

#	Evaluation Recommendation	Acceptance	Management Response	Responsible	Timeline
1	GR – Clear EbA definition (As long as the EbA approach remains unclear to the stakeholders, and also the concrete measures that can be promoted under the approach, it will not be possible to classify past and existing measures as EbA, to systematize them and to feed them into an M&E system.)	Partially	<p>The EbA concept adopted by the program follows the CBD EbA definition and the FEBA quality criteria. We acknowledge, that there is still a lack of understanding of the extent to which EbA approaches contribute to ‘effective’ adaptation at landscape and national level.</p> <p>We agree that it is key for scaling-up EbA to be more inclusive and to engage key stakeholders, who have a stake in the project, through information, communication, networking and decision-making processes. Measures to reinforce awareness raising of key actors regarding EbA were undertaken in 2023 and will be intensified over the course of 2024 and 2025, to deepen understanding on the role EbA can play in reducing climate risk and enhancing resilience. Awareness raising measures to foster communication and networking to mainstream EbA include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Implementing of awareness raising plan and provision of information material in WP III.I (2) Replication of Training- of - Trainer course on mainstreaming EbA, which was rolled out in all three countries in 2023 and will be replicated in GT and CR in Output III. (3) A blended learning course directed at representatives from the finance and insurance sector in Output IV ; (4) A public awareness campaign on improving water security through EbA for rural water committees in Costa Rica (ASADAS) in Output IV. (5) Strategic monitoring and evaluation as well as communication of EbA effectiveness and impacts at all levels (national, subnational, community) 	<p>IUCN for WP 3.1 especially in Guatemala and Costa Rica</p> <p>GIZ and CATIE in all work packages related to awareness raising of key actors, exposure visits, webinars</p>	<p>Measures to sensitize stakeholders further: Until end of project</p>
2	GR – Abandon its scientific approach: First and foremost, the project management should abandon its scientific approach and be more practice-oriented. Think more from the needs of the target groups and the local implementation organisations and how they can be supported. Shift to more pragmatic decisions that reflect actions in the landscape.	yes	<p>The consortium wants to stress the importance of using state of the art science and methods in assessments such as vulnerability studies. We agree that using science-based modeling approaches has been time-consuming, and EbA has been perceived as a theoretical approach. We fully agree on the need to shift to a more pragmatic approach to fulfill the practical approach of EbA and to better respond to the specific needs of the target groups and strengthen stakeholder engagement through participatory processes. Concrete measures include the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Use of simpler, target group differentiated language and contents. (2) Implement focus group discussions involving more the poorest and most vulnerable people. (3) Review and inform project progress, indicator achievement and make adjustment to consider the respective situation contexts and needs with key stakeholders in all implementing landscapes. (4) Focus on the implementation of activities, evaluate and be flexible to optimize implementation processes. (5) Implement additional outreach and network activities such as peer-to-peer learning, community of practices, experience exchange activities as well as a learning-by-doing approach in all relevant work packages. <p>We only partially agree with the recommendation, to “think from what the implementation organisations need”. We consider, that it is key to include implementation organisation (subgrantees) as well as other local civil society organisations in consultation, negotiation and coordination processes on how to enhance resilience at landscape level to get balanced perspectives from a variety of stakeholders.</p>	All consortia members: IUCN, CATIE and GIZ	until end of project

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3	<p>PM – Decision-making process; speed-up decision making processes: Due to the extended role clarification phase, a certain mistrust amongst the consortium partners as well as the creation of a complex steering structures, , which is based on the consensus of all consortium partners and in which all partners co-operate instead of achieving results within an output on their own, it makes no sense to restructure the complex and sometimes complicated internal project management mechanisms again in this phase. In the worst-case scenario, this could hinder the project's activities instead of promoting them. Therefore, the only advice for the ongoing project phase is to speed up decision-making processes and make quicker decisions. The local implementation partners are waiting and expect concrete and rapid support for their programs to increase resilience of vulnerable people.)</p>	Yes	<p>We acknowledge this recommendation which emphasizes the need for simplified processes and certain degree of autonomy for decision making and the assumption of full responsibility by each consortium partner in ensuring efficiency and effectiveness in reaching project outcomes. The recommendation coincides with an internal evaluation done by the project team and actions already being undertaken to enhance agile decision making.</p> <p>Actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Strengthen already established decision making spaces and formats and involve the right people. (2) Periodic evaluation of steering structure, where needed clarification and/ or modification of roles and responsibilities. (4) Implement agile and adaptive management to enhance decision-making processes. (5) Where appropriate establish “petit committees”/ rapid response teams to accelerate decision making processes. (6) Greater autonomy for decision making at country level while ensuring information and transparency. <p>As a complementary measure enhance awareness-raising, information- sharing, reporting and validation with key stakeholders (see also recommendation in GR 1)</p>	IUCN regional coordination, CATIE regional coordinator GIZ Consortia Lead All national and subnational coordinators and regional output coordinators	Immediately
4	<p>PM- To speed-up the decision-making process: Abandon the theoretical approach of doing a cost-benefit-analysis with questionable recommendations, start immediately with informing the stakeholders about the 10 EbA-measures, support the existing implementation partners in their work programmes, continue the cooperation with the new partners and concentrate on improving the needs of the beneficiaries instead of putting more efforts into (theoretical) studies.</p> <p>Another reason for abandoning the cost-benefit analysis is the conceptual weakness of the study, as it does not monetarize the positive environmental elements of the EbA approach, such as biodiversity, carbon</p>	Yes	<p>We consider that recommendation PM-4 regarding abandoning the theoretical approach is partially answered by GR-2 ("Abandon its scientific approach".</p> <p>We agree on the need to accelerate implementation of EbA measures through support by implementing partners (subgrantees) in CR and GT. The following actions will be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Enhance project staff presence at landscape scale and accelerate implementation of field activities involving key local authority officials, NGOs, community leaders, beneficiaries, smallholder farmers, extension services in Output II in CR and GT (2) Concretise the EbA practices that are appropriate for each landscape considering specific training needs. (3) In output II, disseminate information material in simple and non-technical knowledge on the EbA measures in the landscapes in GT and CR including capacity development measures for beneficiaries and local authority officials. (4) Finalize grant agreements with subgrantees (implementing partners) in Guatemala and follow-up with existing subgrantees in Costa Rica to ensure administrative and technical compliance and oversee activities to reach the project goal. 	Output II lead, IUCN	until end of project

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	capture, water retention, etc. From a scientific point of view possible outcomes and recommendations of the study are therefore highly questionable.)				
5	PM – Autonomy to country teams: From a technical and conceptual point of view, it is also essential that the country teams are given the highest possible degree of autonomy to make decisions and implement measures, as they have the necessary socio-cultural information and can draw on existing contacts.	Yes	<p>We agree with this recommendation. Autonomy for country teams is essential to create relevance, ownership, and transformational change at the national and subnational level. Only through autonomy, the program can support nationally and locally relevant and sustainable adaptation and conservation strategies, to respond to country specific needs.</p> <p>Country Teams already have autonomy from regional/consortia decision-making to respond to national/local contexts. However, autonomy only works with assuring quality of results and impact, therefore alignment among the project outputs within the country teams and the priorities of each country needs to be guaranteed.</p> <p>To further enhance a bottom-up approach and accelerate implementation at landscape level all consortia partners are committed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(1) to improve the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of the project outcomes, through adaptive management and adaptive leadership(2) to promote an environment of cooperation and trust among country teams to foster the partnership between IUCN, CATIE and GIZ.	IUCN regional coordination, CATIE regional coordinator GIZ Consortia Lead All national and subnational coordinators and regional output coordinators	until end of project

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6	PM – Monitoring & Evaluation: The M&E system should be revised in a way that in future no more severe errors in data collection occur. The M&E system of the project has shown severe deficiencies: In the annual report of the year 2022, the outcome indicator I.O.1 comprised a value of 208 ha under EbA measures in total over all countries, which was detected only in December 2024, corrected and downsized to a total of 29ha.	Yes	<p>The program has developed a result-based monitoring system to evaluate incremental progress towards indicator achievement, based on jointly agreed milestones in 2022. We agree that the result-based M & E system must be strengthened with regards to specific outcome and output indicators, such as “ha implemented with EbA measures” or “direct versus indirect beneficiaries”. Measures already implemented include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">(1) Guidance document on responsibilities, means of verification, detailed methodology for data collection for each indicator compiled in the projects M & E document. Country teams have been made aware of the sources of verification for all indicators, so that the necessary information requirements are understood and internalized by the teams.(2) Standardization of the M&E data collection with periodic (three-month basis) updates with team members and partners at country and regional level.(3) Clarification of responsibilities in data review and data quality assurance among consortia members. <p>Further measures to strengthen the M & E system are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">(1) Each consortia member ensures the proper functioning of the M & E system for the respective indicators, they are responsible for. This includes ensuring that all responsible team members understand the indicator methodology, verification and data quality assurance.(2) Particularly for the indicators regarding direct and indirect beneficiaries as well as hectares with implemented EbA measures in charge of IUCN, constant feedback is provided to maintain quality control over the information collected and reported.(3) Numeric indicators (beneficiaries, areas of land with implementation of EbA measures) will be further broken down to smaller values, to be able to monitor incremental progress periodically.	IUCN regional coordination, CATIE regional coordinator GIZ Consortia Lead All national and subnational coordinators and regional output coordinators	until end of project
7	PM – Involvement of target groups: It is essential to involve the target groups more closely in implementing specific EbA measures and to speed up with project ideas that have already started (e.g., Tree nursery project with the municipality of Pococí in Costa Rica). More financial support should be given to the beneficiaries in Output II as short-term measures in addition to the long-term financial investments in Output IV, which aim to secure longer-term funding for EbA measures.	Yes	<p>We agree and acknowledge that it is key to pursue a participative approach to foster ownership of key actors and sustainability of EbA. Promoting participation of key actors in adaptation planning and implementation is relevant to assume ownership at all levels. In addition to measures described in GR-1, GR-2, PM-4 and PM-17 the following actions will be implemented:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">(1) Further strengthening participatory processes at landscape level with key stakeholders and vulnerable groups.(2) Focus on accelerating implementation at all levels and reduce the number of consultancies studies.(3) Enhance alignment with priorities and activities of Annual Operational Plans of key institutions (environment, agriculture, forestry);(4) Empower subnational coordinators and field staff in the intervention areas in GT and CR to coordinate activities at landscape level and deliver EbA implementation that meet the target groups needs;(5) Promote synergies between local organizations for field implementation.(6) Create learning networks to exchange EbA best practices, strengthen capacities and generate new knowledge.	Output II Lead (IUCN) National and subnational coordinators in each country (WP: I.II, III.I, III.II, III.III, IV. I, IV.II)	until end of project

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8	PM – Motivating stakeholders and inclusion of existing knowledge: Learn from the country of Ecuador in terms of motivation of stakeholders and inclusion of existing knowledge, through capacity building in a wide range of measures, such as on grafting of fruit plants in Chone, trees seedlings, etc. and the further factors which have led to a wide acceptance of the team by the beneficiaries and implementing organizations.	Yes	<p>This recommendation is already being implemented. The 2024 workplan envisages experience exchanges that include best practice approaches from Ecuador. Peer-to-peer learning as well as experience exchanges have been included for the different work packages in the three countries to foment learning and knowledge management (please also refer to management response regarding recommendation PR-16).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) All consortia partners agree that key stakeholders need to be included in learning and experience exchange at network events, peer-to-peer-exchange or outreach events such as conferences. (2) Learning from what has not worked and what the challenges have been, can be far more useful for broader learning than focusing only on success. (3) To further strengthen ownership and sustainability, all consortia partners promote the presentation of project results by representatives of political partners at regional or international conferences. 	IUCN regional coordination, CATIE regional coordinator GIZ Consortia Lead All national and subnational coordinators and regional output coordinators	2024
9	PM – Expectation management has to be improved: The expectations of local implementation partners must be clarified more than before. It must be clear to local cooperation partners, such as Superintendencia General de Seguros de Costa Rica (SUGESE) in Costa Rica, what they can expect from the project and what not.	Yes	<p>We agree that expectation management is critical in a cooperation system to avoid any misunderstanding of roles and to manage stakeholders’ expectations. Several measures are in place to manage expectations. Consortium partners are very careful with regards to managing expectations, avoiding ambiguities and commitments which the program cannot fulfil or contribute to. Measures include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Clarification to governmental authorities on what a technical assistance instrument offers and how it differs from financial cooperation, to avoid expectations regarding investments funding. (2) Clarification to beneficiaries on how official development assistance works and why technical assistance projects can provide incentives, contributions and training programs, but not financial aid. (3) Project role and rules clarification of implementing partners (subgrantees) by the grantor. The grantor will inform subgrantees on project progress and priorities, provide technical orientation and supervise activities. <p>We disagree with the evaluators that false expectations were raised with SUGESE. The project team cooperates in CR with SUGESE and provides technical assistance. Supporting documentation to clarify this misunderstanding has been provided in due time to the evaluator team.</p>	Regional coordinator IUCN, Regional coordinator CATIE, GIZ consortia lead.	Ongoing until project end
10	PM – Adjustment of all indicators on outcome and output level as well as standard indicators: For the operational planning that takes place at the beginning of the new year, it should be examined whether it is already possible to question the interdependence between milestones linked to specific activities and work packages and, if necessary, dissolve them into simplified	Yes	<p>We agree that the periodic review of indicators is an essential part of monitoring and evaluation, and we are assessing all indicators with regards to necessary adjustments. Standard indicators have already been adjusted in the interim report for 2022 and are updated regularly.</p> <p>In 2022, first adjustment to simplify processes, accelerate implementation and reduce the need for extensive coordination were agreed within the consortia and included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) transfer of responsibilities and allocated funds for Output IV in Costa Rica and Ecuador from IUCN (WP IV.3 Costa Rica) and CATIE (WP IV.1 Ecuador) to GIZ. 	Regional coordinator IUCN, Regional coordinator CATIE, GIZ consortia lead.	Until June 2024

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	processes. In concrete terms, this would mean focusing less on the work packages - putting the internal discussions about "who with whom" and which resources at the back of the agenda - and instead allowing more autonomy for individual experts in the team and focusing on the degree of quantitative achievement of the activities, as is already happening in Costa Rica regarding Output IV. A revision and adjustment of the project progress as well as standard indicators to the existing conditions is unavoidable.		Despite implementation delays, we expect that most indicators will be achieved during the project duration. To enhance current implementation efforts in Output II, we propose: (2) enhance and accelerate implementation in Output II in Guatemala and Costa Rica, see also PR-4 (3) transfer of implementation responsibility from IUCN to GIZ for all indicators and work packages in Costa Rica and Guatemala related to the strengthening of M&E systems at national level (WP I.IV) and Knowledge Management (WP III.III), where little progress is visible so far and GIZ is already providing extensive support. This management response is associated with budget reallocation and a new contract amendment for the grant between IUCN and GIZ.		
11	PM – Data disaggregation: As far as the reporting on standard indicators is concerned, the project should follow the guidelines for data disaggregation. In the case of SI – 4 capacity people reporting for the year 2022 for instance, all types of actors - with its detailed subdivisions- involved should be reported against, to avoid misunderstandings and misinterpretations.	No	This recommendation refers to data from 2022 and has been addressed in 2023. The program is following IKI guidelines for data disaggregation.	Regional coordination Output III (CATIE Costa Rica) as well as country component leads for Output 3	Until end of project
12	PP – Development of concrete capacity strengthening plans: The capacity strengthening strategy describes the responsibility of the EbA LAC technical team in capacity building. For each country, key actors are identified, but what is lacking – especially in Costa Rica and Guatemala – is a clear analysis of the gaps that exist in capacity building in the organizations and clear and detailed recommendations for the training of individuals and institutions, e.g. how many experts shall be trained of which organization on which thematic topic. A capacity strengthening plan with a comprehensive 5-year plan and its corresponding budget should be developed.	Partially	The program accounts for and implements a capacity-building plan based on already identified knowledge gaps. The capacity development plans, where the target group (#) and themes/topics and capacities are included, is currently being updated. There will be specific reference to organisations, institutions and individuals. The CD plan will also be updated to include the budget for each country and course, as well as the number of people to be trained. We only partially agree with the recommendation with regards to the timeframe of 5-years, the CD plan will span 3 years and will cover the project duration time until 2026.	Regional coordination Output III (CATIE Costa Rica) as well as country component leads for Output 3	May-24

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13	<p>PP – Identification of the concrete financial products: Under output IV, the mapping of the cooperation systems as well as financing/risk transfer mechanisms and enabling conditions has been done. In Costa Rica, the analysis of financial institutions was done in a first study that came up with concrete recommendations for the financial organizations to be contacted within the consolidation as well as upscaling areas. What is still lacking is the identification of the concrete financial products in which EbA can be integrated of each of the mentioned institutions, which should be the basis for providing capacity building courses to financial institutions and insurance companies.</p>	Partially	<p>The recommendation is unclear whether it refers to work package IV.I (financial instruments) or IV.II and IV.III ((access to) financing mechanisms). The identification of concrete financial mechanism is completed.</p> <p>(1) In Ecuador, financial products are identified with Tier 1 and Tier 2 financing institutions within the popular and solidarity financial system <u>CONAFIPS</u>). At tier1, in cooperation with DGRV, technical assistance is provided in the development of two green credit products: one for the agricultural cooperative <i>Junín</i> and one for the cooperative <i>15 de abril</i>. The financing products will integrate EbA criteria and will be launched for the fourth quarter of 2024. Additionally, in partnership with <u>FINANCOOP</u>, four additional green credit products at tier 1 and four local savings and credit cooperatives (<i>Chone, Calceta, Santa Ana, Abdón Calderón</i>) will be strengthened. At second tier, CONAFIPS’ green credit line for savings and credit cooperatives will integrate EbA criteria, AFD and BID will canalize funds for EbA through CONAFIPS.</p> <p>(2) In Guatemala, the identification of specific financial products for the integration of EbA is being carried out with the financial entities selected by the Program for the implementation of the SARAS and Agroclimatic tools, which will be two bank cooperatives for each country. It is important to mention that the application of these tools will be a first step to demonstrate and promote the potential benefits of integrating the EbA approach into financial products.</p> <p>(3) In the case of Costa Rica, the financial products have been defined in 2022 (assuming the recommendations don’t refer to the financing and risk transfer instruments of IV.1). The financial products are covered in 4.2 and 4.3:</p> <p>a) the seed capital financial product that is being worked on with Activa and SBD,</p> <p>b) the water resource protection tariff and</p> <p>c) the credit program with SBD based on the portfolio of financing sources.</p> <p>Tools and instruments (IV.1) prioritized for Costa Rica include SARAS (since 2023) and Futurismo (since 2022). We do not agree with the assumption that the identification of financial products is a requirement for training insurance and financial entities. Capacity development measures that are being developed by EbA LAC for the finance and insurance sector focus on strengthening entities in understanding climate change and ecosystem-based Adaptation approach.</p>	Regional output lead IV, Output IV country leads.	December 2024

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14	<p>S – Safeguard measures mentioned in the country documents have to be reviewed:</p> <p>The safeguard measures mentioned in the country documents have to be reviewed. Classifications should be harmonized across all countries to guarantee consistency. If downgrading occurs, for instance, with PS 7 - Indigenous peoples and marginalized groups- in the 2022 annual report for Guatemala, it has to be explained. Reporting for subsequent years has to be more informative and provide concrete examples of the project's activities and impact instead of generalities. In future, PS 4 should be monitored closely and reported to regularly as the political situation is so far stable after the elections but might change any time and impact community safety.</p>	Partially	<p>We partially agree with the assessment of the evaluation, since discrepancies are related to different periods considered, the period for evaluating safeguards in the interim report (until 12.2022) was different than the period the evaluator is considering (2023).</p> <p>The project has undertaken action to strengthen the projects safeguard system. Between 11.2023 and 02.2024 a revision process of the performance standards took place for Guatemala and Costa Rica. In 02.2024 workshops were held for all consortium members as well as current local implementing partners on safeguards, gender, conflict sensitivity in adaption projects as well as on the do-no-harm approach. Safeguards measure have been revised, complemented and/ or further defined.</p> <p>Safeguards are part of the regular M & E system and are evaluated on a 3month basis.</p>	GIZ	Periodically until end of project
15	<p>G – Gender: In terms of Gender, the participation of men in project activities still prevails in the year 2022 with overall 58% in Guatemala, 59% in Costa Rica, 60% attendance in Ecuador. It is not surprising that a personal exchange that was exclusively directed to women in Guatemala with regard to governance in watersheds has the highest participation rate of women with 98%. This leads to the conclusion that women attendance of workshops can be improved if workshops are directed towards women only and if they take place in locations, where women have easily access to and in times, when they are mostly freed from other duties</p>	Partially	<p>We agree that gender-responsiveness must be enhanced in the project implementation. We emphasize that closing gender gaps means far more than “parity in participation” and includes economic participation and opportunity, education attainment, health, political empowerment. Measuring gender parity in participation has not proven to measure closing the gender gap, because if not well designed, can lead to increase in domestic violence. It is likely that workshops directed only to women will improve their participation, however imbalances in decision-making powers, education attainment, equal labor opportunities must be tackled through multiple ways. Measures to be implemented to enhance gender-responsiveness are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Promoting gender-equitable access to finance for EbA (2) Promoting gender-equitable participation and influence in adaptation decision-making processes (3) Addressing gender-specific needs and capacities, such as adjusting workshop and trainings to schedules/ locations which best fit rural women’s needs. (4) Awareness raising campaigns and training material on the crucial role rural women in Latin America play in enhancing resilience and reducing climate risks. 	Regional coordinator IUCN, Regional coordinator CATIE, GIZ consortia lead.	Until end of project

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16	RE – No regional exchange with Argentina, Colombia, and El Salvador: Due to the delays in implementing the project content in the individual countries, it is recommended that the aspect of the exchange with Colombia, Argentina and El Salvador as well as the potential exchange with regional bodies like Central American Commission for Environment and Development shall not be realized in the remaining project period and that all efforts be concentrated on implementing (partial) aspects and activities for the dissemination of EbA practices in the three project countries.	Yes	We agree with the recommendation and won't further pursue a regional exchange with Argentina, Colombia and El Salvador. However, for specific topics which are still very incipient we consider that a thematic exchange on a regional level involving "forerunner" countries contributes to innovation, enhanced ownership and a more dynamic implementation. This particularly applies to the topic of climate risk insurance which in most countries is still at a very initiatory level with little to no experience with regards to commercial products. There is substantial interest among stakeholders to identify and implement concrete steps in developing such insurance products. The GADeR-ALC Innovation Fund will co-finance this year a regional (Brasil, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Guatemala) multi-stakeholder meeting to develop a roadmap for climate insurances (commercial and parametric). Additionally, EbA LAC is liaising with the Access to Insurance Initiative and EuroClima with regards to best practices and peer-to-peer learning.	GIZ	2024 and 2025
17	CP – Allocate funding: Irrespective of the pending cost-benefit analysis of the identified EbA measures that have been started or are pending, it is urgently recommended that the consortium partners allocate funding for technical assistance to keep up stakeholder's motivation. It is important that the project offers concrete support to the stakeholders with measures that bring them revenue and other benefits. To finance these activities, funds from the grants from IUCN and CATIE (budget item 4.4) could be taken. GIZ could also check whether budget items 3.1 and 6.4 still contain funds for specific target group measures. Think of the cash outflow at all times. Only one organization has so far spent the cash outflow that was planned.	Partially	We agree that accelerating implementation is urgently needed to deliver results at the local landscape level and all consortia partners should provide technical assistance to stakeholders. Allocation of incentive funding for EbA measures falls under Output II responsibility, nevertheless EbA measures will also be funded through Output IV (financing). There is currently over 500 k EUR allocated for incentives to vulnerable people to implement EbA measures in all three countries in the IUCN grant. We only partially agree with these recommendations, because the funds will be drawn, rather than 3.1 and 6.4. Please, also see response for recommendation PM-4 and PM- 7 on direct financial support for beneficiaries.	IUCN	Immediately