

# Brief Summary



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## SOS Lemurs Initiative 2017-2022 Final Evaluation

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**IUCN Save Our Species  
Brief summary**

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**SOS Species** : Established in 2010, IUCN Save Our Species is a joint initiative of IUCN, the World Bank and the Global Environment Facility. It aims to halt the extinction of threatened species and their habitats by funding on-the-ground conservation programs.

**Lemurs of Madagascar, a strategy for their conservation 2013-2016** (Lemur Site based Action Plan) written and published by the IUCN Save Our Species Commission's Primate Specialist Group. In 2015, following a \$8 million (81 600 000 CHF) grant from a Swiss donor, IUCN Save Our Species launched a program exclusively dedicated to the preservation of Madagascar's lemurs. This initiative was looking specifically for field results, with low requirements in terms of financial and administrative procedures.

The **Terms of References (ToR)** of this final evaluation are based on OECD standard criteria: relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

**As a conclusion, SOS Lemurs is a very successful project, most welcomed by grantees. Procedures were quite simple and it was the main funding sources for field conservation and research activities. It has been accessible to many NGOs including small entities from civil society.**

	IUCN		PROJECTS	
<b>Relevance</b>	Alignment with national priorities			
<b>Coherence</b>	Internal coherence		Appropriation by local authorities	
	External coherence			
<b>Effectiveness</b>	Results (activities)		Species & Habitat	
			Objectives (by project)	
			Consolidated (all projects)	
<b>Efficiency</b>	Economic		Economic	
	Timeliness		Matching funds	
	Operational		Timeliness	
<b>Impacts &amp; Sustainability</b>	-		Impact	
			Sustainability	

Nevertheless, it did not reach its full potential of results and impact, due to a lack of anticipation at the beginning of the program as regards

- the lack of initial logical framework with consequences on monitoring (baseline & indicators)
- the monitoring capacity on technical achievements and financial matters as SOS team was understaffed
- The absence of capitalization on results

## Relevance

Globally, SOS Lemurs program is **relevant and aligned** with national priorities. SOS Lemurs program relies on the IUCN lemurs action plan which is deeply aligned with Malagasy NBSAP. SOS Lemurs program objectives are matching 8 out of the 20 objectives

## Coherence

**Internal coherence** is very good. Regarding global IUCN strategy, it is deeply aligned with IUCN framework on the "Restore" and "Resource" categories. Regarding lemurs, It is also deeply aligned with Lemurs site based action plan (2013-2016). However, the latter is outdated. Some new species are still being discovered and new locations at stake are identified.

**External coherence** has not been a priority so far. There was not any specific coordination / harmonization with other initiatives such as FAPBM or CEPF. However, their scopes are complementary, with for instance, SOS Lemurs being the sole actor committed on research and site-based activities whereas FAPBM is mostly funding long-term staff (salaries).

At projects' level, SOS Lemurs is relevant, with a particularly great ownership of project by local actors, and a general satisfaction from beneficiaries and grantees staff.

## Effectiveness

Four activities were to be implemented with fairly satisfying results:

- **Grants from Calls for Proposals** (medium grants): 49 small grants have been awarded to 27 national and international NGOs through 3 calls for proposal.
- **ValBio Infrastructure Project** (one specific pre-determined research organisation): the project has been implemented as requested
- **Lemur Conservation Action Fund** (very small grants for scientists): 50 small grants (under 5 K CHF) have been awarded.
- **Lemur Red List Assessment Workshop** (in order to update Lemurs red list assessment): The red list has been updated.

At projects' level, SOS Lemurs is fairly effective with :

- More than 64% of threatened species targeted by at least one project.
- Two-third of the priority sites (as defined in the Lemurs of Madagascar, a strategy for their conservation 2013-2016) covered by at least one project.

Regardless of any robust quantitative assessment of the results; 71,6% of objectives/activities set by grantee have been achieved (on the basis of project closed only). However, consolidating results from all the 49 projects remain very difficult due to some weakness in their elaboration:

- A baseline was not always present
- Indicators for a same criterion might vary from one project to another

- Indicators were heterogeneous and not always complying with SMART principles

### Efficiency

- **Economic / Financial:** Disbursement (to May 2022) exceeds 92%, reaching 98,7% for Valbio. The only activities with a lower rates are overheads (83,5%) and IUCN staff activities under component 2 (2.Projects funding) with 73,2 %. The latter has not any impact on projects results and reflects lower expenses. For instance, a “capitalization” workshop was to be organized. At projects’ level, disbursement rate reached 91,5% in May 2022. Some projects are yet to be completed (mainly from 2020 CFP). HR and administrative costs are globally satisfactory. Although a quarter of the projects have human resources exceeding 40% of their budget. Overhead costs never exceeded 10% as requested.
- **Timeliness:** No delay at IUCN’s level. At projects’ level, efficiency is satisfactory with quite a few no-cost extensions to be underlined. For instance, 3 medium grantees (among the 49) had more than 6 months delay. Most of delays were due to Covid-19 impact, and IUCN well-managed this crisis situation by keeping sending funds during this period and accepting no-cost extensions. Lemurs Action Funds benefited from 3 no-costs extensions, without strong reporting requirement in report, which can question transparency and equity between grantees.
- **Operational:** Overhead costs are low. Human resources budget is moderately comparable to equivalent initiatives. The team dedicated to the program is limited and overworked. FTE figures are quite low compared to equivalent initiatives.
- **Matching funds regarding medium grants (Activity A2):** More than 3,600 K CHF have been spent as matching fund so far, which represents more than 67% of current expenditure on SOS Lemurs medium grants. A third of the projects funded didn’t comply with matching funds criteria. 16% of which have very few or not any cofunding, mostly due to Covid pandemic.

### Impact & sustainability

At projects’ level, we cannot assess the impact and sustainability, as the project were carried out on a short period of time. However, from what was recorded on the field, SOS Lemurs could generate a strong impact both on the short and middle term. Some projects that have been funded deserved to be highlighted as examples of sustainability and impact:

- **FANAMBY and L’Homme & l’Environnement:** private partnership and development of local associations has to be supported, improved and scaled up with safeguards on side effects (e.g. maize in MENABE / benefit redistribution)
- **Madagasikara Voakajy:** working with youth ambassadors and training of trainers
- **AVG** on law Enforcement, giving legal support to local NGOs facing illegal activities

## **RECOMANDATIONS**

### Priority 1:

- Update the Lemurs of Madagascar Conservation Strategy
- Strengthen the SOS Lemurs team
- Organize a three-day workshop at the end of this current SOS Lemurs initiative
- Design and use a monitoring and evaluation tool at IUCN level to follow-up results (already planned – on going).

### Priority 2:

- Write a logical framework at IUCN's level
- Better coordinate with similar donors, eg. FAPBM & CEPF
- Reinforce TAG procedures to guarantee transparency
- Publish a unique Call for Proposal to deliver one unique set of grants
- Sustainability has to be a key selection criterion
- Deliver a quick formation on IUCN procedures to new grantees. Include if necessary a capacity building activity as a prerequisite for low capacity grantees

### Priority 3:

- Review the technical report structure imposed to grantees