

Management Response to Terminal Evaluation of GEF project

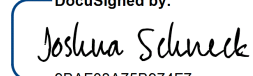
Knowledge 4 Nature: Provisioning the Biodiversity Data Behind Global Goals for Nature (K4N)

Evaluand identification data		
Evaluand title:	Knowledge 4 Nature: Provisioning the Biodiversity Data Behind Global Goals for Nature (K4N)	
Date started:	April 3, 2023	
Date closed:	December 31, 2025	
Evaluand manager:	Programme/office:	
Joshua Schneck	Multilateral Finance Unit	

Management Response Summary Data	
Evaluation or review title as it appears on final report: Cynosure FINAL REPORT Independent Final Evaluation of “Knowledge 4 Nature: Provisioning the Biodiversity Data Behind Global Goals for Nature (K4N)” Date received: April 2, 2026	Unit/person responsible for managing/tracking follow-up: Joshua Schneck, Multilateral Finance Unit
Date Management Response approved: June 17, 2026 Last progress update:	All units/positions requested to take action: IUCN Biodiversity Assessment and Knowledge Team (BAKT) IUCN Science Team IUCN Business and Nature Team IUCN Economy and Finance Team IUCN Multilateral Finance Unit
Expected duration required to fully implement the MR: Updated annually in 2027 and 2028	

Narrative response:

IUCN welcomes this independent evaluation of the "Knowledge 4 Nature: Provisioning the Biodiversity Data Behind Global Goals for Nature (K4N)" GEF project (GEFID 10897) including the overall findings of Highly Satisfactory Relevance and Satisfactory Effectiveness, Coherence, Efficiency, and Project Implementation and Execution. IUCN recognizes the good effort and care that went into producing this evaluation and appreciates the recommendations including those that seek to inform and strengthen the design of subsequent GEF projects and programs.

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Recommendation No. 1	
Recommendation Category	Project Design
Evaluation Recommendations	Continue Expanding and Refining the Marine Layer: Develop a roadmap that broadens the scope of the marine layer by including a wider range of marine species, improving the precision of data related to marine habitat and threat assessment, and integrating the marine layer more effectively into global conservation frameworks. In addition, learnings and outcomes from this project should be used to inform ongoing and future initiatives on inclusion of additional species in the STAR metric, such as trees.
IUCN Management Response	Accepted. This is an excellent recommendation. Expanding taxonomic coverage to the marine environment is a primary concern in order to prevent conservation planning and investments getting locked in based on only terrestrial data. IUCN is already working on this and expects a new unified layer with updated and higher resolution marine STAR to be released within the coming months. In addition, learnings from the Knowledge for Nature project are being implemented in follow up STAR pilots in Taiwan and Mauritania that are allowing the testing and implementation of the marine layer. These new calibrations are crucial for expanding on the use of the K4N nature outputs, in particular their deployment through the Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool, the portal through which the private sector accesses STAR, the Red List, KBAs, and other essential biodiversity data.
Key actions in response	• Submit unified manuscript incorporating marine layer and updated terrestrial star layer within the first half of 2026. • Work with IBAT team of developers to have unified STAR layer incorporated
Intended Result	Unified STAR layer is published and available in IBAT. The simplest indicator is whether it will be live in IBAT. However, an interesting complementary indicator will be private sector usage statistics.
Responsible unit	Science and BAKT.
Timeframe	End of 2026
Status (for tracking)	<i>Partially achieved</i>
Comment (for tracking)	

Recommendation No. 2	
Recommendation Category	Project Design
Evaluation Recommendations	Strengthen Institutionalization of SIS Connect Beyond Technical Deployment: Future phases should promote stronger governmental and institutional partnerships to expand uptake of SIS Connect across additional countries and embed its use within national biodiversity reporting and planning systems. Formal collaboration with environment ministries, national Red List Authorities, and regional bodies will be essential to ensure sustained national integration rather than isolated technical adoption.
IUCN Management Response	Accepted. IUCN is developing a new version of the Species Information Service (version 3). This new version will include all the features of the current SIS Connect directly within SIS. The purpose of SIS was to import data from national Red List processes/systems into SIS and for countries that use SIS for their national process to export data out i.e. essentially a data transfer system with various checks in place to check that what is being imported is consistent with the IUCN Red List rules, data integrity and structure. That functionality will be in the new SIS. SIS Connect was never designed to support national biodiversity reporting and planning systems. A workshop with national Red List representatives is being held from 16-18 June 2026 to discuss the functionality that countries need in SIS to help them with their national Red List processes. The outcomes of that workshop will inform and may change some of the planned implementation of the SIS Connect functionality in the new SIS. Other new bits of work will be rolled into a 2nd phase of development.
Key actions in response	SIS National Red List Workshop held in June, functionality for SIS Connect operations developed in the new SIS
Intended Result	Enhanced SIS Connect functionality available for use in the new version of SIS and there is greater uptake in the use of SIS by national Red List processes
Responsible unit	Conservation Informatics Team, Systems Manager and SIS Development Team
Timeframe	By early 2027
Status (for tracking)	<i>Partially achieved</i>
Comment (for tracking)	

Recommendation No. 3	
Recommendation Category	Project Design
Evaluation Recommendations	Accelerate Technological Integration by Defining Tech Roadmaps Early: Future projects should define technology roadmaps at the design stage, with clear timelines for tool development, testing, and deployment. This roadmap should be treated as a high-level deliverable and aligned with both the technical and scientific outputs from the beginning. Early and ongoing pilot testing will allow for adjustments before full-scale implementation.
IUCN Management Response	Accepted. This project featured a number of significant developments for IUCN Red List derivatives (products). Given the relatively short overall-project duration, insufficient time was available to produce road-maps and pilot-testing.
Key actions in response	The Red List Management Committee, in its March 2026 meeting, agreed to establish Red List Product Road Maps for each of the major Red List derivatives (including RLI, AoH, SIS). The roadmaps will include timelines for development of new features and renewal, or expansion, of the data sets.
Intended Result	Red List Products will have a road map that describes its objective, audience, dependencies, technologies and road map of development.
Responsible unit	Red List Management Committee
Timeframe	Road Maps to be completed by October 2026 and updated as needed.
Status (for tracking)	<i>Partially achieved</i>
Comment (for tracking)	

Recommendation No. 4	
Recommendation Category	Project Design
Evaluation Recommendations	Build on Existing Technology and Partnerships: IUCN should continue to leverage the momentum gained from the development of new technologies and partnerships, such as the UoC collaboration and the inclusion of new species in the STAR metric. By integrating these advancements,

	IUCN can further enhance the accuracy, scalability, and applicability of biodiversity metrics. IUCN can expand collaboration with academic institutions and technical partners to refine and implement new technologies.
IUCN Management Response	Accepted The K4N project has contributed to significant advances in biodiversity metrics, data infrastructure, and partnerships, particularly around STAR and Red List derived products. These advances are already being extended and consolidated through subsequent and ongoing initiatives, notably the COLOURS programme and the Biodiversity Hotspots updated project, which explicitly build on K4N developed methods, datasets, and institutional partnerships. IUCN will continue to integrate and mature these tools and collaborations through these follow-on projects, ensuring continuity, scientific robustness, and efficient use of resources.
Key actions in response	• Integrate K4N methodologies and data products into the ongoing implementation of the COLOURS programme, including guidance development, pilot applications, and training materials. • Build on K4N outputs within the Biodiversity Hotspots updated project by incorporating expanded species coverage, strengthened STAR metric, and updated Red List inputs into hotspot and megadiversity analyses. • Continue collaboration with academic institutions and technical partners already engaged through COLOURS and Biodiversity Hotspots activities.
Intended Result	K4N-developed metrics, datasets, and partnerships are consolidated and scaled through COLOURS and the Biodiversity Hotspots updated project, enhancing the accuracy, applicability, and uptake of biodiversity metrics while remaining aligned with existing institutional mechanisms and funded workstreams. K4N outputs, including STAR and related metrics, are applied through COLOURS guidance, pilots, and training products and incorporated into Biodiversity Hotspots analyses and publications, with continued engagement of the academic and technical partners originally involved in K4N through these follow-on initiatives.
Responsible unit	Science BAKT
Timeframe	2026-2027
Status (for tracking)	<i>Partially achieved</i>
Comment (for tracking)	This recommendation is being addressed through integration into existing and funded follow-on initiatives rather than through standalone K4N activities.

Recommendation No. 5	
Recommendation Category	Private Sector Engagement and Financial Mobilization
Evaluation Recommendations	Strengthen GEF uptake and institutionalization of Red List-derived metrics: GEF should build on the advances achieved under K4N by formally integrating automated RLI and STAR outputs into project screening, spatial prioritization, and portfolio-level monitoring under GEF-8 and beyond. Embedding these science-based metrics within GEF's operational architecture would enhance decision quality, strengthen results reporting, and create sustained demand for up-to-date biodiversity data infrastructure.
IUCN Management Response	Accepted IUCN welcomes this recommendation on enhancing GEF results measurement and reporting through adoption and use of science-based, best-in-class metrics developed with GEF support, including IUCN RLI and STAR. IUCN RLI and STAR are integrated within IUCN's portfolio of GEF-8 supported projects and programs, offering tangible evidence and approaches for strengthening monitoring and reporting of GEF projects and programs for the wider GEF partnership.
Key actions in response	Develop communication product(s) documenting IUCN experiences using IUCN RLI and STAR in GEF projects and program and disseminate widely among GEF partnership
Intended Result	Support strengthening of monitoring and reporting of GEF project and programs
Responsible unit	IUCN MFU
Timeframe	GEF-8 implementation and beyond.
Status (for tracking)	<i>Not started</i>
Comment (for tracking)	

Recommendation No. 6	
Recommendation Category	Private Sector Engagement and Financial Mobilization
Evaluation Recommendations	Diversified Funding Portfolio: The project benefited from GEF funding, but to ensure long-term sustainability, future projects must diversify their funding sources and engage with new models, such as corporate funding and philanthropic contributions. In this regard, IUCN should also continue efforts, together with Red List Partners and strategic stakeholders, to advance the NDPF from concept to implementation through a clear roadmap with defined governance, revenue targets, and pilot financing

	streams (e.g., data services, analytics, blended finance instruments). Revenues should be transparently reinvested into core Red List updating cycles to secure long-term financial sustainability beyond time-bound project funding.
IUCN Management Response	Partially accepted. K4N has made a substantive contribution by strengthening the scientific robustness, technical maturity, and usability of biodiversity metrics, which are being actively taken forward through IUCN’s engagement with the TNFD and through IBAT, where these metrics are made available to private sector users. These pathways represent realistic and already operational mechanisms through which finance sector uptake of K4N outputs can continue to grow. In parallel, the IUCN Red List Partnership continues to play a central role in resource mobilization to support the maintenance and updating of the Red List and its derived metrics.
Key actions in response	• Continue contributing K4N developed metrics and datasets to IUCN’s engagement with TNFD, supporting increased use of Red List derived indicators by financial institutions for risk assessment, disclosure, and decision making. • Maintain and enhance the availability of K4N outputs (STAR) through IBAT, where they are offered to private sector users as part of integrated biodiversity risk and impact assessment services. • Coordinate with the IUCN Red List Partnership to ensure that K4N-strengthened metrics are aligned with broader partnership efforts to sustain Red List data generation and updating.
Intended Result	K4N developed biodiversity metrics are increasingly accessed and applied by the finance and private sectors through established platforms and initiatives, notably TNFD engagement and IBAT, supporting sustained demand for up-to-date Red List derived data while remaining aligned with existing institutional roles and delivery mechanisms.
Responsible unit	Science Team BAKT Business and Nature Team IBAT Partners Red List Partners
Timeframe	2026-2027
Status (for tracking)	<i>Partially achieved</i>
Comment (for tracking)	This recommendation is being addressed through existing TNFD, IBAT and Red List Partnership engagement pathways

Recommendation No. 7	
Recommendation Category	Capacity Building and Advocacy
Evaluation Recommendations	Launch Targeted Capacity-Building Programs in Megadiverse Countries: Local capacity constraints were a barrier to the full utilization of K4N’s tools, especially in countries with limited expertise or infrastructure for biodiversity data management. To overcome these challenges, there is a need to launch tailored, in-country capacity-building programs that focus on biodiversity data collection, analysis, and application. These could include a combination of online courses, workshops, and internships designed to upskill local stakeholders in using biodiversity metrics like RLI and STAR. Additionally, practical training can be provided on integrating biodiversity data into national policy frameworks.
IUCN Management Response	Partially accepted The project demonstrated the value of technical engagement and knowledge exchange through existing IUCN networks. Within realistic post-project parameters, K4N follow-up efforts can leverage IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) experts and other Commission members to support targeted, demand-driven technical exchanges, learning events, and guidance related to Red List derived metrics (RLI, STAR), particularly when linked to ongoing assessments, partner initiatives, or future projects with dedicated resources.
Key actions in response	- Facilitate targeted technical exchanges, webinars, or learning sessions on K4N-related tools and metrics, drawing on IUCN SSC experts and other Commission members, where demand and resources allow. - Share K4N guidance and tools through existing IUCN and SSC networks to support uptake by national practitioners and institutions engaged in species assessments and biodiversity planning.
Intended Result	K4N tools and methodologies are disseminated through established IUCN and SSC channels, increasing national and regional practitioners’ exposure to RLI, STAR, and related approaches through expert-led technical exchanges, in line with existing institutional mechanisms and available resources, as evidenced by SSC-supported learning events and the use or citation of K4N materials in Commission-led training and outreach activities.
Responsible unit	Science BAKT IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC), in coordination with relevant Commissions
Timeframe	Activities through 2026–2027, subject to resources and demand
Status (for tracking)	<i>Partially achieved</i>

Comment (for tracking)	Implementation depends on alignment with existing SSC and Commission workplans and the availability of resources
Recommendation No. 8	
Recommendation Category	Gender and Social Inclusion
Evaluation Recommendations	Establish Gender-Targeted Capacity-Building in Technical Leadership: A dedicated program can be developed that targets women for capacity-building in technical roles related to biodiversity data systems, species assessments, and metrics development.
IUCN Management Response	Partially accepted. IUCN recognizes the importance of gender equality and inclusive participation in technical biodiversity initiatives. Within the limits of K4N's objectives and resources, the project contributed indirectly by applying inclusive participation principles in relevant capacity-building and knowledge-sharing activities, and by aligning with IUCN-wide gender and social inclusion policies and initiatives where feasible.
Key actions in response	• Document and share K4N outputs such as tools, guidance and publications in formats that are accessible to a diverse technical audience, including women working in biodiversity data and RL assessments. • Refer opportunities for gender-targeted leadership or technical capacity-building to relevant IUCN corporate programmes or future projects where gender equality is an explicit objective and adequately resourced.
Intended Result	Gender considerations are reflected in K4N-related follow-up activities through inclusive participation practices and clear linkage to broader IUCN gender and inclusion initiatives.
Responsible unit	Science, BAKT
Timeframe	2026-2027
Status (for tracking)	<i>Not started</i>
Comment (for tracking)	Implementation is contingent on the existence of K4N-related follow-up activities and on coordination with broader, institutionally funded gender equality initiatives within IUCN.