

Mid-Term Evaluation of the WWF Finland Partnership Programme 2018-2021

Final Report

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Abbreviations and acronyms

CSO	Civil Society Organization
IWT	Illegal Wildlife Trade
MFA	Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development / Development Assistance Committee
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference

Executive Summary

WWF Partnership Programme

The objective of the Partnership Programme of WWF Finland is to implement sustainable natural resource management and good governance for the creation of livelihoods and equal benefits for people, including women and those who are marginalised in their own communities. Through its activities, the programme aims to secure biodiversity and to halt the increase of our ecological footprint, while also targeting the sustainable development goals. Improved natural resources governance is addressed by promoting community forestry across the programme regions. Additionally, national and international governance issues, environmental education and illegal wildlife trade is being targeted.

The programme takes place in six regions in Asia and East Africa and contributes to awareness raising in Finland. The programme is funded by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA) and implemented together with selected other members of the international WWF Network and their partners. The programme actively engages also other stakeholders, including communities, citizens, civil society organizations (CSOs), governments and the private sector in Finland and other programme target countries.

Objectives of the Mid-Term Review

The overall objective of the Mid-term Review (the evaluation) is to provide WWF Finland and its partners with an independent assessment of the Partnership Programme's strategic scope, intervention logic and functionality. The evaluation focuses especially on understanding the *relevance* and *effectiveness* of the programme activities in order to find out if the current concept, design and activities are on the right track considering the objectives of the programme. Also, other OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, namely *efficiency*, *impact* and *sustainability* are looked upon especially in the light of further streamlining and possible adjustments required for the latter phase of the programme. Additionally, also the *adaptive capacity* of the programme has been assessed and recommendations for its further promotion provided.

The evaluation findings have been collected through a document analysis, participatory self-evaluation methods and stakeholder consultations in Finland and in partner countries.

Key findings

The programme targets relevant biodiversity issues in its target regions through an appropriate and well-founded approach. Community forestry is a binding theme for the programme. Throughout the programme, sustainability of high-priority wildlife areas is promoted by increasing the value of good forest

management among communities and governments in programme partner regions. The programme also addresses good governance and sensitizes societies in conservation issues through awareness raising.

While other WWF network practice areas, such as sustainable food, oceans or freshwater would also include several interesting and impactful topics to address biodiversity and natural resource management, forests are among the key expertise areas of WWF Finland, and it is well justified to focus the partnership programme on forests. As community forestry has direct linkages to livelihoods, governance and civil society at community level, it is a well justified topic to address within the forestry sector with funds provided from Finnish development cooperation funds.

The programme is well aligned with WWF Finland strategic objectives of biodiversity conservation and preserving natural capital and equitable resource governance. It is also in line with Finland's development policy through creating clear added value especially in sustainable use of natural resources, while it also contributes to strengthening the status of women and girls, strengthening the role of civil society and generating livelihoods. The programme efforts are considered as one of the most effective initiatives in the field of environment and natural resources in Finnish development cooperation by the key stakeholders. The programme and its activities are also considered relevant by key stakeholders in partner countries.

The programme delivers value for money, and the overall efficiency of the programme implementation is considered good. The short- and long-term efficiency of the regional approaches varies. Close collaboration with governments in Asian partner regions sometimes causes delays in short term, yet in long-term it is critical to have governmental stakeholders as implementing partners in those countries. Regional approach in East Africa is efficient in international efforts, yet country specific contributions through regional hubs are sometimes considered less efficient.

The achievement of the programme objectives can be affected by stability of operating environment and its structures, and experience of programme partners and their partners. Most of the programme strategies are proving to be effective and nearly all targeted outcomes are likely to be achieved during the programme period.

Rapid changes in economic conditions could affect the effectiveness of the programme in the future for the positive or the negative. For example, increasing private sector interest towards sustainable sourcing could provide opportunities for improving the sustainability of community forestry approaches while changes in governments' priorities could decrease (or increase) the effort and funding provided for conservation in partner countries.

The programme approaches in different regions are well justified and are expected to reach the planned impact. Long-term commitment of the donor partner has enhanced the sustainability of many activities beyond financial sustainability, especially institutional and technical sustainability.

Long-term commitment and collaboration between partners improve the efficiency and allow programme activities to become distinguished parts of partner operations and are therefore considered as of high priority. In several cases MFA funding has leveraged additional funding from other donors improving the sustainability of the actions started within the programme.

At community level, sustainability of community forestry often depends on communities' capability to generate livelihoods and income from forest products and services. By developing solutions that generate valuable and tangible assets from sustainable forest management for community members, the communities can become better committed to maintain sustainable community forestry practices also in the future.

Having government bodies as implementing partners can be effective, if the programme succeeds in making critical conservation efforts part of government practices also beyond the programme period and targeted regions. On the other hand, if practicing critical conservation strategies among government is directly dependent on the programme funding, their sustainability can be critically endangered.

Within the programme, the role of civil society is strengthened especially at community level through community forest management units. At national level, collaboration with other CSOs also contributes to this objective. Close collaboration with governmental bodies may have versatile effect on this objective, as it allows WWF to become a close and trusted advisor in conservation issues strengthening also the wider importance of CSOs in political decision making, yet it could also hinder the freedom of expression of opinion in some cases.

The programme approach allows high adaptivity to changing conditions at partner level. Risk monitoring practices vary among partners and their operations, and it is mainly conducted according to partners' own risk management practices.

Key conclusions and main recommendations from the evaluation are presented in the table 1 below and grouped by topics identified relevant during the evaluation process. Comprehensive conclusions and recommendations are presented in chapter 4.

Table 1. Key conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions	Recommendations
Community forestry approach	
<p>Community forestry has a substantial role in nearly all programme regions, and the topic successfully binds the programme together thematically.</p> <p>Community forestry can be an effective tool in promoting biodiversity and sustainable management of natural resources as well as addressing deforestation by developing community managed forests into precious and appreciated source of well-being and income for the local communities.</p> <p>A well-functioning community forestry scheme requires large enough forest areas, well-established governance structures and support frameworks for business development to be in place. Without tangible benefits and functioning operating frameworks communities can't be expected to maintain sustainable forest management practices.</p>	<p>Recommendation 1: WWF Finland should identify the most feasible way of capacitating their partners in providing entrepreneur skills for communities. In some cases, it could be efficient to train the programme partner in the subject, whereas sometimes the role could be provided for their partners (e.g. other CSOs or private sector associations). Also, the support available from WWF network should be studied to ensure efficient utilization of existing resources and to identify potential development needs at network level.</p> <p>Recommendation 2: At community level, sustainable frameworks offering business development and market access services to local forest-based businesses should be developed.</p> <p>Recommendation 3: Best practices and lessons learned could be shared and discussed between programme partners.</p>
Private sector collaboration strategies	
<p>Many partners (e.g. Nepal, Bhutan and East African hubs) are interested in better understanding the potential private sector collaboration provides for them in terms of additional financing and improving the effectiveness and impact of their own operations. Other partners, especially Indonesia, already have established some approaches to private sector collaboration, yet there is still room for further development.</p>	<p>Recommendation 4: WWF Finland should discuss and identify private sector collaboration strategy development needs among programme partners. While there might be similar needs within WWF Finland, lessons learned from the Finnish development process could potentially be made of use also for the programme partners. Peer-learning should be encouraged also among programme partners.</p> <p>In case private sector collaboration strategy development is not considered as a programme priority, programme partners could be advised and</p>

	encouraged to access other sources of support for developing those e.g. within the WWF network.
Climate resilience	
<p>Climate resilience is underlying most of the programme efforts, but it is not yet considered as a key tool or objective across the programme.</p> <p>However, climate change and resilience efforts are currently being assessed among the WWF Finland programme coordination team and plans for improving the performance are already under development.</p>	<p>Recommendation 5: Climate resilience should be mainstreamed across the programme by assessing climate relevance of programme activities. When planning the next programme period, all main programme components should be screened through the climate lens to ensure the programme has only positive or neutral impact on climate change.</p>
Role of government partners	
<p>Government is considered as a priority partner in many partner countries. In some regions, government is an implementing partner to WWF and receives direct funding from the programme. Close collaboration with governments has let critical conservation strategies to be taken into government plans, allowed WWF to contribute to critical conservation efforts inaccessible without governmental partners and enabled timely follow-up and contribution to government decisions.</p> <p>Having government as an implementing partner has also caused some delays when governmental structures change, as roles and responsibilities have been renegotiated within and with the newly established governmental institutions.</p> <p>The more dependent the programme partners are on government's efforts to reach the programme outcomes, the less freedom they may have to express their own views in case differences in priorities or preferred approaches appear. In some countries especially in Asia, close collaboration with the government is, however, the most effective way</p>	<p>Recommendation 6: It should be ensured that partners' connections to and roles with government are understood among programme management and related benefits and risks discussed with the partners.</p> <p>Recommendation 7: Changes in governance structures and collaboration agreements should be considered in risk assessments to the extent possible and alternative implementation models initially planned when feasible.</p>

to promote conservation and well justified as a programme approach.	
Added value of WWF Finland	
<p>In addition to funding, programme partners consider the added value of the programme to focus on adaptive capacity of programme planning and implementation and the existing yet limited technical and strategic support provided by WWF Finland.</p> <p>The partners would like to be more aware of the expertise and potential technical support WWF Finland could provide for them especially related to Finnish core expertise areas including environmental education and forest management. WWF Finland's emphasis on HRBA is recognized and appreciated by most of the programme partners. The topic is considered important, and more practical tools for mainstreaming it would be welcomed. Partners also acknowledge that WWF Network has recently launched new safeguards and guidelines that are about to be taken into use by the partners.</p> <p>Support on entrepreneurship skills development and private sector partnership development is needed among all partners to improve the sustainability of community forestry and partners' operations in national contexts (see also recommendations 1, 2 and 4).</p>	<p>Recommendation 8: Means for making use of WWF Finland's environmental education and forestry specialists and expertise within the programme should be developed to allow programme partners to share and gain lessons with Finland and other partners</p> <p>Recommendation 9: WWF Finland's support on HRBA related issues should be streamlined with the guidelines and safeguards provided by WWF Network and other WWF partners (work is already ongoing).</p>
Benefits of programmatic approach	
<p>While the programme partners benefit greatly from the programme financing and to some extent of the common approach, so far little collaboration between programme partners has taken place. Programme partners have expressed their interest to strengthen exchange of experiences between</p>	<p>Recommendation 10: More active collaboration among the programme partners should be encouraged by creating electronic and/or physical venues for information sharing.</p>

themselves to allow a more easily reachable forum for open discussion and learning compared to the official WWF Network activities and platforms.	
Programme management	
<p>The better the programme coordinators in Finland understand the programme implementation approaches and practices and know the responsible people in the partner countries, the easier it is for them to identify potential areas for support, and the easier it is for the partners to raise issues or risks that might need attention from Finland.</p> <p>The relationship between programme coordinators in Finland and in partner regions affects the overall efficiency of programme implementation through e.g. efficiency of operational procedures and communication and defining the most useful support Finland may provide for each partner.</p> <p>Multiple roles and responsibilities among the WWF Finland international team limit the resources available for active programme partnership management.</p> <p>Long-term partnerships between WWF Finland and its partners promote sustainability as programme efforts become integral parts of partners' strategies.</p>	<p>Recommendation 11: Closer collaboration between programme coordinators in Finland and in partner countries should be promoted to allow strengthened support on strategic development for the partners, to identify opportunities for increasing WWF Finland's added value to its partners, to improve efficiency and effectiveness of communicating programme results and to strengthen risk monitoring in programme regions.</p> <p>Recommendation 12: WWF Finland should assess its own priorities and capacity to provide more capacity development services (e.g. technical support or strategic advice) for its partners in order to define an adequate level of support to be provided.</p> <p>Recommendation 13: Long-term partnerships are worth maintaining, while the scope of the partnership should be carefully assessed for each programme period and revised if needed for maximum impact.</p> <p>Recommendation 14: WWF Finland could consider developing also other programmes or interventions with their existing partners with the support from other donors.</p>
Leveraging additional funding	
<p>The programme's ability to provide funding for innovative and new approaches for old and new partners has created great impact especially by leveraging additional funding from other donors.</p>	<p>Recommendation 15: The programme's ability to provide seed funding for innovative approaches should be maintained and further promoted in future programme periods as possible. One option to consider is to reserve a specific share of programme funds for this purpose with an objective</p>

	to leverage additional funds for a critical conservation efforts rather than to maintain very long-term collaboration with WWF Finland. This approach may require changes in the funding rules at the MFA, thus it is not entirely in the hands of WWF Finland.
Programme evaluability	
<p>General evaluability of the programme is good. Indicators for programme outputs and impacts are in place, they mostly reflect the activities well and data for baseline and progress can be efficiently collected especially at regional level.</p> <p>The indicators in the results framework mainly reflect output and outcome level achievements and biodiversity related impacts at programme level, but societal long-term impacts are not monitored in detail at regional or programme level.</p> <p>Some programme partners have their operations evaluated regularly either by themselves or their funding partners, while others have never been evaluated.</p>	<p>Recommendation 16: Should wider societal impacts be included in the objectives of later programme phases, the expected social consequences of outputs and outcomes generated should be identified and indicators for those defined during programme planning. For this programme period, initial societal impacts could be identified and assessed during the final evaluation, yet their systematic measurement would due to lack of specified indicators.</p> <p>Recommendation 17: The evaluation needs of the programme partners should be assessed in order to define the scope and focus of a potential final evaluation of the current programme period. The final evaluation, could, for example, focus on a specific topic relevant and of interest to most of the programme partners instead of a programme wide impact evaluation.</p>
Future opportunities	
<p>While the programme targets consumption and its sustainability mainly in Finland, consumption is rapidly increasing in most of the programme partner regions. The programme also touches many topics that are relevant to the supply chains of consumer products and food sold in Finland.</p> <p>Despite of the linkages and increasing importance of consumption related issues in developing countries, ecological footprint issues targeted</p>	<p>Recommendation 18: Opportunities for linking ecological footprint issues managed through other WWF Finland operations to the partnership programme could be studied.</p> <p>Recommendation 19: Strengthening programme partners interest in and understanding of consumption related footprint issues could be considered in programme phases to come, as consumption models and their development in</p>

through the programme mainly focus on Finnish consumers. At the same time other ecological footprint related work in Finland is only partly connected to the Partnership Programme.	developing countries becomes more and more critical from the perspective of resource scarcity.
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1. Introduction to WWF Finland Partnership Programme

WWF Finland has been implementing its Partnership Programme since 2014. The current, second programme phase started in 2018. The objective of the programme is to implement sustainable natural resource management and good governance for the creation of livelihoods and equal benefits for people, including women and those who are marginalised in their own communities. Through its activities, the programme aims to contribute to the achievement of the sustainable development goals and WWF's global goals to secure biodiversity and to halt the increase of our ecological footprint. A single programme level outcome target has been defined as *"Communities, citizens, governments and companies engaged in sustainable natural resource management to address deforestation and secure equal benefits for people and sustain wildlife habitats"*. The programme is funded by the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs and implemented together with selected other members of the international WWF Network and their partners. The programme actively engages also other stakeholders, including communities, citizens, CSOs, governments and the private sector in Finland and other programme target countries.

Community forestry is an overarching topic common to all partners of the programme. Forests affect the wellbeing of local people significantly across the programme regions while climate change causes increasing pressure on the environment and creates uncertainty related to livelihoods. Forests and their management practices also directly contribute to biodiversity, making forests a significant source of well-being for the most vulnerable groups as well as for communities at large. By improving the wellbeing of people and increasing sustainable livelihood opportunities, the programme aims at long-term sustainability and reduction of unsustainable use of natural resources. While community forestry development is an approach adopted by most programme partners, all the programme efforts also contribute to WWF's overall mandate of improved conservation of biodiversity and balanced future for the nature and people.

The **geographical focus** of the second programme phase covers the Himalayas (Bhutan and Nepal), the Greater Mekong area, Indonesian Borneo, and East Africa (figure 1). The practical approaches to conservation and community forestry vary from partner to partner. In Nepal, WWF Finland is continuing its 15-year work with forest conservation and developing sustainable natural resources management models.

The approach has also been introduced in Bhutan, where the national government plays a significant role among the project stakeholders.

In Indonesian Borneo, the programme targets deforestation by improving the dialogue between forest companies, communities and other stakeholders and by enhancing sustainable forest management in production and natural forests. Deforestation is also targeted in the Mekong region, including Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos and Vietnam. There the emphasis is on empowering communities and developing community-based agroforestry practices and related enterprises.

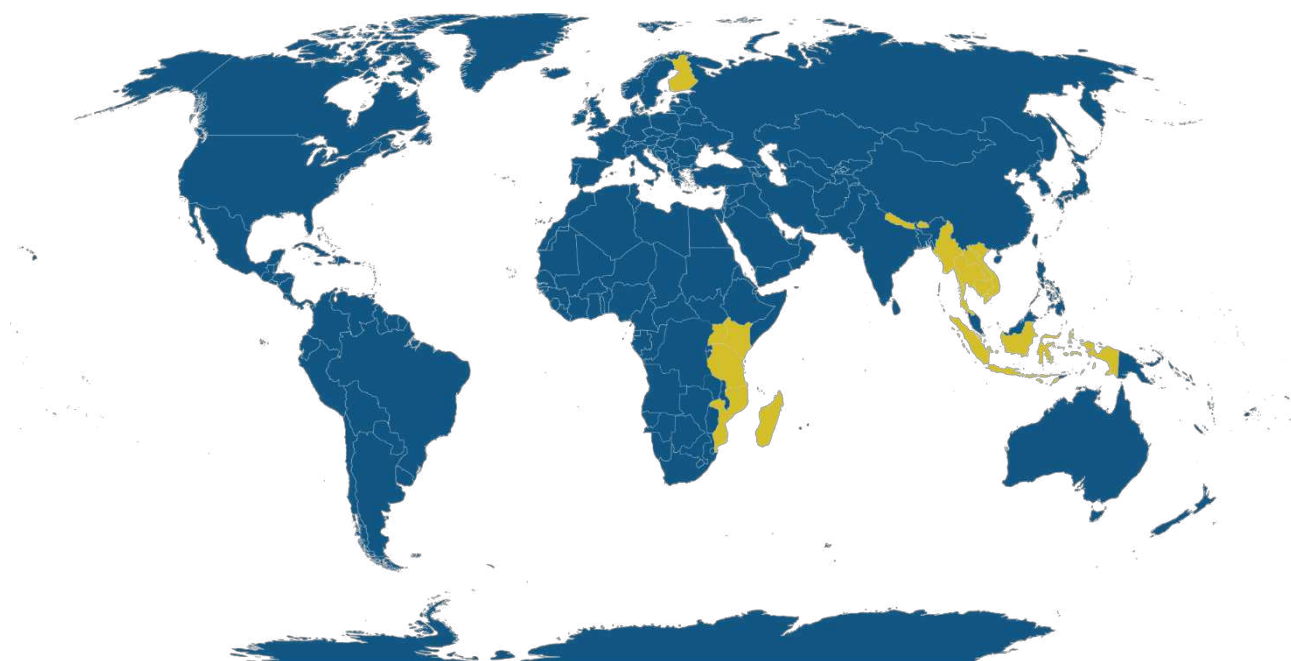


Figure 1. Partner regions of the WWF Finland Partnership Programme

Forest protection is also in the focus of the WWF Finland East African forest operations coordinated from Tanzania and implemented also in Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique and Uganda. There the emphasis is put on reducing illegal logging and timber trade by strengthening forest governance, relevant civil society organizations and intergovernmental collaboration. The other regional effort of the programme in East Africa focuses on reducing illegal wildlife trade of elephants and rhinos in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. These activities also contribute to strengthening biodiversity and intergovernmental collaboration and have some connections to community forestry through capacitating communities and rangers working in those.

All programme partners are implementing or about to implement a landscape approach in their operations. The approach emphasises the importance of targeting different factors relevant to conservation holistically across sectors in the targeted landscape. Each WWF office usually has several landscapes in their focus, whereas the Finnish funded programme normally contributes to one landscape per region. The partners often

also have other projects or programmes targeting the same landscape as the Finnish funded programme does, but they focus on different sectors, activities or sub-regions.

While the scope of the programme is international, the programme includes also **global education and dissemination work in Finland**, focusing especially on responsible food choices. In this respect, the programme aims to reduce Finnish consumers' negative global impact on the environment through making citizens aware of the global environmental threats and prevailing global inequality, as well as the global impacts of their consumption habits directly affecting the ecological footprint. A detailed analysis of this work has been excluded from the evaluation.

The programme makes up a significant share of WWF Finland operations. Therefore, the lessons learned from this MTR are also utilized in the WWF Finland's strategy development process that is taking place in 2019-2020.

2. Evaluation

2.1. Objectives and methodology

The overall objective of the Mid-term Review (the evaluation) was to provide WWF Finland and its partners with an independent assessment of the Partnership Programme's strategic scope, intervention logic and functionality. The evaluation focused especially on understanding the *relevance* and *effectiveness* of the programme activities in order to find out if the current concept, design and activities are on the right track considering the objectives of the programme. Also, other OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, namely *efficiency*, *impact* and *sustainability* were looked upon especially in the light of further streamlining and possible adjustments required for the latter phase of the programme. Additionally, also the *adaptive capacity* of the programme was assessed and recommendations for its further promotion were provided, in line with the WWF evaluation practices. The descriptions of the evaluation criteria are available in Terms of Reference (ToR) (Annex 1).

The Mid-term Review built on a document analysis (Annex 7) conducted during an inception phase, participatory self-evaluation methods facilitated for WWF Finland staff and their partners in partner countries as well as stakeholder consultations in Finland and in partner countries (Annex 6).

The evaluation methodology applied **facilitated self-assessments** as a key evaluation tool. In addition to data collection, the aim of the self-assessments was to encourage programme partners to critically consider their own efforts and to help them to identify best practices and room for development within their operations.

Before the MTR process, WWF Finland conducted an online partnership survey among their partners. The evaluation team had a chance to add questions to the survey template, and the team was also provided access to consolidated results of the survey which were used as an information source for the evaluation.

The self-assessments conducted as part of the evaluation process started with a self-assessment survey for programme partners. The survey was meant to be conducted as an internal discussion or brief workshop among the partners' own team with results reported to the evaluation team before consultations in each partner country. Most of the partners produced the results in line with the instructions. The self-assessment template is provided in Annex 3 to this report.

The self-assessment process continued with facilitated self-assessment workshops. In Finland, the workshop was participated by relevant people from environmental education, ecological footprint and communications teams of WWF Finland and facilitated by two evaluation team members. The focus of the workshop was on relevance and effectiveness of the current programme period and its development needs for the future.

In each partner country/region, the workshops were participated by the partner staff members relevant to the MFA programme and facilitated by the evaluation Team Leader. The number of participants varied between 6 to 17 people per workshop, and the content of the workshops varied depending on the priorities of each partner. The generic template for the issues discussed in the workshops is provided in Annex 4 to this report. For Mekong region, the workshop was replaced by a joint call with key staff members and the evaluation Team Leader.

The self-assessment process was finalized in Kilwa, Tanzania on 4-5 November 2019 in a joint workshop participated by representatives from each programme partner, WWF Finland and the evaluation Team Leader. The key findings from the self-assessment process are presented in Annex 5 to this report.

The data collected through self-assessments was supported with stakeholder consultations conducted in Finland and in partner countries. In Finland, most of the key stakeholders to the programme were consulted in a stakeholder workshop facilitated by the evaluation team in September 2019. WWF Finland Partnership Programme Manager introduced the programme to the participants, but WWF staff was not present during the workshop sessions. Invitees not able to attend to the workshop were provided an opportunity to contribute to the evaluation by email and/or by phone interviews.

For the programme partners' stakeholders, consultations were conducted through interviews in each partner country/region except Mekong region. WWF Finland and their partners identified the list of stakeholders to be consulted, and the partners organized the interviews and participated in most of them. The interviews were led by the evaluation Team Leader. Whenever translation was needed, WWF partners interpreted the discussions during the interviews.

Based on feedback, most partners considered the process heavy, yet fruitful. The level of commitment and involvement varied between partners and was strongest among the long-term partners of WWF Finland.

2.2. Report structure

The first parts of this evaluation report consist of key findings of the evaluation summarized in the Summary chapter, brief introduction to the WWF Finland Partnership Programme and evaluation methodology presented in this chapter, followed by findings and conclusions and recommendations in the following chapters. The findings from the evaluation process presented in chapter 3 are divided by evaluation criteria and presented in the order of evaluation questions as provided in the ToR (Annex 1) when feasible. The conclusions and recommendations are presented by thematic topics, which were identified as the most relevant issues for consideration in the inception phase of the evaluation or identified as of specific importance during the self-assessments.

3. Findings

The evaluation findings are based on a desk study of key documentation, stakeholder consultations and the self-assessments conducted during the evaluation process. The findings are structured according to the evaluation criteria defined in the ToR, following the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria (*relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability*) and amended with *adaptive capacity* focusing on project and risk management in line with WWF network evaluation practice.

3.1. Relevance

The programme targets relevant biodiversity issues in its target regions through an appropriate and well-founded approach. Community forestry as a binding theme across the programme addresses conservation related topics through multiple means, including but not limited to creating wildlife corridors between protected and other high-priority areas and buffer zones between high-priority areas and communities, as well as by reducing the pressure on forests and human-wildlife conflicts by creating more sustainable livelihoods from sustainable forest management for local communities. In short, WWF Finland and its partners improve the sustainability of high-priority wildlife areas by increasing the value of good forest management among communities and governments in programme partner regions.

In addition to sustainable natural resources management, the programme addresses good governance in its partner regions. Governance is not only targeted through community forestry development, but the programme partners have demonstrated also other means to improve governance in conservation. Most of the programme partners in Asia have close relations to local and national governments. In Nepal, Bhutan and Borneo, programme funding is used for providing direct funding for the national and/or local government to cover conservation related costs within the programme scope. In all these countries, WWF is considered more as a donor rather than a traditional Civil Society Organization (CSO). While close relations with the government could in some cases threaten WWF's capability to freely express its opinions, it also allows the organization to act as a trusted advisor to governments in issues related to conservation.

The programme objectives are aligned with WWF Finland strategy and Finnish Development Policy.

The programme is well aligned with WWF Finland strategic objectives of biodiversity conservation and preserving natural capital and equitable resource governance. Within the programme, ecological footprint issues are mainly emphasised in Finland. Efforts for channelling investments to more sustainable direction have not been highlighted in the programme objectives or its activities¹. With perspective on WWF network

¹ The evaluation team had access only to the Finnish version of the updated strategy document (2017-2020), thus the exact wording may be different in the latest English version of the document.

strategies, the programme makes a clear contribution to forestry and governance practices of the WWF network, and is also relevant to other practices, including wildlife.

The programme is also well aligned with Finland's development policy and creates clear added value especially in sustainable use of natural resources. WWF's efforts within the programme are considered as one of the most effective initiatives in the field of environment and natural resources in Finnish development cooperation by the key stakeholders. The programme also contributes to strengthening the status of women and girls, strengthening civil societies especially at community level and generating livelihoods. Especially for the latter, there is potential for even stronger impact through community forestry related small enterprises and private sector collaboration.

The programme also complements work of other Finnish funded actors, including other CSOs, and continues contributing to areas where Finnish bi-lateral development collaboration no longer operates (e.g. forestry sector in Nepal). The programme strengthens the civil society in programme regions through the partnerships with WWF offices and other CSOs. In some Asian countries, WWF is not considered as a traditional civil society organization but more as an international donor. Even in these countries, collaboration or sharing of information with more traditional CSOs exist, yet sometimes the closest partners are among the government (e.g. in Bhutan).

The programme activities are aligned with the overall goal and objective of the programme and those set for the regions. Based on self-assessment results and consultations with key stakeholders, the programme activities support the achievement of the overall programme and regional objectives. It is, however, worth noting that the evaluation focused on partner and stakeholder consultations at outcome and output level. Detailed analysis of programme interventions at activity level as well as verification of results at field level was excluded from the evaluation approach set by WWF Finland and its partners.

The programme and its activities seem to be relevant to key stakeholder priorities. All stakeholders consulted were satisfied with the scope and implementation of the programme interventions. Many stakeholders that act as partners or implementing partners to WWF in programme regions considered the programme as donor funding for their own activities and felt that they were able to contribute to defining the programme scope and design of activities, allowing them to align the activities to meet with their own priorities.

At community level, the programme targets not only conservation and natural resource management directly, but also contributes to livelihoods generation and strengthens the civil society through community forest groups. The combination is considered relevant and effective by many of the stakeholders consulted. It is to

be noted that priorities of direct beneficiaries (e.g. community members, schools and national park rangers) at field level have not been directly assessed during the evaluation process.

Also, other WWF network members providing support for the programme members in the same or other landscapes than those targeted by the programme, consider the programme to be relevant and sufficiently aligned with the efforts they contribute to. While most of the supporting partners provide their assistance to individual country or national WWF offices, the regional approach of the programme in East Africa is considered different and sometimes slightly confusing by the partners. For international issues such as illegal trade of timber or wildlife, the regional focus is, however, considered relevant by programme stakeholders.

The Theory of Change (ToC) is considered clear, and it reflects the approaches and activities in different programme regions (Annex 2). The key means (the “why”) of the ToC are addressed at different depths within the programme. Improved management of natural resources, engagement of beneficiaries and environmental education are clearly covered across the programme. Climate resilience is underlying most of the programme efforts, yet it did not come up in the self-assessments or stakeholder consultations too often. Even though most of the programme activities clearly target improved climate resilience, it is not yet considered as a key tool or objective across the programme. Also, communication and community-level entrepreneurship issues are integral parts of the programme, yet their role and importance could be strengthened with additional support from WWF Finland or through engaging the partners more with relevant efforts conducted among the WWF Network.

The Results Framework details the theory of change at regional level by describing the expected results and indicators for measuring those. At programme level, the impact level indicators are partly outdated, e.g. for the WWF Living Planet Index which is no longer reported at country level. Regional level outcomes are aligned with the programme level outcome target (*communities, citizens, governments and companies engaged in sustainable natural resource management to address deforestation and secure equal benefits for people and sustain wildlife habitats*) but the applicability of the set indicators at programme level varies between programme regions. Some details related to region-specific outputs and indicators may need to be revised during the programme period, but it is not considered to affect the overall clarity or functionality of the theory of change at programme or regional levels.

The different perspectives to community forestry and natural resource management in different programme regions add up to the programmatic approach and make it successful in terms of addressing issues critical to sustainable management of natural resources. The programme approach to focus on community forests and improved governance is considered efficient, and each region contributes to the

objectives through their own priorities. Collaboration and interaction between programme regions and partners are however scarce, which limits the benefits of the programmatic approach to the programme partners.

WWF's social policies and MFA's HRBA are acknowledged and considered across the programme, yet practical tools for managing those are still developing. Programme partners consider sensitising the implementing partners and stakeholders at field level on human rights issues most challenging. Localization of approaches is considered critical by some partners, as international practices or indicators are not considered applicable in all regions (e.g. in some East African countries). The partners appreciate active contributions from WWF Finland on this theme in general. Among the topics relevant to human rights, gender issues are most widely taken into account, while other aspects such as rights of vulnerable and marginalized groups are not so often recognized as human right issues relevant to conservation efforts among programme partners. WWF network has recently launched new safeguards and guidelines for human rights, and programme partners are about to make use of those.

3.2. Efficiency

The programme delivers value for money at general level, and the overall efficiency of the programme implementation is considered good. While the actual impacts of the programme are still to be measured towards the end of the programme, it seems that most if not all planned outputs will reach their targets and deliver as planned. For some outputs, target setting could have been more ambitious as some targets have been reached years in advance (e.g. in Nepal). However, the flexibility partners have in activity design should allow targets to be increased or funds to be allocated for other activities as considered feasible. In some cases, changes in governance structures (e.g. in Nepal) or in collaboration agreements with the government (e.g. in Borneo) are causing some inefficiency as some interventions need to be redesigned and/or redone in the new setting.

In the East Africa Forest Hub, the efficiency of funding for community forestry efforts at country level may not be as efficient as in some other parts of the programme, as the total sums per country are small yet the administrative burden of channelling them is somewhat heavy. The hub member countries also noted that they have challenges in planning for their operations as the annual budgets for each country are not available early enough and are considered small in total. The efficiency of facilitating the cross governmental trade agreements under the East Africa Forest Hub has not been questioned in the self-assessments and consultations conducted.

In some cases, the short-term efficiency may be negatively affected by the multi-layered implementation structure, yet in most cases the chosen approach is well justified. In some countries and regions (e.g. in Nepal and East Africa Forest Hub) there can be three organizations down the line after WWF Finland before the funds reach an implementing organization. The implementing organizations outside WWF represent skills and experience relevant to their role that is not available at programme partners, thus their involvement is well justified to effectively meet the set objectives. Also unexpected changes in governance structures have affected the efficiency of the programme in some regions which blurs the analysis of cost efficiency as the changes are causing changes also in programme implementation structures.

The cost of programme administration is challenging to assess due to the multi-layers programme structure, as each partner provides the programme with both administration and technical expertise. Within the WWF Finland programme administration team, a significant share of the full-time team members' resources is spent on thematic and cross-cutting issues having mainly indirect contribution to the programme partners' work, while the direct collaboration with the programme partners focuses on administrative issues and reporting.

In some programme regions, where several funding partners are providing funds for the same interventions through basket funding, the MFA reporting requirements are considered heavy by the implementing WWF partner as well as other funding WWF partners. This is the case especially with the East Africa Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Hub.

3.3. Effectiveness

Nearly, if not all targeted outcomes are likely to be achieved during the programme period. In some cases, outcomes have been reached earlier than expected leaving room for more ambitious target setting.

Most of the programme strategies are proving to be effective

- **Close collaboration with governments** seems to be effective in the long run, even though changes in governance structures and collaboration models may decrease efficiency during a single programme period. The programme has managed to embed conservation strategies into governmental structures already in its earlier phases (e.g. community forestry development in Nepal) and the results from these efforts seem to bring fruit also during this programme period.
- Also, **collaboration with other CSOs** seems to be effective and allows reaching wider audiences than would be possible for WWF alone. In Nepal, collaboration with the family planning association improved the resilience of communities already during the previous programme period, and new collaboration with Red Cross is now under development. Both of these collaboration initiatives have been contributed to by the CSOs' Finnish partners Västöliitto and Finnish Red Cross together with

WWF Finland. In Indonesia, the programme has made effective use of a local NGO specializing in land use planning and geographical information systems, and in East Africa close collaboration with Traffic continues expanding the effectiveness of regional programmes to wildlife and forest product trade beyond WWF's internal capacity.

- Some untapped potential exists in **inter-programmatic collaboration**. So far little collaboration between programme partners has taken place, even though experience from the earlier programme phase has been effective. Then, East African WWF staff as well as local government officials were trained in anti and zero poaching approaches in Nepal by WWF Nepal. During self-assessments, programme partners expressed their interest to strengthen exchange of experiences between the programme partners to allow a more easily reachable forum for open discussion and learning compared to the official WWF Network activities and platforms.

The evaluation recognised three major factors affecting the achievement of programme objectives:

- **Stability of operational environment and its structures.** Significant changes in operating environment have taken place e.g. in Nepal in the form of changes in national governance structures. In Indonesia, changes to collaboration agreements with the government are expected to influence especially activities planned for protected areas. Changes in government structures affect the effectiveness of the work especially in regions where governments are partially responsible for implementation of the programme, as it takes time to renegotiate the implementation responsibilities with the new organizations.
- **Experience of the programme partners and their partners.** For most programme regions, programme partners' long-term experience in conservation work can be seen as the most significant aspect influencing programmatic success. In each region visited during the evaluation, WWF is an institutional and well recognized operator in conservation issues. The country and national offices understand their operating context, have good, long-term relationship with the key stakeholders and possess sufficient experience in designing and implementing effective conservation work. In Bhutan, Indonesia, Nepal and to some extent Tanzania this is successfully combined with long-term collaboration with WWF Finland, which improves the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the work thanks to well established collaboration procedures. In these countries, good, experienced and realistic programme planning among programme partners seems to have facilitated the success of the chosen strategies.
- **Availability of additional financing outside the programme where programme funds are limited compared to the targeted outcomes.** In many of the partner countries and regions, the

Finnish funding has managed to attract additional funds to the planned conservation efforts, as the initial work conducted within the programme has managed to prove the feasibility of innovative approaches. A special success story in this regard is the East African IWT, where the programme has managed to leverage more than 7 MUSD, while the programme has budgeted only EUR 360 000 for the hub's use during the four-year programme period. While the programme funding has been elemental for the hub's success and its importance has been well recognized among the partners, MFA's reporting requirements are considered heavy among the implementing partners and other funders compared to the size of funding provided.

Other success stories of accessing additional financing include conservation work started within the previous programme phase in Bhutan and Nepal and continued later with other funding, as well as the recently confirmed large EU funded responsible food programme Eat4Change to be led by WWF Finland that was developed based on the lessons learned from food work in Finland.

Factors described above can also be expected to affect the programme implementation in the next programme period. Also, rapid changes in economic conditions could affect the effectiveness of the programme in the future (e.g. rapid growth of private forestry or change in government funding) for the positive or the negative. Global mega trends and private sectors' increasing interest towards sustainable supply chains could also improve the sustainability of community forestry approaches if communities can produce raw or processed materials for national or international suppliers. For example, different non-timber forest products could have significant potential for increasing income and the number of small businesses should the communities' capacities in sustainable business skills be enhanced.

3.4. Impact

The programme approaches in different regions are well justified and are expected to reach the planned impact. The partners have developed well-functioning models for community forestry and improved governance. For further impacts, funding for scaling-up would be needed. Once the intervention models are in place, effectiveness of funding can be better especially at community level where replication is required to meet the needs of additional beneficiaries while the structures already defined can be made use of.

In addition to increasing direct funding, the MFA programme could continue seed funding for innovative ideas and further encourage other donors to join the efforts through communicating the expected impacts and strengths of the implementing partners within the WWF Network and beyond.

3.5. Sustainability

Long-term commitment of the donor partner has enhanced the sustainability of many activities also beyond financial sustainability, especially institutional and technical sustainability. Long-term commitment and collaboration between partners improve the efficiency and allow programme activities to become distinguished parts of partner operations and are therefore considered as of high priority.

In several cases MFA funding has leveraged additional funding from other donors improving the sustainability of the actions started.

At community level, sustainability of community forestry development often depends on communities' capability to develop their livelihoods with forest products. While the environmental sustainability of community forests can be maintained with the sustainable natural resource practices promoted by the programme, the actual continuation and sustainability of these practises depends on their economic feasibility and sustainability. Also, time spans of accessing the resources affect the sustainability of the approaches. For example, when planting trees, it takes some 15 years before the trees can be utilized, thus additional income from the forest resources would be needed in the meanwhile.

According to stakeholders consulted, for a community forestry approach to function and sustain, the forest areas managed by the communities should be large enough, the forest management governance should be strong, and sufficient support structures for developing the financial benefits from the forest products should be easily available. Should the communities consider community forestry and other means of sustainable natural resource management as practices that improve their income and livelihoods, they can be expected to commit to maintaining and developing those.

For institutional sustainability, government partners can make a difference. Having government bodies as implementing partners can be effective, if the programme succeeds in making critical conservation efforts part of government practices also beyond the programme period and targeted regions. On the other hand, if practicing critical conservation strategies among government is directly dependent on the programme funding, their sustainability can be critically endangered.

3.6. Adaptive capacity

The programme approach allows high adaptivity to changing conditions at partner level. Both programme partners and their partners appreciate the programme's flexibility to adjust activities and targeted outputs during the programme period according to changing needs and circumstances.

Risk monitoring practices vary among partners and their operations, and it is mainly conducted according to partners' own risk management practices. Some partners indicated their interest towards strengthened support for risk mapping and management from WWF Finland especially during programme planning. For regional programme components, risk management practices vary between partnering organizations, and in some countries programme specific risk management procedures are not in place (e.g. Madagascar and Kenya as part of the East African forest hub). At programme level, risk management follows WWF Network risk management procedures. Programme region specific risk information collection is mainly based on programme partners' reports. The more established and stronger the connection between the programme coordinators in Finland and partner countries are, the easier it seems to be to identify potential risks during the programme implementation. Some partners (e.g. in Mekong) would also like to see WWF Finland to act as a peer reviewer to their landscape-level risk assessments.

Lessons learned and best practices are collected and utilized best within programme partners' own operations and between their different programmes and projects. At programme level or between the programme partners, lessons learned are collected and shared to some but not to maximum level.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

During the inception phase and later in the self-assessment process, several topics were identified as most important from the programme development perspective. The conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation are summarized in this chapter following those topics.

4.1. Community forestry

Community forestry has a substantial role in nearly all programme regions, and the topic successfully binds most of the conservation efforts under the programme together thematically. Community forestry can be an effective tool in promoting sustainable management of natural resources and addressing deforestation by developing community managed forests into precious and appreciated source of well-being and income for the local communities. While other WWF network practice areas, such as sustainable food, oceans or freshwater would also include several interesting and impactful topics to address biodiversity and natural resource management, forests are among the key expertise areas of WWF Finland, and it is well justified to focus the partnership programme on forests. As community forestry has direct linkages to livelihoods, governance and civil society at community level, it is an excellent topic to address with funds provided from Finnish development cooperation funds.

The programme and its partners have had a role in introducing community forestry approaches to new regions and developing them further together with their partners and governments. Community forestry and related efforts have developed new approaches for managing human-wildlife conflicts (e.g. in Nepal), generating small-scale income opportunities from non-timber forest products (e.g. eco-tourism, bee keeping, chilli farming), connecting communities to commercial timber trade (e.g. in Tanzania), making communities more accessible also to other CSOs (e.g. in Bhutan and Nepal) and demonstrating governments the opportunities assets managed by communities may offer. While the lessons learned from these different approaches are many, sharing them between programme partners or within the WWF Network has been limited. Potential for cross-programmatic sharing exists both at regional (e.g. the Himalayas or South East Asia) as well as programme level.

Sustainability of community forestry approaches at community level often depends on communities' ability to improve livelihoods from forests. Within the programme, several models for new and existing non-timber forest products have been developed, including but not limited to eco-tourism, broom making and chilli farming. For many of the products it is common that the product exists, but its owners have limited skills in developing it into a business. For them, strengthening their entrepreneurial skills such as bookkeeping, value chain development and accessing markets could often make a big difference and transfer the role of

community forestry from subsistence into small-scale business. Also, permanent support frameworks (e.g. specialized service providers) for developing the financial benefits from the forest products and services should be in place to allow continuous benefits from community forests to be enjoyed. WWF's partner Mpingo Conservation and Development Initiative (MCDI) in Tanzania is a good example of an organization providing support for making a business out of forest products and services. Without tangible benefits, communities can't be expected to maintain sustainable forest management practices.

Recommendations:

- Community forestry is a feasible choice for the overall programme topic, and it is recommended to be kept as the focus area of the programme. Interventions with less evident connections to the topic (e.g. illegal wildlife trade targeted in East Africa) also stand for their place in targeting critical biodiversity issues through sustainable natural resource management, yet their number should not be increased within the programme to allow sufficiently targeted strategic support for programme partners.
- Lessons learned and best practices in fields common and of interest to several programme partners could be shared more actively to maximise the benefits of the programme. Potential means for sharing include joint workshops, online discussion platforms and joint field visits among all or selected programme partners.
- Means for improving the potential benefits of forest products and services should be assessed and developed. This could include but not be limited to improving programme partners' (and their implementing partners') capacity in entrepreneurship development, establishing support frameworks to enable communities' access to business development services and developing value chains for selected products (see also private sector development in chapter 4.2).

4.2. Private sector development and collaboration

Sustainability of community forestry depends on communities' capacity to create income from forest products. Community forestry group members could be capacitated in entrepreneur skills, including but not limited to supply chain development, financial management, marketing and accessing potential clients to allow them to be and stay incentivized in sustainable management of their forests.

Many partners (e.g. Nepal, Bhutan and East African hubs) are interested in better understanding the potential private sector collaboration provides for them in terms of additional financing and improving the

effectiveness of their own operations. Other partners, especially WWF Indonesia, already have established some approaches to private sector collaboration, yet there is still room for further development.

It is worth keeping in mind that WWF partners have different positions and rules when it comes to acting as a service provider, which may affect their possibilities to collaborate with private companies. In any type of collaboration, it should be ensured that the primary conservation objectives of WWF would be promoted and not threatened by the efforts. WWF Finland has taken a somewhat active role in promoting innovation and private sector collaboration within the WWF network, and this is welcomed also by other network members and stakeholders.

Developing collaboration between the civil society and private sector is also of interest to the MFA. WWF Finland has shown some good examples of this earlier within the partnership programme (e.g. support for Finnfund in Tanzania) and promoted related opportunities also in Finland. By carefully combining the conservation and community development expertise of WWF and its partners and private sectors' interest to establish and develop sustainable businesses out of forest products, sustainable use of natural resources could be promoted across the programme regions and the whole WWF Network reaching impacts not reachable to donor-only funded operations.

Recommendations:

- WWF Finland should identify the most feasible way of capacitating their partners in providing entrepreneur skills for communities. In some cases, it could be efficient to capacitate the programme partner in the subject, whereas sometimes the role could be provided for their partners (e.g. other CSOs or private sector associations). Also, the support available from WWF network should be studied to ensure efficient utilization of existing resources and to identify potential development needs at network level.
- At community level, frameworks offering business development and market access services to local forest-based businesses should be developed (see also community forestry section).
- Best practices and lessons learned from private sector collaboration strategy development at partner level could be shared and discussed between programme partners. WWF Network level channels for sharing lessons could also be identified and/or established if needed.
- WWF Finland could discuss and identify private sector collaboration strategy development needs within the programme. While there might be similar needs within WWF Finland, lessons learned from the Finnish development process could potentially be made of use also for the programme partners. In case private sector collaboration strategy development is not

considered as a programme priority, programme partners could be advised and encouraged to access other sources of support for developing those e.g. within the WWF network.

4.3. Environmental education

Environmental education² is relevant and of interest to most programme partners. Experience of and means for implementing it vary between partners from recently started efforts to nation-wide school programmes and public campaigns.

WWF Finland's strong expertise in environmental education was news to most of the partners and seems to have untapped potential in terms of sharing experiences and building capacities. Programme partners showed strong interest in sharing lessons and learning from others' experience in this field.

Recommendation:

- Means for making use of WWF Finland's environmental education specialists and relevant expertise within the programme partners should be developed to allow programme partners to share and gain lessons with Finland and other partners (see also WWF Finland's added value chapter)

4.4. Governments' role in programme implementation

Government is considered a priority partner in many partner countries. Close collaboration with the government allows WWF to follow-up and contribute to government decisions relevant to conservation. This strategic choice also contributes positively towards programme effectiveness (see Chapter 3).

In some partner regions, the MFA programme provides the government financing for conservation related efforts for indirect costs, and sometimes also to cover government staff salaries. Interviews suggest that in some cases this is the only funding available for those activities (e.g. in Nepal and Indonesia). Thanks to financing but also to the expertise provided, governments consider the MFA programme as highly important and effective contribution to their conservation efforts.

While close collaboration with governments provides many positive opportunities and can create a lasting positive impact, it could also lead to negative implications. It could, for example, lead to a situation where the government has the main decision power on how the programme funds are spent, and the programme partner has only limited means to define programme outputs or activities if they want collaboration with the government to continue. Based on the evaluation findings there is no sign of this type of negative

² Also called conservation education among some partners

implications taking place within the programme, but it is only brought up as an issue worth monitoring in the future. It is also worth noting that the role of WWF and that of civil society as a whole varies between the programme regions, and there is no one model for government collaboration that would suit all regions.

The critical role of the government in programme implementation also makes the programme sensitive to changes in governance structures.

Recommendations:

- The strong role of government partners in Asian partner regions is well justified and allows the programme to target issues at relevant levels of the society, thus the practice is encouraged to be continued, keeping in mind also the following recommendations.
- Partners' connections to government should be understood among programme management. When assessing the feasibility of government's role in each partner region, governance structures as well as differences in WWF's status in each partner region should be carefully considered. Also the role of government partners in setting the scope of the regional efforts should be monitored.
- Changes in governance structures and collaboration agreements should be considered in risk assessments. It is, however, difficult to plan collaboration free of these risks as governmental bodies are likely to remain close and important partners.

4.5. Evaluability of the programme

Evaluating programme outputs and impacts will be relatively straightforward, as indicators are in place, they mostly reflect the activities well and data for baseline and progress can be efficiently collected.

Assessment of the overall societal impacts of the programme is currently limited to the indicators listed in the results framework that mainly reflect output and outcome level achievements and biodiversity related impacts. Should the wider societal impacts of the programme be targeted with the final programme evaluation or in later programme phases, the expected consequences of outputs and outcomes generated should be identified.

The programme level outcome and impact indicators reflect the overall programme at general level but lack the capacity to demonstrate sustainability of the impacts created. Sustainability could, however, be evaluated through qualitative methods, including interviews of stakeholders. Should the overall impact of the programme be evaluated after the programme, impact indicators would be needed for each programme region as well.

Due to the multi-layered implementation structure of the programme and multiple implementing partners of programme partners, detailed value for money analysis would be resource intensive to conduct and likely deliver mixed results.

Some of the programme partners regularly conduct evaluations of their operations either independently or with support from their funding partners. Sometimes these evaluations may also cover activities conducted as part of the Finnish funded programme. On the other hand, some partners' (e.g. Bhutan) activities have never been evaluated, yet the partners would be interested to collect feedback for their operations in a form of an evaluation. One of the most common feedback from programme partners after the self-assessments of this evaluation was their interest to have the programme activities and impacts evaluated at the field level.

Recommendations:

- The evaluation needs of the programme and its partners should be assessed in order to define the scope and focus of a potential final evaluation of the current programme period.
- When developing the next programme period, it should be carefully considered what kind of impacts are targeted (e.g. societal impacts in addition to the current impact targets), and indicators relevant to all programme regions set for those.
- Promoting biodiversity and contributing to sustainable natural resources management should be maintained in the focus of the final evaluation when programme impacts are being evaluated. Community forestry (and other programme interventions) should be considered as a tool for targeting the overall objectives of the programme.
- Due to the changes in programme regions' governance structures, a detailed value for money assessment should be excluded from the final evaluation. Alternatively, the impacts of the changes in governance structures on effectiveness should be considered separately from the rest of the programme implementation in the assessment.

4.6. WWF Finland's added value to its partners

WWF Finland's contributions through the Partnership Programme are highly valued among the partners. Currently, the most significant value from the programme is considered to be the financial support for the partners' operations.

The type of technical support expected from WWF Finland varies between partners. Programme partners in Asia are often acting as a funding partner (or donor) to their own partners and are well comfortable managing their operations independently. In East Africa, the partners have more of an implementing role, and they would welcome more strategic support and direct advice from WWF Finland as part of the

programme support. Regardless of the partners' role in their own society, technical support from WWF Finland on interesting topics and more active sharing of experiences between the partners would be warmly welcomed by all programme partners.

WWF Finland's capability and interest to provide funding to test innovative approaches and new project ideas is highly appreciated. Once proven successful, other donors have invested more funds in many efforts originally financed through the programme (including the previous programme phase), thus the leveraging effect of Finnish funding has been significant.

Technical support on topics among WWF Finland's core expertise would be welcomed by the partners, e.g. on environmental education and (scientific) forest management.

WWF Finland's emphasis on HRBA is recognized and appreciated by most of the programme partners. The topic is considered important, and more practical tools for mainstreaming it would be welcomed. Partners also acknowledge that WWF Network and WWF US³ have recently launched new safeguards and guidelines that are about to be taken into use by the partners.

Support on entrepreneurship skills development and private sector partnership development is needed among all partners to improve the sustainability of community forestry and partners' operations in national contexts.

Recommendations:

- WWF Finland's added value to its partners could be increased by making its expertise in environmental education, forest management, communication and other potential topics accessible and useful to programme partners through capacity building and sharing of experiences.
- The strategic advisory role of WWF Finland to its partners could be strengthened. Closer collaboration between programme management team in Finland and coordinators in partner countries would allow better understanding of the key issues relevant to programme development at regional level (see also programme management section).
- WWF Finland's support on HRBA related issues should be streamlined with the guidelines and safeguards provided by WWF Network and other WWF partners.

³ Some programme partners, e.g. WWF Nepal and WWF Bhutan are officially programme offices under WWF US, thus guidelines are provided also by WWF US.

4.7. Programme management

Programme partners are experienced and well equipped to manage their own operations and do not require additional overseeing of their operations from Finland. The flexibility of the programme to adjust activities and outputs in line with changing needs and circumstances is well appreciated by the partners. For programme partners, the activities conducted within the programme are primarily considered as country/region specific activities, and their relation to the overall programme is not considered significant.

Personal relationships between programme coordinators in Finland and partner regions strengthen efficiency and seem to increase WWF Finland's added value to partners. The more aware the programme coordinators in Finland are of the programme implementation approaches and practices in the partner countries, the easier it is for them to identify potential areas for support, and the easier it is for the partners to raise issues that might need attention from Finland. However, multiple roles and responsibilities among the WWF Finland international team limit the resources available for active programme partnership management.

In line with the ToC, climate resilience, communication, capacity building and community-level entrepreneurship are considered as some of the key means of reaching programme goals. The visibility of these topics, however, is somewhat limited within the programme and its partners. Climate change and resilience efforts are currently being assessed among the WWF Finland programme coordination team and plans for improving the performance are already under development. Also, communication support for partners is being renewed at WWF network level, and WWF Finland is actively contributing to the process.

WWF Finland's strategic choice not to provide organizational development support for its partners is well justified, as the topic is covered by several other WWF network members. Enhancing thematic capacity building through technical advice in topics in the core of WWF Finland's expertise would, however, strengthen partners' capability to address critical conservation issues and also strengthen the added value of WWF Finland among its partners (see previous chapter on added value).

The risk management efforts vary between programme regions and partners. While it is feasible to follow the risk management procedures of each partner rather than to implement a strict risk framework for the whole programme that could bring unnecessary extra burden for partners, it is important to make sure that each partner implements a sufficient risk management system.

Recommendations:

- Understanding of the programme activities and outcomes could be strengthened among the admin team in Finland to allow strengthened support on strategic development for the partners and to

improve efficiency and effectiveness of communicating programme results. It would also contribute to strengthened risk monitoring in programme regions.

- It could be considered if the programme should have one programme manager that spends most of her/his time on programme partnerships to allow more programmatic approach and strengthened strategic support for partners.
- WWF Finland could assess its interest and capacity to provide more capacity development services for its partners. Also, opportunities for capacity development activities from programme partners to others could be considered.
- It should be considered if the programme interventions should be more linked to each other or not. Increased collaboration between programme partners would increase the relevance of the interventions being part of the common programme. It should not, however, be considered as an objective on its own but be promoted if collaboration would improve the effectiveness of the overall programme in relation to the programme objectives. Should more active collaboration be promoted, programme partners could be encouraged to exchange more experiences among themselves either independently or facilitated by WWF Finland.
- The risk management systems the partners are utilizing within the programme should be assessed by the WWF Finland administration team. Should gaps in risk management systems be identified, support for filling those should be provided either directly, or a plan for strengthening the risk management system through other means should be developed together with the partner in question.

4.8. Programme reporting

Reporting process to WWF Finland is considered straightforward especially among the long-term partners. In multi-donor (basket funded) activities, MFA reporting requirements are considered heavy compared to other donors' requirements.

The annual programme reports are produced mainly for MFA's use. Annual reporting tends to focus on activities conducted rather than outcomes reached, and the analysis of underlying reasons and expectations is limited. By highlighting the expectations and potential needs for changes in programme approach or activities in the reporting process could strengthen the partners' and WWF Finland's ability to recognize issues requiring more strategic analysis.

The format of the annual reports tends to be long in narrative and would benefit from scrutinizing the key results and findings in tables. Also, programme plans in each partner region are differently described in the

programme document and the theory of change. Streamlining them would help stakeholders and even partners to recognize what are the most relevant issues within each programme region.

Recommendations:

- Reporting capacity could be built among the coordinating team and partners' coordinators to allow more efficient reporting in the long term. A key would be to understand why and to whom reporting is done and what issues are interesting to them. Also, identifying critical issues during the reporting process would allow programme partners and coordinators to identify issues for more strategic analysis in the due course.
- Sufficient time for monitoring and reporting should be ensured in partner countries and in the home office. This would also allow more efficient collection and use of lessons learned for future planning.
- More focus could be paid on communicating the outcomes and summarizing more detailed information e.g. in tables. Summarising the underlying reasons for the selected approaches could help developing an overall picture of the programme and its achievements in annual reports and the programme document.
- In programme planning, expected changes and plans to reach those could be aligned between the programme document and theory of change.
- For improved efficiency in basket-funding interventions, reporting structures could be further developed to meet the needs of different funding partners. It could also be considered if the MFA programme coordinators in Finland could have stronger role in identifying the most feasible ways of collecting the required information from the field, together with the programme coordinator in the region.

4.9. Opportunities for future programme phases

Long-term partnerships promote sustainability as programme efforts become integral parts of partners strategies. On the other hand, the programme's ability to provide funding for innovative and new approaches has leveraged additional funding from other donors.

Establishing well-functioning and effective partnerships takes time and requires resources. Overall, the programme partners are very happy with the partnership with WWF Finland. All of them would be interested consider also to other funding sources but the MFA with WWF Finland.

While the programme targets consumption and its sustainability mainly in Finland, consumption is rapidly increasing in most of the programme partner regions. The programme also touches many regions and topics

that are relevant to the supply chains of Finnish consumer products. However, the ecological footprint issues targeted at WWF Finland are currently only partly connected to the Partnership Programme.

Recommendations:

- Long-term partnerships with well-established partners is an approach well worth maintaining. Also, WWF Finland's interest and capability to provide seed funding for innovative approaches is an approach that can be very effective. Both approaches are recommended to be continued. For seed funding, one option is to reserve a specific share of programme funds for this purpose. In this case the key objective of this type of funding would be to leverage additional funds rather than to maintain very long-term collaboration with WWF Finland. This approach may require changes in the funding rules at the MFA, thus it is not entirely in the hands of WWF Finland.
- WWF Finland could consider establishing also other programmes or interventions with their existing partners. Potential funding sources could include e.g. the EU, GEF and international challenge funds.
- Opportunities for linking ecological footprint issues to the partnership programme could be studied. Strengthening programme partners interest in and understanding of consumption related footprint issues could also be interesting, as consumption models and their development in developing countries becomes more and more critical from the perspective of resource scarcity.

Annex 1: Terms of Reference

WWF Finland

Mid-Term Review of the Partnership Programme 2018–2021

TERMS OF REFERENCE

14.5.2019

Programme Name	Partnership Programme 2018–2021
Programme Location	East Africa (Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Mozambique, Madagascar) Indonesia (Borneo), Greater Mekong (Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam) Nepal, Bhutan
Programme Reference Number	
Names of Programme Executants (WWF Office, name of project/programme manager)	WWF Finland; Anne Tarvainen, Programme Manager
Project/Programme Duration (from start year)	2018-2021
Period to Be Evaluated	Partnership Programme II- Jan 2018- Dec 2019 and Partnership Programme 2014-2017 related to programme approach development
Programme Budget Sources and Amounts (for period to be evaluated)	
Names of Implementing Partners (if relevant)	

PROJECT/PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The WWF Finland Partnership Programme 2018–2021 is a continuation of the first programme period from 2014–2017. The WWF Finland Partnership Programme 2018–2021 engages with communities, citizens, CSOs, governments and the private sector to implement sustainable natural resource management and good governance for the creation of livelihoods and equal benefits for people, including women and those who are marginalised in their own communities.

WWF Finland and its partners' strategies are aligned with the global WWF strategy. Being part of a global network enables alignment of the MFA-funded programme with larger WWF Network programmes and processes, allowing leveraging of the Finnish contribution.

WWF Finland Partnership Programme 2018–2021 continues the approach of the first programme period 2014–2017 under WWF Finland Strategy which was continuation of long-term project based cooperation with the same partners. The WWF Finland programme (2018-2021) is focused on the Himalayas (Bhutan and Nepal), the Greater Mekong area, Indonesian Borneo, and East Africa.

In all partner countries and regions, forests affect the wellbeing of local peoples significantly and climate change is causing increasing pressure on the environment and creating uncertainty. The communities living in these areas are often especially vulnerable to the threats to biodiversity, as they directly depend on natural resources in their everyday lives. By improving the wellbeing of people and increasing sustainable livelihood opportunities, the programme ensures long-term sustainability and reduce the unsustainable use of natural resources. Therefore the programme focuses on community forests and forestry.

In the Himalayas, the programme continues the work to engage with the Governments of Nepal and Bhutan in conservation and further develop and replicate sustainable natural resources management models which have proven to be successful in Nepal.

In Borneo, the programme gradually moves to a new Arabela landscape area that is facing huge pressure from deforestation. The work is done with forest companies and communities to promote sustainable forest management practices that will help to ensure that biodiversity values are maintained in production forests and surrounding natural (or protected) forests.

In East Africa, the success of bringing the countries together to sign the Zanzibar declaration to address the illegal timber trade in the region is continued by supporting the implementation of the declaration. The aim is to achieve a similar regional commitment to end poaching and the illegal wildlife trade in the coming years. The communities are engaged in managing their forest resources through community forestry, which has proven in past years to provide income and to contribute to community development.

By expanding the programme to the Greater Mekong area, the programme creates a wider coverage to work on the major global deforestation fronts. Our focus is in engaging with forest communities to play a more active role in managing and monitoring forest corridors while, at the same time, developing livelihood models and agroforestry systems.

In Finland, citizens are provided with an understanding of the global environmental threats and prevailing global inequality, as well as the global impacts of our consumption habits. If everyone would consume at the same rate as we do, we would need three planets to fulfil our needs. Therefore, the programme aims to reduce Finnish consumers' negative global impact on the environment, through ecological footprint. The most effective way identified is to change the food consumption habits: 93 per cent of biodiversity impacts of our food consumption takes place outside Finnish borders, and food consumption is also the second largest source of greenhouse gas emissions.

By providing people with livelihoods, benefits and opportunities to participate, the programme aims to contribute to the achievement of the sustainable development goals and WWF's global goals to secure biodiversity and to halt the increase of our ecological footprint. The partnership programme has been built on strong partnerships between WWF Network offices and our stakeholders, including local communities.

The current Programme Thriving Environment- Wellbeing of People Theory of Change and the Results Framework is presented in the Annex 4 Programme Document.

EVALUATION PURPOSE AND USE, OBJECTIVES, AND SCOPE

The Programme will come to its mid-term at the end of 2019. With this ToR the programme will issue a Mid-Term Review to be carried out for the project during time frame of August 2019- January 2020.

The overall objective of this mid-term review is to provide WWF Finland and its partners with an independent assessment of the **Partnership Programme's strategic scope, intervention logic and functionality. The efficiency and progress towards Programme targets as per the Programme Document and set Results Framework will be assessed in order to improve its performance and provide recommendations on future strategic alignment.**

The Evaluation will:

- Review of the programme concept and design with respect to the approach adopted by the Programme to tackle conservation challenges;
- Assess on how well and provide recommendations to improve the Programme's alignment with WWF Finland's Strategy and WWF's wider conservation programmes (WWF Practices and ACAIs) and Finnish Development policy.
- Assess is the Programme on right path to achieve its outcomes and ultimate impact statement
- Assess the evaluability of the programme impact/ results by the end of the programme
- Assess and recommend ways to improve stakeholder engagement (incl. engagement of women, girls, other vulnerable and/ or marginalised groups etc.) and partnerships (incl. public and private sector, CSOs etc.) as outlined in the Development Policy of Finland 2016 and The Guidelines of the Civil

Society in Development Policy 2017;

- Capture the lessons learnt and best practices and recommend ways to promote adaptive management of the Programme;
- Analyse and evaluate reasons for success, and shortfalls if any; and
- Recommend strategies to improve performance and programme design, reflecting the programme development from the first Partnership Programme period to partnership Programme II.

The review will be used to inform the improvement of the programme design for future (Programme Phase III) and will feed into the development of WWF Finland's Strategy for years 2021-2025.

The geographical area of the evaluation will cover whole Programme area. Due to time and resources restrictions, the evaluator is however not expected to do full-fledged verification of progress in all the programme sites in the field but to evaluate the progress based on facilitated self-evaluations to be conducted in each programme area, and using desk review and interviews of stakeholders to ensure proper analysis.

The review will be completed within time period of 08/2019-01/2020.

The commissioner of the Evaluation is Anne Tarvainen, Head of Programme and the responsible evaluation oversight is Henna Tanskanen, Development Co-operation Expert. Management response to the Evaluation results will be done by Jari Luukkonen, Conservation Director and responsibility/ oversight of the implementation of the Management Response and communication of the main results with relevant stakeholders is Anne Tarvainen, Head of Programme.

EVALUATION CRITERIA AND GUIDING QUESTIONS

Alignment with the Finland's Development Policy Program objectives

The project will be evaluated based on the Evaluation Manual published by MFA Finland <https://eoppiva.zapter.io/evaluationmanual2018> and the WWF's evaluation manual in appropriate parts (e.g. using WWF's self- evaluation tool).

The evaluation should reflect on how the programme has promoted the priority areas of the Finland's Development Policy, namely:

- I. The rights and status of women and girls have been enhanced
- II. Developing countries' own economies have generated more jobs, livelihood opportunities and well-being
- III. Societies have become more democratic and better-functioning, and
- IV. Food security and access to water and energy have improved, and natural resources are used sustainably.

In addition, the evaluation should clearly present how the cross-cutting objectives have been incorporated to the project design and implementation and how the project has promoted these objectives which are gender equality, reduction of inequality and discrimination, as well as strengthening of climate sustainability.

Evaluation Criteria and Evaluation Questions

Since the review is conducted after first 2 years of implementation of the Thriving Environment- Wellbeing of People Programme, the main evaluation criteria's to be given more focus will be on **Relevance, Effectiveness and Efficiency**. Sustainability will be viewed and incorporated to the assessment and recommendations regarding the Programme's intervention logic/ approaches. Impact will be looked mainly from the point of view whether the current Theory of change holds still true in the light of the current context

in the Programme implementation area. Adaptive capacity will be assessed to support the continuous improvement of the programme management.

The mid-term review will mainly follow the OECD/DAC criteria in the assessment, namely;

Relevance (and quality of Design)- The extent to which the aid activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor.

- Does the programme design represent a necessary, sufficient, appropriate, and well-founded approach to bring about positive changes in targeted biodiversity and/or footprint issues (e.g. species, ecosystems, ecological processes, including associated ecosystem services that support human wellbeing)?
- To what extent are the objectives of the programme still valid and the activities of the programme consistent with the overall goal and the attainment of its objectives and impact?
- Has the programme focused on and does it remain relevant to issues of highest priority related to the context, priorities of stakeholders (including women, girls, vulnerable households, marginalised groups access to natural resources and decision making), and objectives?
- Is the theory of change clear? Has the programme taken, and will it continue to take the best, most efficient strategic approach?
- Does the country intervention portfolio 'add up' to a necessary and sufficient approach to achieving programmatic success?
- Does the project/programme make a clearly aligned and meaningful contribution to attaining WWF's strategies?
- How well does the Programme adhere to the WWF's Social Policies and the MFA's policy and guidance on Human Rights Based Approach?

Efficiency- Efficiency measures the outputs -- qualitative and quantitative -- in relation to the inputs.

- Is the programme delivering value for money in that costs are reasonable given the outputs and outcomes generated?
- Was the programme or project implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternatives in the partner countries/regions (compared to the other similar organizations and their approaches and/ or known best practice in the sector)?

Effectiveness- A measure of the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives.

- To what extent have the targeted outcomes been achieved / are likely to be achieved?
- Which Programme strategies are proving to be effective, and which are not?
- What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?
- What supporting or impeding factors might affect successful implementation in the next programme period?
- What lessons can be taken and applied to improve effectiveness in the coming years?

Impact (on ultimate conservation targets⁴, plus any unintended effects)- The positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.

⁴ Conservation target includes footprint targets and ecosystem services supporting human wellbeing. Consideration of impact also needs to ensure that any unintended effects on non conservation targets are understood.

- How might the programme increase its impact (especially towards the final beneficiaries/ right holders) and what would be the associated human and financial capacity needs?

Sustainability- Measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn.

- What kind of positive features of or limitations for sustainability (social including human rights, environmental including climate sustainability, and economic) can be identified and what are the most important lessons to be learned for the future?

In addition to the OECD DAC criteria, the Evaluation will assess the Adaptive capacity according to the WWF's evaluation manual:

Adaptive Capacity; A measure of the extent to which the project or programme applies strong adaptive management practice to ensure continued relevance, strong performance, and learning.

- Does the Programme apply systematic monitoring of the programme and related risks, as well as allow and apply lessons learnt into practice?

METHODOLOGY CONSIDERATIONS

A mix of methods is expected to be used to ensure that qualitative and quantitative data and evidence is assessed and referred to by the evaluators. Validation of the results through triangulation must be done.

A careful review of existing documentation (refer to Annex 1) is of importance and should be given a due attention to in the preparatory phase.

Due to the time and resources constraints all modern interactive methods shall be taken into use to extract the information needed to complement and countercheck the evidence found in the documentation and one visit to each Programme region will be conducted.

To promote internal learning, self-evaluation will be carried out as part of the MTR process to provide further material for the evaluation and to overcome the limitation of data collection from each Programme area/country field sites. The consultant will facilitate the self-assessments (refer to Annex 3) for each Programme region/ country (East Africa Forest Programme hub in Tanzania, East Africa Wildlife Crime hub in Kenya, Mekong region in Laos, Borneo in Indonesia, Nepal in Kathmandu and Bhutan in Thimphu). WWF will arrange a joint workshop of all partner regions/countries in Tanzania (tentatively planned for 1st week of November 2019) for the consultant to facilitate workshop sessions to bring together the findings of the self-evaluations and develop plans/recommendations to improve the programme in future (draft workshop agenda attached as Annex 5, final to be developed together with the consultant).

Debriefing session/s with relevant stakeholders shall be arranged and WWF consulted on the observations and to identify the possible gaps and errors in information. Complementary interviews and e-questionnaires can be organized in the final stages of report drafting.

Possible methods that can be used for data collection and analysis are:

- Desk study covering project work plans, project reports, project documents, evaluations and reviews, Finnish Development Policy program and other materials
- Personal and group interviews with relevant stakeholders and key informants (refer to Annex 2)
- Other data/information collection tools such as surveys and questionnaires
- The methodology should ensure that the evaluation process:
 - is participatory and inclusive involving different stakeholders including the final beneficiaries

- takes into consideration gender and human rights aspects, and
- respects local traditional and cultural norms

Detailed methodology will be proposed by the evaluator conducting the evaluation. Well formulated approach and methodology combined with a realistic time schedule and evaluation matrix form is expected to be provided.

PROFILE OF EVALUATOR(S) AND WWF SUPPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

The review team should comprise of experts (1-3 members) that have demonstrated understanding of conservation and/or natural resources management interventions in development context, especially in balancing strategic objectives with operational and financial constraints in the programme areas (East Africa, Central Asia and/ or South East Asia). If the review will be conducted by team, one of the consultants should act as a team leader and WWF Finland will sign the contract with the one company or lead consultant only.

The consultant/team should have strong expertise in conducting evaluations. In addition, the consultant/team should have expertise in the following thematic concepts:

- Proven evaluation experience (preferably on MFA funded projects/ programmes) and strong facilitation skills
- Conservation/forest and/or NRM sector in development context in general
- Sustainable livelihoods and socio-economic aspects
- Human rights, gender equality and reduction of inequality
- Natural resources governance/institutional aspects
- Climate sustainability and climate adaptation

In addition:

- The review consultant/ team should have knowledge on Finnish Development Policy Programme and its objectives
- Proven ability to assess past effectiveness and provide strong strategic thinking on future direction
- Have balanced experience in sector/theme/country/regional expertise
- Demonstrated ability to generate high quality reports in English

WWF Support. WWF staff will provide necessary information/documentation to the evaluation and assist with logistical arrangements that may be needed as agreed with the consultant in negotiations.

MANDATE

The consultant/review team is entitled and expected to discuss matters relevant to this evaluation with pertinent persons and organizations. However, it is not authorized to make any commitments on the behalf of WWF Finland.

EVALUATION PROCESS, DELIVERABLES, AND TIMELINE

The evaluation should start in **August 2019** and is expected to be completed by end of January 2020.

The schedule of the review is presented below:

Kick off meeting	16.8.2019
Inception Report	16.9.2019
Joint workshop in Tanzania	4.11.- 10.11.2019
Briefing presentations on preliminary findings to relevant stakeholders	15.11.2019

Draft MTR report	6.12.2019
Final MTR report	31.1.2020

It is expected that the evaluator will

- Finalize the evaluation methodology and prepare an inception report (incl. initial findings and conclusions of desk review, elaborated methodology, table of evaluation questions as well as work/reporting plan) which will be commented by WWF before starting the evaluation activities
- Evaluate relevant sources of information through desk reviews and literature studies
- Analyze the results of the WWF Finland Partnership survey (survey conducted by WWF Finland)
- Facilitate self-assessments with WWF self-assessment tool (refer to Annex 3) and other appropriate tools/methods as appropriate in all programme areas and facilitate joint workshop on the self-assessment results
 - Self-assessment with WWF Finland and its partners
 - Consultation with local stakeholders as appropriate
- Interact/discuss with relevant stakeholders in Finland and partner countries and areas
- Prepare draft report with evaluation findings and recommendations
- Receive and incorporate feedbacks from stakeholders before finalizing reports
- Organize a feedback session for WWF Finland and relevant personnel of Partnership Programme to receive comments and test the results (skype meeting or similar)
- Prepare final report of the evaluation incl. table of evaluation results in English and submit it to WWF Finland.

The final report should be:

- maximum of 25 pages + annexes
- compact and include only relevant information
- answer to the main evaluation questions
- reflect on the cross-cutting objectives
- include findings and clear table of recommendation
- List of interviewed stakeholders

Publication of the report shall be responsibility of WWF Finland. WWF Finland will hold copy right of the report and the consultant cannot publish part or full report without prior approval from WWF Finland.

WWF Finland will select the consultant/review team based on the proposals from the interested consultants. The expression of the interest, detail workplan and the CVs of the evaluation team should be submitted to WWF Finland Anne Tarvainen (anne.tarvainen@wwf.fi) by 4 pm Friday the 31 of May 2019.

BUDGET, FUNDING, AND PAYMENT TERMS

The budget for the review is **max. 35 000 EUR**. All-inclusive lumpsum contract (incl. consulting fees, VAT, international travel and visas, local transport, accommodation and food, taxes, communications, travel insurance etc.) will be drawn with the lead consultant.

The tentative payment schedule is presented below and can be negotiated with the consultant.

Schedule of Payments to Consultant	Payment %
Submission of Inception report	25%
Submission of draft MTR report	50%
Final payment on approval of Final MTR Report	25%

ANNEX 1- List of documents to be reviewed

- Programme document
- Annual report
- MFA evaluation of the WWF Programme
- WWF Finland Strategy
- Other relevant programme level and WWF strategic documents

ANNEX 2- Key people to be consulted

- Key WWF project/programme staff
- Key external partners and stakeholders
- Key network staff identified by WWF Finland

ANNEX 3- WWF Self-Assessment Tool

ANNEX 4- Programme Document and the Results Framework

ANNEX 5- Joint Workshop Agenda (Draft)

Annex 2: WWF Finland Partnership Programme Theory of Change

Table 2.
Theory of change –
Programme level

A1 Development and economic growth in the partner countries is carried out in a sustainable manner. Governments have willingness and resources to support sustainable development

A2 Other drivers of deforestation are addressed. Good governance is applied and corruption managed. Broad-based and equitable participation of communities is maintained.



WHY

The urgency of biodiversity protection

Forests providing habitats, livelihoods and climate resilience

Finnish consumption affects global biodiversity and climate

Civil society plays an important role in conservation

Environment has a vital role in securing human rights

HOW

Climate resilience

Improved management practices and good governance in natural resource management (NRM)

Engagement of beneficiaries, including Finnish society

Environmental education

Communication

Capacity building

Community-level entrepreneurship

WHAT

Bhutan: Government, private sector and people in Bhutan engaged to implement sustainable natural resource management

Borneo: Cooperation between the government, companies and local indigenous communities and CSO's enhanced to maintain forest cover and biodiversity

EAF: Governments are committed to obeying international, regional, bilateral agreements and national laws to reduce illegal trade in timber and other forest products

EAW: Illegal Wildlife Trade is reduced in East Africa by addressing poaching, trade and demand for illegal products while improving community benefits of wildlife

Nepal: Government's and people's awareness and competence is increased to promote improved natural resource governance and climate resilience

Finland: More sustainable consumption choices made by individuals and companies

Bhutan: Community forests are sustainably managed to provide livelihoods for benefitting people

Borneo: Deforestation addressed in Muller Schwaner and Arabela (MSA) Landscapes

EAF: Forest cover has been maintained or increased through support to sustainable community forestry management

Mekong: Communities engaged and benefitting from improved forest management in corridors

Nepal: The forests in Western Terai Arc Landscape under improved management and conservation benefitting people and biodiversity.

OUTCOME

Communities, citizens, governments and companies engaged in sustainable natural resource management to address deforestation and secure equal benefits for people and sustain wildlife habitats

A2

IMPACT

Sites and species important for biodiversity are more effectively protected and restored to safeguard ecosystem services

A1

Annex 3: Self-evaluation questionnaires

3.9.2019

Instructions to Self-Assessment of WWF Finland's support to WWF's country programmes

As part of the mid-term review (MTR) of the development cooperation programme of the WWF Finland, each partner country team is requested to conduct a critical self-assessment on the programme implemented in the given region with the support by WWF Finland. The following includes a short instruction on the methodology as well as templates to conduct the self-assessment.

Background

The objective of the self-assessments is to provide the country teams a possibility to systematically review the programmes supported by WWF Finland. The self-assessments will provide the external mid-term review team with valuable inside information on the success stories and strengths as well as on the challenges and problems encountered in implementation of the activities supported by WWF Finland. The reviews by the country teams will also be used for the detailed planning of the workshops to be conducted as part of the MTR.

Self-assessment teams

The self-assessments will be conducted by the key personnel responsible for the country programmes, i.e. WWF personnel in the partner countries responsible for planning, implementation and monitoring of the programmes supported by WWF Finland. A moderator/facilitator should be selected for managing the assessment (see point 1 below).

Assessment approach

The assessment will be conducted using the attached templates. To ensure the usefulness of the exercise, open and self-critical approach should be applied whereby both successes and challenges should be identified and discussed. As all WWF Finland supported country programmes will be subject to this self-assessment, the process will provide a possibility both for identifying practical issues for improving the specific country programmes, as well as for providing important information on the experiences for entire programme-level improvements and planning of future interventions.

The self-assessment process subject to this instruction will function as a preparatory task for the workshop sessions to be conducted as part of the consultations conducted in the programme regions in October-November, and the joint workshop to be organized in Tanzania in November 2019.

Detailed instructions are given in the following.

1. Management of the self-assessment

A **moderator/facilitator** should be selected to manage the self-assessment process. The facilitator may be a person experienced in moderation, e.g. an experienced trainer from the country team. The key duties of the moderator/facilitator are the following:

- Organizing the self-assessment session for discussing the questionnaire topics, i.e. scheduling the assessment, reserving the venue and inviting the participants
- Being responsible for compiling/editing the assessment report (if not otherwise agreed upon by the self-assessment team)
- Compiling relevant documentation for the assessment event (e.g. Programme Documents, Annual Reports, etc.)

3-4 hours should be reserved for conducting the assessment. While the bulk of the reporting will be produced during the assessment workshop, the facilitator should reserve additional time for editing the report and filling the on-line template afterwards.

Before the session, each participant should have a quick review of key documentation (Programme plans and the latest Annual Report).

2. Assessment criteria and the assessment templates

The assessment will be conducted using the following assessment criteria:

- **Relevance** of the WWF Finland supported activities for the final beneficiaries (rights holders such as population living in the target areas) and immediate beneficiaries (e.g. duty bearers such as environmental authorities or other key partners). In addition, the relevance includes also relevance of the Finnish support to the overall country programme of the national WWF.
- **Efficiency** of implementation of the programmes, including cost efficiency of activities
- **Effectiveness** of the programmes, including achievement of planned **outputs** and Implementation of the **activities**; i.e. have the planned outputs been produced (or is their production on track), what has been particularly successful, any problems in output quality, possible delays, etc.?
- Emerging **impacts**; i.e. are targeted impacts starting to emerge, are any other (positive or negative) impacts emerging?
- **Sustainability** of the results; i.e. is there evidence on good sustainability, or are some sustainability risks emerging? Is there a potential for wider dissemination and replication of developed best practices?
- **Cooperation and coordination** with other stakeholders; i.e. are cooperation arrangements functioning, are there possibilities for better synergies, etc.?
- **Adaptive capacity / Management issues**; i.e. strengths and problems related to planning, monitoring, reporting, teamwork, management and coordination with key stakeholders?

Reporting on the self-assessment will be done on the online questionnaire that follows the template provided below. The template includes a breakdown by assessment criteria and guiding questions for each criterion. When conducting the assessment, key success stories and strengths (i.e. what is working particularly well) as well as problems/challenges should be written down in the respective columns. The assessment shall cover activities covered by the WWF Finland support. Please, be specific in reporting to ensure that also persons not involved in the assessment may understand the messages.

Assessment template

Basic data	
Country	
Implementing organisation(s) and partners	
Self-assessment team	
Date of the assessment	
Key objectives and targeted results of the country programme	<p>Targeted impact: Sites and species important for biodiversity are more effectively protected and restored to safeguard ecosystem services</p> <p>Outcome: Communities, citizens, governments and companies engaged in sustainable natural resource management to address deforestation and secure equal benefits for people and sustain wildlife habitats</p> <p>Key outputs related to <u>Engagement</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bhutan: Government, private sector and people in Bhutan engaged to implement sustainable natural resources management. • Borneo: Cooperation between the governments, companies and local indigenous communities and CSO's enhanced to maintain forest cover and biodiversity • East African Forest: Governments are committed to obey international, regional, bilateral agreements and national laws to reduce illegal trade in timber and other forest products • East African Wildlife: Illegal Wildlife Trade reduced in East Africa by addressing poaching, trade and demand for illegal products while improving community benefits of wildlife • Nepal: Government's and people's awareness and competence increased to promote improved natural resources governance and climate resilience • Engagement of Finnish Society: More sustainable consumption choices made by individuals and companies <p>Key outputs related to <u>Sustainable Forest Management</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bhutan: Community forests are sustainably managed to provide livelihoods for benefitting people • Borneo: Deforestation addressed by improved sustainable forest management practices which maintain livelihoods and biodiversity in Muller Schwaner and Arabela (MSA) Landscapes • East African Forest: Forest cover has been maintained or increased through support to sustainable community forestry management • Mekong Region: Communities engaged and benefitting from improved forest management in corridors • Nepal: The forests in Western Terai Arc Landscape under improved management and conservation benefitting people and biodiversity

Assessment of MFA Finland's support			
	Key achievements / Success stories / Strengths	Problems and challenges encountered or foreseen	Comments and lessons learnt

<i>To what extent the WWF Finland support is relevant to the needs and priorities of the key beneficiaries and the national WWF and WWF network?</i>			
Is the programme design and strategy relevant to the needs and priorities of the programme's final beneficiaries (rights holders) such as the population living in the target areas?	▪	▪	▪
Is the programme design and strategy relevant to the priorities of the immediate beneficiaries (duty bearers) such as environmental administrations, other CSOs etc.	▪	▪	▪
Is the WWF Finland support relevant to the priorities and strategies of the partner country WWF; what is the value-added of WWF Finland's support?	▪	▪	▪
Does WWF Finland's support make a clearly aligned and meaningful contribution to attaining WWF's global strategies?	▪	▪	▪
How are human rights considered in the programme planning and implementation? Is e.g. the Finnish Human Rights Based Approach considered in the operations?	▪	▪	▪
<i>To what extent WWF Finland support is used in an efficient way in terms of usage of resources and management procedures?</i>			
Are the implementation mechanisms cost efficient; is the programme delivering value for money, are the costs justified?	▪	▪	▪
Has the programme succeeded to mobilize also other resources?	▪	▪	▪

Is WWF Finland's support on track for achieving the targeted results (outputs)?			
To what extent have the targeted results (outputs) been achieved / are likely to be achieved?	▪	▪	▪
Is the quality and usability of the results (outputs) adequate? I.e. Are the key beneficiaries using / able to use the developed systems, materials, etc.?	▪	▪	▪
To what extent is WWF Finland's support in the process of creating targeted impacts? Are other unintentional positive or negative impacts emerging?			
Impacts on environment (protection, biodiversity, etc.)	▪	▪	▪
Institutional impacts (legislation, conservation management, etc.)	▪	▪	▪
Impacts on livelihoods	▪	▪	▪
Other impacts	▪	▪	▪
What is the sustainability of the achievements; will the responsible stakeholders be able to maintain and operate the developed systems; have any sustainability risks emerged?			
<u>Institutional</u> sustainability (post-project organisations, human resources)	▪	▪	▪
<u>Economic/financial</u> sustainability (long-term funding)	▪	▪	▪
<u>Operational and technical</u> sustainability (operation and maintenance issues)	▪	▪	▪
Potential for wider <u>replication and dissemination</u> ?	•	•	•
Do the management mechanisms applied for MFA Finland's support contribute towards efficient management, do they ensure continuous learning for improved implementation?			
Are the planning and decision-making mechanisms efficient and do they support good governance of MFA Finland's support?	▪	▪	▪
Does monitoring and reporting contribute to clear and systematic results-based management, are the mechanisms appropriate?	▪	▪	▪
Are the cooperation and coordination mechanisms	▪	▪	▪

relevant and efficient, do they contribute towards good cooperation with relevant partners?			
Is risk management systematic and does it provide tools for risk mitigation?	▪	▪	▪

Annex 4: Self-assessment workshop structure

Topic	1. Theory of change, measuring impact and reporting
Participants	

Criteria	Success and strengths	Challenges	Comments and lessons learnt
Is the theory of change clear?			
How well do the overall programme and region level outcomes reflect the objectives of your operations?			
How well do the country level indicators (outcome and output) reflect your work?			
Can indicator data be effectively collected?			

Does the reporting structure of MFA allow and promote identification of critical issues to be attended to?			
Other considerations and new opportunities			

Topic	2. Effectiveness
Participants	

Criteria	Success and strengths	Challenges	Comments and lessons learnt
Which Programme strategies are proving to be effective, and which are not?			
What are the major factors influencing the expected achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?			
Other considerations and new opportunities			

Topic	3. Social policies and human rights
Participants	

Criteria	Success and strengths	Challenges	Conclusions
How are WWF network social policies (e.g. indigenous people, gender, poverty and conservation) considered in the programme?			
Has MFA's strengthened approach on human rights affected your operations somehow, or do you expect it do so in the future?			
What kind of questions or challenges exist in aligning conservation work and human rights?			

Have the WWF social policies and MFA HRBA guidance been useful in your work?			
What kind of additional support would you like to have for these subjects?			
Other considerations and new opportunities			

Topic	4. Alignment with other operations and donors
Participants	

Criteria	Success and strengths	Challenges	Conclusions
How are the MFA programme contributions aligned with your other operations and funding received from other partners?			
How would you describe WWF Finland collaboration with other IWT Hub partners (e.g. other WWF Network members and)?			
Are there overlapping activities between activities funded by different donors? If yes, what type?			

Are there gaps that should be filled between activities funded by different donors? If yes, what type?	
How could WWF Finland support you in acquiring additional funding from other donors?	
Would you like to have more collaboration with other WWF offices participating in the MFA programme? If so, what type?	
Other considerations and new opportunities	

Topic	5. Collaboration with other CSOs and private sector
Participants	

Criteria	Success and strengths	Challenges	Conclusions
What kind of collaboration with other CSOs could be developed to better meet the programme objectives?			
Is strengthening collaboration with private sector important?			
How could collaboration with the private sector be enhanced?			
What kind of additional expertise would be required to do it?			
Other considerations and new opportunities			

6. Future (joint discussion)

- What factors may affect the implementation of the programme in the future?
- What should be done differently when planning or implementing the next programme period?

In this region?

At WWF Finland?

- What kind of additional expertise would you like to have to better respond to the conservation challenges in the future?
- Can you think of other ways how WWF Finland could provide you added value, in addition to funding?

The background features a network of dashed grey lines connecting various colorful shapes: blue circles, yellow circles, pink diamonds, light brown circles, and dark blue triangles. A large, light brown circle is positioned at the top center, and a large yellow circle is on the right side. The main title is centered within a light brown rectangular box.

WWF Finland Partnership Programme MTR

Results from the self-assessment process
Annex 5 to the Final Report

Objective of the assignment

- The overall objective: to provide WWF Finland and its partners with an independent assessment of the Partnership Programme's **strategic scope, intervention logic and functionality**. The efficiency and progress towards Programme targets as per the Programme Document and set Results Framework will be assessed in order to improve its performance and provide recommendations on future strategic alignment.

Other key issues to be focused on

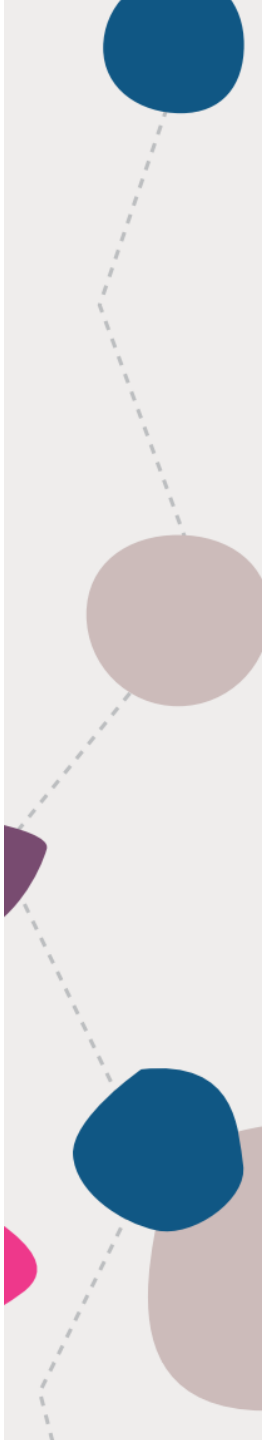
- Is the Programme on the right track, considering its objectives and targeted results?
- Are the current sectors, topics, activities and regions still valid in light of the WWF strategies?
- Contributions to the new WWF Finland strategy under development
- Role of private sector within the Programme
- Collaboration and synergies with other WWF partners providing funding for the same regions and/or fields

What is excluded from the analysis

- Assessment of the impacts aimed to be achieved at the end of the Programme period (impacts are included in the evaluability analysis)
- Analysis of budget expenditure per cost type
- Field level verification of the results
- Detailed analysis of activities related to responsible food in Finland

Observations from the self-assessment process

- The mid-term review process included several steps that required involvement of partners (incl. partnership survey committed by WWF Finland in June-August, preliminary self-assessment group work, interviews and workshops in partner countries, joint workshop in Kilwa)
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- In some countries, language barriers affected the level of information received from the partners and their stakeholders



Key Findings

Relevance 1/2

- The programme approach targets relevant biodiversity issues in its target regions.
- Programme partners and their (implementing) partners promote conservation issues relevant to the programme priorities (e.g. biodiversity protection, good governance and multiple benefits from forests).
- The programme activities are mostly well aligned with the overall goal and objective of the programme and those set for the regions.
- The programme and its activities seem to be relevant to key stakeholder priorities. Priorities of beneficiaries have not been directly assessed during this process.
- The Theory of Change is clear. The programme approach and focus on community forests and improved governance is considered efficient.

Relevance 2/2

- The programme is aligned with WWF Finland strategy, especially on conservation, preserving natural capital and equitable resource governance. Within the programme, ecological footprint issues are mainly emphasised in Finland. Efforts towards green economy could be strengthened across the programme.
- The programme makes a clear contribution to forestry and governance practices of the WWF network.
- The programme is well aligned with Finland's development policy and complements work of other Finnish funded actors
- WWF's social policies and MFA's HRBA are acknowledged and considered across the programme, yet practical tools for managing those are still developing. Among the relevant topics, gender issues are most widely taken into account.

Efficiency

- The programme delivers value for money.
- In most regions, it has also managed to leverage additional funding for wider impacts.
- Overall, the efficiency of the implementation is considered good.
- In some cases, the short-term efficiency may be affected by the multi-layered implementation structure, yet in most cases the chosen approach is well justified.
- For improved efficiency in basket-funding interventions, reporting structures could be further aligned among funding partners.

Effectiveness

- Nearly all targeted outcomes are likely to be achieved during the programme period. In some cases outcomes have been reached earlier than expected leaving room for more ambitious target setting.
- Close collaboration with governments seems to be effective in the long-run. The programme has managed to embed conservation strategies to governmental structures already in its earlier phases and the effects seem to continue during this programme period.
- Changes in government structures affect the effectiveness of the work especially in regions where governments are partially responsible for implementation.
- Rapid changes in economical conditions could affect the effectiveness of the programme in the future (e.g. rapid growth of private forestry or decline in government funding)

Impact

- The programme approaches in different regions are well justified and seem to reach the planned impact.
- The partners have developed well functioning models for community forestry and improved governance. For further impacts, funding for scaling-up would be needed. Once the intervention models are in place, effectiveness of funding can be better especially at community level where replication is required to meet the needs of additional beneficiaries.
- In addition to increasing direct funding, the MFA programme could continue seed funding for innovative ideas and further encourage other donors to join the efforts through communicating best .

Sustainability

- Long-term commitment of the donor partner has enhanced the sustainability of many activities also beyond financial sustainability, especially institutional and technical sustainability. Long-term commitment and collaboration between partners improve the efficiency and allow programme activities to become distinguished parts of partner operations and are therefore considered as of high priority.
- In several cases MFA funding has leveraged additional funding from other donors improving the sustainability of the actions started.
- In some cases, changes in government structures and objectives have decreased the sustainability of the efforts made or planned.
- At community level, sustainability may be hindered unless livelihoods from forest products are strengthened

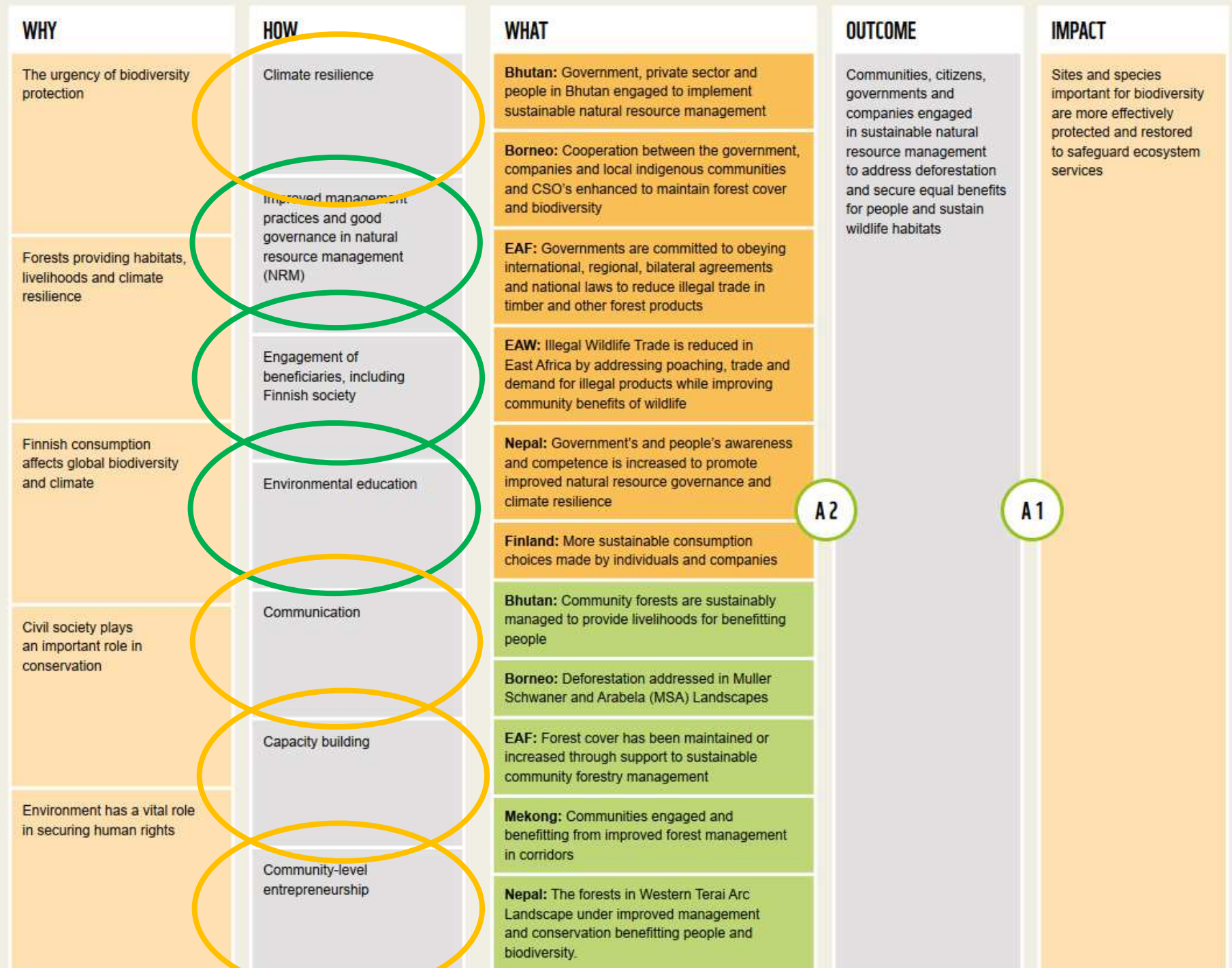
Adaptive Capacity

- The programme approach allows high adaptivity to changing conditions at partner level
- Risk monitoring practices vary among partners and their operations. Risk management could be strengthened in programme planning and monitoring.
- Lessons learned and best practices are collected and utilized to some but not maximum level across the programme and its partners

Table 2.
Theory of change –
Programme level

A1 Development and economic growth in the partner countries is carried out in a sustainable manner. Governments have willingness and resources to support sustainable development

A2 Other drivers of deforestation are addressed. Good governance is applied and corruption managed. Broad-based and equitable participation of communities is maintained.



Thematic considerations: Community forestry

- Community forestry has a substantial role in nearly all regions
- Sustainability depends on communities' ability to improve livelihoods from forests (esp. non-timber forest products)
- Partnerships with other CSOs have been fruitful
- Common development needs in the sector include value chain and entrepreneur skills development

Thematic considerations: Environmental education

- Environmental education is relevant and of interest to most programme partners
- Means for implementation vary between partners
- Sharing of lessons among partners over the programme is of interest to partners
- WWF Finland's strong expertise in environmental education was news to most partners and seem to have untapped potential. There's strong interest to make use of it among partners.

Thematic considerations: Governments' role as an (implementing) partner

- Government is considered a priority partner in many partner countries.
- Governments consider the MFA programme as highly important and effective contribution to their conservation efforts.
- In some countries, the MFA programme provides the government financing for conservation related efforts. Interviews suggest that sometimes this is the only funding available for those activities (e.g. in Nepal and Indonesia).
- Close collaboration with the government allows WWF to follow-up and contribute to government decisions relevant to conservation.
- It could also lead to a situation where the government has the main decision power on how the funds are spent.

Partners' views on WWF Finland's role

- Programme partners have established good relations to their key (implementing) partners
- WWF's role varies between donor of donors to implementing role
 - For donor-like partners (e.g. Nepal and Bhutan) little need for strategic advise
 - For partners active in implementation, WWF Finland is hoped to provide stronger support in strategic planning and decision making
- Partners in each region have a strong ownership for their activities, control from WWF Finland is considered light
- Long-term partnerships ease the administrative burden of the programme for partners as collaboration models become familiar

Opportunities for future approach

- Long-term partnerships promote sustainability as programme efforts become integral parts of partners strategies
- MFA Programme's ability to provide funding for innovative and new approaches has leveraged additional funding from other donors. Shorter-term seed funding to kick-off critical interventions could be considered alongside long-term partnerships.
- Partners would be keen to reach out also to other funding sources but the MFA with WWF Finland, e.g. EU, GEF, challenge funds

Initial opportunities for improved programme management

- WWF Finland's key thematic expertise could be made more easily available for programme partners
- Understanding of the programme activities and outcomes could be strengthened among the admin team in Finland to allow strengthened support on strategic development and communicating results
- Personal relationships between programme coordinators in Finland and partner regions strengthen efficiency and increase WWF Finland's added value to partners
- Multiple roles and responsibilities among the WWF Finland international team limit the resources available for programme partnership management. It could be considered if the programme should have one programme manager that spends most of her/his time on programme partnerships to allow more programmatic approach and strengthened strategic support for partners.

WWF Finland added value

- WWF Finland's contributions are highly valued, yet mainly considered financial
- WWF Finland has been able to provide funding to test innovative approaches and new project ideas. Once proven successful, other donors have invested more funds, thus the leveraging effect of Finnish funding has been significant.
- Technical support on topics among WWF Finland core expertise would be welcomed, e.g. on environmental education and (scientific) forest management
- HRBA is considered important among the partners and more practical tools for mainstreaming it would be welcomed. WWF Network and WWF US have recently launched new safeguards and guidelines that should be carefully considered before developing additional tools for partners' use.
- Also support on entrepreneurship skills development and private sector partnership development is required among all partners to improve the sustainability of community forestry and partners' operations at large.

Reporting structures and processes

- Reporting process to WWF Finland is considered somewhat straightforward among long-term partners
- Annual reporting tends to focus on activities conducted rather than outcomes reached
- Programme plans in each partner region are differently described in the programme document and theory of change.
- In multi-donor activities MFA reporting requirements are considered heavy.
- More focus could be paid on communicating the outcomes and summarizing more detailed information e.g. in tables. Sufficient time for reporting should be ensured in partner countries and in the home office. This would also allow more efficient use of lessons learned for future planning.
- Summarising reasons for the selected approaches could help developing an overall picture of the programme and its achievements.
- In programme planning, expected changes and plans to reach those could be aligned between the programme document and theory of change

Examples of best practices potentially worth sharing among partners

- Anti-poaching (Nepal)
- International government treaties (East African forests)
- Community based forestry practices (all)
- Private sector collaboration (Borneo)
- Land use planning (Borneo)
- Environmental education (Nepal)
- Tools for promoting legal wildlife trade (EA IWT/Traffic)

Annex 6: List of organizations consulted

Bhutan

Gross National Happiness Commission Secretariat

Helvetas

Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, Department of Forests and Parks Services

Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, Social Forest and Extension Division

Royal Society for Protection of Nature / Tarayana

WWF Bhutan

Finland

Finnfund

Finnpartnership

Helsingin Yliopisto

Individual consultant

Indufor

MFA ALI-20

MFA KEO-10

MFA KEO-20

MFA KEO-30

Siemenpuu Foundations

Suomen Punainen risti

SYKE Biodiversiteettikeskus

WWF Finland

Indonesia

Bukit Baka Bukit Raya National Park

GRID Pontianak

KPH Sintang Timur

People, Resources, Conservation Foundation (PRCF) Indonesia

PT. Dwima Grup

Sintang district development planning office

Spatial plan and land authority of Sintang district

WWF Indonesia

Kenya

TRAFFIC

UNODC

WWF Kenya

WWF East Africa Illegal Wildlife Hub

Nepal

Building and Wood Workers International - Nepal Affiliated Committee (BWI-NAC)

Embassy of Finland in Kathmandu

Family Planning Association Nepal (FPAN)

Idea Studio

Ministry of Forests and Environment, Department of Forests and Soil Conservation (DoFSC)

Ministry of Forests and Environment, Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC)

Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS)

School Environment Education Network, Nepal (SENSE Nepal)

WWF Nepal

Tanzania

East African Community (EAC)

Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism (MNRT)

Mpingo Conservation Group

PFP programme Tanzania

Southern African Development Community (SADC)

Tanzania Forest Services

WWF Tanzania

Other countries

WWF Denmark

WWF Norway

WWF Sweden

WWF UK

Annex 7: List of documents and information reviewed

MFA (2017). CSO Evaluation III Meta-analysis, MFA Evaluations 2017/5

MFA (2016). Finland's Development Policy

MFA (2016). CSO Evaluation – WWF Finland, MFA Evaluations 2016/4F

MFA (2016). CSO Evaluation I RBM Component, Working Paper

MFA (2015). Human Rights Based Approach in Finland's Development Cooperation - Guidance Note 2015

WWF Finland Partnership Programme Document 2018-2021 with annexes

WWF Finland Partnership Report 2018 with annexes

WWF Finland Strategy (updated 2017)

WWF Finland - Consolidated plans for WWF Finland Partnership Programme 2019 (budget)

WWF Finland – Partnership Programme, Work plan 2019

WWF Network Practices (WWF International website)

WWF Finland Partnership survey results 2019

WWF Finland Partnership Programme Report 2014-2016

WWF Finland Partnership Programme Report 2017

WWF Pulse of the Forest Report 2018

WWF Regional operation reports in programme regions (TPR)

The background features a network of dashed grey lines connecting various colorful geometric shapes. These shapes include circles in blue, yellow, and light pink, as well as triangles and irregular polygons in blue, pink, and purple. A large, light pink rectangular area serves as a backdrop for the main title.

WWF Finland Partnership Programme MTR

Results from the self-assessment process
Annex 5 to the Final Report

Objective of the assignment

- The overall objective: to provide WWF Finland and its partners with an independent assessment of the Partnership Programme's **strategic scope, intervention logic and functionality**. The efficiency and progress towards Programme targets as per the Programme Document and set Results Framework will be assessed in order to improve its performance and provide recommendations on future strategic alignment.

Other key issues to be focused on

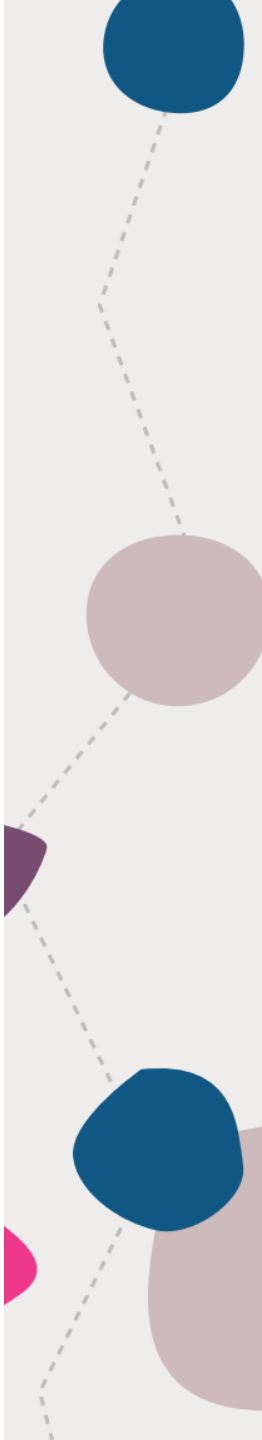
- Is the Programme on the right track, considering its objectives and targeted results?
- Are the current sectors, topics, activities and regions still valid in light of the WWF strategies?
- Contributions to the new WWF Finland strategy under development
- Role of private sector within the Programme
- Collaboration and synergies with other WWF partners providing funding for the same regions and/or fields

What is excluded from the analysis

- Assessment of the impacts aimed to be achieved at the end of the Programme period (impacts are included in the evaluability analysis)
- Analysis of budget expenditure per cost type
- Field level verification of the results
- Detailed analysis of activities related to responsible food in Finland

Observations from the self-assessment process

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Key Findings

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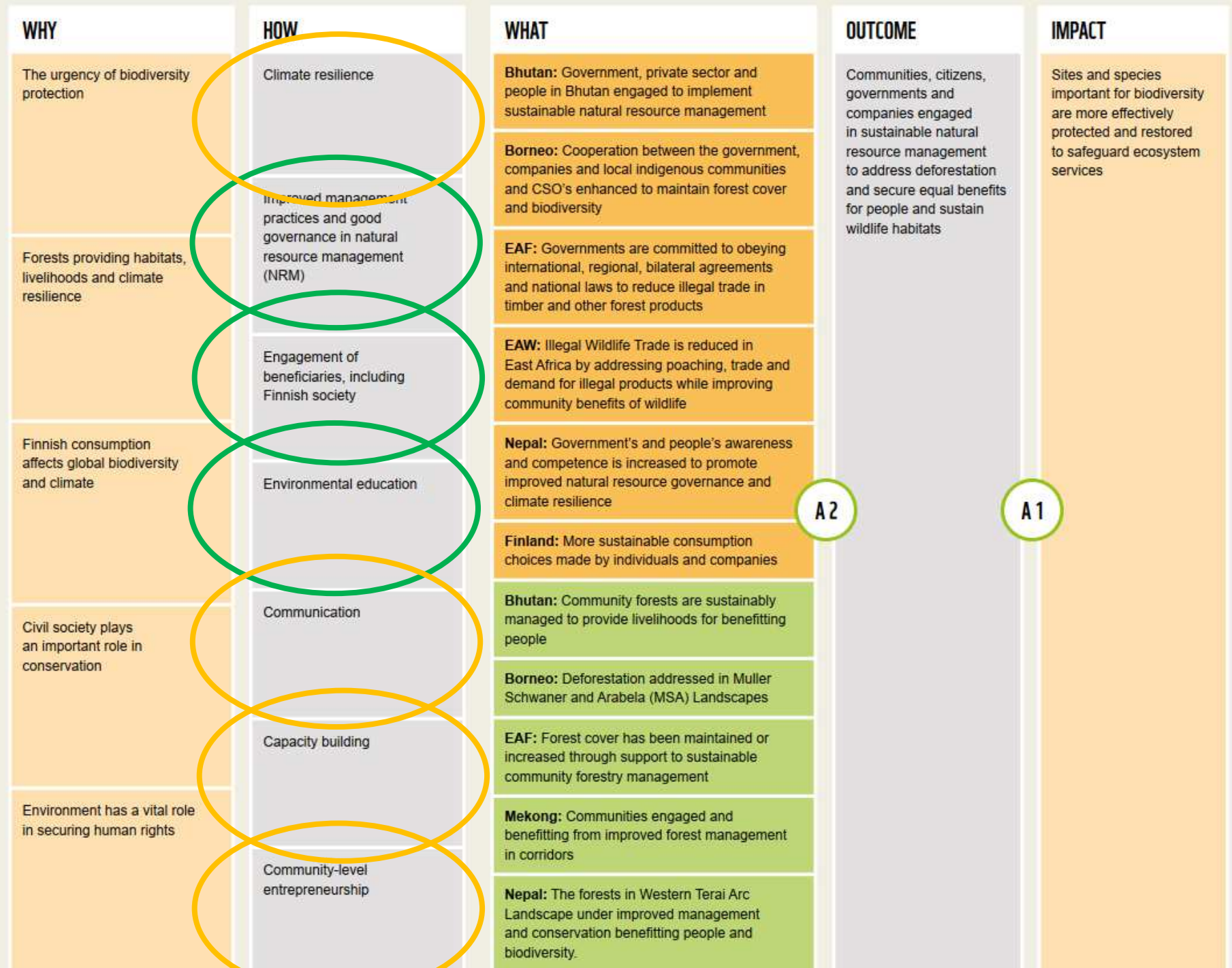
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Recommendation	WWF Finland management response	Actions agreed in WWF Finland	Responsible	Timeframe	Progress
Community Forestry Approach					
Recommendation 1: WWF Finland should identify the most feasible way of capacitating their partners in providing entrepreneur skills for communities. In some cases, it could be efficient to train the programme partner in the subject, whereas sometimes the role could be provided for their partners (e.g. other CSOs or private sector associations). Also, the support available from WWF network should be studied to ensure efficient utilization of existing resources and to identify potential development needs at network level.	We also see this need and there are initiatives in the network promoting this. We need to encourage our partners to think and analyze the situation and needs.	WWF Finland to discuss as part of the strategy and new programme 2022 onwards. Identify network initiatives supporting entrepreneurial and business development skills and link them to appropriate processes and partners as applicable.	Anne and the team - senior management of WWF Finland	Strategy - new programme	
Recommendation 2: At community level, sustainable frameworks offering business development and market access services to local forest-based businesses should be developed.	We see this need also and there is also initiatives in the network.	WWF Finland to discuss as part of the strategy and new programme 2022 onwards. Identify network initiatives supporting entrepreneurial and business development skills and link them to appropriate processes and partners as applicable.	Anne and the team - senior management of WWF Finland	Strategy - new programme	
Recommendation 3: Best practices and lessons learned could be shared and discussed between programme partners.	Strengthen WWF Finland coordinators role to create a space, where to find and encourage partners to share good examples of their work.	Identify ideas from partners which can be shared between the programme partners. Organize Zoom to discuss and share best practices, lessons learnt etc. Can be done also face to face meetings WWF Finland Partners group to Workplace (Anne)	Coordinators	One call before summer holiday 2020	
Private sector collaboration strategies					
Recommendation 4: WWF Finland should discuss and identify private sector collaboration strategy development needs among programme partners. While there might be similar needs within WWF Finland, lessons learned from the Finnish development process could potentially be made of use also for the programme partners. Peer-learning should be encouraged also among programme partners.	The Finnish experiences of company cooperation might not be feasible in the partner countries. In general role of private sector in the future see previous response.	None			
Climate resilience					
Recommendation 5: Climate resilience should be mainstreamed across the programme by assessing climate relevance of programme activities. When planning the next programme period, all main programme components should be screened through the climate lens to ensure the programme has only positive or neutral impact on climate change.	WWF Finland agrees this recommendation and urgent need to support climate adaptation and resilience in the programme implementation.	In 2020 summary of climate resilience approaches will be done which creates basis for future planning and dialogue with partners to enhance and mainstream climate adaptation to the programme. WWF Finland to discuss as part of the strategy and new programme 2022 onwards.	Henna	In 2020	
Role of government partners					
Recommendation 6: It should be ensured that partners' connections to and roles with government are understood among programme management and related benefits and risks discussed with the partners.	We agree and we need to ensure we understand the implementation structures in the partner countries.	Ensure that we have fund flow charts from all countries - discuss with partners Ensure that there is MoU/contract with all partners - discuss to see if WWF Int'l has approved or is there programme specific MoUs.	Tanja and other coordinators	In 2020	
Recommendation 7: Changes in governance structures and collaboration agreements should be considered in risk assessments to the extent possible and alternative implementation models initially planned when feasible.	WWF network will strengthen safeguards, MoUs with governments are currently signed off/ reviewed in centralised manner by WWF Int'l.	Active risk management including governance risks and see above. Programme's risk matrix reviewed.	Aleksi and other coordinators	In 2020	
Added value of WWF Finland					
Recommendation 8: Means for making use of WWF Finland's environmental education and forestry specialists and expertise within the programme should be developed to allow programme partners to share and gain lessons with Finland and other partners	To be discussed as part of new strategy and programme development. In partner countries it might be more relevant to connect youth employment not only environmental education.	WWF Finland to discuss as part of the strategy and new programme 2022 onwards	Anne	Strategy - new programme	
Recommendation 9: WWF Finland's support on HRBA related issues should be streamlined with the guidelines and safeguards provided by WWF Network and other WWF partners (work is already ongoing).	Fully agreed	Partnership programme result framework and reporting aligned with network structures. Identify how WWF Finland can support Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework roll-out and implementation.	Henna	In 2020 and new programme	
Benefits of programmatic approach					
Recommendation 10: More active collaboration among the programme partners should be encouraged by creating electronic and/or physical venues for information sharing.	See above recommendation 3				
Programme management					
Recommendation 11: Closer collaboration between programme coordinators in Finland and in partner countries should be promoted to allow strengthened support on strategic development for the partners, to identify opportunities for increasing WWF Finland's added value to its partners, to improve efficiency and effectiveness of communicating programme results and to strengthen risk monitoring in programme regions.	The role of WWF Finland and its experts will be reviewed as part of WWF Finland strategy process based on the findings of this review and feedback received from the partners. This will be then reflected to the future cooperation 2022 onwards.	The role and responsibilities of WWF Finland International Development team will be revised as part of the strategy process.	Anne and the team - senior management of WWF Finland	Strategy - new programme	
Recommendation 12: WWF Finland should assess its own priorities and capacity to provide more capacity development services (e.g. technical support or strategic advice) for its partners in order to define an adequate level of support to be provided.	See above recommendation 11				
Recommendation 13: Long-term partnerships are worth maintaining, while the scope of the partnership should be carefully assessed for each programme period and revised if needed for maximum impact.	To be discussed as part of the strategy but there is no need to change these if the primary donor conditions and rules don't influence the support.	The scope of the partnership will be reviewed in the planning process of the new programme 2022 onwards.	Anne and the team - senior management of WWF Finland	Strategy - new programme	
Recommendation 14: WWF Finland could consider developing also other programmes or interventions with their existing partners with the support from other donors.	To be discussed as part of the strategy.	Better preparation in advance for the calls is needed.	Anne and the team - senior management of WWF Finland	Strategy - new programme	

Recommendation	WWF Finland management response	Actions agreed in WWF Finland	Responsible	Timeframe	Progress
Leveraging additional funding					
Recommendation 15: The programme's ability to provide seed funding for innovative approaches should be maintained and further promoted in future programme periods as possible. One option to consider is to reserve a specific share of programme funds for this purpose with an objective to leverage additional funds for a critical conservation efforts rather than to maintain very long-term collaboration with WWF Finland. This approach may require changes in the funding rules at the MFA, thus it is not entirely in the hands of WWF Finland.	Very good and will be continued	To be discussed as part of the strategy how to maintain the role of catalyst for wider impact.	Anne and the team - senior management of WWF Finland	Strategy - new programme	
Programme evaluability					
Recommendation 16: Should wider societal impacts be included in the objectives of later programme phases, the expected social consequences of outputs and outcomes generated should be identified and indicators for those defined during programme planning. For this programme period, initial societal impacts could be identified and assessed during the final evaluation, yet their systematic measurement would due to lack of specified indicators.	To be discussed as part of new strategy and network ESSF discussion.	To be discussed as part of Results Framework revision if a social indicator will be added at impact level of the programme. Continue and improve the monitoring the assumptions of the programme.	Henna and the team - senior management of WWF Finland	Continuous	
Recommendation 17: The evaluation needs of the programme partners should be assessed in order to define the scope and focus of a potential final evaluation of the current programme period. The final evaluation, could, for example, focus on a specific topic relevant and of interest to most of the programme partners instead of a programme wide impact evaluation.	Final evaluation should be done and it will be further planned how it will be done most effective way and using partners own evaluations and supporting their evaluation needs.	Plan and discuss with partners about their evaluation plans of the landscapes, regional programmes or WWF Finland programme and design plan for final evaluation.	Henna	In 2020	
Future opportunities					
Recommendation 18: Opportunities for linking ecological footprint issues managed through other WWF Finland operations to the partnership programme could be studied.	Ecological footprint and for example sustainable diets might not be relevant at least in all partner countries where at community level the biggest challenge still is food security.	To be discussed as part of the strategy development.	Anne and the team - senior management of WWF Finland	Strategy - new programme	
Recommendation 19: Strengthening programme partners interest in and understanding of consumption related footprint issues could be considered in programme phases to come, as consumption models and their development in developing countries becomes more and more critical from the perspective of resource scarcity.	See above the recommendation 19				