



Terms of Reference

End of Project Evaluation

Enhancing Sustainable Fisheries Management for Sharks and Finfish through Collaborative Community-Based Data Collection

1. Introduction

The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) Belize, with financial support from the Belize Fund for a Sustainable Future, implemented the project “Enhancing Sustainable Fisheries Management for Sharks and Finfish through Collaborative Community-Based Data Collection.” Length-at-maturity values used in fisheries assessments have often been derived from populations outside Belize, despite known geographic variability in these life-history parameters.

The project was designed to generate locally relevant size and age-at-maturity information for approximately 10 commercially important finfish species and five shark species. It combines scientific data collection and analysis with direct participation by fisherfolk, improved community landing reporting, capacity building, and public communication. The resulting evidence is intended to strengthen length-based assessments, improve fisheries management guidance, support sustainable yields and livelihoods, and help Belize meet reporting obligations under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

Implementation was led by WCS Belize in collaboration with Fishers4Science and the Belize Fisheries Department. The overall goal of the project was to improve the assessment of key finfish and shark species in Belize through strong fisher participation and engagement. To achieve this goal, the project had three main objectives. The first was to ensure that length-based assessments of finfish and sharks in Belize were based on locally collected life-history information and accurate landings data. The second was to build the capacity of fisherfolk and ensure their active participation in scientific research, data collection at landing sites, and fisheries assessments. The third was to increase awareness among fisherfolk and the general public about the importance of accurate fisher-reported landings data and the benefits of sustainably managed fisheries.

2. Purpose of the Evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation is to provide an independent, evidence-based assessment of the project’s performance and results over its full implementation period. The evaluation will assess the project’s relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact or emerging impact, and sustainability; determine the extent to which intended outputs and outcomes were achieved; examine project management, financial management, safeguards, gender responsiveness,



stakeholder participation, and monitoring and evaluation; and identify practical lessons and recommendations for WCS, the Belize Fund, government partners, collaborators, and future fisheries initiatives.

The evaluation shall be guided by the “[GEF Guidelines for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of Full-Size Projects-2023](#),” including the applicable rating criteria, while adapting the approach proportionately to the size, context, and design of this Belize Fund supported project. The evaluation should provide an overall project performance score and clearly explain the evidence supporting each rating.

3. Objectives of the Evaluation

The specific objectives of the evaluation are to:

- Assess the extent to which the project’s goal, objectives, outputs, indicators, and intended outcomes were achieved, including successes, shortfalls, delays, unintended results, and factors affecting performance.
- Examine the relevance and technical soundness of the project design, including its problem analysis, theory of change or results logic, targets, implementation arrangements, and responsiveness to Belize’s sustainable fisheries priorities.
- Assess the quality, representativeness, management, analysis, and intended use of data and samples collected for finfish and sharks, including their contribution to improved length-based assessments and landings reporting.
- Evaluate the effectiveness and quality of fisher participation, training, employment opportunities, knowledge exchange, and communication and awareness activities.
- Assess the efficiency of implementation, project governance, partnerships, procurement, budget use, co-financing, reallocation or reprogramming decisions, and financial management.
- Assess compliance with environmental and social safeguards and the degree to which gender equality and inclusion commitments were implemented and documented.
- Evaluate the likelihood that project benefits, data systems, technical capacity, partnerships, assessments, and management applications will continue after project closure.
- Document lessons learned and provide prioritized, actionable recommendations for sustaining results and designing or implementing future fisheries research and management initiatives.

4. Scope of the Evaluation

The evaluation will cover the entire project implementation period, from 1 March 2024 to 30 September 2026, including any approved extensions, reallocations, reprogramming, and close-out activities. It will examine the implementation and performance of all three project objectives,



their related outputs and activities, and the extent to which the project's intended results and targets were achieved.

Geographically, the evaluation will cover the relevant finfish and shark landing sites, community finfish landing sites, and stakeholder locations along Belize's marine coastal environment. The evaluator will select a representative sample of sites for field verification, considering accessibility, species coverage, project activities, and stakeholder participation.

The evaluation will include consultations with participating fisherfolk, data collectors, boat captains, fishing communities, women involved in the fisheries value chain in particular processors at community landing sites, WCS Belize, Fishers4Science, the Belize Fisheries Department, the Belize Fund, and other relevant technical and government stakeholders.

The evaluation will assess the project's design, implementation, management, monitoring, outputs, outcomes, and emerging impacts. This will include reviewing the collection and management of biological data and samples, the development of locally relevant size- and age-at-maturity information, updated length-based assessments, finfish and shark landings reporting, fisherfolk training and employment, stakeholder participation, communication and public-awareness activities, partnerships, environmental and social safeguards, gender inclusion, sustainability, and the potential for replication.

5. Proposed Methodology

To make effective use of existing information and avoid duplication, the evaluation will draw on multiple sources of evidence. These will include a comprehensive desk review and analysis of relevant project documents, reports, monitoring data, financial information, statistics, and related studies. Primary data will also be collected from key stakeholders through interviews, discussions, consultations, and observations during field visits. Where information is available, the evaluator should present demographic and participation data disaggregated by sex and other relevant characteristics.

The evaluation methodology will include the following components:

- i. Desk review and analysis of relevant documentation, including project reports, environmental and social safeguard documents, monitoring information, financial reports, and related correspondence.
 - a. Review the number and nature of funding reallocations, activity reprogramming, and the completion status of approved activities, including activities that were completed late, partially completed, or not achieved.
 - b. Review the use of approved funds, budget variances, overspending or underspending, and the adequacy of supporting documentation.
- ii. Critical analysis of available data and reports to verify reported outputs, outcomes, indicators, and project results.



- iii. Consultations and site visits, including interviews with project leads, participants, the Belize Fund, and other relevant stakeholders, as well as field visits to verify project outputs and outcomes.
- iv. Assessment of project performance, including relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, cost-effectiveness, project management, financial management, safeguards, gender inclusion, and sustainability.
- v. Assessment of the level of project success and documentation of lessons learned.
- vi. Development of practical recommendations to improve the implementation of similar projects and inform future activities that build on the project's results.

The evaluator must apply the relevant GEF terminal-evaluation rating criteria to assess overall project performance and calculate an end-of-project performance score expressed as a percentage.

6. Deliverables and Timeline

The evaluation must be completed within six weeks of signing the consultancy agreement. Applicants should propose a realistic schedule based on their methodology and availability. An accelerated schedule may be proposed; however, the assignment must not exceed six weeks. The final workplan and submission dates will be agreed upon with WCS Belize and the Belize Fund during the inception phase.

Deliverable 1: Inception Report and Evaluation Matrix

Indicative due date: Within the first three working days

The inception report will provide detailed evaluation methodology, evaluation matrix, sampling strategy, data-collection methods and tools, proposed stakeholder consultations, ethical procedures, workplan, report outline, anticipated limitations, and quality-assurance approach. Data collection should begin only after the inception report has been reviewed and approved.

Deliverable 2: Completion of Data Collection and Emerging Findings Brief

Indicative due date: By the end of Week 2

The evaluator will complete the document review, interviews, stakeholder consultations, and agreed field visits. The evaluator will then provide a brief presentation or written update outlining the emerging findings, information gaps, challenges encountered, and any additional follow-up required.

Deliverable 3: Draft Evaluation Report

Indicative due date: By the end of Week 4



The draft report will include an executive summary, project background, evaluation methodology and limitations, findings organized according to the evaluation criteria, assessment of project indicators and financial performance, project performance ratings, conclusions, lessons learned, and recommendations. The draft will be submitted to WCS Belize and the Belize Fund for review and comments.

Deliverable 4: Presentation and Validation of Findings

Indicative due date: By the end of Week 5

The evaluator will present the main findings, conclusions, lessons learned, and recommendations to WCS Belize, the Belize Fund, and other invited stakeholders. The evaluator will document the comments received and indicate how they will be addressed in the final report.

Deliverable 5: Final Evaluation Report and Supporting Documents

Indicative due date: No later than the end of Week 6

The final evaluation report will incorporate relevant comments and factual corrections received during the review and validation process. The evaluator must submit the final report in editable Word and PDF formats, together with the final presentation, evaluation tools, response-to-comments matrix, and any anonymized supporting datasets or analytical files produced during the assignment.

The assignment will be considered complete once the final deliverables have been reviewed and approved by WCS Belize and the Belize Fund.

7. Budget

Applicants shall submit a detailed financial proposal in Belize dollars (BZD), inclusive of professional fees, taxes, travel, accommodation, subsistence, communications, data collection, report production, and all other reimbursable or incidental costs required to complete the assignment. Costs should be itemized by deliverable or activity, with assumptions clearly stated.

Payments will be made upon the satisfactory completion and approval of the agreed deliverables, in accordance with the following indicative payment schedule.

Milestone	Indicative payment
Approval of inception report	25%
Acceptance of draft evaluation report and delivery of validation session	35%
Approval of final evaluation report and all supporting files	40%

8. Qualifications of the Evaluator(s)

Applicants should demonstrate the appropriate combination of education, professional experience, technical knowledge, and evaluation skills required to complete the assignment successfully.

- A minimum of a bachelor's degree in monitoring and evaluation, marine or fisheries science, natural resource management, environmental management, development studies, social sciences, project management, business administration, or another relevant field.
- At least three years of relevant professional experience in project evaluation, applied research, monitoring and evaluation, results-based management, conservation, sustainable fisheries, marine resource management, or community-based natural resource management.
- Demonstrated ability to design and implement evaluation frameworks, methodologies, and tools for project assessments.
- Skills and Competencies: Strong analytical and critical thinking skills, with the ability to interpret complex data and generate actionable insights. Proficiency in both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods. Excellent written and verbal communication skills for preparing and presenting evaluation reports, findings, and recommendations. Ability to work collaboratively with project stakeholders, including project teams, beneficiaries, and partners.
- Knowledge of project-evaluation theories, models, and good practices, including the Logical Framework Approach (LFA), Theory of Change, and Results-Based Management (RBM). Familiarity with current trends and innovations in project evaluation and monitoring.
- The applicant must provide professional references and examples of previous evaluation reports or comparable assignments that demonstrate their experience and approach to project evaluation.



9. Annexes

ANNEX A – APPROVED PROPOSAL

ANNEX B – APPROVED PROJECT BUDGET

ANNEX C – NARRATIVE PROGRESS REPORT

ANNEX D – FINANCIAL PROGRESS REPORT

ANNEX E – MONITORING AND EVALUATION TRACKING TOOL

ANNEX F – FORMAL CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE FUNDER AND GRANTEE

ANNEX G – BELIZE FUND PROCUREMENT GUIDELINES