



# EVALUATION SUMMARY

COUNTRY: MOZAMBIQUE



## Conservation of Biodiversity and Community Development in the Chimanimani Conservation Area

**Evaluators: Biotope & Justice Biodiversity Development**  
**Evaluation date: November, 14, 2025**

## KEY DATA ON FFEM SUPPORT

**Amount of FFEM funding: €1,200,000**

**Project grant date: January, 2020**

**Duration : 5 years**

**Project name: BioPaisagem - Chimanimani**

**Project number: CMZ1157**

### Context

The BioPaisagem project (2020–2025) operates in the Chimanimani Conservation Area, a transboundary mountain ecosystem between Mozambique and Zimbabwe, recognised for high endemism and strong cultural value. The landscape faces growing pressures from shifting cultivation, uncontrolled fires, artisanal gold mining, poaching, human–wildlife conflict and post-cyclone recovery needs. Conceived within Mozambique's national strategy to strengthen natural and cultural heritage conservation while improving local livelihoods, the project combines biodiversity conservation with community development. It promotes improved protected-area management, recognition of community land rights, biodiversity-based value chains and sustainable conservation financing, positioning Chimanimani as a pilot socio-ecological laboratory within a broader landscape supported by international partners.

### Participants and operating procedures

The project is financed by AFD, FFEM and Fauna & Flora, with parallel support from the World Bank. The Government of Mozambique is the beneficiary, with BIOFUND as fiduciary manager and MICAIA Foundation as implementing partner, working with park authorities, institutions and community

associations through coordinated conservation and livelihood components.

## OBJECTIVES

The goal is to achieve a sustainable balance in the Chimanimani landscape (Chimanimani National Park and its buffer zone) between conserving biodiversity and cultural heritage and enhancing socio-economic well-being of local communities.

### Specific objectives:

The programme aims to: (1) conduct biodiversity inventories and monitoring, protect cultural heritage, and develop an ANAC-led (National Administration of Protected Areas) knowledge management system; (2) secure community land rights, implement participatory land use plans, and fund conservation areas; (3) professionalize honey and pilot forest product value chains; (4) Testing sustainable financing through PES (Payments for Ecosystem Services) mechanisms for water and biodiversity.

## TESTED INNOVATION

The project experimented with large-scale participatory mapping (CaVaTeCo), hybrid restoration and biodiversity offset models, a private–non-profit value chain mechanism (UFUMI), and digital monitoring tools such as EarthRanger. These innovations represent clear additionality and generate replicable prototypes for Mozambique and, with adaptation, other conservation landscapes.



# EVALUATION RESULTS

## Relevance

The project is strongly aligned with Mozambique's national conservation agenda and the management framework of Chimanimani National Park, as well as with the strategic priorities of AFD and the FFEM. Its focus on buffer-zone communities addresses structural drivers of degradation, including insecure land tenure and limited livelihood options. By combining land rights formalisation, biodiversity-based value chains and innovative conservation finance, the project responds both to ecological fragility and to socio-economic vulnerability in a high-value transboundary landscape.

## Coherence

Internal linkages between land rights, value chains and conservation finance are conceptually strong, though operational articulation remains partial. External complementarities with national programmes and partners are evident, particularly in the broader Chimanimani landscape, yet coordination mechanisms were not consistently sustained. Stronger donor alignment and structured partner induction would enhance synergies, reduce transaction costs and reinforce overall strategic coherence.

## Effectiveness

Most planned outputs have been delivered or are near completion, notably in participatory land mapping, operational park support and honey/ NTFP (Non-Timber Forest Products) value chains. Results benefited from adaptive management, embedded local implementation and strong community ownership. Delays related to audit transitions and the longer maturation time required for systemic innovations (e.g., knowledge systems and payment for

ecosystem services mechanisms) moderated full achievement of higher-level outcomes.

## Efficiency

Overall resource use is satisfactory, with strong output density relative to budget. Decentralised management proved agile, though audit transitions temporarily slowed implementation.

## Impact

Tangible impacts are visible at community and landscape levels, including income diversification, improved fire management practices and strengthened social organisation. However, systemic and policy-level effects, such as biodiversity offset integration, payment for ecosystem services and national knowledge systems, remain emergent and were constrained by external pressures including mining expansion, social unrest and post-pandemic tourism decline.

## Viability/sustainability

Sustainability prospects are mixed. Technical and socio-cultural foundations are solid: community land rights enjoy strong legitimacy, honey value chains are operationally robust, and restoration models are validated. However, institutional and financial durability remain fragile. Monitoring and research systems within ANAC are under-resourced, NTFP chains depend on continued support from Eco-MICAIA, and long-term financing for community structures and fire management is uncertain. Gender gains are promising but require sustained capacity-building to ensure lasting qualitative empowerment.

# LESSONS LEARNED & RECOMMENDATIONS

The BioPaisagem project demonstrates that strategic planning, adaptive management, and strong institutional anchoring are essential for sustainable conservation outcomes. Early operationalization of monitoring and evaluation, governance clarity, and community empowerment are critical for maintaining impact amid political and institutional changes. **Key recommendations are:**

- Implement a structured exit plan covering responsibilities, funding gaps, and risk management for land tenure, livelihoods, restoration, and human-wildlife conflicts (HWS).
- Standardize communication, branding, and digital archiving for transparency.
- Consolidate MICAIA governance, land tenure, and institutional memory.
- Operationalize ANAC's knowledge system and strengthen donor/partner coordination.
- Enhance HWC management, livelihoods, and value chains with appropriate technology and training.
- Develop sustainable finance and nature-based solutions pipelines, including PES and private-sector partnerships.

## ADDED VALUE OF THE FFEM

The financial support from FFEM provided decisive catalytic additionality. It enabled rapid post-Idai rehabilitation of park infrastructure, financed under-served innovations (CaVaTeCo, restoration/offset pilots, value chains), and tested hybrid governance models. This helped quickly bridge emergency recovery and long-term system building, generating replicable prototypes and market credibility.

The project re-established Chimanimani National Park's operational capacity, secured over 5000 land parcels, strengthened 20 community associations, and professionalised the honey/NTFP value chains.

Find details of the project sheet by scanning the QR Code

