources, such as non-timber products, sustainable timber, eco-tourism, etc.
		Poverty Reduction & Household Income	Evidence showing that forestry interventions help lift people out of poverty or increase household earnings, either directly through jobs/income or indirectly through economic development.
		Gender Equity and Inclusion	Efforts that promote equal participation, benefits, and representation of women and marginalized groups in forestry activities, decision-making, or benefit sharing.
		Institutional Strengthening & Local Governance	Improvement of local institutions and governance structures responsible for forest management, such as capacity-building, transparency, accountability, or stakeholder engagement.
		Policy & Legal Impact	Influence on, or changes to, local, regional, or national policies and legal frameworks that support sustainable forest management, rights, and access.
	Project did not achieve impacts related to adaptation; project is not likely to achieve impacts related to adaptation	Project could not show measurable impacts by project close due to short timelines	The project's implementation period was too short for observable or measurable impacts to emerge before the project ended.
		Appropriate systems to monitor and verify impact were lacking	The project did not have adequate tools, methods, or systems in place to track, assess, or validate outcomes or impacts.
		Project design related challenge	Issues or shortcomings in the way the project was planned or structured (e.g., unclear objectives, weak logical framework, unrealistic targets) that limited its ability to achieve or demonstrate impact.
		Project implementation related challenge	Difficulties encountered during delivery of the project (e.g., delays, limited capacity, inadequate resources, poor participation) that undermined achievement of impacts.
		Factors outside project control	External events or circumstances beyond the project's influence (e.g., political instability, natural disasters, economic shifts, policy changes) that affected or prevented the realization or measurement of impacts.

Positive	Negative	Category	Additional instructions
IMPACT			
Evidence of impact: Mitigation			
Project achieved impacts related to mitigation; project is likely to achieve impacts related to mitigation		GHG Emission Reductions	Evidence that the project resulted in a measurable decrease in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, such as CO_2, methane, or nitrous oxide, through activities like changing land use, forest management, or technology adoption.
		Carbon Sequestration/ Enhanced Carbon Stock	Activities that increased the amount of carbon stored in forests and landscapes – either through growing more biomass (trees, plants) or improving soil carbon content – helping to remove CO_2 from the atmosphere.
		Expansion of Sustainable Land Management (SLM) and Sustainable Forest Management (SFM):	Initiatives that expanded environmentally sound land or forest management practices, improving productivity, stability, or resilience while maintaining or enhancing natural resources and ecosystem services long-term.
		Reduced Deforestation & Degradation	Demonstrable decrease in the rate of forest clearance, loss, or degradation as a direct result of the project's interventions.
		Policy, Legal, and Institutional Strengthening	Improvements in laws, regulations, institutions, or governance frameworks that support and sustain forest-based climate change mitigation, such as new policies or enhanced enforcement/institutional capacity.
		Behaviour and Capacity Change	Increases in awareness, knowledge, skills, or a shift in attitudes and behaviours among individuals, communities, or organizations that support sustainable resource management and climate mitigation.
		Community and Stakeholder Empowerment	Evidence that local communities, indigenous groups, or other stakeholders gained more authority, participation, or benefits in decision-making, project implementation, or management of natural resources.
		Co-benefits: Biodiversity, Watershed, and Livelihood Improvements	Additional positive outcomes of mitigation activities, such as better biodiversity conservation, improved water resources management, or enhanced livelihoods for local people, beyond direct GHG or carbon stock effects.
	Project did not achieve impacts related to mitigation; project is not likely to achieve impacts related to mitigation	Project could not show measurable impacts by project close due to short timelines	The project's implementation period was too short for observable or measurable impacts to emerge before the project ended.
		Appropriate systems to monitor and verify impact were lacking	The project did not have adequate tools, methods, or systems in place to track, assess, or validate outcomes or impacts.
		Project design related challenge	Issues or shortcomings in the way the project was planned or structured (e.g., unclear objectives, weak logical framework, unrealistic targets) that limited its ability to achieve or demonstrate impact.
		Project implementation related challenge	Difficulties encountered during delivery of the project (e.g., delays, limited capacity, inadequate resources, poor participation) that undermined achievement of impacts.
		Factors outside project control	External events or circumstances beyond the project's influence (e.g., political instability, natural disasters, economic shifts, policy changes) that affected or prevented the realization or measurement of impacts.

Positive	Negative	Category	Additional instructions
SUSTAINABILITY			
Factor conducive to sustainability			
Project design contained factor that is conducive to long-term sustainability		Community Engagement & Local Ownership	Projects repeatedly stress that engaging local communities – through participatory planning, co-management, capacity development, and creation of local user organizations – fosters sustainability by increasing motivation, buy-in, and maintenance of project interventions.
		Institutional/ Capacity Building	Evidence highlights sustainability when projects invest in building or strengthening the capacities of government agencies, community organizations, or local committees responsible for managing forests/natural resources.
		Financial Mechanisms & Sustainable Funding	Many projects note the establishment of dedicated funds, trust funds, revolving funds, PES (payment for ecosystem services), or strategies for attracting ongoing funding as key to long-term sustainability.
		Legal, Policy, and Regulatory Frameworks	Establishing, revising, or enforcing legal and policy frameworks is cited repeatedly as crucial, whether through the creation of new laws, management plans, or by institutionalizing new standards.
		Knowledge Management, M&E, and Learning Systems	Establishing knowledge management platforms, robust monitoring and evaluation systems, and channels for lesson-sharing supports continuity, adaptive management, and scaling.
		Multi-Sectoral or Interagency Collaboration	Sustainability is often tied to forming ongoing coordination platforms across sectors or levels of government and with NGOs, the private sector, or technical agencies.
	Project design contained factor that is non-conducive to long-term sustainability	Lack of Financial Sustainability/ Resources	Projects often lack secure, long-term funding or strategies for resource mobilization after external funding ends. There may be no sustainable business model, dedicated budget, or financial incentives to maintain activities post-project.
		Weak Institutional Frameworks and Governance	Weaknesses in governance, poor coordination among institutions, lack of clear mandates, or delays in policy/legal reforms undermine the ability to sustain or scale up interventions.
		Limited Community Engagement and Ownership	Projects struggle when there is insufficient community participation, empowerment, or buy-in. Top-down project designs, lack of capacity-building, or absence of incentives for local stakeholders limit sustainability.
		No Exit Strategy/ Planning for Transition	Projects often lack a well-defined exit or transition plan to ensure that benefits and activities continue post-project, leaving outcomes vulnerable when support ends.
		Challenges in Scaling Up, Replication, and Market Linkages	Pilot or demonstration activities aren't easily adopted or expanded due to poor extension models, limited market access, or lack of capacity for replication and scale.
		Environmental Risks and External Shocks	Factors such as extreme weather, climate change, natural disasters, or continuing illegal activities threaten the longevity of project outcomes.
		Socio-Political Instability and Policy Changes	Political instability, changes in government, shifting priorities, or lack of supportive policies may undermine sustainability.
		Insufficient Capacity Building and Human Resources	Limited training of local staff, high turnover, and lack of sustained capacity development impede long-term maintenance or expansion of results.

D) List of documents

Ref	Title	Document type	Fund	File Name
1	Learnings from Adaptation Fund Evaluations for the Forestry Sector	Aggregate report	AF	Forestry knowledge product - AK V2.docx
2	Final Evaluation – Building Resilience to Climate Change and Variability in Vulnerable Smallholders (GFCC Project), Uruguay	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	AF	EN_PDF_Informe Evaluacion Final del GFCC (2).pdf
3	Final Evaluation – Ecosystem-Based Adaptation to Climate Change in Seychelles (PIMS 4775)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	AF	TE Seychelles EbA Project_Final Report_ Final and cleared 2022 (1).pdf
4	Final Evaluation – Marine Conservation and Climate Adaptation Project (MCCAP), Belize	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	AF	Belize-BZ-Marine-Conserv-Climate-Adaptation final evaluation.pdf
5	Final Evaluation Report – Family Agriculture Adaptation and Resilience in Northeast Argentina to Climate Change and Variability	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	AF	54_1.2 DIPROSE - Final Evaluation Report - Non definitive version - ENG (1).pdf
6	Terminal Evaluation – Climate Change Adaptation Programme in the Coastal Zone of Mauritius	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	AF	PIMS 4453 Terminal Evaluation AF Project_Final (2).pdf
7	Terminal Evaluation – Developing Climate Resilience of Farming Communities in the Drought Prone Parts of Uzbekistan	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	AF	50_20211125 UNDP Uzbekistan PIMS5002 TE Aral_Final Report_rs106 (1).pdf
8	Terminal Evaluation – Development of Agropastoral Perimeters as an Adaptation Strategy to Climate Change, Djibouti	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	AF	2_4683_AF_Djibouti_TE report_June 2019.pdf
9	Terminal Evaluation – Implementation of Concrete Adaptation Measures to Reduce Vulnerability of Livelihoods and Economy of Coastal Communities of Tanzania	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	AF	22_4141 AFB2G48_2019_te_unep_gef_af_fsp_spcc_Adaptation Tanzania (1).pdf
10	Terminal Evaluation – Increased Resilience to Climate Change in Northern Ghana through Management of Water Resources and Diversification of Livelihoods	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	AF	6_AF Project Ghana -Final Terminal Evaluation Report 0321 with clearance (1).pdf
11	Terminal Evaluation – Promoting Climate Resilience in the Rice Sector in Alaotra-Mangoro Region	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	AF	10_2020_AFB_5060_1111_2G49_madagascar (1).pdf
12	Terminal Evaluation – Reducing Vulnerability to Coastal Flooding through Ecosystem-Based Adaptation (Manglar Vivo), Cuba	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	AF	59_PIMS 5090 Cuba AF TE Manglar Vivo - Final Evaluation Report _Sept 9 2020__ (1).pdf
13	Mid-Term Evaluation – Ecosystem-Based Adaptation to Climate Change in Seychelles (PIMS 4775)	Project level report - Mid-term evaluation (External)	AF	19_4775_AF-Seychelles_MidTermReport_Oct2018.pdf
14	Mid-Term Evaluation – Increased Resilience to Climate Change in Northern Ghana through Management of Water Resources and Diversification of Livelihoods	Project level report - Mid-term evaluation (External)	AF	6_4952_AF_Ghana_MTE report.pdf
15	Mid-Term Evaluation – Marine Conservation and Climate Adaptation Project (MCCAP), Belize	Project level report - Mid-term evaluation (External)	AF	55_Final MCCAP MTE Report - 5th February 2018-3.pdf

Ref	Title	Document type	Fund	File Name
16	Mid-Term Evaluation Report – Building Adaptive Capacities of Communities, Livelihoods and Ecological Security in the Kanha-Pench Corridor of Madhya Pradesh	Project level report - Mid-term evaluation (External)	AF	Mid-Term Evaluation Report _AF_ Madhya Pradesh.pdf
17	Mid-Term Review – Developing Climate Resilience of Farming Communities in the Drought Prone Parts of Uzbekistan	Project level report - Mid-term evaluation (External)	AF	50_MTR-AF-Uzbekistan-Report-FINAL2.docx
18	Evaluation of the Development Impacts from CIF's Investments: Final Report	Aggregate report	CIF	development_impacts_eval_report.pdf
19	Evaluation of Transformational Change in the CIF	Aggregate report	CIF	evaluation_of_transformational_change_in_the_cif_final_w_mresp_jan_2019.pdf
20	Main achievements and results of the FIP Project - NFI Cerrado	Aggregate report	CIF	BRAZIL_Forest Information to Support Public and Private Sectors in Management Initiatives.pdf
21	SUPPORTING JUST TRANSITIONS TO SUSTAINABLE LAND USE IN GHANA	Aggregate report	CIF	ghana_just_transitions.pdf
22	FINAL REPORT OF PROJECT EXECUTION IDB – Loan No. 2838/SX-ME and Non-Refundable Financing Agreement GRT/SX-13509-ME "Carbon Reduction Program in Forest Landscapes"	Other	CIF	MEXICO_Financing Low Carbon Strategies in Forest Landscapes_English Exec Summary.pdf
23	Forest Dependent Communities Support Project	Other	CIF	DRC_Forest-Dependent Community Support Project.pdf
24	Integrated Landscape Management in the Cerrado Biome (Brazil)	Other	CIF	BRAZIL Integrated Landscape Management in the Cerrado Biome Project (P164602).pdf
25	Evaluation of Local Stakeholder Engagement in the CIF	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	CIF	evaluation_of_local_stakeholder_engagement_in_the_cif.pdf
26	Evaluation of the CIF Programmatic Approach (Final Report & Management Response)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	CIF	evaluation_of_the_cif_progammatic_appproach_final_report_and_management_response.pdf
27	Evaluation of the Development Impacts from CIF's Investments: Case Studies	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	CIF	development_impacts_eval_case_studies.pdf
28	BR DGM for Indigenous People and Traditional Communities	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	CIF	BRAZIL_Dedicated Grant Mechanism.pdf
29	Brazil DGM for Indigenous People and Traditional Communities Phase 2 (P177957)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	CIF	BRAZIL_Dedicated Grant Mechanism Phase 2.pdf
30	Brazil Investment Plan Coordination Project	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	CIF	BRAZIL_Investment Plan Coordination Project.pdf
31	BURKINA FASO: GAZETTED FORESTS PARTICIPATORY MANAGEMENT PROJECT FOR REDD+ (PGFC/REDD+)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	CIF	BURKINA FASO_gazetted_forests_participatory_management_project_for_redd_pgfcredd_-_project_completion_report.pdf
32	Dedicated Grant Mechanism for Cote d'Ivoire	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	CIF	COTE D'IVOIRE_Dedicated Grant Mechanism.pdf
33	DEDICATED GRANT MECHANISM FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES (P161241)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	CIF	MOZAMBIQUE_DGM for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities.pdf

Ref	Title	Document type	Fund	File Name
34	Dedicated Grant Mechanism for Local Communities Project	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	CIF	GHANA_Dedicated-Grant-Mechanism-for-Local-Communities-Project.pdf
35	Development of systems to prevent forest fires and monitor vegetation cover in the Brazilian Cerrado	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	CIF	BRAZIL-Development-of-Systems-to-Prevent-Forest-Fires-and-Monitor-Vegetation-Cover-in-the-Brazilian-Cerrado-Project.pdf
36	DGM Program and Global Learning and Knowledge Exchange Project	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	CIF	GLOBAL_DGM.pdf
37	Environmental Regularization of Rural Lands in the Cerrado (Brazil)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	CIF	BRAZIL Environmental Regularization of Rural Lands in the Cerrado of Brazil.pdf
38	FIP – Decentralized Forest and Woodland Management Project	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	CIF	BURKINA-FASO-FIP-Decentralized-Forest-and-Woodland-Management-Project.pdf
39	Forest Investment Program	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	CIF	COTE D'IVOIRE_Forest Investment Project.pdf
40	Ghana FIP – Enhancing Natural Forest and Agroforest Landscapes Project	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	CIF	GHANA_Enhancing Natural Forest and Agroforest Landscapes Project.pdf
41	GHANA: ENGAGING LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN REDD+ PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	CIF	GHANA_Engaging Local Communities in REDD Enhancement of Carbon Stocks.pdf
42	Improved Forested Landscape Management Project (IFLMP)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	CIF	DRC_Improved Forested Landscape Management Project (IFLMP).pdf
43	Local Forest Communities Support Project	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	CIF	BURKINA FASO_Dedicated Grant Mechanism.pdf
44	Mexico Dedicated Grant Mechanism for IP and LC	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	CIF	MEXICO_Dedicated Grant Mechanism.pdf
45	Mexico Forests and Climate Change Project	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	CIF	MEXICO Forests and Climate Change Project.pdf
46	Mozambique Forest Investment Project	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	CIF	MOZAMBIQUE_Forest Investment Project.pdf
47	PROJET INTEGRE REDD+ DANS LES BASSINS DE MBUJI-MAYI/KANANGA ET DE KISANGANI	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	CIF	DRC_Integrated REDD Project in the MbujiMayiKananga and Kisangani Basins.pdf
48	PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY-BASED NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	CIF	INDONESIA_Promoting Sustainable Community-Based Natural Resource Management and Institutional Development.pdf
49	SAWETO DEDICATED GRANT MECHANISM FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN PERU PROJECT	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	CIF	PERU_Dedicated-Grant-Mechanism-Project.pdf
50	Scaling-up Participatory Sustainable Forest Management (SUPSFM) Project	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	CIF	LAO_Scaling-up Participatory Sustainable Forest Management.pdf
51	STRENGTHENING RIGHTS AND ECONOMIES OF ADAT AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES PROJECT	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	CIF	INDONESIA_Strengthening Rights and Economies of Adat and Local Communities Project.pdf

Ref	Title	Document type	Fund	File Name
52	Sustainable Production in Areas Previously Converted to Agricultural Use (Brazil)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	CIF	BRAZIL-Sustainable-Production-in-Areas-Previously-Converted-to-Agricultural-Use-Project.pdf
53	Midterm Evaluation of the Forest Investment Program	Project level report - Mid-term evaluation (External)	CIF	midterm-evaluation-of-the-forest-investment-program_0.pdf
54	EFFECTIVENESS OF CERTIFICATION AND LAND TENURE INTERVENTIONS TO CONSERVE FORESTS	Aggregate report	GCF	02-protocol-forest-conservation-evidence-review_0 (1).pdf
55	EFFECTIVENESS OF CERTIFICATION AND LAND TENURE INTERVENTIONS TO CONSERVE FORESTS	Aggregate report	GCF	systematic-review-forest-conservation.pdf
56	Effectiveness of Certification and Land Tenure Interventions to Conserve Forests – Protocol	Aggregate report	GCF	02-protocol-forest-conservation-evidence-review_0.pdf
57	Effectiveness of Forest Conservation Interventions: An Evidence Gap Map	Aggregate report	GCF	learning-paper-effectiveness-forestry-conservation-interventions-evidence-gap-map.pdf
58	EVIDENCE REVIEW ON FOREST CONSERVATION	Aggregate report	GCF	evidence-review-forest-conservation-approach-paper-mp-review-12-02-25-1600 (1).pdf
59	Evidence Review on Forest Conservation – An Evidence Gap Map	Aggregate report	GCF	01-egm-report-forest-conservation.pdf
60	EVIDENCE REVIEW ON FOREST CONSERVATION – AN EVIDENCE GAP MAP	Aggregate report	GCF	egm-report-forest-conservation-2.pdf
61	Evidence Review on Forest Conservation – Approach Paper	Aggregate report	GCF	evidence-review-forest-conservation-approach-paper-mp-review-12-02-25-1600.pdf
62	Evidence Review on Results-Based Payments: Evidence Gap Map and Intervention Heat Map	Aggregate report	GCF	210201-egm-rbp-top-0.pdf
63	Independent Evaluation of the Relevance and Effectiveness of GCF Investments in the Latin American and Caribbean States – Final Report	Aggregate report	GCF	lac2024-final-report_0.pdf
64	Independent Evaluation of the Relevance and Effectiveness of GCF's Investments in the Latin American and Caribbean States – GEvalBrief	Aggregate report	GCF	2024-lac-gevalbrief-en-top-3-web.pdf
65	LORTA Synthesis Report	Aggregate report	GCF	lorta-2022-synthesis-report.pdf
66	INDEPENDENT RAPID ASSESSMENT OF THE GREEN CLIMATE FUND'S REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS MODALITY	Aggregate report	GCF	230330-rfp-final-report-2ed-top-web-isbn.pdf
67	Special Study on REDD+ Results-Based Payment Projects in the Latin America and Caribbean Region	Aggregate report	GCF	redd-special-study-120824.pdf
68	Summary – Effectiveness of Forest Conservation Interventions: An Evidence Gap Map	Aggregate report	GCF	summary-forest-conservation-interventions-learning-paper.pdf
69	Can Forest Conservation Work While Building Stronger Livelihoods? Lessons from Impact Evaluation of GCF's FP026: Sustainable Landscapes in Eastern Madagascar (SLEM) Project	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GCF	lortas-impact-insights-web.pdf
70	Independent Evaluation of the Relevance and Effectiveness of GCF's Investments in the Latin American and Caribbean States – Country Case Study Reports	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GCF	250417-lac-country-case-studies-report-top.pdf

Ref	Title	Document type	Fund	File Name
71	LEARNING-ORIENTED REAL-TIME IMPACT ASSESSMENT (LORTA) IMPACT EVALUATION BASELINE REPORT FOR FP073: STRENGTHENING CLIMATE RESILIENCE OF RURAL COMMUNITIES IN NORTHERN RWANDA "GREEN GICUMBI PROJECT	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GCF	impact-evaluation-baseline-report-fp073.pdf
72	Sustainable Landscapes in Eastern Madagascar Baseline Household Survey Report	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GCF	sustainable-landscapes-eastern-madagascar.pdf
73	Impact evaluation midline report for FP026 Sustainable Landscapes for Eastern Madagascar	Project level report - Mid-term evaluation (External)	GCF	240215-lorta-midline-report-madagascar-top.pdf
74	IMPACT EVALUATION MIDLINE REPORT FOR FP073 – THE GREEN GICUMBI PROJECT	Project level report - Mid-term evaluation (External)	GCF	lorta-rwanda-country-brief-top-web.pdf
75	Impact evaluation midline report for FP073 The Green Gicumbi Project	Project level report - Mid-term evaluation (External)	GCF	241030-lorta-rwanda-midline-report-top-1815.pdf
76	Amazon Coordination Technical Assistance (ASL1)	Aggregate report	GEF	9339-terminal-evaluation-unvalidated.pdf
77	GEF Support to Sustainable Forest Management	Aggregate report	GEF	sfm-2022-vol1.pdf
78	Completion Report: Forestry and Ecological Restoration Project in Three Northwest Provinces (China)	Other	GEF	3483-terminal-evaluation.pdf
79	A Regional Focus on Sustainable Timber Management in the Congo Basin	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	3822-terminal-evaluation.pdf
80	Addressing Barriers to Adoption of Improved Charcoal Production Technologies and Sustainable Land Practices (Uganda)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	4644-terminal-evaluation.pdf
81	Advancing Sustainable Resource Management to Improve Livelihoods and Protect Biodiversity in Palau	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	5208-terminal-evaluation.pdf
82	Biodiversity Conservation in Multiple Use Forest Landscapes in Sabah, Malaysia	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	4182-terminal-evaluation.pdf
83	Biodiversity Conservation through Sustainable Management of Forests by Local Actors (Bolivia)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	3971-terminal-evaluation.pdf
84	Building a Multiple-use Forest Management Framework to Conserve Biodiversity in the Caspian Hyrcanian Forest Landscape (Iran)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	4470-terminal-evaluation.pdf
85	Capacity building for Access and Benefit Sharing and Conservation and Sustainable Use of Medicinal Plants (Ethiopia ABS CSUMP)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	4091-terminal-evaluation.pdf
86	Capacity, Policy and Financial Incentives for Participatory Forest Management in Kirisia Forest and Integrated Rangelands Management (Kenya)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	5083-terminal-evaluation.pdf
87	Capturing Coral Reef and Related Ecosystem Services (CCRES) Project	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	4690-terminal-evaluation.pdf

Ref	Title	Document type	Fund	File Name
88	Community-based Forest and Coastal Conservation and Resource Management (CbFCCRM, Papua New Guinea)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	3954-terminal-evaluation.pdf
89	Community-Based Integrated Natural Resources Management Project (CBINReMP)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	3367-terminal-evaluation.pdf
90	Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity in Dry Ecosystems to Guarantee Ecosystem Services and Mitigate Deforestation/Desertification (Colombia)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	4772-terminal-evaluation.pdf
91	Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity, Forests, Soil and Water to achieve Good Living / Sumac Kawsay in Napo Province (Ecuador)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	4774-terminal-evaluation.pdf
92	Conservation and sustainable use of Pamir Alay and Tien Shan ecosystems for snow leopard protection and sustainable community livelihoods (Tajikistan)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	6949-terminal-evaluation.pdf
93	Conservation of globally important biodiversity and associated land and forest resources of Western Tian Shan Forest Mountain ecosystems and support to sustainable livelihoods (Kyrgyz Republic)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	6958-terminal-evaluation.pdf
94	Conservation-oriented management of forests and wetlands to achieve multiple benefits (Belarus)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	7993-terminal-evaluation.pdf
95	Conserving biodiversity through sustainable management in production landscapes (Costa Rica)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	9416-terminal-evaluation.pdf
96	Contribution of sustainable forest management to a low emission and resilient development in Serbia	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	9089-terminal-evaluation.pdf
97	Delivering Multiple Global Environmental Benefits through Sustainable Management of Production Landscapes (Honduras)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	4590-terminal-evaluation.pdf
98	Development of the Trans-frontier Conservation Area linking Forest Reserves and Protected Areas in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	3984-terminal-evaluation.pdf
99	Ecosystem Approach to Haiti Cote Sud	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	5531-terminal-evaluation.pdf
100	Effective Conservation and Sustainable Use of Mangrove Ecosystems in Brazil	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	2703-terminal-evaluation.pdf
101	Enhancing Effectiveness and Financial Sustainability of Protected Areas in Malaysia	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	3906-terminal-evaluation.pdf
102	Enhancing Sustainability and Climate Resilience of Forest and Agriculture Landscapes and Community Livelihoods (Bhutan)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	9199-terminal-evaluation.pdf
103	Expanding Coverage and Strengthening Management Effectiveness of the Terrestrial Protected Area Network on Mauritius	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	3526-terminal-evaluation.pdf

Ref	Title	Document type	Fund	File Name
104	Expanding Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Certification at Landscape Level through Incorporating Additional Ecosystem Services	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	3951-terminal-evaluation.pdf
105	Gestion de zones tampons d'aires protégées au Burkina Faso	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	4221-terminal-evaluation.pdf
106	Greening the Cocoa Industry	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	3077-terminal-evaluation.pdf
107	Implementation of Global and Regional Oceanic Fisheries Conventions and Related Instruments in the Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	4746-terminal-evaluation.pdf
108	Implementing a Ridge-to-Reef Approach to Preserve Ecosystem Services, Sequester Carbon, Improve Climate Resilience and Sustain Livelihoods in Fiji	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	5398-terminal-evaluation.pdf
109	Implementing a Ridge-to-Reef Approach to Protecting Biodiversity and Ecosystem Functions within and around Protected Areas in Grenada	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	5069-terminal-evaluation.pdf
110	Integrated Approach to Management of Forests with Demonstration in High Conservation Value Forests in the Mediterranean Region (Turkey)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	4469-terminal-evaluation.pdf
111	Integrated Land and Agroecosystem Management Systems (ILAMS) for Tonga	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	5578-terminal-evaluation.pdf
112	Integrated Management of Mangrove and Associated Wetlands and Coastal Forest Ecosystems (Republic of the Congo)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	4083-terminal-evaluation.pdf
113	Integrated Management of the Yallahs and Hope River Watershed Management Areas (Jamaica)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	4454-terminal-evaluation.pdf
114	Integrated National Monitoring and Assessment System on Forest Ecosystems (SIMEF, Chile)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	4968-terminal-evaluation.pdf
115	Integrated Watershed Management in Lake Apanás and Lake Asturias (Nicaragua, NI-X1005)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	3981-terminal-evaluation.pdf
116	Mainstreaming Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Land Management into Production Practices in All Bioregions and Biomes (Paraguay)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	4860-terminal-evaluation.pdf
117	Mainstreaming Biodiversity Conservation into Russia's Energy Sector Policies and Operations	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	3909-terminal-evaluation.pdf
118	Mainstreaming Biodiversity Conservation, Sustainable Forest Management and Carbon Sink Enhancement into Mongolia's Productive Forest Landscapes	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	4744-terminal-evaluation.pdf
119	Mainstreaming Sustainable Land and Forest Management in Mountain Landscapes of North-Eastern Armenia	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	5353-terminal-evaluation.pdf

Ref	Title	Document type	Fund	File Name
120	Maximizing Carbon Sink Capacity and Conserving Biodiversity through Sustainable Conservation, Restoration and Management of Peat-Swamp Ecosystem (Thailand)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	5330-terminal-evaluation.pdf
121	Multiplying Environmental and Carbon Benefits in High Andean Ecosystems	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	4750-terminal-evaluation.pdf
122	National Biodiversity Project: Conservation of Iona National Park (Angola)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	4082-terminal-evaluation.pdf
123	Niger Delta Biodiversity Project (Nigeria)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	4090-terminal-evaluation.pdf
124	Payment for Ecosystem Services to Support Forest Conservation and Sustainable Livelihoods (Mozambique)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	5516-terminal-evaluation.pdf
125	Préservation participative de la biodiversité et développement faiblement émissif en carbone dans les écovillages pilotes à proximité des aires protégées du Sénégal	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	4080-terminal-evaluation.pdf
126	Promotion of Environmentally Sustainable and Climate-Resilient Grid/Isolated Grid-based Hydroelectric Electricity (Sao Tome and Principe)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	5334-terminal-evaluation.pdf
127	Protecting Biodiversity and Multiple Ecosystem Services in Biological Mountain Corridors in Chile	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	5135-terminal-evaluation.pdf
128	Proyecto de Desarrollo Social Integral y su Interrelación con el Cambio Climático en Cuencas Hidrográficas de Lara y Falcón (Venezuela)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	3963-terminal-evaluation.pdf
129	Reimaanlok – Looking to the Future: Strengthening Natural Resource Management in Atoll Communities (RMI R2R, Marshall Islands)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	5544-terminal-evaluation.pdf
130	Scaling Up Sustainable Land Management and Agro-Biodiversity Conservation to Reduce Environmental Degradation in Small-Scale Agriculture in Western Kenya	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	5272-terminal-evaluation.pdf
131	Securing the Future of Protected Natural Areas in Peru	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	9374-terminal-evaluation-unvalidated.pdf
132	Securing the long-term conservation of Timor-Leste's biodiversity and ecosystem services (TLSNAP)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	9434-terminal-evaluation.pdf
133	Strengthening Capacity and Incentives for Wildlife Conservation in the Western Forest Complex (Thailand)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	4677-terminal-evaluation.pdf
134	Strengthening Management Effectiveness and Generating Multiple Environmental Benefits within and around the Greater Kafue National Park and West-Lunga National Park (Zambia)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	4639-terminal-evaluation.pdf

Ref	Title	Document type	Fund	File Name
135	Strengthening national biodiversity and forest carbon stock conservation through landscape-based collaborative management of Cambodia's Protected Areas System (CAMPAS)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	4905-terminal-evaluation.pdf
136	Strengthening National Policy and Knowledge Framework in Support of Sustainable Management of Brazil's Forest Resources	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	3767-terminal-evaluation.pdf
137	Strengthening of the National System of Protected Areas in Equatorial Guinea	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	3757-terminal-evaluation.pdf
138	Strengthening the Management Effectiveness of the Wetland Protected Area System in Hainan (China)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	4811-terminal-evaluation.pdf
139	Support to the Consolidation of a Protected Area System in Guinea-Bissau's Forest Belt	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	3575-terminal-evaluation.pdf
140	Supporting Sustainable Land Management in Steppe and Semi-Arid Zones through Integrated Territorial Planning and Agro-Environmental Incentives (Kazakhstan)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	5699-terminal-evaluation.pdf
141	Sustainable Community-Based Management and Conservation of Mangrove Ecosystems in Cameroon	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	3821-terminal-evaluation.pdf
142	Sustainable Cropland and Forest Management in Priority Agro-ecosystems of Myanmar	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	5123-terminal-evaluation.pdf
143	Sustainable Forest and Biodiversity Management in Borneo (Heart of Borneo Initiative, Indonesia)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	3435-terminal-evaluation.pdf
144	Sustainable Forest and Land Management in the Dry Dipterocarp Forest Ecosystems of Southern Lao Project	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	6940-terminal-evaluation.pdf
145	Sustainable Forest Lands Management and Conservation under an Ecosocial Approach (Venezuela)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	5410-terminal-evaluation.pdf
146	Sustainable Forest Management and Multiple Global Environmental Benefits (El Salvador)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	4479-terminal-evaluation.pdf
147	Sustainable Forest Management to Secure Multiple Benefits in Pakistan's High Conservation Value Forests	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	5660-terminal-evaluation.pdf
148	Sustainable Forest Management under the Authority of Cameroonian Councils	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	4800-terminal-evaluation.pdf
149	Sustainable Fuelwood Management (SFM) Project in Nigeria	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	5745-terminal-evaluation.pdf
150	Sustainable Land and Forest Management in the Greater Caucasus Landscape (Azerbaijan)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	4332-terminal-evaluation.pdf
151	Sustainable Land Management of the Upper Watersheds of South Western Haiti (Macaya National Natural Park)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	3132-terminal-evaluation.pdf

Ref	Title	Document type	Fund	File Name
152	Sustainable Management of Amazon Forest Ecosystems by Local Communities to Generate Multiple Environmental and Social Benefits (Bolivia, GEFAmazon Project)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	5755-terminal-evaluation.pdf
153	Sustainable Management of Mountainous Forest and Land Resources under Climate Change Conditions (Kyrgyzstan)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	4761-terminal-evaluation.pdf
154	Sustainable Management of the Mbé River Forested Watershed through a Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) Mechanism (Gabon)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	3761-terminal-evaluation.pdf
155	Sustainable natural resource and forest management in key mountainous areas important for globally significant biodiversity (Mountain Ecosystems Project, Uzbekistan)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	8031-terminal-evaluation.pdf
156	Terminal Evaluation – Mountains and Markets: Business and Biodiversity in Northern Pakistan	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	3825-terminal-evaluation.pdf
157	Terminal evaluation of the project "Rehabilitation of forest landscapes and degraded land with particular attention to saline soils and areas prone to wind erosion"	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	3450-terminal-evaluation.pdf
158	Transforming Management of Protected Area/Landscape Complexes to Strengthen Ecosystem Resilience – "Resilient Amazon" (Peru)	Project level report - End evaluation (External)	GEF	5080-terminal-evaluation.pdf
159	Amazon Region Protected Areas Program Phase II (Brazil)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	4085-terminal-evaluation.pdf
160	Benin Forest and Adjacent Land Management Project	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	5215-terminal-evaluation.pdf
161	Cameroon: Ngoyla-Mintom Project (P118018)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	4084-terminal-evaluation.pdf
162	Coastal Watersheds Conservation in the Context of Climate Change (Mexico)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	4792-terminal-evaluation.pdf
163	Congo: Forest and Economic Diversification Project	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	9700-terminal-evaluation.pdf
164	Conservation Areas for Biodiversity and Development Project (Mozambique, MozBio 1)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	5225-terminal-evaluation.pdf
165	Enhancing Institutional Capacities on REDD issues for Sustainable Forest Management in the Congo Basin	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	3779-terminal-evaluation.pdf
166	Environmental Land Management and Rural Livelihoods Project (ELMARL, Tajikistan)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	4352-terminal-evaluation.pdf
167	Environmental Services Project (Albania)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	4778-terminal-evaluation.pdf

Ref	Title	Document type	Fund	File Name
168	Forestry Development Project (Belarus)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	6947-terminal-evaluation.pdf
169	Hwange-Sanyati Biological Corridor Project (Zimbabwe)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	4645-terminal-evaluation.pdf
170	Implementation Completion and Results Report – Rural Corridors and Biodiversity Project, Argentina	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	3830-terminal-evaluation.pdf
171	India Ecosystems Service Improvement Project (ESIP, P133803)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	4942-terminal-evaluation.pdf
172	Integrated Citarum Water Resources Management Investment Program	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	3279-terminal-evaluation.pdf
173	Integrated Forest Ecosystem Management Project (Kyrgyz Republic)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	9037-terminal-evaluation.pdf
174	Landscape Approach to Forest Restoration and Conservation (LAFREC) Project (Rwanda, P131464)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	4952-terminal-evaluation.pdf
175	Malawi: Shire River Basin Management Program (Phase-I) Project	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	4625-terminal-evaluation.pdf
176	Management and Protection of Key Biodiversity Areas in Belize (P130474)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	4605-terminal-evaluation.pdf
177	Mauritania Sustainable Landscape Management Project under the Sahel and West Africa Program	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	5792-terminal-evaluation.pdf
178	Natural Resources Management in a Changing Climate in Mali	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	5270-terminal-evaluation.pdf
179	Niger Community Action Program Phase 3	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	5252-terminal-evaluation.pdf
180	Nigeria Erosion and Watershed Management Project (NEWMAP)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	4907-terminal-evaluation.pdf
181	Second Lao Environment & Social Project (formerly Protected Area and Wildlife Project)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	4650-terminal-evaluation.pdf
182	Support to Protected Areas Management (Benin, P122419)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	4075-terminal-evaluation.pdf
183	Sustainable and Inclusive Agribusiness Development Project (Senegal)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	5449-terminal-evaluation.pdf
184	Sustainable Coffee Landscape Project (Burundi)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	4631-terminal-evaluation.pdf
185	Sustainable Forest and Landscape Management Project (Bosnia and Herzegovina)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	4779-terminal-evaluation.pdf
186	Sustainable Land and Forestry Management Project (Burkina Faso, CBRD Phase 3)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	5187-terminal-evaluation.pdf
187	Sustainable Land and Water Management Project (Ghana)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	5221-terminal-evaluation.pdf

Ref	Title	Document type	Fund	File Name
188	Sustainable Land Management Project (Chile)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	4104-terminal-evaluation.pdf
189	Sustainable Land Management Project (Ethiopia)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	5220-terminal-evaluation.pdf
190	Sustainable Landscape Management Project (Madagascar)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	9330-terminal-evaluation.pdf
191	Sustainable Management of Critical Wetlands Ecosystems (Gabon)	Project level report - End evaluation (Internal)	GEF	5264-terminal-evaluation.pdf

Annex III: Terms of Reference









Technical Evaluation Reference Group of the Adaptation Fund (AF-TERG)

Evaluation and Learning Initiative of the Climate Investment Funds (CIF E&L)

Independent Evaluation Unit of the Green Climate Fund (GCF IEU)

Independent Evaluation Office of the Global Environment Facility (GEF IEO)

Terms of Reference

Piloting AI in Climate Change Evaluations

- 28 April 2025 -

Introduction

The purpose of this Terms of Reference (ToR) is to elaborate on the requirements for conducting an AI Pilot Study focused on synthesis of evaluative evidence in the forest sector. This study will be conducted by a firm and overseen jointly by the evaluation units of the four climate funds, namely the Technical Evaluation Reference Group of the Adaptation Fund (AF-TERG), the Evaluation and Learning Initiative of the Climate Investment Funds (CIF E&L Initiative), the Independent Evaluation Unit of the Green Climate Fund (GCF IEU), and the Independent Evaluation Office of the Global Environment Facility (GEF IEO). On one side, the study will conduct synthesis of evidence from projects funded by these funds, specifically targeting forestry-related mitigation and adaptation efforts. On the other side, the study will explore how Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be applied as part of this evaluation, assess relevant opportunities and challenges, and identify entry points for its application in future evaluations.

The **Adaptation Fund (AF)** is an innovative financing mechanism set up by the Conference of Parties (COP) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), established to finance concrete adaptation projects and programmes in developing countries that are parties to the Kyoto Protocol or the Paris Agreement and are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. **The Technical Evaluation Reference Group of the Adaption Fund (AF-TERG)** was established in 2018, as an independent evaluation advisory group accountable to the Adaptation Fund Board (the 'AF Board' or the 'Board'), to ensure the independent implementation of the Fund's Evaluation Policy.

The **Climate Investment Funds (CIF)** was established in 2008 to provide scaled-up climate finance to low- and middle- income countries to initiate transformational change towards low carbon, climate resilient development. With almost $12 billion pledged, CIF is one of the world's largest multilateral climate funds. CIF leverages MDBs as implementing agencies, jointly supporting nearly 400 projects in 72 countries—covering a range of climate mitigation and adaptation areas, including clean technologies, climate resilience, renewable energy integration, coal transitions, and nature. **CIF's Evaluation & Learning (E&L)** Initiative identifies strategic lessons across CIF's portfolio and enables learning that is timely and relevant, thus helping to inform decisions and strategies for CIF and the wider climate finance sector.

The **Green Climate Fund (GCF)** was set up by the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 2010 to support the efforts of developing countries to respond to climate change. It aims to deliver balanced funding for mitigation and adaptation while being guided by the Convention's principles and provisions. The **Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU)** was established by the GCF Board on 13 February 2014. It conducts independent evaluations of the GCF's activities to guarantee its accountability and synthesizes learnings from high-quality and rigorous evaluations to support the GCF's effectiveness and efficiency. The IEU operates independently of the GCF Secretariat. Its Head is appointed by and reports directly to the Board. The IEU also provides evaluation reports to the Conference of the Parties (COP) to UNFCCC, for purposes of periodic reviews of the Financial Mechanism of the Convention, of which GCF is a part.

The **Global Environment Facility (GEF)** is a multilateral family of funds dedicated to confronting biodiversity loss, climate change, and pollution, and supporting land and ocean health. Its financing enables developing countries to address complex challenges and work towards international environmental goals. The **Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the Global Environment Facility (GEF)** was established by the GEF Council in July

2003. The Office is independent from GEF policy making and its delivery and management of assistance and undertakes independent evaluations at the strategic level.

This ToR aims to provide key information to interested vendors about this synthesis exercise, including the use of AI as part of it, and guide the potential vendors on specific requirements during its implementation. The ToR is structured as follows: Section 1 presents the background to the study; Section 2 provides context for the study; Section 3 outlines the purpose, scope, and objectives; Section 4 identifies the approach and methodology; and Section 5 outlines timelines and key milestones. The required experience, qualifications, and competencies of the consultant are included in Section 6 and Section 7 discusses the logistical arrangements for this study.

1. Background

The four climate funds have collectively supported numerous forestry-related projects aimed at improving resilience, adaptive capacity, and carbon sequestration while addressing deforestation and land degradation challenges (see Annex for more details). These projects contribute to global climate change mitigation and adaptation goals.

Given the increasing complexity of evaluating climate change interventions, Artificial Intelligence (AI) offers significant potential to enhance evaluation processes by synthesizing large datasets, identifying trends, and generating actionable insights. This pilot study seeks to explore how AI can be applied to this type of evaluations while addressing challenges such as data quality, methodological limitations, and capacity gaps.

This study aims to inform stakeholders by synthesizing evaluative evidence, lessons learned, and conclusions from evaluations and relevant knowledge products generated by the Four Funds and their evaluation units. This synthesis will focus on forestry-related projects across four climate funds while also assessing AI's role in enhancing evaluation practices.

2. Context of the AI Pilot Study

The development of this AI Pilot Study is fully aligned with the strategic priorities of the four climate funds and their evaluation units. It is also part of the complementarity and coherence efforts led by the evaluation units of the four funds. It aims to inform future work by synthesizing evaluative evidence and knowledge products from forestry-related projects funded by these entities. The study will focus on both mitigation and adaptation aspects of forestry, providing learnings and actionable insights for stakeholders.

The study will also assess processes, methodologies, and challenges associated with using AI in evaluation synthesis. By doing so, it will provide a foundation for scaling up AI applications in future evaluations across diverse sectors.

3. Purpose, Scope, and Objectives

Purpose

The primary purpose of this AI Pilot Study is to evaluate how AI can be used to synthesize evaluative evidence from the projects of the Four Funds, specifically targeting the forestry sector, and draw key insights (lessons and recommendations) for further application of AI in evaluative works. This includes assessing both final results (mitigation/adaptation outcomes) and processes/methodologies related to AI application.

A secondary purpose of the study is to synthesize the wealth of evaluative evidence in the Forestry sector from among the Four Funds and derive lessons for future investments in the sector.

Scope

The consultant will work closely with representatives from all four climate funds to conduct a synthesis that explores opportunities for using Artificial Intelligence (AI) in evaluations within the Forestry sector.

The focus will be on the thematic evaluations, final evaluations and any other project-level evaluations published in the last 5-7 years by the evaluation units of the Four Funds. This includes any evidence reviews or studies in addition to evaluations specifically targeting forestry and its accompanying land use, as a sector. Knowledge products developed by the Four Funds' respective secretariats shall also be considered as additional resources for this study.

Objectives

The specific objectives are as follows:

1. Analyze and synthesize evidence targeting forestry sector from the projects across four climate funds using AI, focusing on mitigation outcomes and adaptation outcomes.

2. Assess processes and methodologies used for applying AI in evaluations to identify best practices and challenges.

3. Explore entry points for integrating AI into evaluation practices, emphasizing opportunities for scaling up its use in future evaluations.

4. Provide actionable recommendations for enhancing evaluation methodologies using AI tools while ensuring alignment with international evaluation standards.

As the evaluation exercise will cover the work across the Four Funds, the overarching question that the synthesis should aim to answer is how the funds are supporting, individually and jointly, the forestry sector in line with their mandates and the goals of the UNFCCC and whether these efforts have been transformative for the forestry sector.

Some of the additional questions that the synthesis should answer include:

1) Are the investments of the Four Funds in the forestry sector aligned with their respective mandates?

2) What is the adaptation and mitigation impact of the investments of the Four Funds in the forestry sector globally?

3) Are the impacts of the investments of the Four Funds in the forestry sector likely to be sustained after completion of projects?

4) Is complementarity and coherence observed across the investments of the Four Funds in the forestry sector?

5) Are the funds successful in scaling up investments in the forestry sector or creating the environment to promote scaling?

Evaluation Criteria

The study will address the following OECD DAC criteria:

- **Relevance:** Alignment of forestry projects with climate fund objectives.

- **Effectiveness:** Achievement of intended outcomes, particularly adaptive capacity and resilience.

- **Efficiency:** Resource utilization in project implementation and evaluation processes.

- **Impact:** Contribution to adaptation and mitigation goals within the Forestry sector.

- **Sustainability:** Likelihood of sustained outcomes post-project completion.

4. Methodology

Methodology Steps

1. Development of a Draft Methodology:

· Design a methodology for synthesizing evidence across the Four Funds while using AI tools.

· Ensure alignment with common approaches in the existing evaluation frameworks used by the climate funds.

· Consult internal stakeholders in the Four Funds to refine the methodology.

2. Application of Methodology:

· Apply the methodology to synthesize evidence from final evaluations of completed projects and other thematic and strategic evaluations, funded by the four climate funds, specifically involving Forestry, using appropriate AI tools.

3. Analysis of AI Processes:

· Examine processes and methodologies related to AI application in conducting evaluative work, such as this synthesis of evidence.

· Identify challenges encountered during implementation.

· Codify the applied approach and update the draft methodology

4. Final Reporting:

· Produce a final synthesis report detailing findings, lessons learned, and recommendations.

· Include a refined methodology for future AI applications in evaluations.

· Clearly explain how and which AI tools were used for the synthesis, their benefits and limitations.

5. Timeline and Key Milestones

The vendor will work closely with representatives from each climate fund who will provide strategic guidance throughout the assignment. AF-TERG will lead the coordination of this study with the support of the other three evaluation units and will oversee quality assurance for all deliverables.

#	**Deliverable/ Milestone**	**Timeline**
1	Inception report	Within 1 month from contract signing
2	Draft methodology	Within 1.5 months from contract signing
3	Draft synthesis report and revised methodology	Within 2.5 months from contract signing
4	Final report and methodology	Within 4 months from contract signing

6. Experience and Qualifications

The AI Pilot study requires a multidisciplinary team of at least two experts. It is essential that the team has strong experience in conducting evaluations for multilateral institutions and/or multilateral climate funds as well as proven expertise in the use and application of AI and machine learning tools and models. The team should already have a good baseline knowledge of climate finance architecture in general and adaptation finance specifically. They also must have a strong knowledge of the forestry sector to be able to extract relevant lessons.

The AI Pilot team will be composed of an experienced evaluator and an AI expert. Whilst there is no minimum number of recommended team members, the team should be well-resourced to ensure that the concurrent implementation activities can be completed on time and at the required standard.

Experience of the firm:

- The successful consulting firm (or a consortium of firms) shall have at least 10 years of combined experience in evaluations particularly in climate change adaptation projects/programmes with multilateral organisations and climate funds.

- The firm should also have a network of qualified consultants (evaluators, AI experts, geospatial specialists, specialists in text and data analytics, forestry experts) to be able to tap into when necessary.

Experience of the senior evaluation expert(s):

- Strong and proven academic background in applied research, climate change, or environmental sciences, with a PhD/Master level degree or equivalent in a relevant field (climate change adaptation; international development; social sciences or related area).

- A minimum of 10 years of experience in leading and implementing mixed method evaluations or external reviews.

- A minimum of 10 years of experience in geospatial analysis and text analytics.

- Expertise in the Forestry sector is required.

- Experience working with climate funds is an advantage.

- Ability to communicate complex technical detail with clarity, and ability to identify and focus on the key messages among competing detail.

Experience of the AI expert(s):

· Advanced academic qualifications (PhD/Master's) in climate change adaptation, forestry sciences, data science/AI applications, or related fields.

· A minimum of 5 years of experience in understanding and practical application of various capabilities of AI and associated tools and models

· A minimum of 5 years of experience in the evaluation field, including managing, or conducting evaluations as well as evaluation syntheses and potentially also meta evaluations.

· Thorough understanding of climate finance, the four climate funds and the stakeholders to their projects and evaluations.

· Proven expertise in applying AI tools or machine learning techniques for research or evaluations.

· Strong analytical skills with experience synthesizing complex information clearly.

· Ability to communicate complex technical detail with clarity, and ability to identify and focus on the key messages among competing detail.

· Strong interpersonal skills, ability to collaboratively work with diverse stakeholders.

7. Arrangements

Location: The consultancy will take place at the consultants' own place of work, while working EST time zone office hours, as needed.

Travel: No travel is expected under this consultancy.

Support: The Four Funds will provide the consultant with all necessary documentation needed in support of the above scope of work via access to a cloud-based background documentation repository or will provide access in another way to any documentation.

Arrangements: All contracts with the Adaptation Fund are World Bank contracts and follow the relevant rules and regulations of the Bank. The focal point and the secretariat for administrative matters related to this study, on behalf of the Four Funds, will be the Secretariat of the Technical Evaluation Reference Group of the Adaptation Fund (AF-TERG). Payments for deliverables will be processed upon submission and approval of the deliverables by the Secretariat.

Interviews: In case interviews are required, the steering group will support the consultant in organizing them.

All application should be submitted through the procurement system of the World Bank.

8. Annex

Additional Information on the Forestry Portfolio of each MCF:

Adaptation Fund:

The Adaptation Fund finances projects and programs to help the most vulnerable communities in developing countries to fight land degradation, create smart agricultural practices and integrate adaptive measures within communities to conserve their forests and rich biodiversity. The Adaptation Fund has two forestry projects totaling USD $5.06 million in grant funding covering the theme of strengthening land-based adaptation capacity of communities, livelihoods, and ecological security. In addition to this, forestry is a cross-cutting theme in at least 30 per cent of the projects in the Adaptation Fund portfolio.

The Adaptation Fund Technical Evaluation Reference Group (AF-TERG) recently published a thematic evaluation on the Fund's Approach to Support for Innovation for Climate Change Adaptation that explores the impact of AF's support to adaptation-related innovations. Additionally, AF-TERG recently published a Rapid Evaluation of the Adaptation Fund as part of a phased approach to a comprehensive, overall evaluation of the Fund.

Climate Investment Funds:

In 2009, the CIF established the Forest Investment Program (FIP) to provide funding for countries to reduce deforestation, curb forest degradation, support sustainable forest management, and promote forest carbon stocks. In 2010, as part of the broader FIP portfolio, the CIF also established the Dedicated Grant Mechanism (DGM) to enhance the role of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) in protecting the forests that they depend on. The FIP portfolio includes 53 projects with $598 million in approved funding covering the following sectors: landscape approaches, sustainable forest management, capacity building/institutional strengthening and governance reform, Indigenous peoples/local communities, forest monitoring/measurement, reporting, and verification, and agroforestry.

The CIF's Evaluation and Learning (E&L) Initiative commissioned an independent midterm evaluation of the FIP to understand what elements of the FIP and DGM have or have not worked, for whom, and under what conditions. Other forestry-related evaluations and studies include the Evaluation of Development Impacts from CIF's Investments, a case study on Supporting Just Transitions to Sustainable Land Use in Ghana, and a case study on the Contribution of the Forest Investment Program to Forest and Climate Goals in Mexico.

Green Climate Fund:

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) contributes to shifting the paradigm in the forest and land use sector through: 1) Forest Protection 2) Forest Restoration 3) Sustainable Forest Management. GCF's forestry portfolio includes over 68 projects amounting to more than USD $1.7 billion in financing. GCF established a pilot programme on REDD+ results-based payments (RBPs) from 2017-2022 through a USD 500 million request for proposals window. In July 2024, the GCF Board approved the principles for mainstreaming REDD+ results-based payments into the regular project and programme activity cycle of the Green Climate Fund, as well as, on an exceptional basis, extending the pilot programme on REDD+ results-based payments.

The GCF Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU)'s recent evaluations include an Independent Evaluation of the GCF's Approach to Indigenous Peoples, Independent Evaluation of the GCF's Result Area 'Health and Wellbeing, and Food and Water Security', Independent Evaluation of the Relevance and Effectiveness of GCF's Investments in the Latin American and Caribbean States as well as the Second Performance Review of the GCF. In addition to evaluations, the GCF IEU has also completed evidence reviews on a range of topics including forest conservation, market-based approaches to mitigation and adaptation (including payments for ecosystem services), and just transition (including ecosystem services). The IEU also recently completed an impact evaluation report on the GCF's Sustainable Landscapes in Eastern Madagascar project, which covers the remaining large blocks of forest in the eastern part of Madagascar encompassing over 660,000 hectares.

Global Environment Facility:

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) has supported sustainable forest management (SFM) for more than 30 years. Many GEF projects, even when forests are not the only focus, contribute to the GEF's forests portfolio through a landscape-based approach. The GEF offers support for a wide range of sustainable forest management (SFM) tools such as: protected area establishment and management; integrated landscapes planning and management; forest restoration; certification of timber and non-timber forest products; payment for ecosystem services schemes; financial mechanisms related to carbon; development and testing of policy frameworks to slow the drivers of undesirable land-use change; and work with local communities to develop alternative livelihoods to reduce pressure on forests. Over the years, the GEF has supported 640 SFM projects with a value of USD $3.654 billion. The portfolio covers a wide diversity of geographies, implementing agencies, focal areas, and financial values.

For nearly 30 years, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) has supported forestry projects through a diverse portfolio of interventions focused on protection, restoration, management, and community engagement. GEF has invested approximately $3.654 billion in 640 SFM projects that span a wide range of geographies and sectors. GEF support has contributed to 78 million hectares of forests gaining new or improved protected status, 1.9 million hectares of forest restoration, and biodiversity improvements in 41% of projects.

The GEF Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) recently conducted a comprehensive evaluation of GEF Support to Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) that assesses the outcomes and performance of GEF's diverse portfolio of SFM activities and provides strategic insights and lessons for future forest-related interventions. Other relevant evaluations conducted recently include Strategic Country Cluster Evaluation (SCCE): GEF support to Drylands Countries, Strategic Country Cluster Evaluation (SCCE): Lower-Mekong Ecosystem, Evaluation of Community Based Approaches (CBA) at the GEF and the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) and the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF) Annual Evaluation Report 2023.