Midterm Review Report

November 2016

Version: v1

Strengthening Multi-sectoral Management of Critical Landscapes

UNDP PIMS ID: 4536
GEF Project ID: 4550

Country:	Samoa
Region:	Asia and the Pacific
Focal Area:	Land Degradation (GEF-5)
GEF Agency:	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
Executing Agencies:	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSD)
Project Timeframe:	October 2013 – October 2018 (planned)

Prepared by:
James Lenoci
Contract No. IC_2016_11

Midterm Review Opening Page:

PROJECT DETAILS:

Project Name:	Strengthening Multi-sectoral Management of Critical Landscapes
Project ID:	GEF Project ID: 4550 UNDP PIMS ID: 4536
Country:	Samoa
Region:	Asia and the Pacific
Focal Area:	Land Degradation (GEF-5)
Strategic Programs:	**Objective LD-3: Integrated Landscapes:** Reduce pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in the wider landscape **Outcome 3.1:** Enhanced cross-sector enabling environment for integrated landscape management; **Indicator 3.1** *Policies support integration of agriculture, rangeland, forest, and other land uses* **Outcome 3.2:** Integrated landscape management practices adopted by local communities; **Indicator 3.2** *Application of integrated natural resource management (INRM) practices in wider landscapes*
Funding Source:	GEF Trust Fund
Implementing Agency:	United Nations Development Programme
Implementation Modality:	National Implementation Modality (NIM)
Executing Agencies:	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSD)

FINANCIALS:

Project Preparation Grant:	USD 136,364
GEF Project Grant:	USD 4,736,363
Cofinancing Total:	USD 24,217,000
GEF Agency Fees:	USD 473,636
Total Cost:	USD 28,953,363

PROJECT TIMELINE:

Received by GEF:	27 May 2011
Preparation Grant Approved:	06 September 2011
Concept Approved:	01 November 2011
Project Approved for Implementation:	03 July 2013
State Date:	31 October 2018
Closing Date (Planned):	October 2018

MIDTERM REVIEW DETAILS:

Midterm Review Timeframe:	September-November 2016
MTR Reporting Language:	English

Evaluator:

James Lenoci

The evaluator would like acknowledge the information and feedback provided by interviewed project stakeholders, including the national project director, representatives of MNRE, MAF, MWCSD, and other project partners. Special thanks is also extended to the UNDP CO staff, including the Deputy Resident Representative, the UNDP-GEF regional technical advisor, the project manager, other members of the PMU, the consultants and other service providers working on the project, and the residents of the communities visited during the field mission.

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Executive Summary

Exhibit 1: Project Information Table			
Project Title:	Strengthening Multi-sectoral Management of Critical Landscapes		
UNDP Project ID (PIMS #):	4536	**PIF Approval Date:**	01 Nov 2011
GEF Project ID (PMIS #):	4550	**CEO Endorsement Date:**	03 Jul 2013
Award ID:	73781	**Project Document (ProDoc) Signature Date (project start):**	31 Oct 2013
Country(ies):	Samoa	**Date project manager hired:**	Nov 2014
Region:	Asia and the Pacific	**Inception Workshop date:**	Mar 2015
Focal Area:	Land Degradation	**Midterm Review date:**	Sep-Nov 2016
GEF-5 Strategic Programs:	LD-3, Outcome 3.1 LD-3, Outcome 3.2	**Planned closing date:**	Oct 2018
Trust Fund:	GEF TF	**If revised, proposed closing date:**	N/A
Executing Agencies:	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE)		
Other execution partners:	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSD)		
Project Financing:	**at CEO endorsement (USD)**	**at Midterm Review (USD)***	
[1] GEF financing:	4,736,363	1,103,003	
[2] UNDP contribution:	617,000	500,000	
[3] Government:	23,600,000	96,663	
[4] Other partners:	0	0	
[5] Total cofinancing [2 + 3+ 4]:	24,217,000	596,663	
PROJECT TOTAL COSTS [1 + 5]	**28,953,363**	**1,699,666**	

*Actual expenditures and cofinancing contributions through 30 June 2016

Project Description

The primary objective of this project is "*to strengthen local capacities, incentives and actions for integrated landscape management in order to reduce land degradation and greenhouse gas emissions and promote nature conservation whilst enhancing sustainable local livelihoods*". The project was designed to achieve this objective through the following two outcomes:

Outcome 1: Communities and farmers are able to undertake and benefit from integrated land and water management on their traditionally owned lands (composed of different ecosystems and agriculture, fisheries and livestock production systems); and

Outcome 2: Strengthened national enabling environment to promote integrated landscape management through local households and communities.

The expected results of the project include:

- Critical landscapes of over 160,000 ha under integrated SLM management by local communities, where indices of ecosystem health, diversity and condition remain the same as baseline or improve and is mainstreamed into local development plans (forest and tree cover; maintenance of wetlands);
- No net increase of agricultural land under mono cropping);
- Area under vegetative cover increased 24,430 (with average tree density of 111 trees/ ha);
- 128,000 ha of forest cover under effective management, including no net loss due to land use conversion.

- At least 5000 households' incomes increase by 10% on average by project end through increased land productivity; and
- Avoided emission of 689,333 CO_2-eq for 4 years and sequestration of stored additionally 10,755 tCO_2-eq.

Purpose and Methodology

The objective of the MTR was to gain an independent analysis of the progress mid-way through the projects. The MTR focused on identifying potential project design problems, assessing progress towards the achievement of the project objective, and identifying and documenting lessons learned about project design, implementation and management. Findings of this review will be incorporated as recommendations for enhanced implementation during the final half of the project's term. The project performance was measured based on the indicators of the project's strategic results framework and relevant GEF tracking tools. The MTR was an evidence-based assessment and relied on feedback from persons who have been involved in the design, implementation, and supervision of the project, and also review of available documents and findings obtained during the field mission.

Evaluation Ratings

Evaluation ratings are summarized below in **Exhibit 2**.

Exhibit 2: MTR Ratings and Achievement Summary Table

Measure	MTR Rating	Achievement Description
Project Strategy	Not Rated	The project was designed under Objective 3 (LD-3) of the GEF-5 Land Degradation Strategy, consistent with Outcome 3.1, "*Enhanced cross-sector enabling environment for integrated landscape management*", and Outcome 3.2, "*Integrated landscape management practices adopted by local communities*". The project design is also closely aligned to the Samoa Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) for 2012-2016, particularly with respect to Priority Area IV, The Environment, Key Outcome 13: Environmental Sustainability. The expected results of the project under Outcome 1, associated with reforestation, restoration of degraded lands, adoption of sustainable agriculture practices resulting in increases in household income of individual farmers, improvements to water quality as a result of improved livestock management, among others are far-reaching and the achievability of many of them are questionable. And, the partnership arrangements required to achieve such ambitious results were insufficiently articulated at the design phase.
Progress towards Results	Objective Achievement: **Moderately Unsatisfactory**	With only 2 years remaining of project implementation, it is highly unlikely that the envisaged results, particularly under Outcome 1, will be achieved. The targets for reforestation and degraded land restoration, for example, are inconsistent with sector plans of the Forestry and Water Resources Division. Achieving no net loss in forest cover due to land use conversion requires a nation-wide, cross-sectoral monitoring and evaluation coordination arrangement – which is not in place by midterm. Facilitating increased household income of at least 5,000 farmer households is also unlikely, as there has been limited progress by midterm and an unclear pathway for reaching such a large number of households. As there has been negligible progress by midterm with respect to increasing area of vegetative cover, there is similarly no change from the baseline in terms of CO_2 equivalent greenhouse gas emissions avoided.
	Outcome 1 Achievement: **Moderately Unsatisfactory**	Considering that the recently issued agricultural sector plan includes establishment of an organic farming section, it is likely the number of certified organic farmers will continue to increase in the coming years. The strategy by the Government and also on the SMSMCL project with respect to organic farming is more focused on supply than on the market side. The strategy on how to achieve the envisaged increased forest cover has not been worked out, and there are no monitoring protocols in place for measuring and evaluating progress. Certain clarification of the production landscape is required under Outcome 1; e.g., there are no particular land use restrictions applied to key biodiversity areas (KBAs) as compared to areas outside KBAs. There have only been consultations made with a few communities, far short of the target 126 villages. By midterm, one sustainable development village plan is in draft form, for the Uafato village. A total of 14 individual farm plans have been submitted by local farmers; this represents less than 1% of the 5,000 end target.

Exhibit 2: MTR Ratings and Achievement Summary Table		
Measure	**MTR Rating**	**Achievement Description**
		Achieving verifiable water quality improvements over a 5-year project timeframe is quite ambitious, considering that the areas where the enhanced livestock management measures will be implemented are not yet determined. Also, detailed baseline hydrological surveys, land use assessments, and socioeconomic assessments (e.g., possible impacts from residential septic systems) need to be carried out to support a determination of water quality improvements. In order to achieve sustainable livestock relocation, a comprehensive livestock management approach needs to be taken. Achieving increased knowledge on sustainable land management issues by the end of the project is likely, based on the plans for developing an information system, and producing various audio-visual and printed knowledge products.
	Outcome 2 Achievement: **Satisfactory**	The project has made good progress in developing a soil conservation manual, with a draft version under review at midterm. Once the manual is finalized in English, and abbreviated version is planned to be made in Samoan language. There has also been satisfactory progress with respect to policy support. Technical advisory service to the Land Resources Division in development of the Land Survey and Environment Bill, which is expected to be passed in 2017. The recently issued agriculture sector plan includes reference to sustainable agriculture objectives. In fact, there are also opportunities to mainstream sustainable forestry objectives in the forestry sector plan, which is currently under review. Inter-sectoral coordination continues to improve in the country, e.g., facilitated through the National Environmental Sector Committee. There has also been an increase in recent years in the number of civil society organizations involved in promoting SLM related issues. There was less information available regarding the private sector. A separate UNDP-GEF project is supporting the Government of Samoa on the obligations among the Rio Conventions is funding the development of a Data Knowledge Information Facility (DKIF). The SMSMCL project is well positioned to complement the DKIF with an enabling information management system focused on sustainable land management. With respect to institutional capacity building, the envisaged training course has not yet been developed at the University of the South Pacific. The University is, however, developing an undergraduate course on sustainable land management, and the National University of Samoa is developing a diploma course on sustainable agriculture.
Project Implementation and Adaptive Management	**Moderately Satisfactory**	The delays in starting up the project have significantly affected project outcomes and sustainability. Generally there has been an inadequate focus on results; progress reported in the 2016 PIR, for instance, does not reflect the challenges the project is facing in meeting the end targets. Requisite monitoring and evaluation systems and resources are not yet in place. Baseline conditions have mostly not yet been validated; monitoring protocols have not yet been developed, and the resources required to support the high monitoring and evaluation demands are under-estimated. Procurement of goods and local services has been mostly arranged through the public procurement process, and the majority of consultancies have been procured through the UNDP system. There has been a learning curve among the project team, with respect to the public procurement policies and procedures, resulting in some delays, further diminishing the efficiency of the project. While stakeholder engagement has been generally good during the first half of the project, developing and operationalizing partnerships, which is a critical aspect of this project, has been insufficient. And, there have been missed opportunities for collaborating with the project's primary cofinancing partner - the World Bank funded Samoa Agriculture Competitiveness Enhancement Project (SACEP).
Sustainability	**Moderately Unlikely**	Recent developments and existing social arrangements in Samoa enhance the likelihood that benefits realized on this project will be sustained after GEF funding ceases. For example, sustainable land management is integrated into certain sector plans, and new Land Survey and Environment Bill is expected to be passed in 2017. Certain enabling structures at the community level are in place, e.g., farmer groups and women's committees. Substantive project resources are allocated for capacity building, which also increases the likelihood for sustaining project results. There are other factors, however, that diminish the likelihood for sustaining results achieved on the project. Firstly, the project resources are spread too thin to achieve substantive results; for example, realizing improved land productivity of at least 5,000 individual farms,

Exhibit 2: MTR Ratings and Achievement Summary Table		
Measure	**MTR Rating**	**Achievement Description**
		relocating 15,000 head of livestock, and improving water quality at 50% of the project sites. The targeted results on this project for reforestation, restoration of degraded lands, and adoption of water and soil conservation on agricultural land significantly exceed, by one or two orders of magnitude, the efforts of the national partners, including assistance from the donor community, over the past 10 years or so. It is, therefore, unlikely that sufficient resources will be available to support maintenance and scaling up of project results following closure of this GEF project Time is also limited to affect behavioral changes, e.g., in terms of farming practices. The customary land tenure system in Samoa also pose challenges, as sustainable land management often requires collaborative agreements on a landscape scale. The fact that partnership arrangements have mostly not yet been operationalized on the project further reduces the likelihood that results will be sustained. Achieving a sustainable multi-sectoral approach to managing crucial landscapes in the country depend on such partnership arrangements.

Project Progress Summary

Progress towards results has been limited by midterm, partly due to the significant delays in starting up the project; recruitment of the project manager was finalized in November 2014, more than a year after the project document was approved by the Government of Samoa on 31 October 2013. Two of the three team leaders, covering agriculture and communications, were hired in autumn 2015, and the third team leader, responsible for the sustainable forestry components of the project, joined the team in September 2016. At the time of the midterm mission in October-November 2016, the envisaged 10 field assistants had not yet been hired. The project inception workshop was held in March 2015, and this was followed by a comprehensive review of current circumstances, lessons learned on other projects and initiatives, and preparation of an inception report in October 2015.

Under Outcome 1, which accounts for 85% of the GEF implementation grant, the project has concluded several consultancies, including development of a SLM training manual, which is being used for training of trainers. To date, 3 training of trainers has been completed, one village level and two in Apia. Community based trainings have also been delivered, to 2 villages, as part of the process of developing sustainable development village plans. One such plan, for Uafato village, is prepared in draft form; the end target is to have 50 village plans developed. The community based trainings completed have also been used to facilitate engagement of farmers in adopting sustainable agricultural practices; 14 farm plans have been prepared by interested farmers, and the project team expects to have the approximate USD 500-1,000 plans funded before the end of 2016 and the implemented starting in early 2017. Another notable activity under Outcome 1 has been pre-surveys of 4 key biodiversity areas (KBAs), followed by rapid biodiversity assessments in 3 of the KBAs. A separate GIS mapping consultancy has also been completed, to help in strengthening baseline evaluation and provide foundational base maps for tracking progress. Discrepancies between some older maps produced on a different project with the results of the GIS mapping on this project were revealed; these will need to be resolved before finalizing the envisaged outputs.

There have also been a number of activities under Outcome 2, which is designed to strengthen the requisite enabling conditions for realizing a multi-sectoral approach to SLM. A draft soil conservation manual has been prepared by experts at the University of South Pacific; this will be used to guide the sustainable agriculture activities in Outcome 1. The project has supported the Land Resources Division in the formulation of the Land Survey and Environment Bill, which is expected to be passed later in 2017, and also funded a consultancy that prepared a detailed policy review. The project has also initiated discussions with the civil society, and a consultancy for development of a SLM information system was under procurement at the time of the MTR mission.

Summary of Conclusions

Implementation delays have adversely impacted progress towards results, specifically for Outcome 1, and diminished the likelihood that benefits realized will be sustained after project closure. The end targets on

this 5-year duration project are far-reaching and were not sufficiently validated during the project design stage. The project strategy was thoroughly reviewed at the inception phase, but the results framework was not critically reviewed and there has been inadequate focus on results during the implementation phase to date. Partnership arrangements, which are critical for this project, have not yet been worked out, e.g., the memoranda of understanding between the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) and the other implementing partners, including the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) and the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSD) have not materialized as envisaged in the project design. The project has initiated several consultancies and started to deliver community level trainings, but the pathways linking these activities with the expected results are unclear, resulting in a general lack of coherence in project implementation.

The project team is unprepared to fulfill the formidable monitoring and evaluation demands of the project. Baseline conditions have, for the most part, not yet been validated; in fact, the sources of the many of the baselines remain unclear. Monitoring and evaluation protocols have not yet been, and required resources to support the requisite monitoring and evaluation are under-estimated.

There have also been shortfalls with respect to risk management and project oversight. Early warnings, particularly regarding negligible progress under Outcome 1, have not been adequately communicated, there has been insufficient focus by the project board on progress towards results, and internal progress reporting has provided an over-rated characterization of project status.

Based on the findings of the MTR, it is highly unlikely that envisaged results under Outcome 1 will be achieved within the project timeframe.

Recommendations

The MTR recommendations, outlined below in **Exhibit 3**, have been formulated with the aim of improving project effectiveness and enhancing the likelihood that project results will be sustained after GEF funding ceases.

Exhibit 3: Recommendations Table

No.	Recommendation	Responsible Entities
1.	**Critically review the project strategy**. Several of the end targets within the project results framework do not match national strategies or capacities. A few suggestions have been made as part of this MTR, but a thorough critical review of the project strategic results framework should be made as soon as possible. Once the review has been made, a meeting should be held with senior level officials of MNRE, Ministry of Finance, and UNDP officials to determine whether to recommend changes to the GEF Secretariat.	PMU, MNRE, MoF, UNDP
2.	**Identify and operationalize strategic partnerships**. Partnerships are the key aspect to the multi-sectoral approach promoted on this project; however, the requisite partnership arrangements are not yet in place. a. Identify partners for each indicator in the results framework. Particular attention should be placed on developing memoranda of understanding with the MAF, MWSCD, and the SACEP. b. Develop a joint strategy for realizing the envisaged project results. The strategies should include clearly mapped out pathways for achieving the results. c. Develop a resource allocation plan for implementing the strategic partnerships; including labor requirements, project funding, cofinancing, monitoring and evaluation, etc. d. Implement the strategic action plans.	PMU, MNRE, MAF, MWSCD, UNDP
3.	**Strengthen project monitoring and evaluation systems.** Monitoring and evaluation systems are not in place and requisite resources are under-estimated a. Validate and/or update each of the individual baselines. For the expected result of greenhouse gas emissions avoided, the results of the GEF Carbon Benefits Project (CBP) should be consulted in reassessing baseline figures. b. Assign responsibilities among the project team leaders and develop M&E protocols for each individual indicator in the results framework. c. The GEF LD tracking tool indicator integrated into the project results framework should be	PMU, UNDP, Project Board

Exhibit 3: Recommendations Table		
No.	**Recommendation**	**Responsible Entities**
	clarified with the UNDP-GEF regional technical advisor. d. Prepare cost estimations for implementing the M&E protocols. e. Implement the M&E protocols and report regularly to the project board.	
4.	**Improve work planning processes**. Project results are not integrated into the current work planning processes. a. Work planning should be prepared based upon the project results framework, with end targets integrated as milestones. b. Team leaders should be assigned a set of indicators and develop work plans for those accordingly. c. Critical path work planning should be implemented for each individual indicator, and quarterly progress represented on Gantt charts, communicated to the project board.	PMU, Project Board
5.	**Develop and implement a knowledge management strategy for the project**. The project has several opportunities for contributing towards expanded knowledge of SLM, but there is no coherent knowledge management strategy. a. Develop a knowledge management strategy, identifying key messages, beneficiaries, roles and responsibilities for implementing the KM strategy, etc. b. Prepare a separate action plan for management of traditional ecological knowledge, drawing from regional and international best practice, consultations with local communities, developing a roadmap for enabling communities to draw on their local knowledge, and record and disseminate it in forms that are useful for them.	PMU, UNDP
6.	**Strengthen risk management processes**. Time is of the essence for the second half of the project; there is less than 2 years remaining to project closure. A proactive risk management process should be implemented. a. Prepare an updated analysis of current project risks. b. Assign risk "owners" to each of the identified risks, and develop a quarterly risk evaluation and reporting procedure. c. Develop and implement risk mitigation measures, and report progress at minimum quarterly to the project board.	PMU, Project Board
7.	**Determine best way forward for SLM information management system**. Access and management of SLM information are important aspects of the sustainability of project results. As a first step, organize a technical level meeting with MNRE IT specialists, the service provider working on the DKIF on the Rio Conventions project, SMSMCL communication team leader, and UNDP staff, to discuss needs and systems for the envisaged SLM information system. Based on this meeting, develop a recommended way forward and present to the project board for approval.	PMU, MNRE, Project Board
8.	**Integrate gender considerations into the project strategy.** Gender considerations have not yet been thoroughly analyzed and integrated into the project strategy. A gender analysis should be prepared by a qualified specialist, and a gender action plan should be developed, not only addressing the remaining period of project implementation but also how to integrate gender and social inclusion considerations into the community driven development and management plans promoted by the project.	PMU, UNDP, Project Board
9.	**Improve project record-keeping.** Project record-keeping should be improved, including keeping an updated tally of cofinancing contributions, documenting project board meetings, keeping the project asset register up to date, etc. It would be advisable to develop and implement a file management system for all types of project documentation, including electronic files, hardcopy documents, audio-visual documentation, etc.	PMU

Abbreviations and Acronyms

Exchange Rate, SAT:USD (30 September 2016) = 2.5153

ACD	Aid Coordination Division
ACEO	Assistant Chief Executive Officer
CBP	Carbon Benefits Project (CBP)
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
DEC	Division of Environment and Conservation
DKIF	Data Knowledge Information Facility
DLM	Division of Land Management
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHG	Green House Gas
KAP	Knowledge Attitudes and Practices (KAP
LD	Land Development
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
METI	Matua i le ōō Environmental Trust Inc.
MFAT	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
MNRE	Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment and Meteorology
MWCSD	Ministry of Women, Community, and Social Development
MWTI	Ministry of Works, Transport and Infrastructure
NAP	National Action Plan
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NEMS	National Environmental Management Strategy
NGOs	Non-governmental Organisations
NUS	National University of Samoa
OLSSI	O le Si'osi'omaga Society Incorporated
PIR	Project Implementation Review
PMU	Project Management Unit
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PUMA	Planning and Urban Management Agency
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries
SAT	Samoan Talā
SBS	Samoa Bureau of Statistics
SDS	Strategy for the Development of Samoa
SFA	Samoa Farmer's Association
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SLM	Sustainable land management
SMSMCL	Strengthening multi-sectoral management of critical landscape
STAP	Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (GEF)
TSAT	Technical Support and Advisory Team
UNDP	United Nationals Development Programme
UNDP-CO	UNDP Country Office
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
USP	University of the South Pacific
WIBDI	Women in Business Development Inc.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Purpose of the Review

The objective of the MTR was to gain an independent analysis of the progress mid-way through the project. The review also focuses project strategy, progress towards results, project implementation and adaptive management, and the likelihood that the envisaged global environmental benefits will be realized and whether the project results will be sustained after closure.

1.2. Scope and Methodology

The MTR was an evidence-based assessment, relying on feedback from individuals who have been involved in the design, implementation, and supervision of the project, and also a review of available documents and findings made during field visits. The overall approach and methodology of the evaluation follows the guidelines outlined in the UNDP Guidance for Conducting midterm reviews (MTRs) of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects[1].

The MTR was carried out an international consultant and included the following activities:

- ✓ An evaluation mission to Samoa from 24 October through 4 November 2016; the itinerary is compiled in **Annex 1**. Key project stakeholders interviewed for their feedback are listed in **Annex 2**.
- ✓ The MTR evaluator completed a desk review of relevant sources of information, such as the project document, project progress reports, financial reports and key project deliverables. A complete list of information reviewed is compiled in **Annex 3**.
- ✓ As a data collection and analysis tool, an evaluation matrix (see **Annex 4**) was developed to guide the review process. Evidence gathered during the fact-finding phase of the MTR was cross-checked between as many sources as practicable, in order to validate the findings.
- ✓ The project results framework was also used as an evaluation tool, in assessing attainment of project objective and outcomes (see **Annex 5**). Suggested modifications to the results framework, based on findings of the MTR, are compiled in **Annex 6**.
- ✓ Project cofinancing realized by midterm was assessed - see **Annex 7**.
- ✓ Field visits were made to four villages where the project has initiated trainings, two on the island of Upolu and two in Savai'i. A summary of the field visits is presented in **Annex 8;**
- ✓ The MTR evaluator presented the preliminary findings of the MTR at the end of the mission at a debriefing on 3 November, held at the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) office in Apia.
- ✓ The MTR evaluator also reviewed the midterm GEF Tracking Tool; the filled-in tracking tool is annexed in a separate file to this report.

1.3. Structure of the Review Report

The MTR report starts out with a description of the project, indicating the duration, principal stakeholders, and the immediate and development objectives. The findings of the review are then broken down into the following aspects:

[1] Guidance for Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects, 2014, UNDP-GEF Directorate.

- Project strategy
- Progress towards results
- Project implementation and adaptive management
- Sustainability

The report culminates with a summary of the conclusions reached and recommendations, formulated to enhance implementation during the final period of the project implementation timeframe.

1.4. Ethics

The review was conducted in accordance with the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluators, and the review team has signed the Evaluation Consultant Code of Conduct Agreement form (**Annex 9**). In particular, the MTR team ensures the anonymity and confidentiality of individuals who were interviewed and surveyed. In respect to the UN Declaration of Human Rights, results are presented in a manner that clearly respects stakeholders' dignity and self-worth.

1.5. Audit Trail

As a means to document an "audit trail" of the evaluation process, review comments to the draft report are compiled along with responses from the evaluator and documented in an annex separate from the main report. Relevant modifications to the report will be incorporated into the final version of the MTR report.

1.6. Limitations

The review was carried out over the period of October-November 2016, including preparatory activities, field mission, desk review and completion of the report, according to the guidelines outlined in the Terms of Reference (**Annex 10**).

There were no limitations with respect to language for review of written documentation. Interviews were held in English and nearly all project documentation is prepared in English. The evaluator was assisted by an interpreter during some of the group interviews during the field visits.

Interviews were made with the key national and subnational stakeholders during the mission, and with a representative number of service providers who have been appointed by the project. The evaluator feels that the information obtained during the desk review and MTR mission phases of the review is sufficiently representative.

1.7. Rating Scales

The following rating scales were applied in the review:

Ratings for progress towards results:

Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Project is expected to achieve or exceed all its major global environmental objectives, and yield substantial global environmental benefits, without major shortcomings. The project can be presented as "good practice".
Satisfactory (S)	Project is expected to achieve most of its major global environmental objectives, and yield satisfactory global environmental benefits, with only minor shortcomings.
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Project is expected to achieve most of its major relevant objectives but with either significant shortcomings or modest overall relevance. Project is expected not to achieve some of its major global environmental objectives or yield some of the

	expected global environment benefits.
Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Project is expected to achieve its major global environmental objectives with major shortcomings or is expected to achieve only some of its major global environmental objectives.
Unsatisfactory (U)	Project is expected not to achieve most of its major global environment objectives or to yield any satisfactory global environmental benefits.
Highly Unsatisfactory (U)	The project has failed to achieve, and is not expected to achieve, any of its major global environment objectives with no worthwhile benefits.

Ratings for project implementation and adaptive management:

Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Implementation of all seven components – management arrangements, work planning, finance and co-finance, project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, stakeholder engagement, reporting, and communications – is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management. The project can be presented as "good practice".
Satisfactory (S)	Implementation of most of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management except for only few that are subject to remedial action.
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Implementation of some of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management, with some components requiring remedial action.
Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Implementation of some of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive, with most components requiring remedial action.
Unsatisfactory (U)	Implementation of most of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management.
Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	Implementation of none of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management.

Sustainability was evaluated across four risk dimensions, including financial risks, socio-economic risks, institutional framework and governance risks, and environmental risks. According to UNDP-GEF evaluation guidelines, all risk dimensions of sustainability are critical: i.e., the overall rating for sustainability is not higher than the lowest-rated dimension. Sustainability was rated according to a 4-point scale, as outlined below:

Ratings for sustainability (one overall rating):

Likely (L)	Negligible risks to sustainability, with key Outcomes on track to be achieved by the project's closure and expected to continue into the foreseeable future
Moderately Likely (ML)	Moderate risks, but expectations that at least some Outcomes will be sustained due to the progress towards results on Outcomes at the Midterm Review
Moderately Unlikely (MU)	Significant risk that key Outcomes will not carry on after project closure, although some outputs and activities should carry on
Unlikely (U)	Severe risks that project Outcomes as well as key outputs will not be sustained

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1. Development Context

The primary objective of this project is "*To strengthen local capacities, incentives and actions for integrated landscape management in order to reduce land degradation and greenhouse gas emissions and promote nature conservation whilst enhancing sustainable local livelihoods*". In order to achieve this objective the project aims to empower local communities to reduce pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in the wider landscape. Local capacities are envisaged to be further bolstered by the strengthening multi-sectoral enabling conditions in Samoa for effective integrated landscape management, consisting of actions to reduce major anthropogenic causes of land degradation and greenhouse gas emissions from land-use changes or practices, and to promote restoration and conservation of ecosystems, leading to increased biodiversity conservation status and the improvement of ecosystem services.

2.2. Problems that the Project Sought to Address

Land and water resources in Samoa are under threat from several pressures, including:

Land use changes: Samoa's State of the Environment Report notes "Logging, agricultural clearing and cyclones caused extensive damage and fragmentation to the once dense native forests, opening up the undergrowth to sunlight and creating conditions that favor, and were taken advantage of, by wind dispersed, light demanding and fast growing pioneer species, most of them non-native and invasive. The Report also notes that the 80% of coastal areas (including its natural forests) have been impacted by coastal development, including settlements and other infrastructure. In addition, natural marshes have also been encroached by settlements.

Unsustainable harvesting of products: The project document reports that the 2005 rate of forest and woodland clearance for agricultural purposes, including firewood collection and infrastructure development, is estimated at 1,500 ha per year. Fuel wood harvest from natural forests, for example, is one of the key causes of forest degradation in Samoa, as it is the major source for cooking energy in Samoan households. Upland forests in Upolu have also lost their native species and are now virtually all non-native.

Pollution: Household waste and wastewater, as well as agrochemicals, are the main sources of pollution impacting land and water resources in the country. Monitoring of some streams have indicated high total coliform counts as well as E. coli counts, suggesting high level of fecal contamination.

Invasive alien species: The global invasive species data base suggests that Samoa has over 80 invasive species. Some invasive species such as the Merremia vines are estimated to cover up to 50% of the remaining lowland native forests.

Extreme weather events and other natural hazards: Samoa's location makes it susceptible to frequent occurrence of tropical cyclones. Since 1990, four major cyclones (Ofa, Valerie, Heta, and Evans) have caused extensive damages to terrestrial and marine habitats and species, as well as infrastructure, settlements and agricultural lands. Samoa is also subjected to seismic events in the area and was severely affected by a tsunami in 2009. Such events as well as increased variability in rainfall patters are expected to increase due to global climate change.

Despite a strong policy and legal framework, supported by activities of a number of government Ministries and their constituent Departments, the current investments and actions have not been adequate to achieve the long-term goal that Samoa seeks to achieve- "Samoa's productive

landscapes are protected and sustainably managed to mitigate land degradation and to increase soil carbon sequestration so as to contribute to poverty alleviation and mitigation and adaptation to climate change impacts". Several barriers hinder its achievement, key of which include the following two key barriers:

Barrier No. 1: Fragmented and primarily sectoral approach to land and ecosystems management

Land use in Samoa is influenced directly by the policies and programmes supported by the two key Ministries – the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment (MNRE) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF). Samoa's production lands consist of a mosaic of agricultural land and natural ecosystems; the farming systems employed in the former can have a major impact on the latter—influencing the functionality of the agro-ecosystem. There has been limited cooperation between these two ministries, and also with the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development, which has the primary mandate of promoting local socioeconomic development. The involvement of NGOs, private sector, and academia in promoting SLM has also not been promoted strategically by government institutions, despite the fact that several NGOs have been engaged in the promotion of eco-agriculture, organic farming, and other relevant SLM approaches.

Barrier No. 2: Local communities do not have capacities or strong incentives for effective landscape level SLM management

In addition to the limited national capacities, there are also limited capacities and actions by local communities on sustainable land management, on the agricultural lands they primarily manage as households as well as at the wider landscape level. SLM issues have not been strongly integrated into participatory local development plans, which have been trialed in a number of communities, and are being nationally replicated by the MWCSD. The outreach of Ministries to farmers have also been limited due to their limited capacities and budgets, and innovative approaches of working through the private sector, NGOs and others to reach out to farmers/ local communities to enhance SLM have not been implemented widely at the national scale.

2.3. Project Description and Strategy

This project was designed to overcome the barriers hindering a multi-sectoral approach to SLM in Samoa, and to assist efforts aimed at conservation of biodiversity and scarce resources, to attain both national and global environmental benefits.

Sustainable Land Management: The project strategy consists of facilitating adoption of sustainable land and water management measures by at least 50 villages, and by over 5,000 households, that leads to integrated land, ecosystems and water management in critical landscapes of at least 160,000 hectares, including:

- Soil and water conservation techniques on household managed farms totaling at least 18,000 ha
- Increased vegetative cover of at least 24,000 ha (outside proposed protected areas) through moving from mono-cropping to more mixed/ agroforestry systems on farm, restoration and rehabilitation of degraded lands (including forest lands) using native species. This is expected to reduce exposure of soil to direct rainfall, reducing soil loss and maintaining soil structure, biomass content and water retention.

- Reduced pollution of water through better waste management through household pollution and judicious use agrochemicals or through conversion to organic farming (such as through measurement of nutrient loading and coliform counts).

Maintenance of globally important ecosystems and their services: The project also aims to directly support the maintenance of 43,800 ha of community owned forests through sustainable management practices that includes promotion of sustainable harvesting of timber, firewood and non-timber forest products. Additionally, the project will further support the creation of new protected areas within such community owned landscapes. Such globally important ecosystems have already been identified (called Key Biodiversity Areas). The project's pilot sites include at least 4 KBAs totaling 88,000 ha.

Collaborative Biodiversity Conservation Arrangements: As most of the land ownership in Samoa, including the KBAs, is vested into local communities, a new legal regime needs to be in place that recognizes local ownership and rights over land but still ensures long term maintenance and conservation of such areas. The project was also designed to help develop the regulatory mechanism for these new PA creations, and their effective management thereby avoiding their loss or degradation. One of the KBAs that will be supported – the Central Savaii Rainforest KBA is considered the highest priority for terrestrial conservation investment, as it is the largest contiguous area of rainforest in tropical Polynesia and internationally. It is recognized as one of the last refuge for some critically endangered or endangered species including the following endemic species: Samoan Bush Palm (Niu vao), *Drymophleous samoensis* (Maniuniu), Tooth Billed Pigeon (Manumea), Mao (Maomao), Samoan Broadbill (Tolaifatu), Samoan Flying Fox (Pea vao) and the Samoan Moorhen (Puna'e). The last species is regarded as critically endangered and possibly extinct. In addition to the biodiversity conservation services, the conservation of such important habitats will also ensure that they continue to act as water 'reservoirs" by regulating water infiltration into underground water stores, regulate water flows into the streams and rivers; and ensure that soil and organic matters in soil are maintained in-situ.

Avoidance of GHG emissions and GHG sequestration: The project is expected to remove pressure on forest resources – particularly the threats to conversion into other land uses. By conservative estimates, the deforestation that will be avoided is estimated at around 500 ha per year (using assumption of 0.5% loss per year). The loss of 500 ha of tropical dry forests is equivalent, at minimum to release of 137,867 tons of CO_2-eq/year and 689,333 CO_2-eq for 4 years. The project's afforestation of 500 ha of tropical forests is expected to store additionally 10,755 tCO_2.

2.4. Implementation Arrangements

Implementation modality: The project is implemented over a period of five years, under a national implementation modality (NIM). The lead Executing Agency for the SMSMCL Project is the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE), which has the governmental mandate to coordinate the formulation and implementation of land degradation policies and related programmes and strategies.

Government Cooperating Agency: The Government Cooperating Agency represented by the Ministry of Finance is the governmental unit directly responsible for the government's participation in each UNDP-assisted project. The Government Cooperating Agency was envisaged to act as chair the Project Board meetings.

Implementing Partners: The lead Implementing Partner was indicated as the MNRE, which is primarily responsible and accountable for managing this project; including the monitoring and evaluation of project interventions, achieving project outputs, and for the effective utilization of

available resources. The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) and the Ministry of Women, Social and Community Development (MWSCD) were envisaged to also be implementing partners, with significant roles in project implementation as noted later in this section. The role of MAF includes taking the lead in promoting effective agricultural practices, and also providing relevant technical support to other components. The MWSCD is the lead agency to facilitate participatory land use planning at local level.

The SMSMCL **Project Board** is the group responsible for making consensus management decisions for the project, including recommendation for approval of project work plans and budgets. Based on the approved Annual Work Plan (AWP), the PB may review and approve project quarterly plans when required and authorizes any major deviation from these agreed quarterly plans. It is the authority that signs off on the completion of each quarterly work plan and authorizes the next quarterly work plan. It ensures that Trust Fund resources are committed exclusively to activities that relate to achievement of the project objective, the board arbitrates any conflicts within the project, and negotiates a solution to any problems that may arise between the project and external bodies. In addition, it approves the appointment and responsibilities of the Project Manager (PM) and any delegation of its Project Assurance responsibilities. PB members are not funded through this project.

The composition of the Project Board is as follows:

- The Ministry of Finance, as chair of the board;
- The Chief Executive Officer of the MNRE assumes the Executive role. The Executive, who is also the Project Director, is responsible for organizing and chairing meetings.
- The Senior Supplier role is represented by five offices:
- UNDP, as the body which provides guidance regarding the technical feasibility and substantive focus of the Project and is responsible for supporting operational aspects of implementation and quality assurance of the project;
    - Chief Executive Officer of the MNRE;
    - Chief Executive Officer of the MAF;
    - Chief Executive Officer of the MWSCD
    - Public Service Committee (PSC);
- The Senior Beneficiary on the Board is responsible for providing advice on the realization of project benefits from the perspective of project beneficiaries. This role will be assumed by three representatives of community in rural areas, as follow:
    - Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)
    - Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

There is conflicting information in the project document regarding the chairperson of the Project Board, whether the Ministry of Finance or the MNRE would assume this role.

The **Technical Support and Advisory Team (TSAT)** was envisaged to provide expert support and advice on specific technical questions throughout project implementation. The TSAT was slated to meet once before the implementation of the work and as and when required thereafter. It was meant to provide technical advice and backup support, be chaired by the Project Director, with the Project Manager being a member.

The **Project Director** was indicated as the CEO MNRE who has consolidated background in land degradation activities within Samoa, and extensive project management experience. The PD will be responsible, as Chairman of the TSAT and the Project Board, for overseeing project implementation and ensuring that the project goal, objectives and outputs are achieved. Specific responsibilities include ensuring that Government of Samoa inputs to the project are forthcoming in a timely and effective manner, endorsement of procurement contracts, and supervision/guidance of the PM and Technical Advisors on project implementation issues. This is a function that is not funded through this project. The Project Director assisted by the Project Manager reports to the Project Board on progress of the SMSMCL project.

The **Project Manager** is a full time project-funded staff member who performs the following key functions: The Project manager reports to the Project Director (CEO MNRE), receives guidance from the TSAT and Project Board, and is responsible for the day-to-day management, administration, coordination, and technical supervision of project implementation. The Project Manager is appointed by the Executing Agency and coordinates project implementation, monitors work progress, and ensures timely delivery of outputs per the results framework on time and on budget.

A **Project Management Unit (PMU)** plays the key role in project execution. It will be headed by the Project Manager and supported by **4 Technical Advisors** responsible for delivery of specific Outputs under the Community Development, SLM, Agriculture, Media and Communication – related Outcomes of the SRF, with limited administrative duties. The Project Manager is responsible for delivery of project outputs as outlined in the results framework, while the Community Development, SLM, Agriculture and Media and Communication Technical Advisors are responsible for the technical guidance and delivery of all outputs that require activities within specialized agriculture and community development line agencies. The Project Manager is responsible for consolidating technical as well as financial monitoring and evaluation reports and submitting them to the UNDP-CO. The PMU was also envisaged to be supported by 10 full-time field assistants.

Additional technical support will be provided through access to international and regional experts and institutions from the region as and when required by the PMU, upon compliance with UNDP procurement regulations and endorsement by the Project Board.

2.5. Project Timing and Milestones

Project Milestones:

Received by GEF:	27 May 2011
Preparation Grant Approved:	06 September 2011
Concept Approved:	01 November 2011
Project Approved for Implementation:	03 July 2013
State Date:	31 October 2018
Closing Date (Planned):	October 2018

The project identification form (PIF) was approved in November, and following the approximate 18-month long project preparation phase, the project obtained endorsement by the GEF CEO on 03 July 2013. The project document was then signed by the Ministry of Finance of Samoa and the

UNDP on 31 October 2013, the official start date of the project. The 5-year duration project is slated to close in October 2018.

The project manager was hired in late 2014, which is approximately one year after the project document was signed, following a prolonged recruitment and discussion period. The inception workshop was held in March 2015, two of the three team leaders hired in autumn 2015. The project technical advisor joined later in 2015, and the 3rd team leader, on sustainable forestry, was hired in September 2016.

2.6. Main Stakeholders

The project document contained a brief stakeholder analysis in the Situation Analysis section; there was no evidence that a stakeholder involvement plan was developed at the project preparation phase. Stakeholders identified in the analysis are described below.

Governmental:

- The Ministry of Finance is also important in terms of allocating resources to SLM and ensuring strong donor coordination
- MNRE (Land Resources, Water Resources, Environmental Conservation, Corporate Services, Planning and Urban Management Agency)
- MAF
- MWCSD
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, whose CEO is the political focal point for the GEF and is responsible for facilitating official communication with the UNCCD, GEF, UN Agencies and Regional Organizations
- The Land Transport Authority (LTA) - has the mandate over all public roads and associated drainage systems, which can impact land and water resources

Local Communities:

Local households and communities were identified as ultimately the most important stakeholders for SLM – as most of the legal rights over land are vested in them, as stated in the country's Constitution. As Samoa is a deeply religious country, the Churches also play a vital role in the communities by encouraging moral values and the importance of charity work, including nature protection. This aligns with community's common belief that land is a heritage from God, so needs to be sustainably used, managed and protected

Civil Society:

A thriving Non-Government community in Samoa was described. The Samoa Umbrella of NGOs (SUNGO) has several members who are involved in sustainable land management actions. These include Matua i le ōō Environment Trust Inc. (METI), Women in Business (WIBDI), and Samoa Farmers Association (SFA). METI has been assisting communities to develop integrated farming approaches for sustainable crop production. WIBDI has also been providing training of improved farming techniques, and business management skills, particularly to women farmers. SFA has been an advocacy organization for farmers but has also implemented projects to provide planting materials and extension advice to farming communities, and marketing village farm produce both locally and overseas. In addition to local NGOs, Samoa has also benefited from the support of international NGOs such as the Conservation International. Conservation International (CI) has

supported in identification of key biodiversity areas and in management of protected areas, amongst its several activities.

Regional Organizations:

Samoa is a member of several regional organizations such as SOPAC and SPREP, and has also benefited from their projects, programmes and capacity building actions. SPREP is the regional reference center or focal point for UNCCD and it plays a key role in SLM particularly at the policy level. SPREP's other strategic priorities cover other thematic areas which include biodiversity, climate change, environmental monitoring and governance, and waste management.

Academic Institutions:

Academic institutions were not included in the stakeholder analysis. There are a few key academic partners, including the University of the South Pacific and the National University of Samoa.

Private Sector:

The private sector was also not included in the stakeholder analysis. There are private sector actors involved in land management issues, including within the agriculture sector, forestry sector, tourism sector, and developers of residential, commercial, and industrial lands.

3. FINDINGS

3.1. Project Strategy

3.1.1. Project Design

The project was designed under Objective 3 (LD-3) of the GEF-5 Land Degradation Strategy; specifically Outcome 1 of the project was aligned with Outcome 3.2 of the LD-3 Objective, and Outcome 2 of the project is consistent with Outcome 3.1 under the LD-3 Objective:

Objective 3 of the GEF-5 Land Degradation Strategy: Integrated Landscapes: Reduce pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in the wider landscape	**Project Objective:** To strengthen local capacities, incentives and actions for integrated landscape management to reduce land degradation and greenhouse gas emissions and to promote conservation whilst enhancing sustainable local livelihoods
Outcome 3.1: Enhanced cross-sector enabling environment for integrated landscape management **Indicator 3.1** Policies support integration of agriculture, rangeland, forest, and other land uses	**Outcome 2:** Strengthened national enabling environment to promote integrated landscape management through local households and communities **Indicative Budget: USD 500,000 (10% of total)**
Outcome 3.2: Integrated landscape management practices adopted by local communities **Indicator 3.2** Application of integrated natural resource management (INRM) practices in wider landscapes	**Outcome 1:** Communities and farmers are able to undertake and benefit from integrated land and water management on their traditionally owned lands **Indicative Budget: USD 4,162,237 (85% of total)**

The project design is also closely tied to the Samoa Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) for 2012-2016. The strategic areas and indicators under SDS Priority Area IV, The Environment, Key Outcome 13: Environmental Sustainability, are essentially directly aligned with the project.

Strategic Area	Indicator
1. Sustainable management of natural resources; 2. Improve coordination on environmental initiatives through the development of an appropriate framework for the environment sector through the State of the Environment (SOE) report; 3. Support scientific research and data collection for better management; 4. Promote green growth technologies; 5. Protection of critical eco-systems and species; 6. Promote the use of good land use management practices; 7. Development of an urban agenda and policy; 8. Strengthen community engagement in environmental management; 9. Effective waste management strategies to support sustainable development; 10. Effective assessment and monitoring of water resources.	1. Increase percentage of land area covered by forest; 2. Proportion of land area planted under the community forestry programme; 3. Increase number of terrestrial and marine areas and critical ecosystems and species protected; 4. Number of species threatened with extinction decreased 5. Proportion of invasive species eradicated; 6. Expansion of ground water monitoring network; 7. Percentage of rehabilitated degraded lands and improved critical landscapes; 8. Legislation and tracking system for chemicals and hazardous waste developed and implemented; 9. Increase community awareness on water catchment areas and risk of unsustainable methods of farming; 10. Increase land areas declared as water catchment reserves; 11. Improve compliance with land used management plans.

There are also close synergies with other components of the SDS, including Strategic Area 5 "*Strengthen the policy, strategic planning and management capability to support sustainable*

agriculture development" of Priority Area I: Economic Sector, Key Outcome 2: Re-Invigorate Agriculture.

The project was developed over the period of 2011 -2013, with endorsement from the GEF CEO received in June 2013. At the inception phase in 2015, the project team made an extensive updated review of lessons learned from other projects and initiatives; these are documented in detail in the project inception report.

As part of the project preparation phase, environmental and social risks were screened using the UNDP standard procedure. Potential risks were identified under the Social Equity and Equality category, including possible environmental impacts that could affect indigenous people or other vulnerable groups, possibly significantly impacting gender equality and women's empowerment, and possibly directly or indirectly increasing social inequalities now or in the future. Analysis of these potential scenarios concluded that the risks will be effectively mitigated through supporting more than 5,000 households in sustainable agriculture practices, which would lead to increased soil productively, resulting in increased household income. Furthermore, the project was designed to facilitate enhanced management of at least 43,000 ha, thus protecting the ecosystem goods and services that local communities are reliant upon.

3.1.2. Results Framework

As part of this midterm review, the strategic results framework for the project was assessed against "SMART" criteria, whether the indicators and targets were sufficiently specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound.

The results framework includes 20 performance indicators, 4 at the objective level, 8 under Outcome 1, and 8 under Outcome 2.

Project Objective:

There are four indicators established at the project objective level.

Indicator	End-of-Project target	MTR SMART analysis				
		S	M	A	R	T
Objective: To strengthen local capacities, incentives and actions for integrated landscape management to reduce land degradation and greenhouse gas emissions and to promote conservation whilst enhancing sustainable local livelihoods.						
Obj-1: Area under increased vegetative cover (with average tree density of 111 trees/ ha)	Increased by 24,430 ha	N	Y	N	Y	Y
Obj-2: Area under forest cover (no net loss due to land use conversion) under effective management	128000 ha	Y	N	?	Y	Y
Obj-3: Increase of agriculture income and consumption per household as a consequence of increased productivity of land	5000 households' incomes increase by 10% on average by project end through increased land productivity	Y	?	?	Y	Y
Obj-4: Total amount of CO2 equivalent greenhouse gas emission avoided, and sequestered at the target sites due to effective application of SLM good practices	Avoided emission of 689333 CO2-eq for 4 years and sequestration of store additionally 10,755 tCO2eq.	?	Y	?	Y	Y
SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound Green: SMART criteria compliant; Yellow: questionably compliant with SMART criteria; Red: not compliant with SMART criteria						

Information contained in the project document indicates that the end target of 24,430 ha of Indicator Obj-1 is roughly broken down as follows: 18,000 ha under sustainable agriculture and/or agroforestry, 5,000 ha of reforestation and 500 ha of degraded land restoration. There is no evidence of which specific areas were earmarked for these increased vegetative cover, and interviewed stakeholders also could not clarify this particular indicator, either the average tree density of 111 trees per hectare. There are also shortfalls with respect to achievability. For example, the Forestry Division of the MNRE currently has an annual target of 30 ha of

reforestation, and in over 10 years of implementing the EU Water Sector Programme, 300 ha of degraded land has been restored. The capacity required to achieve 5,000 ha of reforestation and 500 ha of degraded land restoration was not adequately vetted.

With respect to Indicator Obj-2, calling for no net loss of forest cover, this is a rather ambitious target for a 5-year project with GEF grant of less than USD 5 million, and beyond the scope of the project as well.

Similarly, there are achievability concerns regarding increasing household income as a result of increased soil productivity for 5,000 households, as called for under Indicator Obj-3. This number of households could represent 10-20% of the entire population of Samoa, and possibly even more, as rural families are quite large. Through the Farmer Field School Programme run by the extension service of the Ministry of Agriculture with support for the World Bank SACEP program, approximately 30 farmers are participating at a particular time, and the field schools last for about 3 months. The maximum capacity of the extension service is to train about 150-200 farmers per year. Following the training, the farmers then need to implement changes on their lands that result in increased soil productivity. The other issue with this indicator is how to measure household agriculture income. The agriculture census does not include such a parameter; there are income figures per crop, but not aggregated values. The source of the baseline figure in the project document is unclear. The methodology to assess household agriculture income also requires rather sophisticated monitoring procedures, factoring in inflation for example.

Indicator Obj-4 is essentially the same as Indicator Obj-1, but rather than increased vegetative cover reported in hectares it is reported as avoided CO_2 emissions. The same constraints apply to this indicator as for Indicator No. 1 described above.

Outcome 1:

There are 8 indicators under Outcome 1:

Indicator	End-of-Project target	MTR SMART analysis				
		S	M	A	R	T
Outcome 1: Communities and farmers are able to undertake and benefit from integrated land and water management on their traditionally owned lands.						
1. Number of certified organic farmers/farms	A 30% increase in number of households engaged in organic farming or more ecological farming	Y	Y	Y	?	Y
2. Increased density and diversity of native tree species in cyclone damaged landscapes around Apia covering 3314 ha	At least 50% increase forest cover in a landscape	?	?	?	Y	Y
3. Area of natural forests, riverine areas and wetlands under protection and management in the production landscape under community land use plans (forest and tree cover maintenance; maintenance of wetlands; no net increase of agricultural land under mono cropping)	By the end of the project, at least 55000 ha will be under integrated landscape management outside KBAs	Y	Y	Y	?	Y
4. Number of farmer households adopting at least one or more soil / water management and conservation practices on agricultural lands	At least 5000 households will be adopting soil management and conservation practices in their land by the end of the project covering at least 18000 ha	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
5. Increased water quality as a consequence of enhanced watershed management and water source protection	At least 50% of the project sites report on increased water quality by the end of the project – including *E. coli* levels within national standards; and additional parameters of nutrient loads (such as nitrogen) are also within acceptable international standards	N	N	N	Y	Y
6. Per cent of Livestock relocated to optimal grazing areas away from critical riparian areas	At least 50% relocated, covering 2500 ha	Y	Y	N	?	Y
7. Number of integrated participatory village level SLM plans	At least 50 villages have developed plans integrating SLM with the participation of 15000 community member including men, women and young	Y	Y	?	Y	Y
8. Number of community members that report on increased	At least 40% of the communities are able to report	N	Y	Y	Y	Y

Indicator	End-of-Project target	MTR SMART analysis				
		S	M	A	R	T
knowledge and capacity on SLM	on increased knowledge on SLM through access to national SLM system, audio-video materials and trainings					
SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound Green: SMART criteria compliant; Yellow: questionably compliant with SMART criteria; Red: not compliant with SMART criteria						

Indicator No. 1 calls for an increase of 30% in the number of certified organic farmers. The newly issued agricultural sector plan reinforces the Government's strategic objective of expanding organic farming in the country. The issue with this indicator is whether an increase in the number of certified farmers is sufficiently relevant. Only considering an increase in the number of farmers implies that there is sufficient market demand – this might not be the case. There are currently more than 600 certified organic farmers under the programme managed by WIBDI; many of the certified farms are under-utilized, for example. A more relevant indicator might be an increase in the efficiency and/or quality of the organic farmers in the country.

The source of the 3,414 ha figure included in Indicator No. 2 is uncertain, and an increase of 50% forest cover has the same achievability concerns as outlined under the project objective discussion. Without having the baseline area clearly mapped, measuring progress of the increase in forest cover also poses challenges.

The main issue with the target for Indicator No. 3 is the term "outside KBAs". The KBAs are not designated as protected areas, and they essentially are included among the broader production landscape. The community land use plans are particularly focusing on achieving enhanced management of KBAs falling within the respective village jurisdictions.

Indicator No. 4 is linked to objective level indicator Obj-3, i.e., at least 5,000 households adopting soil or water management and conservation practices. The achievability of reaching 5,000 households in a substantive manner is questionable.

Indicator No. 5 is far-reaching, poorly articulated, and essentially unachievable within a 5-year timeframe. Firstly, the term "project sites" is unclear. Does this mean the 126 villages the project is targeting? Affecting water quality changes on a watershed scale in 50% of 126 sites would require significantly more resources and time than available on this project. Detailed hydrologic profiles would need to be made, extensive baseline conditions would need to be established, and information on other potential sources of water pollution determined, e.g., household septic systems.

The 2012 agriculture census indicates that there were 29,553 head of cattle in the country at that time. Under Indicator No. 6, 50% of an estimated 30,000 head of livestock among project sites would be relocated to areas outside of critical catchments. This figure could also include pigs, but end target is rather unrealistic.

Achievability of 50 village plans, as called for under Indicator No. 7, is also questionable – this is approximately 15% of all villages in the country. Since 2009, the MWCSD has developed 26 draft village plans – and these are incomplete and not yet implemented.

Finally, Indicator No. 8 calls for at least 40% of communities reporting an increased knowledge on SLM by the end of the project. This is not sufficiently specific; for example, having access a national SLM system does not necessary mean that someone has an increased level of knowledge on SLM.

Outcome 2:

There are 8 indicators under Outcome 2:

Indicator	End-of-Project target	MTR SMART analysis				
		S	M	A	R	T
Outcome 2: Strengthened national enabling environment to promote integrated landscape management through local households and communities**.**						
9. Soil management and conservation manual targeting local communities in local language	By the end of year 1 a Soil management and conservation manual developed including SLM practices for agriculture, forestry and water resources management	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
10. Number of national policies and plans that support for inter-sectoral and partnership approach to promote community based SLM	• Land Resource management legislation developed and national land use policy updated • Agriculture Sector Plan 2011-2016 strengthened to mainstream SLM approaches and management practices • policies on mining (including sand mining) strengthened or developed • formal guidelines for sustainable land management under village development plans under PUMA Act developed	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
11. increased capacities for INRM as measured by an increase in the score of the GEF LD Tracking Tool Enhanced cross-sector enabling environment for integrated landscape management	5	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
12. Coordination mechanism in place to ensure multi-sector approach to SLM in line with National Environment management Strategy	By the end of the project a formal institutional coordination mechanism has been established including all relevant ministries to ensure integration of SLM in all sectors to manage multiuse landscapes through combined efforts, shared technical resources	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
13. Increased involvement of private sector, civil society and others in promoting SLM in partnership with the government.	By Year 4, the number of NGOs and private partners in SLM is increased by 200%.	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
14. National SLM information system in line with information system for national Environment Management Strategy	By Year 4 an SLM information System will be established and managed by MNRE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
15. Number of government staff who have completed new training of trainers short term courses provided by USP on SLM, tailored for Samoa and including carbon accounting from LULUCF	By the end of the project, at least 100 staff from MNRE, MAF, MWCSC have completed the SLM training at USP	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
16. Number of long term courses institutionalized in USP to degree students on SLM	By the end of the project, at least 1 SLM long term course has been institutionalized at USP	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound Green: SMART criteria compliant; Yellow: questionably compliant with SMART criteria; Red: not compliant with SMART criteria						

The indicators and end targets are Outcome 2 were found to be compliant with SMART criteria.

3.1.3. Gender Mainstreaming Analysis

A separate gender analysis was not made at the project preparation phase. The following statement was included in the Gender Considerations section of the project document:

"The project will ensure that a strong gender analysis is undertaken at the beginning of the project".

There was no evidence available to the MTR evaluator of a gender analysis being completed by midterm. The 2016 PIR made reference that gender considerations will be analyzed; no specific timeline was indicated.

The social and environmental screening made at project preparation indicated a potential risk of significantly impacting gender equality and women's empowerment. The discussion included in social and environmental screening section of the project document did not specifically address how the project would mitigate this risk – and the indicators in the results framework are not gender disaggregated.

3.2. Progress towards Results

3.2.1. Progress towards Outcomes Analysis

Objective: To strengthen local capacities, incentives and actions for integrated landscape management to reduce land degradation and greenhouse gas emissions and to promote conservation whilst enhancing sustainable local livelihoods**.**

Project towards Results (Objective) is rated at: Moderately Unsatisfactory

The first objective level indicator calls for an increase of 24,430 ha in vegetative cover by the end of the project. The source of the baseline figure of 135,000 ha is unclear and has not yet been validated by midterm. Based upon the MTR evaluator's understanding of the information presented in the project document, the 24,430 ha of increased vegetative cover is roughly broken down as follows: 18,000 ha under sustainable agroforestry, 5,000 ha of reforestation and 500 ha of degraded land restoration. The project has not identified with relevant partners how this result will be achieved. The targets for reforestation and degraded land restoration, for example, are not consistent with sector plans of the Forestry and Water Resources Division. Furthermore, the requisite monitoring protocols for measuring progress have not been developed; for instance, will remote sensing be used to measure progress, tree planting reports, etc.

Obj-1: Area under increased vegetative cover (with average tree density of 111 trees/ ha)				
	Baseline	**Midterm Status**	**End Target**	**MTR Assessment**
Value:	135,000 ha	0 ha	Increase by 24,430 ha	**Not on target**
Date:	2012	31 October 2016	30 October 2018	31 October 2016

Similar to the case for Indicator Obj-1, the source of the baseline for Indicator Obj-2 is unclear and the baseline figure has not yet been validated. The 128,000 ha baseline might be the total area of native forests among key biodiversity areas in the country; however, it is uncertain. Achieving no net loss in forest cover due to land use conversion requires a nation-wide, cross-sectoral monitoring and evaluation coordination. For example, input regarding agricultural land conversion changes in commercial forestry, conversion as a result of residential or commercial development, etc. Also, the method of measuring the change has not yet been worked out. Will remote sensing interpretations be used to make the assessment, for instance? By midterm, there was no evidence in progress towards this indicator, the baseline has not been validated, the midterm status not determined, and the required monitoring and evaluation protocols have not been formulated.

Obj-2: Area under forest cover (no net loss due to land use conversion) under effective management				
	Baseline	**Midterm Status**	**End Target**	**MTR Assessment**
Value:	128,000 ha	No progress	128,000 ha	**Not on target**
Date:	2012	31 October 2016	30 October 2018	31 October 2016

The source of the baseline figure of USD 2,692 in agriculture household income is unclear and this baseline has not yet been validated. In fact, the agriculture census does not include this parameter among those surveyed. The project has implemented two community based trainings

and a few of the farmer households in these villages have started to supplement their cash crops with vegetable patches for own consumption and for sale as a source of additional household income. These activities have only started in 2016 and there has not been a full year for assessing changes in annual household agriculture income. The monitoring protocols for measuring household agricultural income have also not yet been established. This is not a straightforward parameter to measure, as many farmer households are not keeping detailed records, farmers tend to have steep fluctuations in income throughout the year, and it is important to differentiate between changes in prices for their baseline agricultural products as compared to the marginal improvements realized as a consequence of increased land productively.

Obj-3: Increase of agriculture income and consumption per household as a consequence of increased productivity of land				
	Baseline	**Midterm Status**	**End Target**	**MTR Assessment**
Value:	USD 2,692 on average *(per HH per yr.)*	0 households	5,000 households' incomes increase by 10% on average	**Not on target**
Date:	2012	31 October 2016	30 October 2018	31 October 2016

Indicator Obj-4 is similar to Indicator Obj-1, except increases in vegetative cover is measured in terms of greenhouse gas emissions avoided compared to land area. As there is no progress yet in increasing area of vegetative cover, there is similarly no change from the baseline in terms of CO_2 equivalent greenhouse gas emissions avoided. The GEF Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) mentioned in their review of the project concept that the results of the GEF Carbon Benefits Project should be consulted when calculating emissions avoided; the baseline and end targets should be reassessed accordingly.

Obj-4: Total amount of CO_2 equivalent greenhouse gas emission avoided, and sequestered at the target sites due to effective application of SLM good practices				
	Baseline	**Midterm Status**	**End Target**	**MTR Assessment**
Value:	Total national emissions from AFOLU 135.3 Gg CO_2-e (2007).	0 CO_2-eq	Avoided emission of 689,333 CO_2-eq for 4 years and sequestration of store additionally 10,755 tCO_2eq	**Not on target**
Date:	2007	31 October 2016	30 October 2018	31 October 2016

Outcome 1: Communities and farmers are able to undertake and benefit from integrated land and water management on their traditionally owned lands**.**

Indicative budget in project document: USD 4,000,000
Actual cost incurred on this Outcome through 30 June 2016: USD 954,606

Project towards Results (Outcome 1) is rated at: Moderately Unsatisfactory

The first indicator under Outcome 1 is the change in the number of certified organic farmers/farms, with a 30% increase earmarked by the end of the project, from a baseline number of 606. During an interview with the director of WIBDI, one of the local NGOs involved the mentoring organic farmers in Samoa, indicated that the current number of organic farmers is 667; this is a 10% increase from the baseline, which is presumably from 2012. An "on target" midterm status is applied; however, the baseline should be adjusted to 2013, the date when the project started. Considering that the recently issued agricultural sector plan includes establishment of an organic farming section, it is likely the number of certified organic farmers will continue to increase in the coming years.

No. 1: Number of certified organic farmers/farms				
	Baseline	**Midterm Status**	**End Target**	**MTR Assessment**
Value:	606 certified currently exist; 345 in Savaii & 261 in Upolu	667*	A 30% increase in number of households engaged in organic farming or more ecological farming	**Marginally on target**
Date:	2012	31 October 2016	30 October 2018	31 October 2016

*Based on information verbally communicated by WIBDI during MTR mission, October 2016

Indicator No. 2 calls for an increase in the density and diversity of native tree species in cyclone damaged landscapes around Apia, covering 3,314 ha. The baseline for this indicator has not been established by midterm; a note in the results framework indicates that the baseline will be determined when the project starts due to the then recent damage by Tropical Cyclone Evans. For example, there is no evidence that the post cyclone report and recovery plan has been used to support strategic approach towards achieving this result. And, there is also no evidence of establishing strategic partnerships for achieving this result. The project has been working with the Water Resources Division, including on the Upland Watershed Management Policy, which likely covers some of the same geographic areas as outlined in Indicator No. 2; but this is uncertain. Not only is the baseline unclear, i.e., where specifically will the increase in forest cover be realized, the strategy on how to achieve the increased forest cover has not been worked out, and there are no monitoring protocols in place for measuring and evaluating progress.

No. 2: Increased density and diversity of native tree species in cyclone damaged landscapes around Apia covering 3,314 ha				
	Baseline	**Midterm Status**	**End Target**	**MTR Assessment**
Value:	With recent damage by TC Evans, baseline will be determined when project start.	0 ha	At least 50% increase forest cover in a landscape	**Not on target**
Date:	2012	31 October 2016	30 October 2018	31 October 2016

The context of Indicator No. 3 is unclear to the project team. The end target calls for at least 55,000 ha under integrated landscape management outside key biodiversity areas (KBAs). The

project has spent substantive resources and time on completing surveys of select KBAs, and much of the community based planning conceptualized to date focus on engaging local residents in collaborative management arrangements of sections of KBAs that fall within the particular village jurisdiction. KBAs are not designated as protected areas in Samoa, and there are no particular land use restrictions compared to areas outside KBAs. It would seem be more sensible to include KBAs under this indicator. Consultations have only begun with two communities and the management plans for the KBAs have not yet been prepared; hence, by midterm, there is no progress realized towards this result. And, monitoring and evaluation protocols have not yet been developed; these will need to be participatory, using local residents to record land use status and changes.

No. 3: Area of natural forests, riverine areas and wetlands under protection and management in the production landscape under community land use plans (forest and tree cover maintenance; maintenance of wetlands; no net increase of agricultural land under mono cropping)				
	Baseline	**Midterm Status**	**End Target**	**MTR Assessment**
Value:	0	0 ha	By the end of the project, at least 55,000 ha will be under integrated landscape management outside KBAs	**Not on target**
Date:	2012	31 October 2016	30 October 2018	31 October 2016

By midterm there have only been consultations made with a few communities. A total of 14 individual farm plans have been submitted by local farmers; this represents less than 1% of the 5,000 end target. Practically, the only way to get close to approaching this target would be to partner with existing initiatives, e.g., the World Bank SACEP project, and/or the extension services of the Ministry of Agriculture. Also, it is important to ensure that the interventions are focused on soil/water management or conservation practices. Some of the farm plans seem to be for expanding vegetable production on existing farms; this might contribute to increased household income, but not necessarily would mean improvements in soil or water conservation.

No. 4: Number of farmer households adopting at least one or more soil / water management and conservation practices on agricultural lands				
	Baseline	**Midterm Status**	**End Target**	**MTR Assessment**
Value:	There are 10,790 households in the target area of the project, but with limited soil and water conservation activities	0 households 0 ha	At least 5,000 households will be adopting soil management and conservation practices in their land by the end of the project covering at least 18,000 ha	**Not on target**
Date:	2012	31 October 2016	30 October 2018	31 October 2016

Baseline information was unavailable for review during the MTR mission; the project team thinks that the "3 major site" might refer to the following rivers: Fuluasou River, Malololelei River, and Vaisigano River. But, water quality baseline data are unavailable. This indicator links improved water quality with the efforts of enhanced livestock management. Achieving verifiable water quality improvements over a 5-year project timeframe is quite ambitious, considering that the areas where the enhanced livestock management measures will be implemented are not yet determined. Also, detailed baseline hydrological surveys, land use assessments, and socioeconomic assessments (e.g., possible impacts from residential septic systems) need to be carried out to support a determination of water quality improvements. These have not yet been done either. One of the villages targeted by the project, Uafato, has recently reached a resolution of relocating several head of cattle out of the village proper, and one set of surface water sampling and analysis has been funded by the project. This represents negligible progress towards this rather formidable indicator, calling for water quality improvements of at least 50% of project sites. There are 126 villages earmarked by the project. It is unclear whether the 50% target is associated with this number of sites; this would mean at least 63 sites. Allocated project resources do not match such a large number of sites.

No. 5: Increased water quality as a consequence of enhanced watershed management and water source protection				
	Baseline	**Midterm Status**	**End Target**	**MTR Assessment**
Value:	Water quality at sampled sites (3 major sites) shows confirmed incidences of *E.coli* presence exceeding national standards	0 sites	At least 50% of the project sites report on increased water quality by the end of the project – including *E. coli* levels within national standards; and additional parameters of nutrient loads (such as nitrogen) are also within acceptable international standards	**Not on target**
Date:	2012	31 October 2016	30 October 2018	31 October 2016

Following the previous result, Indicator No. 6 calls for relocating at least 50% of 30,000 livestock in target areas to optimal grazing areas away from critical riparian catchments. Considering that the 2012 agricultural census indicates that there were 29,553 head of cattle in the country, this target is far-reaching. There has been negligible progress towards achieving this result. As previously indicated, a few head of cattle have been relocated from Uafato village. Relocating livestock is not as straightforward as it is stated in this indicator. In order to achieve sustainable relocation, a comprehensive livestock management approach needs to be taken. For example, if livestock are fenced in, then farmers will need to start growing crops and implement pasture management practices that ensure steady supply of feed. Also, one of the reasons why livestock are located in riparian areas is water supply, and if relocated to non-riparian areas, then alternative water sources would need to be provided. Waste management and public health and safety are other

aspects that need to be considered. If livestock are confined, then a system for management wastes will need to be developed; currently, this is not a concern, as the livestock are free-roaming. Furthermore, there are health and safety regulations that are relevant; such as minimum distance to residential dwellings, etc.

No. 6: Per cent of livestock relocated to optimal grazing areas away from critical riparian areas				
	Baseline	**Midterm Status**	**End Target**	**MTR Assessment**
Value:	Estimated 30,000 livestock in target areas, covering 5,000 ha	0 livestock 0 ha	At least 50% relocated, covering 2,500 ha	**Not on target**
Date:	2012	31 October 2016	30 October 2018	31 October 2016

Indicator No. 7 calls for developing at least 50 sustainable village development plans by the end of the project. By midterm, one plan is in draft form, for the Uafato village. According to the project document, the target of 50 includes 26 that the MWCSD had already preliminarily draft back in 2009, and 24 new ones. There is no evidence of progress towards further developing the 26 existing plans. All in all, the target of 50 seems rather arbitrary. An alternate approach might be to take a district approach, in line with the Community Integrated Management (CIM) strategy developed by the Planning and Urban Management Agency (PUMA). For example, one village plan might be developed in each of the 16 administrative districts in the country. These would be model plans, possibly focusing on particular themes, which could then be scaled up in other villages in the districts. 16 plans are more manageable than 50, and also the approach would be more aligned to current national socioeconomic development strategies.

No. 7: Number of integrated participatory village level SLM plans				
	Baseline	**Midterm Status**	**End Target**	**MTR Assessment**
Value:	No village plans incorporating SLM	1 (in draft form): Uafato village	At least 50 villages have developed plans integrating SLM with the participation of 15,000 community member including men, women and young	**Not on target**
Date:	2012	31 October 2016	30 October 2018	31 October 2016

Indicator No. 8 is associated with increased knowledge and capacity on SLM issues. There has been limited progress towards this result, as the project managed to deliver 4 trainings (2 community based and 2 training of trainers). Achieving increased knowledge by the end of the project, however, is likely based on the plans on developing an information system and producing various audio-visual and printed knowledge products. Determining on a method to measure knowledge should be worked out, in order to adequately verify results of public outreach.

No. 8: Number of community members that report on increased knowledge and capacity on SLM

	Baseline	Midterm Status	End Target	MTR Assessment
Value:	No reports on knowledge on SLM	No reports available Trainings delivered to <5 villages out of 126 villages total	At least 40% of the communities are able to report on increased knowledges on SLM through access to national SLM system, audio-video materials and trainings	**Not on target**
Date:	?2012	31 October 2016	30 October 2018	31 October 2016

Outcome 2: Strengthened national enabling environment to promote integrated landscape management through local households and communities**.**

Indicative budget in project document: USD 506,363
Actual cost incurred on this Outcome through 30 June 2016: USD 91,488

Project towards Results (Outcome 2) is rated at: Satisfactory

The first result under Outcome 2, represented as Indicator No. 9, is development of a soil management and conservation manual. The service provider contracted, University of South Pacific (USP), has made good progress in developing the manual, with a draft version under review. Once the manual is finalized in English, and abbreviated version is planned to be made in Samoan language. The MTR evaluator recommends that more information on forestry and water resource management be added to the manual.

No. 9: Soil management and conservation manual targeting local communities in local language

	Baseline	Midterm Status	End Target	MTR Assessment
Value:	No soil management and conservation manual	English version of manual prepared	By the end of year 1 a Soil management and conservation manual developed including SLM practices for agriculture, forestry and water resources management	**On target**
Date:	2012	31 October 2016	30 October 2018	31 October 2016

There has also been satisfactory progress with respect to policy support, as outlined below in the status report for Indicator No. 10. The project has provided technical advisory service to the Land Resources Division in development of the Land Survey and Environment Bill, which is expected to be passed in 2017. The recently issued agriculture sector plan includes reference to sustainable agriculture objectives. In fact, there are also opportunities to mainstream sustainable forestry objectives in the forestry sector plan, which is currently under review. The project has funded a comprehensive SLM policy review; however, governmental stakeholders should decide how to implement the recommendations presented in the review, e.g., by strengthening or developing

policies on mining and other land use activities. The final target under this indicator is development of formal SLM guidelines to support the village level planning outlined in the PUMA Act; there is no evidence of progress towards developing these envisaged formal guidelines.

No. 10: Number of national policies and plans that support for inter-sectoral and partnership approach to promote community based SLM				
	Baseline	**Midterm Status**	**End Target**	**MTR Assessment**
Value:	A number of policies and plans to support SLM (see section 1.5 of the project document) but inter-sectoral approach is weak	Land Survey and Environment Bill under preparation	Land Resource management legislation developed and national land use policy updated	**On target**
		Agriculture sector plan approved; includes reference to sustainable agriculture.	Agriculture Sector Plan 2011-2016 strengthened to mainstream SLM approaches and management practices	**Achieved**
		Existing policies reviewed; not yet strengthened or developed.	Policies on mining (including sand mining) strengthened or developed	**On target**
		No evidence of formal SLM guidelines.	Formal guidelines for sustainable land management under village development plans under PUMA Act developed	**Not on target**
Date:	2012	31 October 2016	30 October 2018	31 October 2016

Indicator No. 11 is linked to the GEF Land Degradation Tracking Tool, specifically regarding enhanced cross-sector enabling environment for integrated landscape management. The baseline tracking tool assigns a score of 3 for this indicator, inferring that an "*Integrated Natural Resource Management (INRM) framework have been formally proposed but not adopted*". The midterm tracking tool assessment dated October 2016 applied the same score of 3. It is uncertain what is referred to as an INRM framework for Samoa. For example, the national environmental sector plan can be considered an INRM framework. This should be clarified between the PMU and the UNDP-GEF regional technical advisor.

No. 11: Increased capacities for INRM as measured by an increase in the score of the GEF LD Tracking Tool Enhanced cross-sector enabling environment for integrated landscape management				
	Baseline	**Midterm Status**	**End Target**	**MTR Assessment**
Value:	3	3	5	**Not on target**
Date:	2012	31 October 2016	30 October 2018	31 October 2016

Interviewed stakeholders generally agreed that the National Environmental Sector Committee will serve as a SLM coordination mechanism. The Committee has cross-sectoral representation, as well as participation by the civil society. It might be advisable to form a SLM working group that would support the Committee and have the opportunity to address more detailed oriented issues.

No. 12: Coordination mechanism in place to ensure multi-sector approach to SLM in line with National Environment management Strategy

	Baseline	Midterm Status	End Target	MTR Assessment
Value:	No coordination mechanisms for SLM	National Environmental Sector Committee in place	By the end of the project a formal institutional coordination mechanism has been established including all relevant ministries to ensure integration of SLM in all sectors to manage multiuse landscapes through combined efforts, shared technical resources.	**On target**
Date:	2012	31 October 2016	30 October 2018	31 October 2016

There clearly has been an increase in recent years in the number of civil society organizations involved in promoting SLM related issues. Some of these include Coconut Clusters, Adra, Samoa Conservation Society, Farmers' Federation Inc., etc. There was less information available regarding the private sector.

No. 13: Increased involvement of private sector, civil society and others in promoting SLM in partnership with the government				
	Baseline	**Midterm Status**	**End Target**	**MTR Assessment**
Value:	SFA and WIBDI – NGOs assisting communities with projects that are SLM compatible	Other NGOs: Adra, SCS, FFI, Coconut Clusters	By Year 4, the number of NGOs and private partners in SLM is increased by 200%.	**On target**
Date:	2012	31 October 2016	30 October 2018	31 October 2016

At the time of the MTR mission the project team was working on procurement documentation for a consultancy tasked with developing a SLM information system. The system would partly be a project website and also a repository for SLM information. Contemporaneously, the UNDP-GEF project on supporting the Government of Samoa on the obligations among the Rio Conventions is funding the development of a Data Knowledge Information Facility (DKIF). Some of the interviewed stakeholders stressed that the DKIF will also include SLM information, and that a separate system is unnecessary. The project team, on the other hand, feel that a separate system that feeds into the DKIF will indeed be required. The MTR evaluator recommends that this issue be discussed together with the MNRE IT specialists and the DKIF service provider, before proceeding with procurement of a separate SLM information system.

No. 14: National SLM information system in line with information system for national Environment Management Strategy

	Baseline	Midterm Status	End Target	MTR Assessment
Value:	No SLM information system	Data Knowledge Information Facility (DKIF) under preparation	By Year 4 an SLM information System will be established and managed by MNRE	**On target**
Date:	2012	31 October 2016	30 October 2018	31 October 2016

There was a bit of confusion regarding the intent of Indicator No. 15. According the MTR evaluator's understanding of the envisaged results outlined in the project document, this indicator is a measure of strengthened institutional capacity on SLM issues, including carbon account for land use, land-use change, and forestry (LULUCF). At least 100 staff members from MNRE, MAF, and MWCSD are expected to complete SLM training at the USP. By midterm, such a training course has not yet been developed at the USP, and, hence, there is no progress to date towards this result. The MTR evaluator recommends discussing with USP representatives and also considering other options for achieving this result, e.g., existing course, e-learning options, training by doing approaches, etc.

No. 15: Number of government staff who have completed new training of trainers short term courses provided by USP on SLM, tailored for Samoa and including carbon accounting from LULUCF				
	Baseline	**Midterm Status**	**End Target**	**MTR Assessment**
Value:	No SLM training currently available at USP for government staff	0 staff	By the end of the project, at least 100 staff from MNRE, MAF, MWCSD have completed the SLM training at USP	**Not on target**
Date:	2012	31 October 2016	30 October 2018	31 October 2016

The final result expected under Outcome 2, as documented in Indicator No. 16, is associated with strengthening capacity building structures in the country, specifically through institutionalizing a SLM courses at the USP. Interviews with USP representatives during the MTR mission confirmed that a SLM course is indeed under development, and in a separate interview at the National University of Samoa (NUS), professors there indicated that NUS is developing a diploma course on sustainable agriculture.

No. 16: Number of long term courses institutionalized in USP to degree students on SLM				
	Baseline	**Midterm Status**	**End Target**	**MTR Assessment**
Value:	No SLM courses available at University for undergraduate students	Course under development	By the end of the project, at least 1 SLM long term course has been institutionalized at USP	**On target**
Date:	2012	31 October 2016	30 October 2018	31 October 2016

3.2.2. Remaining Barriers to Achieving the Project Objective

The two barriers identified in the project document as hindering progress towards realizing a multi-sectoral approach to SLM in Samoa remain relevant at the midterm of the project.

Barrier 1: Fragmented and primarily sectoral approach to land and ecosystems management

The release of the 2013-2016 National Environment and Development Sector Plan (NESP) was an important step towards improved cross-sectoral collaboration on natural resource management issues. The new agricultural sector plan and the forestry sector pan currently under review provider further support to multi-sectoral strategies. There remain certain deep-seated institutional differences, e.g., the viewpoint regarding the use of agricultural chemicals among MNRE and MAF officials. It will take time before sector specific habits and approaches are unified across other complementary agencies. The project is well positioned to support the operationalization of these collaborative structures in the field, through on-the-ground interventions, including implementation of sustainable agriculture practices, strengthening community driven natural resource management and conservation, and expanding reforestation and land restoration efforts. The project has several far-reaching targets that require collaborative, multi-sectoral partnerships, not only with governmental stakeholders but also with civil society, private sector, and academia.

Barrier 2: Local communities do not have capacities or strong incentives for effective landscape level SLM management

This barrier remains relevant. Government programs are increasingly promoting community driven economic development; this is evidenced, for example, through the Community Integrated Management (CIM) initiative administered by PUMA. Donor funded projects are also addressing the capacity gap at the community level – this is essentially the main aim of the World Bank SACEP project, in the agricultural sector. The programs are also supporting the Government's efforts to reinvigorate agricultural and forestry extension services. A few NGOs in the country are working closely with farmers, mentoring them and assisting certification as organic farmers or farms. Niche export markets are being successfully exploited by many organic farmers. The Government is also promoting organic farming, by establishing a new organic farming section in the MAF. The project is poised to feed into these various programs, working closely with communities in developing capacities and developing partnerships with government agencies, NGOs, donors, and the private sector, in instituting sustainable resource management measures in local communities.

3.3. Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

Project Implementation and Adaptive Management is rated at: Moderately Satisfactory

3.3.1. Management Arrangements

Project Board

The Project Board has convened four times since project inception: June 2014, April 2015, June 2015, and January 2016. The minutes from the January 2016 meeting were available to the MTR evaluator for review; copies of the minutes of the other meetings were not provided. The January 2016 Project Board meeting was fairly well attended, with apologies from the CEO of the MNRE (chairperson of the board), and the ACEO of the Water Resources Division of the MNRE. Discussion points were well documented in the minutes. There were discussions on progress with respect to activities, but there seemed to be a limited focus on achievement toward results according to the project results framework

GEF Agency (UNDP)

The UNDP-CO has provided substantive support services to the project, including administrative issues, financial reporting, procurement support, and technical advisory delivered through the regional technical advisor based in the Asia-Pacific Hub in Bangkok.

Progress reports have been thoroughly and timely produced. The 2016 project implementation review (PIR), however, does not reflect the challenges the project is having in meeting many of the agreed upon results. And, the internal ratings are over-stated, in the opinion of the MTR evaluator.

There is also evidence that risk management has been insufficient. The delays in starting up the project have been pointed out in the project progress reports, but there are significant constraints in fulfilling the intended the results on this project. These challenges should be captured in risk management process and communicated to the board so that mitigation measures can be formulated and implemented.

Executing Agency / Implementation Partners

The Executing Agency for this project is the MNRE, the CEO of the MNRE is the National Project Director, and day-to-day oversight is provided by the Land Resources Division.

The project strategy is built on a multi-sectoral approach to management of critical landscapes in the country, and this was envisaged to be facilitated through an essential joint implementation arrangement with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) and the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSD). In fact, the CEO Endorsement Document lists MNRE, MAF, and MWCSD as executing partners. According to the project document, the partnership arrangements among these three ministries were envisaged to be worked out in memoranda of understanding (MOU). By midterm, MOUs have not been formulated among the three key implementing partners.

Project execution has been affected by the delays in recruiting the Project Manager and other PMU staff. The Project Manager was finally hired in November 2014, which is roughly a year after the project document was approved by the Government. Two of the three other technical team leaders (the Project Manager is the technical team leader for SLM issues) joined in autumn 2015, and the third was hired in September 2016. The chief technical advisor of the project was recruited in spring 2016. At the time of the midterm mission in October-November 2016, the field assistants had not yet been recruited.

There was no evidence available indicating that the Technical Support and Advisory Team (TSAT) has been established as envisaged.

The PMU staff members are qualified professionals in the fields they are representing and each of the technical team leaders are overseeing relevant activities. Based on findings during the MTR mission, the project activities are insufficiently linked to the results framework. It would be advisable to results based management be shared among the team, with each team leader responsible for specific results.

3.3.2. Work Planning

There were significant delays in starting up the project. The Government signed the project document on 31 October 2018 and the project coordinator was not hired until late in 2014. One of the main reasons for this delay was a dispute regarding the proposed salary of the project manager; the post was advertised as a long-term consultancy position at a higher salary than

indicated in the project document. After prolonged discussions, the position was finally filled as a long-term consultancy position. The inception workshop was held in March 2015, and the project team, with the support of an external consultant, prepared a detailed inception report, issued in October 2015. The communications team leader and sustainable agriculture team leader were hired in the autumn of 2015, the technical advisor was brought on board in spring 2016 and the sustainable forestry team leader joined in September 2016. It took approximately 3 years to assemble to entire project management unit, from the time the project document was signed in October 2013.

The multi-year work plan presented in the project document was revised during the inception phase; an updated version was issued on 26 April 2015. Spending was roughly shifted forward one year in the revised work plan as compared to the indicate plan in the project document. Subsequent work plans were unavailable for review by the MTR evaluator.

The 26 April 2015 dated multi-year work plan includes an activity level breakdown of expected expenditures for the five-year period extending from 2014 through 2018. The performance indicators in the results framework are not integrated into the work plan, e.g., in the form of milestones. Such results-based planning would guide the PMU in prioritizing resource allocation and also serve as a useful communication tool when presenting progress to the project steering committee.

For the second half of the project, the MTR evaluator recommends implementing critical path work planning. This process includes identifying which activities are "critical" (i.e., on the longest path) and which can be delayed without making the project longer. Implementing critical path work planning would enable more control on time management and resource allocation.

3.3.3. Finance and Cofinance

A breakdown of project financing is presented below **Exhibit 4**.

Exhibit 4: Breakdown of Project Financing

Component	GEF Grant		Cofinancing	
	CEO Endorsed *% of Total*	*Expended by Midterm* (through 30 Jun 2016)	Confirmed Cofinancing at Project Approval	Realized by Midterm (30 Jun 2016)
Outcome 1: Communities and farmers are able to undertake and benefit from integrated land and water management on their traditionally owned lands	**USD 4,000,000** 84%	**USD 954,606** 87%	USD 20,705,535	Not broken down by project component
Outcome 2: Strengthened national enabling environment to promote integrated landscape management through local households and communities	**USD 506,363** 11%	**USD 91,488** 8%	USD 2,300,615	
Project Management	**USD 230,000** 5%	**USD 50,070** 5%	USD 1,210,850	
Unrealized Loss/Gain	NA	**USD 6,839**	NA	
Total:	**USD 4,736,363**	**USD 1,103,003**	**USD 24,217,000**	**USD 596,663**

Sources: CEO Endorsement Request, Combined Delivery Reports, Cofinancing Records

Financial Expenditures

By midterm, defined as 30 June 2016, USD 1,103,003 or 23% of the USD 4,736,363 GEF implementation grant had been expended, as broken down below **Exhibit 5**.

Exhibit 5: Indicative Budget and Actual Expenditures					
	Total Expenditures				GEF Grant
Component	2014	2015	2016*	Total	Prodoc Budget
Component 1	$31,954	$533,860	$388,792	**$954,606**	$4,000,000
Component 2	$40,847	$16,268	$34,373	**$91,488**	$506,363
Project Management	$830	$37,145	$12,095	**$50,070**	$230,000
Unrealized Loss	$1,121	$6,852	$457	**$8,430**	$0
Unrealized Gain	$0	$0	-$1,591	**-$1,591**	$0
Total	**$74,751**	**$594,125**	**$434,126**	**$1,103,003**	**$4,736,363**

Figures in USD; Source: Combined delivery reports (CDR), provided by UNDP

*2016 figures are for expenditures incurred from January through June, based on CDR reported 24 October 2016

The majority of expenditures have been spent under Component 1, at USD 954,606 by midterm. USD 91,488 have been expended under Component 2, and USD 50,070 for project management which is roughly 5% of the total spent.

The USD 594,125 incurred in 2015 is 94% of the annual budget for year of USD 629,050, which was approved by the National Project Director on 25 February 2015.

Financial audits have not yet been made for the project. The total sum of 2015 expenditures is slightly lower than USD 600,000 threshold that triggers an obligatory financial audit according to UNDP policy for the Samoa country office.

Procurement has proceeded through both public and UNDP systems. Goods and local services have been generally been procured through the public procurement system, and technical services have been procured using the UNDP procurement system. There has been somewhat of a learning curve with respect to public procurement policies and procedures; e.g., resubmittals and clarifications have resulted in extended procurement times in some cases.

Among contracts concluded with technical service providers, the two largest ones have been a USD 130,000 contract with Conservation International for Phase II of the KBA surveys and a USD 75,411 contract with the consultant Keyvan Izadi for a study on payment for ecosystem services (PES). Among the Atlas cost categories recorded on the combined delivery reports, the largest proportion of expenditures are allocated under category 72100, Contract Services – Companies. For example, in 2015, USD 385,505 of the total USD 594,125 expended were allocated under this category.

According to the undated asset register provided by the PMU, 30 items are listed at a cumulative value of SAT 131,656 (approx. USD 52,650). The list includes computer equipment, furniture, and one vehicle at a value of SAT 89,000 (approx. USD 35,600) The PMU staff indicated that the asset register needs to be updated; for example, only one of the three vehicles purchased on the project. It is also unclear how the project assets are represented in the combined delivery reports. There is only one entry for equipment, recorded under Project Management in 2015, at a cost of USD 1,932.

Cofinancing

The total sum of cofinancing confirmed at project approval was USD 24.217 million; including USD 0.6 million in in-kind Governmental contributions, USD 23 million from other Governmental

sources, and USD 0.617 million from UNDP (see **Annex 7**). The USD 23 million of other Governmental cofinancing includes parallel cofounding of USD 5 million from the AusAID Agro-Forestry Project and USD 18 million from the World Bank SACEP project. The UNDP grant cofinancing contributions included USD 0.4 million from the Samoa Cyclone Evan Early Recovery Project, USD 0.1 million from the Preparatory Assistance: Samoa TC Evan Early Recovery Project, and USD 0.117 million from the Private Sector Support Facility (PSSF).

By midterm, according to information available to the MTR evaluator, the amount of cofinancing realized is USD 0.597 million, or 2.5% of the total pledged at project approval.

Of the USD 0.617 million of envisaged UNDP cofinancing, USD 0.5 million has been realized and this is the expected amount by project closure. The Samoa Cyclone Evan Early Recovery Project was completed in 2013-2014 and the Preparatory Assistance: Samoa TC Evan Early Recovery Project was finalized in calendar year 2013. The USD 0.117 million from the PSSF was realized over the period of 2008 to 2012, which is before the SMSMCL project was approved and, therefore, not credited as cofinancing.

The PMU is not tracking cofinancing information. As part of the MTR inception report, submitted on 30 September 2016, the MTR evaluator requested information on cofinancing contributions realized by midterm. No information was submitted by the PMU by the time of the MTR mission or by the time the MTR report was submitted.

The USD 0.6 million of in-kind Governmental support probably represents staff time of MNRE and other agencies who are attending project board meetings and supporting various project activities, and possibly also covering PMU office costs. No information was available to the MTR evaluator regarding actual in-kind contributions realized.

With respect to the AusAID Agro-Forestry Project, the ACEO of the MNRE Forestry Division and the UNDP staff informed the MTR evaluator that there was a decision made in 2013-2014 to phase out this project as it had similar objectives of the UNDP-GEF ICCRIFS) project, and SAT 243,137 (USD 96,663) of remaining funds were transferred to MNRE in 2014. This amount is accounted as a cofinancing contribution for the SMSMCL project.

The largest cofinancing contribution, at USD 18 million is the form of parallel funding from the World Bank SACEP project. According to available information online, the SACEP project has three components: (1) Livestock production and marketing, at USD 4.73 million; (2) Fruit and vegetable production and marketing, at USD 3.02 million; and (3) Institutional Strengthening, USD 6.09 million. The total World Bank funding is USD 13.84 million, and the remaining amount to USD 18 million includes the Governmental cofinancing contributions.

The SACEP project is running, as confirmed during an interview of the SACEP project manager by the MTR evaluator. However, the SMSMCL PMU is not tracking cofinancing and no information was provided to the MTR evaluator regarding contributions realized to date. With respect to the expected amount of cofinancing from the SACEP project, the MTR evaluator assumes that the value of the World Bank funding will be relevant.

3.3.4. Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems

The monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan was prepared using the standard GEF template. A separate monitoring or evaluation plan was not included as part of the project document, and there is no evidence that such a plan has been prepared since start of project implementation.

The estimated cost for implementation of the M&E plan, as recorded in the project document, is USD 100,000, which is approximately 2% of the USD 4,736,363 GEF implementation grant. This is lower than the 3-5% range that is typical of full-sized GEF projects. The budgeted M&E line items include USD 20,000 for the MTR, USD 25,000 for the terminal evaluation and USD 40,000 for financial audits. The financial audit figure, which can be considered as USD 8,000 per year for 5 years, is considerably higher than what is typically allocated on GEF-financed projects. The M&E plan also included USD 3,000 for the inception workshop, USD 2,000 for annual status reports/workshops, and USD 10,000 to cover field visits by M&E staff.

The inception workshop was held in March 2015 and the inception report was finalized later that year, in October. The inception report provides the results of a detailed review of the project document, including some recommendations for making certain adjustments. For example, consultancies on payment for ecosystem services and REDD+ were added, as these issues were seen as reflective of current priorities of governmental and other project stakeholders. The inception process did not include a critical review of the project results framework, and baseline figures, particularly under Outcome 1 were not validated. By midterm, in October 2016, the baselines have not yet been validated, and some of the indicators and end targets are unclear to the project team.

One of the review comments at the PIF stage along with the PPG response were as follows:

Secretariat Comment at PIF	**Response**
GEF expects that during the PPG phase, baselines will be established and methodologies identified/introduced that allow monitoring and quantification of the GEBs, in particular carbon benefits during project implementation.	*... Some of the baseline information will be finalized during the project inception period – such as baseline household incomes, the level of awareness and understanding on SLM issues at the community level. This is because these will requires comprehensive surveys and community participation and thus will require additional time and resources*

As of midterm, much of the baseline information has not been finalized.

This project has particularly high monitoring and evaluation demands. There are 20 performance indicators, many of which call for quantitative changes in status. Monitoring protocols have not yet been developed, and the project team seems generally unprepared to address the intense monitoring requirements.

Certain development objectives are intrinsically built into the project results framework. For instance, household income of 5,000 households is slated to increase by at least 10% by the end of the project as a result of improved soil productivity following implementation of one or more soil or water conservation intervention. There is no gender disaggregation of the indicators; however there are opportunities for disaggregation of some of them.

3.3.5. Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships

The project has implemented some good examples of effective stakeholder engagement. For example, representatives from a number of different MNRE divisions and other ministries have participated in the community based trainings and training of trainers. This is a good practice that encourages cross-sectoral collaboration and also provides local residents with direct access to decision makers for issues they are facing in their communities. The project has also held a number of workshops, and has provided practical support to complementary sectoral programs. The project has worked closely with the Land Resources Division of the MNRE in the development of the Land Survey and Environmental Bill, which is expected to be passed later in 2017. For

instance, the project has supported the Water Resources Division of the MNRE in their efforts on community-led rehabilitation of watershed areas by funding community nurseries.

There has also been effective engagement with the academic sector, including formulation of the soil conservation manual by the University of South Pacific and endorsing the development of a diploma course at the National University of Samoa on sustainable agriculture. Several workshops have been held with local NGOs, and several of these have also been retained as service providers to support the project activities.

Based upon feedback obtained during the MTR mission, Government stakeholders clearly support the objectives of the project, and there is a high level of interest in seeing the project achieves the intended results on the ground.

While stakeholder engagement has been generally good during the first half of the project, developing and operationalizing partnerships, which is a critical aspect of this project, has been insufficient. The extensive results outlined under Outcome 1 require close collaboration with enabling partners, and there has been limited progress made in this regard. For each separate result, the key partner(s) should have been identified at project inception, synergies articulated on how project resources could be mobilized to support implementation of a particular intervention, roles and responsibilities agree upon, monitoring and evaluation systems developed, and a detailed work plan developed. The project has been working on a number of separate activities, but there is insufficient coordination with partners and a general impression that the project team will be spearheading the field interventions themselves. Implementing sustainable agriculture practices at more than 5,000 households, developing and implementing 50 sustainable village development plans, relocating thousands of heads of livestock, restoring thousands of hectares of degraded forest land, etc., require clearly defined partnerships.

The World Bank funded SACEP project is a good example. This initiative is the largest cofinancing partner for this project, but by midterm there have been on synergies discussed or implemented. Based on MTR interviews with the SACEP management team, there have been missed opportunities. For example, SACEP, through the Ministry of Agriculture, is running a grant facility for crop and livestock farmers. They have extended the time for farmers to request grant support, the latest time has now been pushed to January 2017. Several hundred farmers have taken part in this grant facility in the past couple of years, and the SMSMCL project could have dovetailed on this, e.g., by supporting training and field demonstration of sustainable agriculture practices. The project is not prepared to mobilize a meaningful participation by January 2017, but there additional opportunities for collaboration with SACEP until March 2018, when the SACEP project is slated to be closed (extended from the original March 2017 deadline).

3.3.6. Reporting

A few adaptive management measures were implemented during the inception phase of the project. For example, consultancies were added on studying options for payment for ecosystem services (PES) and implementing a PES pilot, and developing a policy on REDD+[1]. The addition of PES and REDD+ consultancies is supported by the Water Resources Division and Forestry Division of the MNRE, respectively. Accommodating these additional activities was justified by adjusting downward the overall level of effort by international consultants.

There have been two project implementation reviews (PIR) produced to date, one for 2015 and the most recent one for 2016. The 2015 PIR rated the progress toward development objective as

[1] Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries

moderately satisfactory and progress in implementation also as moderately satisfactory. The project had effectively not yet started any substantive activities when the 2015 PIR was issued, in June 2015, and recruitment of the project team had not yet been completed. The ratings applied in the 2016 were satisfactory, both for progress toward development objective and progress in implementation. The PIRs do address the significant delays in starting up the project; these were attributed to prolonged recruitment processes. The ratings applied in 2016, however, are overly optimistic, in the opinion of the MTR evaluator. There are significant risks associated with limited progress toward results. In fact, it is highly unlikely that the majority of intended results under Outcome 1 will be achieved by project closure. These risks were not sufficiently communicated in the PIR, or to the project board.

Certain social risks, e.g., conflicts experienced with the local communities due to late payments, are not reflected in the quarterly progress reports or the PIRs. Conflict management should be more proactively and inclusively managed.

The reports are mostly in narrative form, with progress and issues described in tabular form. The use of project management software might better enable stakeholders, including the project board members, to capture the key messages. For example, delays could be graphically represented Gantt charts, which also could show the inter-dependency of certain activities towards realizing a particular milestone.

3.3.7. Communications

Internal Communication:

The project has facilitated positive lines of communication with the relevant divisions of the MNRE, including Land Resources, Water Resources, Environmental Conservation, Planning and Urban Management, Corporate Services, etc. Communication has also generally been good with other ministries, including Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Women, Community, and Social Development.

The project board meetings provide the main communication feedback mechanism. There have been four board meetings by midterm: June 2014, January 2015, April 2015, and January 2016. Meeting minutes for the January 2016 were made available to the MTR evaluator; minutes for the other meetings were unavailable.

There is room for improvement regarding internal communication among the project management unit staff. For example, it would be advisable to assign specific results-based management tasks to each team leader, and have the team leaders more involved in project reporting.

External Communication:

Development of knowledge products to support external communication is in the early phases. The project has retained the services of a communications service provider to produce video documentaries of project activities. Footage has been produced during community based trainings, for example.

At the time of the MTR mission, procurement of a service provider to develop an SLM information management system was in progress. The system would partly be used as a project website, as portal for posting information and progress, and also as a national SLM database. Under a separate project, the UNDP-GEF project supporting the Government on obligations among the Rio Conventions, a data knowledge information facility (DKIF) is being developed. Some of the

interviewed stakeholders felt that the DKIF should be a single information clearinghouse, including for SLM related data. The project team, on the other hand, feels that a separate system will be needed as an interface to the DKIF. The other consideration is the website managed by the Land Resources Division of the MNRE. Is it necessary to have a separate project information system, or rather use the GEF resources to strengthen the Division's website? Prior to finalizing the contract with the service provider for the information management system, these issues should be further discussed and a consensus decision reached by the project board.

As part of the rapid biodiversity surveys of 3 key biodiversity areas (KBAs), the project has had an opportunity to engage local communities and document traditional ecological knowledge. There was some media coverage of the traditional ecological knowledge survey in October 2016 (e.g., Talamua online news, www.talamua.com). It would be advisable to develop a participatory plan on documenting and disseminating traditional ecological knowledge; two of the villages visited during the MTR mission stressed concern that they have been somewhat left out of the process of disseminating this knowledge.

Another issue discussed during the visits to the local communities was a general feeling of discontent by the local residents regarding delays in payments to the people who supported the scientific survey teams. Payments were reportedly delayed by approximately 3 months. In one village in Savai'i, the disgruntled local residents refused the team access and also damaged some of the vehicles used on the team. The project has not been able to return to this village because the mayor has sadly passed away in the meantime. Based on this experience, it would be prudent to develop a conflict management plan, and train the project team members and staff of service providers before starting each field intervention.

One of the performance indicators on the project is a measure of change in knowledge on SLM issues by local communities. Monitoring protocols have not yet been developed for this particular indicator. The MTR evaluator recommends that a simple knowledge, attitudes, practices (KAP) survey be developed, to provide a semi-quantitative assessment of public awareness.

3.4. Sustainability

Sustainability is generally considered to be the likelihood of continued benefits after the GEF funding ends. Under GEF criteria each sustainability dimension is critical, and the overall ranking, therefore, cannot be higher than the lowest one.

Overall:
Likelihood that benefits will continue to be delivered after project closure: Moderately Unlikely

Supporting Evidence:

+ SLM is integrated into certain sector plans, and new Land Survey and Environment Bill.
+ Evidence in the field of farmers taking their own initiative – effective training.
+ Community structures in place, e.g., farmer groups, women's committees.
+ Substantive project resources are allocated for capacity building.
− Project resources spread thin across many villages.
− Time is limited to affect behavioral changes
− Partnership arrangements have mostly not yet been operationalized on the project.
− Customary land tenure system presents challenges

- Uncertainties regarding climate change impacts
- There have been insufficient synergies developed with cofinancing partners, including the SACEP project.

3.4.1. Financial Risks to Sustainability

Financial Risks:
Likelihood that benefits will continue to be delivered after project closure: Moderately Unlikely

The Government of Samoa has demonstrated commitment to further improvements in natural resource management, as evidenced by progressive objectives set forth in recently adopted sector plans and strategies, e.g., the agricultural sector plan and the Upland Watershed Management Policy, and in ones under development, including the new forest sector plan and the land survey and environment bill. There also continues to be substantive donor support. However, there remain structural challenges; for example, the agricultural extension service, one the key enabling structures in the country for sustainable land management, has been significantly under-resourced over the past decade or so and is only recently starting to be reinvigorated. The forestry extension service has similar funding shortfalls.

The targeted results on this project for reforestation, restoration of degraded lands, and adoption of water and soil conservation on agricultural land significantly exceed, by one or two orders of magnitude, the efforts of the national partners, including assistance from the donor community, over the past 10 years or so. It is, therefore, unlikely that sufficient resources will be available to support maintenance and scaling up of project results following closure of this GEF project.

From a project perspective, available resources are spread thin, considering that 50 villages and more than 5,000 households are targeted for implementing SLM interventions. During the first half of the project, cost effectiveness has been fairly low, minimal results have been generated to date. And, there have been essentially no synergies developed with key cofinancing partners, notably the World Bank funded SACEP project. These shortcomings diminish the likelihood that benefits generated on the project will be sustained after GEF funding ceases.

3.4.2. Socioeconomic Risks to Sustainability

Socioeconomic Risks:
Likelihood that benefits will continue to be delivered after project closure: Likely

The vast majority of Samoan residents rely on ecosystem goods and services for their livelihoods, e.g., the agriculture and tourism sector. Culturally, there is a strong bottom-up or decentralized approach to socioeconomic development in Samoa. Government policies reflect this, in striving to strengthen community driven structures, e.g., through the Community Integrated Management (CIM) initiative. There are existing community governance structures in place, including farmers groups and women's committees that are well positioned to lead sustainable land management interventions.

The customary land tenure system in Samoa, on the other hand, presents challenges to implementing landscape scale sustainable land management schemes. The Government is making progress in this regard, particularly within critical landscapes. For example, successful land transfer arrangements have recently been achieved between the Government and Catholic Church for lands within the sensitive uplands in the Apia catchment. Also, the MTR evaluator was informed that the Land Board will not extend land leases to private commercial landowners in sensitive upland areas when the leases expire.

The project is contributing to mitigating socioeconomic risks to sustainability, e.g., a substantive proportion of project resources are allocated for capacity building. Practical training on sustainable agricultural practices and biodiversity conservation are sensible investments for ensuring community driven management of scarce ecosystem goods and services.

3.4.3. Institutional Framework and Governance Risks to Sustainability

Institutional Framework and Governance Risks:
Likelihood that benefits will continue to be delivered after project closure: Moderately Unlikely

As indicated under the discussion of financial risks to sustainability, there have been positive developments in terms of progressive sector plans and national strategies, with respect to sustainable development. The National Environmental Sector Committee has been formed to facilitate inter-sectoral collaboration towards achieving the objectives of the environmental sector plan; this provides a strong institutional framework and governance structure for guiding efforts at sustainable land management moving forward.

With respect to the specific results envisaged on the project, developing and operationalizing partnership arrangements are critical, not only for the timeframe of the project but after GEF funding ceases. By midterm, there had been little progress towards development these partnerships, thus significantly diminishing the likelihood of project sustainability.

3.4.4. Environmental Risks to Sustainability

Risks:
Likelihood that benefits will continue to be delivered after project closure: Likely

Except for fairly intense development pressure within the Apia catchment and the continued spread of alien invasive species through vast stretches of the country, there are relatively low environmental pressures on the Samoan terrestrial ecosystems. Furthermore, considering natural resources are socioeconomic backbone of the country, the Government is heavily invested in developing sensible sustainable development strategies and allocating resources towards improved natural resource management and conservation. As elsewhere in the world, local ecosystems will be faced with increasing stress as a result of the expected impacts of climate change. The Government of Samoa, with substantive donor support, have been investing heavily in adaptation strategies, aimed at reducing vulnerabilities of local communities and strengthening resilience of within the production sector.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Conclusions

Implementation delays have adversely impacted progress towards results, specifically for Outcome 1, and diminished the likelihood that benefits realized will be sustained after project closure. The end targets on this 5-year duration project are far-reaching and were not sufficiently validated during the project design stage. The project strategy was thoroughly reviewed at the inception phase, but the results framework was not critically reviewed and there has been inadequate focus on results during the implementation phase to date. Partnership arrangements, which are critical for this project, have not yet been worked out, e.g., the memoranda of understanding between the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) and the other implementing partners, including the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) and the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSD) have not materialized as envisaged in

the project design. The project has initiated several consultancies and started to deliver community level trainings, but the pathways linking these activities with the expected results are unclear, resulting in a general lack of coherence in project implementation.

The project team is unprepared to fulfill the formidable monitoring and evaluation demands of the project. Baseline conditions have, for the most part, not yet been validated; in fact, the sources of the many of the baselines remain unclear. Monitoring and evaluation protocols have not yet been, and required resources to support the requisite monitoring and evaluation are under-estimated.

There have also been shortfalls with respect to risk management and project oversight. Early warnings, particularly regarding negligible progress under Outcome 1, have not been adequately communicated, there has been insufficient focus by the project board on progress towards results, and internal progress reporting has provided an over-rated characterization of project status.

Based on the findings of the MTR, it is highly unlikely that envisaged results under Outcome 1 will be achieved within the project timeframe.

4.2. Recommendations

No.	Recommendation
1.	**Critically review the project strategy**. Several of the end targets within the project results framework do not match national strategies or capacities. A few suggestions have been made as part of this MTR, but a thorough critical review of the project strategic results framework should be made as soon as possible. Once the review has been made, a meeting should be held with senior level officials of MNRE, Ministry of Finance, and UNDP officials to determine whether to recommend changes to the GEF Secretariat.
2.	**Identify and operationalize strategic partnerships**. Partnerships are the key aspect to the multi-sectoral approach promoted on this project; however, the requisite partnership arrangements are not yet in place. a. Identify partners for each indicator in the results framework. Particular attention should be placed on developing memoranda of understanding with the MAF, MWSCD, and the SACEP. b. Develop a joint strategy for realizing the envisaged project results. The strategies should include clearly mapped out pathways for achieving the results. c. Develop a resource allocation plan for implementing the strategic partnerships; including labor requirements, project funding, cofinancing, monitoring and evaluation, etc. d. Implement the strategic action plans.
3.	**Strengthen project monitoring and evaluation systems.** Monitoring and evaluation systems are not in place and requisite resources are under-estimated a. Validate and/or update each of the individual baselines. For the expected result of greenhouse gas emissions avoided, the results of the GEF Carbon Benefits Project (CBP) should be consulted in reassessing baseline figures. b. Assign responsibilities among the project team leaders and develop M&E protocols for each individual indicator in the results framework. c. The GEF LD tracking tool indicator integrated into the project results framework should be clarified with the UNDP-GEF regional technical advisor. d. Prepare cost estimations for implementing the M&E protocols. e. Implement the M&E protocols and report regularly to the project board.
4.	**Improve work planning processes**. Project results are not integrated into the current work planning processes.

No.	Recommendation
	a. Work planning should be prepared based upon the project results framework, with end targets integrated as milestones. b. Team leaders should be assigned a set of indicators and develop work plans for those accordingly. c. Critical path work planning should be implemented for each individual indicator, and quarterly progress represented on Gantt charts, communicated to the project board.
5.	**Develop and implement a knowledge management strategy for the project**. The project has several opportunities for contributing towards expanded knowledge of SLM, but there is no coherent knowledge management strategy. a. Develop a knowledge management strategy, identifying key messages, beneficiaries, roles and responsibilities for implementing the KM strategy, etc. b. Prepare a separate action plan for management of traditional ecological knowledge, drawing from regional and international best practice, consultations with local communities, developing a roadmap for enabling communities to draw on their local knowledge, and record and disseminate it in forms that are useful for them.
6.	**Strengthen risk management processes**. Time is of the essence for the second half of the project; there is less than 2 years remaining to project closure. A proactive risk management process should be implemented. a. Prepare an updated analysis of current project risks. b. Assign risk "owners" to each of the identified risks, and develop a quarterly risk evaluation and reporting procedure. c. Develop and implement risk mitigation measures, and report progress at minimum quarterly to the project board.
7.	**Determine best way forward for SLM information management system**. Access and management of SLM information are important aspects of the sustainability of project results. As a first step, organize a technical level meeting with MNRE IT specialists, the service provider working on the DKIF on the Rio Conventions project, SMSMCL communication team leader, and UNDP staff, to discuss needs and systems for the envisaged SLM information system. Based on this meeting, develop a recommended way forward and present to the project board for approval.
8.	**Integrate gender considerations into the project strategy.** Gender considerations have not yet been thoroughly analyzed and integrated into the project strategy. A gender analysis should be prepared by a qualified specialist, and a gender action plan should be developed, not only addressing the remaining period of project implementation but also how to integrate gender and social inclusion considerations into the community driven development and management plans promoted by the project.
9.	**Improve project record-keeping.** Project record-keeping should be improved, including keeping an updated tally of cofinancing contributions, documenting project board meetings, keeping the project asset register up to date, etc. It would be advisable to develop and implement a file management system for all types of project documentation, including electronic files, hardcopy documents, audio-visual documentation, etc.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: MTR Itinerary

Date / Time	Activity	Name, Position	Venue
Tuesday 25 October 2016 **9.30am – 10.30am**	Meeting with UNDP	Yvette Kerslake – Program Manager Frances Brown Sara Ferrandi	UNDP Samoa Headquarters
11.00am – 12pm	Ministry of Natural Resources & Environment	Filisita Heather – ACEO, Land Management Division Francis Reupena – ACEO, Sector Coordination Unit Tuiolo Schuster – ACEO, Corporate Services Tolusina Moafanua – ACEO, Forestry Division Anne Rasmussen – ACEO, GEF Division	MNRE CEO Office, Level 3, TATTE Building, Sogi
1pm – 2pm	Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries	Misa Konelio – Acting CEO ACEO, Crops Division	MAF Crops Division, Nu'u
2.30pm – 3.30pm	MNRE Counterpart	Vaaelua Grace Laulala, Principal Land Management Officer	Conference Rm 3, Level 3, TATTE Building, Sogi
4pm – 5pm	SMSMCL Project	Project Management Unit	SMSMCL Office, Tamaligi
Wednesday 26th October 2016 9am – 10am	Samoa Farmers Association	Sala Sagato Tuiafiso, SFA representative, TOT Trainer	Conference Rm, Tamaligi Office
12pm – 1pm	National University of Samoa	Seumanu Gauna Wong – HOD Construction, Senior Lecturer Horticulture & Agriculture Ateca Silatolu – Senior Lecturer Horticulture, TOT Trainer	NUS Compound, Le Papaigalagala, Toomatagi
1pm – 2pm	Ministry of Finance	Lita Lui, ACEO Aid & Debt Coordination	Central Bank Building
2pm – 3pm	University of the South Pacific	Assoc. Prof. Mohammed Umar, Head of School of Agriculture and Food Technology (SAFT), Director, Institute for Research, Extension and Training in Agriculture (IRETA) and Agriculture Farm	USP School of Agriculture, Alafua Campus
3.30pm – 5pm	Conservation International Samoa	Schannel van Dijken, Officer in Charge	CI Samoa Office, Vailima
Thursday 27th October 9am – 10am	SMSMCL	Project Team	Tamaligi Office
10am – 11am	Farmer's Federation Incorporated	Saena Penaia, President	Conference Rm, Tamaligi Office
11.30am – 12.30pm	SMSMCL	Project team continued	Tamaligi Office
1pm – 2pm	Samoa Conservation Society	James Atherton – Secretary Christine Tuioti – Executive member	SCS Office, Vailima
2pm – 3pm	Women in Business Development Inc.	Adimaimalaga Tafuna'i, Executive Director	WIBDI office, Level 2, Nia Mall Building, Fugalei
4pm – 5pm	SMSMCL	Project team continued	Tamaligi Office
Friday 28th October 2016 8am – 11am	Field Visit to Uafato Project site and consultation with representatives of Village	Leau Onosa'i – Village chief, farmer Na'otama – Village chief, farmer	Uafato Village

Date / Time	Activity	Name, Position	Venue
	Council and Project Participants (local farmers)		
12pm – 4pm	Field Visit to Ti'avea Project site and consultation with representatives of the Village Council, women's committee & Project participants (local farmers)	Tuiavii Poloma Komiti – Mayor Noatasi – Village chief, farmer, TOT Model Farmer Malaesala – Village chief, farmer Seumalu – Farmer, TOT trainee Malaesala Sa – TOT trainee, TOT model farmer Feleti – TOT trainee, farmer	Ti'avea Village
Saturday 29th October 2016 8am – 9.30am **(pick up at 6am)**	Travel to Savaii	Travel team consists of: Levao Ricky Faatonu and Gardenia Elisaia-Morrison	Accommodation – Vaimoana seaside lodge
10.30am – 12.30pm	Field Visit to Aopo Project Site & consultation with representatives of the Village Council and Project participants		Aopo Village
2pm – 4pm	Field Visit to Falealupo Project Site and consultation with representatives of the Village Council, women's committee and project participants (local farmers)		Falealupo Village
Sunday 30th October 2016	Return to Upolu		
Monday 31st October 2016 10am – 11am	SMSMCL TA Forestry	Su'emalo Talie Foliga	Tamaligi Office
11am – 12pm	SMSMCL TA Agriculture	Levaopolo Ricky Faatonu	Tamaligi Office
1pm – 2pm	SMSMCL TA Media & Communications	Gardenia Elisaia-Morrison	Tamaligi Office
2pm – 3pm	SMSMCL Senior Technical Advisor	Tofilau Tepa Suaesi	Tamaligi Office
3pm – 5pm	SMSMSCL Project Manager	Seumaloisalafai Afele Faiilagi	Tamaligi Office
Tuesday 01st November 2016			
10am – 11am	Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development	Lemalama Taaloga, ACEO Internal Affairs	MWCSD Office, Tooa Salamasina
11am – 12pm	SACEP Project	Lafaele Enoka, National Project Coordinator	SACEP Office
2pm – 4pm	UNDP Deputy Resident Representative & Program Officer	Sara Ferrandi, Program Officer Notonegoro	UNDP Samoa Office
4pm – 5pm	Mt Vaea Restoration Site Visit	Su'emalo Talie Foliga, SMSMCL TA Forestry	Vailima
Wednesday 02nd November 2016 10am – 11am	MNRE	Tauti Fuatino Leota, MNRE ACEO Division of Environment and Conservation	TATTE Building

Date / Time	Activity	Name, Position	Venue
11am – 12pm	MNRE	Malaki Iakopo, MNRE ACEO Water Resources Division	TATTE Building
1pm – 2pm	MNRE Follow up Meeting	Moafanua Tolusina Pouli, MNRE ACEO Forestry Division	TATTE Building
2pm – 3pm	MAF Follow up Meeting	Misa Konelio, MAF ACEO Crops Division Tommy Tuuamaalii, MAF Principal Crops Officer	Crops Division Nu'u
Thursday 03rd November 2016 10am-12pm	Meeting with UNDP	Yvette Kerslake – Program Manager Frances Brown Sara Ferrandi	UNDP Samoa Office
2pm – 4pm	Debriefing and way forward with MNRE & UNDP	James Lenoci, MNRE, UNDP, Project Team	Conference Rm 1 & 2, MNRE, Level 3, TATTE Building, Sogi
Friday 04th November 2016 11am – 12pm	MAF Follow up Meeting	Misa Konelio, MAF ACEO Crops Division Tommy Tuuamaalii, MAF Principal Crops Officer	Crops Division Nu'u
1pm -	Meeting with SMSMCL – Way forward	James Lenoci, Project team	Tamaligi Office

Annex 2: List of Persons Interviewed

Name	Gender	Organization	Position
Filisita Heather	Female	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment	Assistant Chief Executive Officer (ACEO), Land Management Division
Francis Reupena	Female	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environ	ACEO, Sector Coordination Unit
Tuiolo Schuster		Ministry of Natural Resources and Environ	ACEO, Corporate Services
Tolusina Moafanua	Male	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environ	ACEO, Forestry Division
Anne Rasmussen	Female	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environ	ACEO, GEF Division
Malaki Iakopo	Male	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environ	ACEO Water Resources Division
Vaaelua Grace Laulala	Female	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environ	Principal Land Management Officer
Misa Konelio	Male	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries	Acting CEO, ACEO Crops Division
Lita Lui	Female	Ministry of Finance	ACEO, Aid & Debt Coordination
Lemalama Taaloga	Male	Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development	ACEO Internal Affairs
Lafaele Enoka	Male	SACEP	National Project Coordinator
Assoc. Prof. Mohammed Umar	Male	University of South Pacific	Head of School of Agriculture and Food Technology (SAFT), Director, Institute for Research, Extension and Training in Agriculture (IRETA) and Agriculture Farm
Annabella Tulin	Female	University of South Pacific	Visiting Professor, USP
Ateca Silatolu	Female	National University of Samoa	Senior Lecturer Horticulture/Sustainable Agriculture
TBC by Ricky	Female	National University of Samoa	
Seumanu Gauna Wong	Male	National University of Samoa	Head of Construction Dept, Senior Lecturer Horticulture/Sustainable Agriculture
Adimaimalaga Tafuna'i	Female	Women in Business Development Inc.	Executive Director
Sala Sagato Tuiafiso	Male	Samoa Farmers Association	SFA representative, TOT Trainer
Saena Penaia	Male	Farmers' Federation Incorporated	President
Schannel van Dijken	Male	Conservation International, Samoa Office	Officer in Charge
James Atherton	Male	Samoa Conservation Society	Officer in Charge
Notonegoro	Male	UNDP Samoa	Deputy Resident Representative
Yvette Kerslake	Female	UNDP Samoa	Program Manager
Sara Ferrandi	Female	UNDP Samoa	Program Officer
Doley Tshering	Male	UNDP Asia and the Pacific Regional Hub	Regional Technical Advisor
Seumaloisalafai Afele Faiilagi	Male	SMSMCL Project Management Unit	Project Manager
Su'emalo Talie Foliga	Male	SMSMCL Project Management Unit	Technical Advisor, Forestry
Levaopolo Ricky Faatonu	Male	SMSMCL Project Management Unit	Technical Advisor, Agriculture
Gardenia Elisaia-Morrison	Female	SMSMCL Project Management Unit	Technical Advisor, Media and Communications
Tofilau Tepa Suaesi	Male	SMSMCL Project Management Unit	Senior Technical Advisor
Vaitogi Konetio	Male	Aopo Village Council	Mayor
Malaita	Male	Aopo	Hunter
Soifua Levi	Male	Falealupo Village Council	High Chief
Afaese	Male	Falealupo	Hunter
Taumaloto Levi	Female	Falealupo Women's Committee	Rep

Name	Gender	Organization	Position
Noa Autasia	Male	Ti'avea	Farm Plan Developer
Fereti Fiu	Male	Ti'avea	TOT/CBT participant
Selafina	Female	Ti'avea Women's Committee	TOT participant
Luafulu M	Female	Ti'avea Women's Committee	TOT participant
Pua F	Female	Ti'avea Women's Committee	TOT participant
Leau Onosa'i M	Male	Uafato	TOT trainer
Alaifue	Male	Uafato	Village Council
Anastacia	Female	Uafato	Women's Committee Rep
Lufasiatu	Male	Uafato	TOT participant/Hunter
Vaisa	Male	Uafato	Village Council
Lemau	Male	Uafato	Village untitled Men Committee

Annex 3: List of Documents Reviewed

1. PIF – Project Identification Form;
2. SMSMCL – Project Document;
3. SMSMCL – CEO Endorsement Request documentation;
4. SMSMCL - Project Brief;
5. UNDP Environmental and Social Screening results;
6. Project inception report;
7. AWPs (annual work plans);
8. Annual financial project reports (CDRs) for years 2014, 2015, and 2016 (Jan-Jun);
9. Project asset register (not updated);
10. Project Implementation Reports (PIR's) for years 2015 and 2016
11. Consultancy products (report, technical studies, etc.);
12. Quarterly Progress Reports (QPRs) and quarterly Financial Reports (FRs)
13. Finalized GEF focal area Tracking Tools at CEO endorsement and midterm;
14. Minutes of SMSMCL meetings/Project board meeting minutes (only January 2016 available)
15. Communication products;
16. Community consultations minutes;
17. Draft farm plans;
18. Drat soil conservation manual;
19. GIS mapping report;
20. Draft policy review report;
21. SLM training of trainers documentation;
22. UNDP Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF); and
23. Strategy for the Development of Samoa 2012-2016
24. Agriculture Sector Plan
25. National Environment Management Strategy/Plan (the Environment Sector Plan)
26. National Program of Action to combat land degradation and to mitigate the effects of drought 2015-2020

Annex 4: MTR Evaluation Matrix

Theme	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
Project Strategy			
Project Design:	Project design remains relevant in generating global environmental benefits.	GEF strategies, national and subnational development plans, PIF, project document, CEO endorsement request, reviews, PIRs	Desk review, interviews
Results Framework:	Results framework fulfils SMART criteria and sufficiently captures the added value of the project.	Strategic results framework, tracking tools, inception report, PIRs	Desk review, interviews
Mainstreaming:	Broader development objectives are represented in the project design.	Project document, social and environmental social screening procedure, gender action plan, work plans for community activities, training records, monitoring reports of community activities, PSC meeting minutes, stakeholder feedback during MTR missions	Desk review, interviews, field visits
Progress towards Results			
Progress towards Outcomes Analysis:	See report on progress towards results in Annex 5.	PIRs, self-assessment reports by PMU, annual reports, monitoring reports, output level deliverables, midterm tracking tool, stakeholder feedback during MTR missions	Desk review, interviews, field visits
Remaining Barriers to Achieving the Project Objective:	Delivered outputs address key barriers.	PIRs, annual reports, PSC meeting minutes, stakeholder feedback during MTR missions	Desk review, interviews, field visits
Project Implementation & Adaptive Management			
Management Arrangements, GEF Partner Agency:	Lessons learned on other projects under the CBPF incorporated into project implementation.	PIRs, PSC meeting minutes, audit reports, feedback obtained during MTR missions	Desk review, interviews
Management Arrangements, Executing Agency/Implementing Partner:	Effective management response to recommendations raised by project steering committee.	PIRs, PSC meetings, feedback obtained during MTR missions	Desk reviews, interviews
Work Planning:	Milestones within annual work plans consistent with indicators in strategic results framework.	Project document, multi-year work plan, annual work plans, PIRs, financial expenditure reports, feedback obtained during MTR missions	Desk review, interviews
Finance and Cofinance:	Efficient financial delivery.	Financial expenditure reports, combined delivery reports, audit reports, PSC meeting minutes, PIRs, midterm cofinancing report, feedback obtained during MTR missions	Desk review, interviews
Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems:	Timely implementation of adaptive	PIRs, midterm tracking tools, monitoring reports, annual progress reports, self-assessment reports by	Desk review, interviews, field visits

Theme	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
	management measures.	PMU, PSC meeting minutes, feedback obtained during MTR missions	
Stakeholder Engagement:	New partnerships in PA management realised.	Stakeholder involvement plan in the project document, meeting minutes, records of exchange visits, stakeholder feedback obtained during MTR missions	Desk review, interviews, field visits
Reporting:	Adaptive management measures implemented in response to recommendations recorded in PIRs.	PIRs, annual progress reports, midterm tracking tools, output level project deliverables, feedback obtained during MTR missions	Desk review, interviews
Communication:	Project information is effectively managed and disseminated.	Internet and social media, press releases, media reports, statistics on awareness campaigns, evidence of changes in behaviour, feedback obtained during MTR missions	Desk review, interviews, field visits
Sustainability			
Risk Management:	Timely delivery of project outputs.	Project document, risk logs, PIRs, PSC meeting minutes, feedback during MTR missions	Desk review, interviews
Financial Risks to Sustainability:	Verifiable progress towards improving PA financial sustainability.	PA financial sustainability scorecards, budget allocations,	Desk review, interviews, field visits
Socio-Economic Risks to Sustainability:	Introduction of viable alternative livelihoods reduces unsustainable utilisation of natural resources.	Alternative livelihoods realized, jobs created, records of conflict resolutions, statistics on awareness campaigns	Desk review, interviews, field visits
Institutional Framework and Governance Risks to Sustainability:	Strengthened capacity of PA management staff.	Capacity development scores, PA management effectiveness tracking tool, training records, evidence of policy reform	Desk review, interviews, field visits
Environmental Risks to Sustainability:	Increased environmental awareness.	PA management effectiveness tracking tool, budget allocations for environmental monitoring, monitoring results, training record, statistics on awareness campaigns	Desk review, interviews, field visits

Annex 5: Progress towards Results

Assessment Key:	**Green:** Achieved	**Yellow:** On target to be achieved	**Red:** Not on target to be achieved
Achievement Rating Scale:	Ratings assigned using the 6 point Progress Towards Results Rating Scale: HS, S, MS, MU, U, HU		

Indicator	Baseline	End of Project target	2016 Level (self-reported)[1]	Midterm Level Assessment	Midterm Justification
Objective: To strengthen local capacities, incentives and actions for integrated landscape management to reduce land degradation and greenhouse gas emissions and to promote conservation whilst enhancing sustainable local livelihoods**.**					
Obj-1: Area under increased vegetative cover (with average tree density of 111 trees/ ha)	135000 ha	Increased by 24,430 ha	Four village communities in Upolu Island - Uafato, Ti'avea, Maagiagi and Tafitoala - and four villages in Savai'i Island - Aopo, Taga, Falealupo and Avao - a total of 8 of the 120 target project village communities have been engaged in the implementation of the various project's sustainable land management components as follows: 1) The assessment of state of the target project Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) in the Preliminary and Rapid Assessment Surveys as the precursor to the formulation of plans to revive and or strengthen past conservation and biodiversity management efforts: the villages of Uafato, Ti'avea, Maagiagi, Aopo, Taga and Falealupo. 2) The engagement of local farmers in the sustainable agriculture and landscape farm planning training programme - Ti'avea and Taga. 3) The engagement of local livestock farmers in the relocation and or buffering of livestocks established in catchment areas - Tafitoala and Avao. The following statistics reflect the level of engagement of the eight (8) target communities in the project components: 1) KBA surveys: Close to two hundred (200) villagers were consulted and close to a hundred (100) took part in the preliminary survey and the preparation of transects for the comprehensive biodiversity assessment survey because of their traditional knowledge and practical experiences with the four (4) target KBAs. 2) Sustainable Agriculture Practices and Landscape Farm Plan Training Programme (SAPLFPTP): More than a hundred (100+) took part in the SAPLFPTP with eight (8) of them that have established landscape farm plans that will be implemented from the third quarter (July - September) of this year 2016 with assistance from the project. 3) Livestock (cattle, pigs & poultry) Farm Relocation and or Buffering from Catchments: Close to a hundred (100) villagers were	**Not on target**	The first objective level indicator calls for an increase of 24,430 ha in vegetative cover by the end of the project. The source of the baseline figure of 135,000 ha is unclear and has not yet been validated by midterm. Based upon the MTR evaluator's understanding of the information presented in the project document, the 24,430 ha of increased vegetative cover is roughly broken down as follows: 18,000 ha under sustainable agroforestry, 5,000 ha of reforestation and 500 ha of degraded land restoration. The project has not identified with relevant partners how this result will be achieved. The targets for reforestation and degraded land restoration, for example, are not consistent with sector plans of the Forestry and Water Resources Division. Furthermore, the requisite monitoring protocols for measuring progress have not been developed; for instance, will remote sensing be used to measure progress, tree planting reports, etc

[1] Information in this column copied from 2016 project implementation review (PIR).

Indicator	Baseline	End of Project target	2016 Level (self-reported)[1]	Midterm Level Assessment	Midterm Justification
			consulted with three (3) of them that have agreed and were selected to develop and implement plans for the relocation and or buffering of their cattle farm from catchments with the project assistance from the third quarter (July - September) of this year 2016.		
Obj-2: Area under forest cover (no net loss due to land use conversion) under effective management	128000 ha 164,000 ha (NFI 2014)	128000 ha 164,000 ha (NFI 2014)	The following steps were started for this outcome: 1) Plans are underway for the assessment and rehabilitation of the thirteen (13) acres of highly vulnerable catchment lands at Malololelei of the Apia Catchment that was taken under the Taking of Land Act for Public Purpose 1964 with the project's assistance in 2015. 2) The project have identified the Apia Catchment as the target area for the development of a first Payment for Ecosystem Services or PES Scheme for Samoa as a result of the first phase of the PES consultancy and plans are underway in a second phase of the PES consultancy to implement this in the remaining quarters of 2016. This step will contribute to the rehabilitation activities such as the replanting of the Apia catchments with native and indigenous species from the 2017 with the project assistance in collaboration with other projects. 3) The project have consulted and agreed with the EWAC to work together on the development of the Apia Catchment Management Plan with the project's focus on the PES scheme and any other strategies that will help implement this plan.	**Not on target**	Similar to the case for Indicator Obj-1, the source of the baseline for Indicator Obj-2 is unclear and the baseline figure has not yet been validated. The 128,000 ha baseline might be the total area of native forests among key biodiversity areas in the country; however, it is uncertain. Achieving no net loss in forest cover due to land use conversion requires a nation-wide, cross-sectoral monitoring and evaluation coordination. For example, input regarding agricultural land conversion changes in commercial forestry, conversion as a result of residential or commercial development, etc. Also, the method of measuring the change has not yet been worked out. Will remote sensing interpretations be used to make the assessment, for instance? By midterm, there was no evidence in progress towards this indicator, the baseline has not been validated, the midterm status not determined, and the required monitoring and evaluation protocols have not been formulated.
Obj-3: Increase of agriculture income and consumption per household as a consequence of increased productivity of land	US$2692 on average (national[1])	5000 households' incomes increase by 10% on average by project end through increased land productivity	As discussed above close to a hundred (100) farmers of two (2) target villages have completed the Community Based Training (CBT) of the Sustainable Agriculture and Landscape Farm Plan Training Programme Eight (8) of	**Not on target**	The source of the baseline figure of USD 2,692 in agriculture household income is unclear and this baseline has not yet been

[1] The average household income of target areas will be determined at project start

Indicator	Baseline	End of Project target	2016 Level (self-reported)[1]	Midterm Level Assessment	Midterm Justification
			them that have formulated plans that will be implemented with the project's assistance from the 3rd quarter (July - September) of 2016. More than fifty (50) participants who are technical government and non-governmental officials have completed the Training of Trainers (TOT) of the SALFPTP. A third of them were involved in the design and implementation of the CBT in two (2) of the target villages of Ti'avea and Taga.		validated. In fact, the agriculture census does not include this parameter among those surveyed. The project has implemented two community based trainings and a few of the farmer households in these villages have started to supplement their cash crops with vegetable patches for own consumption and for sale as a source of additional household income. These activities have only started in 2016 and there has not been a full year for assessing changes in annual household agriculture income. The monitoring protocols for measuring household agricultural income have also not yet been established. This is not a straightforward parameter to measure, as many farmer households are not keeping detailed records, farmers tend to have steep fluctuations in income throughout the year, and it is important to differentiate between changes in prices for their baseline agricultural products as compared to the marginal improvements realized as a consequence of increased land productively.
Obj-4: Total amount of CO2 equivalent greenhouse gas emission avoided, and sequestered at the target sites due to effective application of SLM good practices	Total national emissions from AFOLU 135.37, Gg CO2-e (2007).1	Avoided emission of 689333 CO2-eq for 4 years and sequestration of store additionally 10,755 tCO2eq.	Recruitment is underway for a REDD technical expert to provide assess and provide guidance on the implementation of this outcome. In the meantime the GIS mapping required to assist with this work covering the project's target communities were completed and are made available online under the project's GIS technical expert consultancy.	**Not on target**	Indicator Obj-4 is similar to Indicator Obj-1, except increases in vegetative cover is measured in terms of greenhouse gas emissions avoided compared to land area. As there is no progress yet in increasing area of vegetative cover, there is similarly no change from the

[1] GoS 2010, Samoa's 2nd National Communication to UNFCCC.

Indicator	Baseline	End of Project target	2016 Level (self-reported)[1]	Midterm Level Assessment	Midterm Justification
					baseline in terms of CO_2 equivalent greenhouse gas emissions avoided.
			Achievement Rating, Project Objective:	**Moderately Unsatisfactory**	
Outcome 1: Communities and farmers are able to undertake and benefit from integrated land and water management on their traditionally owned lands**.**					
1. Number of certified organic farmers/farms	606[1] certified currently exist; 345 in Savaii & 261 in Upolu	A 30% increase in number of households engaged in organic farming or more ecological farming	Consultations were carried out with all the NGOs in the country that are engaged in the promotion and establishment of organic farming systems among local farmers in the country including the Women in Business Development Incorporation WBDI, Matua i le Oo Environment Trust METI, Samoa Farmers Association SFA, Farmers Federation Incorporated FFI, Samoa Coconut Clusters SCC and Samoa Umbrella of Non-governmental Organisations SUNGO regarding the project's support of their organic farming processes for upscaling their work in the project's target village communities. These organisations are working on their plans to submit to the project for consideration with METI as the first to submit its proposal that is currently under consideration and negotiation for a possible implementation to start in the third or fourth quarter of 2016. In relation to these efforts the work with local farmers in the project's target villages under the SALFPTP and the Livestock Relocation project components constitute attributes which also contributes to the organic farming and ecological farming aspects of this outcome.	**Marginally on target**	The first indicator under Outcome 1 is the change in the number of certified organic farmers/farms, with a 30% increase earmarked by the end of the project, from a baseline number of 606. During an interview with the director of WIBDI, one of the local NGOs involved the mentoring organic farmers in Samoa, indicated that the current number of organic farmers is 667; this is a 10% increase from the baseline, which is presumably from 2012. An "on target" midterm status is applied; however, the baseline should be adjusted to 2013, the date when the project started. Considering that the recently issued agricultural sector plan includes establishment of an organic farming section, it is likely the number of certified organic farmers will continue to increase in the coming years.
2. Increased density and diversity of native tree species in cyclone damaged landscapes around Apia covering 3314 ha	With recent damage by TC Evans, baseline will be determined when project start.	At least 50% increase forest cover in a landscape	The project is working closely with the MNRE's Division of Forestry as a partner of the Government's Two Million Tree Planting Campaign with the project's support and contribution in the project's target communities. In the meantime the GIS mapping requirements of this outcome were completed under the GIS consultancy and are made available online.	**Not on target**	Indicator No. 2 calls for an increase in the density and diversity of native tree species in cyclone damaged landscapes around Apia, covering 3,314 ha. The baseline for this indicator has not been established by midterm; a note in the results framework indicates that the baseline will be determined when the project starts due to the then recent

[1] Women in Business (WIB)

Indicator	Baseline	End of Project target	2016 Level (self-reported)[1]	Midterm Level Assessment	Midterm Justification
					damage by Tropical Cyclone Evans. For example, there is no evidence that the post cyclone report and recovery plan has been used to support strategic approach towards achieving this result. And, there is also no evidence of establishing strategic partnerships for achieving this result. The project has been working with the Water Resources Division, including on the Upland Watershed Management Policy, which likely covers some of the same geographic areas as outlined in Indicator No. 2; but this is uncertain. Not only is the baseline unclear, i.e., where specifically will the increase in forest cover be realized, the strategy on how to achieve the increased forest cover has not been worked out, and there are no monitoring protocols in place for measuring and evaluating progress
3. Area of natural forests, riverine areas and wetlands under protection and management in the production landscape under community land use plans (forest and tree cover maintenance; maintenance of wetlands; no net increase of agricultural land under mono cropping)	0	By the end of the project, at least 55000 ha will be under integrated landscape management outside KBAs	As stated above relevant work on this targets include the following: 1) Join collaboration established with the EWAC project on the rehabilitation of the Apia Catchment on the target KBAs. 2) SAPLFPTP have started with two (2) of the five (5) target KBA communities. 3) Work underway for the rehabilitation and management of the 10 acre land secured in the Apia Catchment as a reserve under the Taking of Land for Public Purpose Act 1964 4) The Preliminary Surveys and the Preparation for the Comprehensive Biodiversity Assessment Surveys have been completed in all the four (4) target KBAs.	**Not on target**	The context of Indicator No. 3 is unclear to the project team. The end target calls for at least 55,000 ha under integrated landscape management outside key biodiversity areas (KBAs). The project has spent substantive resources and time on completing surveys of select KBAs, and much of the community based planning conceptualized to date focus on engaging local residents in collaborative management arrangements of sections of KBAs that fall within the particular village jurisdiction. KBAs are not designated as protected areas in

Indicator	Baseline	End of Project target	2016 Level (self-reported)[1]	Midterm Level Assessment	Midterm Justification
					Samoa, and there are no particular land use restrictions compared to areas outside KBAs. It would seem be more sensible to include KBAs under this indicator. Consultations have only begun with two communities and the management plans for the KBAs have not yet been prepared; hence, by midterm, there is no progress realized towards this result. And, monitoring and evaluation protocols have not yet been developed; these will need to be participatory, using local residents to record land use status and changes.
4. Number of farmer households adopting at least one or more soil / water management and conservation practices on agricultural lands	There are 10790 households in the target area of the project, but with limited soil and water conservation activities	At least 5000 households will be adopting soil management and conservation practices in their land by the end of the project covering at least 18000 ha	As explained above eight (8) local farmers of two target village communities have adopted Landscape Farm Plans as a direct results of their participation in the project's Sustainable Agriculture and Landscape Farm Plan Training Programme (SALFPTP) component and two (2) cattle farmers are formulation relocation and or buffering zone from catchment plans as a result of consultation on the livestock and catchment component of the project. These farmers will be engaged to develop their capacities in the implementation of their plans in a three monthly cycle process of action or implementation, review or reflection and planning or consultation stages with appropriate support and accompaniment from the project PMU and project teams of government and local trainers and assistants. These farmers represents households in the target villages that have started important first steps through the implementation of their farm plans for developing their capacities and resources for adopting sustainable land management and soil conservation and management practices. Supporting these farmers plans are valuable guidance and information from the soil manual work that is currently under preparation through a project consultancy with the USP Alafua experts; a mapping exercise with the GIS mapping consultancy with CI and where relevant the KBA biodiversity surveys through another consultancy with CI.	**Not on target**	By midterm there have only been consultations made with a few communities. A total of 14 individual farm plans have been submitted by local farmers; this represents less than 1% of the 5,000 end target. Practically, the only way to get close to approaching this target would be to partner with existing initiatives, e.g., the World Bank SACEP project, and/or the extension services of the Ministry of Agriculture. Also, it is important to ensure that the interventions are focused on soil/water management or conservation practices. Some of the farm plans seem to be for expanding vegetable production on existing farms; this might contribute to increased household income, but not necessarily would mean improvements in soil or water conservation.

Indicator	Baseline	End of Project target	2016 Level (self-reported)[1]	Midterm Level Assessment	Midterm Justification
5. Increased water quality as a consequence of enhanced watershed management and water source protection	Water quality at sampled sites (3 major sites) shows confirmed incidences of *E.coli* presence exceeding national standards	At least 50% of the project sites report on increased water quality by the end of the project – including *E. coli* levels within national standards; and additional parameters of nutrient loads (such as nitrogen) are also within acceptable international standards	Water quality testing is underway in the project target communities that have been engaged so far with the different project components starting from the	**Not on target**	Baseline information was unavailable for review during the MTR mission; the project team thinks that the "3 major site" might refer to the following rivers: Fuluasou River, Malololelei River, and Vaisigano River. But, water quality baseline data are unavailable. This indicator links improved water quality with the efforts of enhanced livestock management. Achieving verifiable water quality improvements over a 5-year project timeframe is quite ambitious, considering that the areas where the enhanced livestock management measures will be implemented are not yet determined. Also, detailed baseline hydrological surveys, land use assessments, and socioeconomic assessments (e.g., possible impacts from residential septic systems) need to be carried out to support a determination of water quality improvements. These have not yet been done either. One of the villages targeted by the project, Uafato, has recently reached a resolution of relocating several head of cattle out of the village proper, and one set of surface water sampling and analysis has been funded by the project. This represents negligible progress towards this rather formidable indicator, calling for water quality improvements of at least 50% of project sites. There are 126 villages earmarked by the project. It is unclear whether the 50% target is associated with this number of sites; this would mean at least 63 sites. Allocated project resources do not match such a

Indicator	Baseline	End of Project target	2016 Level (self-reported)[1]	Midterm Level Assessment	Midterm Justification
					large number of sites.
6. Per cent of Livestock relocated to optimal grazing areas away from critical riparian areas	Estimated 30000 livestock in target areas, covering 5000 ha	At least 50% relocated, covering 2500 ha	As explained above two (2) cattle farmers have been engaged in two local villages of Tafitoala in Upolu Island and Avao in Savaii Island to formulate plans for the relocation and or buffering of their cattle farms from catchment streams and water ways. The engagement of these cattle farmers will also aimed at building their capacities to implement their plans through a three monthly cycle process of action, reviewing and planning stages as with the landscape farm plans implementation.	**Not on target**	Following the previous result, Indicator No. 6 calls for relocating at least 50% of 30,000 livestock in target areas to optimal grazing areas away from critical riparian catchments. Considering that the 2012 agricultural census indicates that there were 29,553 head of cattle in the country, this target is far-reaching. There has been negligible progress towards achieving this result. As previously indicated, a few head of cattle have been relocated from Uafato village. Relocating livestock is not as straightforward as it is stated in this indicator. In order to achieve sustainable relocation, a comprehensive livestock management approach needs to be taken. For example, if livestock are fenced in, then farmers will need to start growing crops and implement pasture management practices that ensure steady supply of feed. Also, one of the reasons why livestock are located in riparian areas is water supply, and if relocated to non-riparian areas, then alternative water sources would need to be provided. Waste management and public health and safety are other aspects that need to be considered. If livestock are confined, then a system for management wastes will need to be developed; currently, this is not a concern, as the livestock are free-roaming. Furthermore, there are health and safety regulations that are relevant; such as minimum distance to residential

Indicator	Baseline	End of Project target	2016 Level (self-reported)[1]	Midterm Level Assessment	Midterm Justification
					dwellings, etc.
7. Number of integrated participatory village level SLM plans	No village plans incorporating SLM	At least 50 villages have developed plans integrating SLM with the participation of 15000 community member including men, women and young	The project PMU has completed rounds of consultations with key stakeholders in particular the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSD), the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment's Planning and Urban Management Agency (MNRE/PUMA), the Samoa Umbrella for Non-governmental Organizations (SUNGO) and others who are leading the engagement of local village communities in community development planning processes to seek an agreement with them on an integrated planning framework for building village sustainable land management plans. The results of these consultations was a general agreement on the emerging Community Integrated Management Plan (CIM Plan) process as the integrated framework for building village SLM plans in the project's target communities. The project PMU is currently working closely with the CIM Plans project to start the formulation and implementation of SLM plans in the project's target communities starting from eight (8) communities of Uafato, Ti'avea, Maagiagi, Tafitoala, Aopo, Taga, Falealupo and Avao that have already been engaged in the different project components.	**Not on target**	Indicator No. 7 calls for developing at least 50 sustainable village development plans by the end of the project. By midterm, one plan is in draft form, for the Uafato village. According to the project document, the target of 50 includes 26 that the MWCSD had already preliminarily draft back in 2009, and 24 new ones. There is no evidence of progress towards further developing the 26 existing plans. All in all, the target of 50 seems rather arbitrary. An alternate approach might be to take a district approach, in line with the Community Integrated Management (CIM) strategy developed by the Planning and Urban Management Agency (PUMA). For example, one village plan might be developed in each of the 16 administrative districts in the country. These would be model plans, possibly focusing on particular themes, which could then be scaled up in other villages in the districts. 16 plans is more manageable than 50, and also the approach would be more aligned to current national socioeconomic development strategies.
8. Number of community members that report on increased knowledge and capacity on SLM	No reports on knowledge on SLM	At least 40% of the communities are able to report on increased knowledge on SLM through access to national SLM system, audio-video materials and trainings	Initial efforts which contribute to this target includes work with local farmers and the ongoing KBA surveys in the target communities have have arelady been engaged in the implementation of various project components..	**Not on target**	Indicator No. 8 is associated with increased knowledge and capacity on SLM issues. There has been limited progress towards this result, as the project managed to deliver 4 trainings (2 community based and 2 training of trainers). Achieving increased knowledge by the end of the project, however, is likely based

Indicator	Baseline	End of Project target	2016 Level (self-reported)[1]	Midterm Level Assessment	Midterm Justification
					on the plans on developing an information system and producing various audio-visual and printed knowledge products. Determining on a method to measure knowledge should be worked out, in order to adequately verify results of public outreach.
			Achievement Rating, Outcome 1:	**Moderately Unsatisfactory**	
Outcome 2: Strengthened national enabling environment to promote integrated landscape management through local households and communities**.**					
9. Soil management and conservation manual targeting local communities in local language	No soil management and conservation manual	By the end of year 1 a Soil management and conservation manual developed including SLM practices for agriculture, forestry and water resources management	A draft soil manual has been produced under a consultancy with the soil experts of the USP Alafua Campus. The draft covered all of Savai'i and the remaining part that is currently under development will include Upolu and the rest of the inhabited small islets of Manono and Apolima. In the meantime the draft has important content that will be incorporated into the relevant modules and courses of the SALFPTP with local farmers of the target project communities.	**On target**	The first result under Outcome 2, represented as Indicator No. 9, is development of a soil management and conservation manual. The service provider contracted, University of South Pacific (USP), has made good progress in developing the manual, with a draft version under review. Once the manual is finalized in English, and abbreviated version is planned to be made in Samoan language. The MTR evaluator recommends that more information on forestry and water resource management be added to the manual.
10. Number of national policies and plans that support for inter-sectoral and partnership approach to promote community based SLM	A number of policies and plans to support SLM (see section 1.5 of the project document) but inter-sectoral approach is weak	• Land Resource management legislation developed and national land use policy updated	The review of Sustainable Land Management Policies is currently underway. This work will lead to the formulation of a more broad and integrated policy framework that strongly linked and considered the land resources constraints and limitations of the country's islands in a more holistic and unified way with the country's development policies and plans. On a more practical sense this framework will address critical areas	**On target**	There has also been satisfactory progress with respect to policy support, as outlined below in the status report for Indicator No. 10. The project has provided technical advisory service to the Land Resources Division in development of the Land Survey

Indicator	Baseline	End of Project target	2016 Level (self-reported)[1]	Midterm Level Assessment	Midterm Justification
		• Agriculture Sector Plan 2011-2016 strengthened to mainstream SLM approaches and management practices	of land use that threatened to undermine the long term stability and security of the country's land resources and related land resources, geological and ecological service, such a more comprehensive land resource management policy for the country.	**Achieved**	and Environment Bill, which is expected to be passed in 2017. The recently issued agriculture sector plan includes reference to sustainable agriculture objectives. In fact, there are also opportunities to mainstream sustainable forestry objectives in the forestry sector plan, which is currently under review. The project has funded a comprehensive SLM policy review; however, governmental stakeholders should decide how to implement the recommendations presented in the review, e.g., by strengthening or developing policies on mining and other land use activities. The final target under this indicator is development of formal SLM guidelines to support the village level planning outlined in the PUMA Act; there is no evidence of progress towards developing these envisaged formal guidelines.
		• policies on mining (including sand mining) strengthened or developed		**On target**	
		• formal guidelines for sustainable land management under village development plans under PUMA Act deveoped		**Not on target**	
11. increased capacities for INRM as measured by an increase in the score of the GEF LD Tracking Tool Enhanced cross-sector enabling environment for integrated landscape management	3	5	The SMSMCL Project has established working links with the following sustainable land management relevance programmes: 1) EWAC (Economic Wide Approach to Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management to Reduce Climate Vulnerability of Communities in Samoa in terms of the development of management schemes for the Apia catchment area such as the project's Payment for Ecosystem or PES to support the rehabilitation of the Apia catchment resources; 2) SACEP in terms of collaboration on the implementation of the Landscape Farm Plans under the project's Sustainable Agriculture and Landscape Farm Plan Training Programme; 3) AF (Adaptation Fund) in terms of collaboration on the development of an integrated planning process for the development of village communities in terms of the project's support for the emerging Community Integrated Management Plans that integrate all planning processes of the government with	**Not on target**	Indicator No. 11 is linked to the GEF Land Degradation Tracking Tool, specifically regarding enhanced cross-sector enabling environment for integrated landscape management. The baseline tracking tool assigns a score of 3 for this indicator, inferring that an "*Integrated Natural Resource Management (INRM) framework have been formally proposed but not adopted*". The midterm tracking tool assessment dated October 2016 applied the same score of 3. It is uncertain what is referred to as an INRM framework for Samoa. For example, the national

Indicator	Baseline	End of Project target	2016 Level (self-reported)[1]	Midterm Level Assessment	Midterm Justification
			village communities the basis also for the development of village SLM plans and activities.		environmental sector plan can be considered an INRM framework. This should be clarified between the PMU and the UNDP-GEF regional technical advisor.
12. Coordination mechanism in place to ensure multi-sector approach to SLM in line with National Environment management Strategy	No coordination mechanisms for SLM	By the end of the project a formal institutional coordination mechanism has been established including all relevant ministries to ensure integration of SLM in all sectors to manage multiuse landscapes through combined efforts, shared technical resources	The review of SLM policies that is underway and as well as the other components of the project in which the stakeholders of the project are continually engaged is the first stage for future focused consultations on strengthening the consideration of relevant SLM issues with the work and responsibilities of the other government ministries and development sectors, in particular those that are directly involved with the extraction and alteration of landscapes and land resources.	**On target**	Interviewed stakeholders generally agreed that the National Environmental Sector Committee will serve as a SLM coordination mechanism. The Committee has cross-sectoral representation, as well as participation by the civil society. It might be advisable to form a SLM working group that would support the Committee and have the opportunity to address more detailed oriented issues.
13. Increased involvement of private sector, civil society and others in promoting SLM in partnership with the government.	SFA and WIBDI – NGOs assisting communities with projects that are SLM compatible.	By Year 4, the number of NGOs and private partners in SLM is increased by 200%.	Consultations were held collectively and with each of the key NGOs involved with relevant SLM practices including the METI, WIBDI, SSF, FFI, SCC, and SUNGO regarding potential plans for upscaling their SLM relevant work or activity with the appropriate support of the project. So far only METI has submitted a proposal that is currently under the project's PMU consideration for possible implementation in the fourth quarter of this year 2016.	**On target**	There clearly has been an increase in recent years in the number of civil society organizations involved in promoting SLM related issues. Some of these include Coconut Clusters, Adra, Samoa Conservation Society, Farmer's Federation Inc., etc. There was less information available regarding the private sector.
14. National SLM information system in line with information system for national Environment Management Strategy	No SLM information system	By Year 4 an SLM information System will be established and managed by MNRE	Recruitment of the SLM Information System is Underway for the start of this work in the fourth quarter of 2016.	**On target**	At the time of the MTR mission the project team was working on procurement documentation for a consultancy tasked with developing a SLM information system. The system would partly be a project website and also a repository for SLM information. Contemporaneously, the UNDP-GEF project on supporting the Government of Samoa on the obligations among the Rio Conventions is funding the development of a Data Knowledge Information Facility

Indicator	Baseline	End of Project target	2016 Level (self-reported)[1]	Midterm Level Assessment	Midterm Justification
					(DKIF). Some of the interviewed stakeholders stressed that the DKIF will also include SLM information, and that a separate system is unnecessary. The project team, on the other hand, feel that a separate system that feeds into the DKIF will indeed be required. The MTR evaluator recommends that this issue be discussed together with the MNRE IT specialists and the DKIF service provider, before proceeding with procurement of a separate SLM information system.
15. Number of government staff who have completed new training of trainers short term courses provided by USP on SLM, tailored for Samoa and including carbon accounting from LULUCF	No SLM training currently available at USP for government staff	By the end of the project, at least 100 staff from MNRE, MAF, MWCSC have completed the SLM training at USP	As explained above the first relevant SLM training programme that was established under the project is the Sustainable Agriculture and Landscape Farm Planning Training Programme. Already two (2) Training of Trainers (TOTs) were held in which technical officers of the government ministries and NGOs were involved. These TOTs were conducted by SLM technical experts of NUS, USP and key government ministries such as MNRE and MAF. Thirty (30) technical officers of the government ministries and NGOs have completed this SLM training course.	**Not on target**	There was a bit of confusion regarding the intent of Indicator No. 15. According the MTR evaluator's understanding of the envisaged results outlined in the project document, this indicator is a measure of strengthened institutional capacity on SLM issues, including carbon account for land use, land-use change, and forestry (LULUCF). At least 100 staff members from MNRE, MAF, and MWCSD are expected to complete SLM training at the USP. By midterm, such a training course has not yet been developed at the USP, and, hence, there is no progress to date towards this result. The MTR evaluator recommends discussing with USP representatives and also considering other options for achieving this result, e.g., existing course, e-learning options, training by doing approaches, etc.
16. Number of long term courses institutionalized in USP to degree students on SLM	No SLM courses available at University for undergraduate students	By the end of the project, at least 1 SLM long term course has been institutionalized at USP	Consultations have started with the representatives of the academic institutions for the primary, secondary and tertiary formal education including the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture; the National University of	**On target**	The final result expected under Outcome 2, as documented in Indicator No. 16, is associated with strengthening capacity

Indicator	Baseline	End of Project target	2016 Level (self-reported)[1]	Midterm Level Assessment	Midterm Justification
			Samoa and the USP Alafua Campus on the consideration of SLM in the curriculum and instruction of these three levels of formal education. A consensus was reached among the participants of these consultations that the project will consider and implement strategies for strengthening SLM content and practical learning experience in all the three levels of formal education as a way of raising generations that will appreciate and commit to SLM best practices and considerations in their careers in particular those which involved the development of land resources. The following strategies are currently under consideration for implementation from the second quarter of this year 2016 with the appropriate project assistance: 1) Development of teaching aids and resources to strengthen the SLM content and instructions at the primary and secondary levels of formal education 2) Development of SLM courses or units as requirements for the completion of SLM relevance courses such as degress in agriculture and environmental science at NUS and USP 3) Implementation of workshops and hiring of experts for the development of teaching aids for primary and secondary and for putting together the relevant SLM courses.		building structures in the country, specifically through institutionalizing a SLM courses at the USP. Interviews with USP representatives during the MTR mission confirmed that a SLM course is indeed under development, and in a separate interview at the National University of Samoa (NUS), professors there indicated that NUS is developing a diploma course on sustainable agriculture.
			Achievement Rating, Outcome 2:	**Satisfactory**	

Annex 6: Suggested Modifications to Project Results Framework

Indicator	End-of-Project target	Justification
Objective: To strengthen local capacities, incentives and actions for integrated landscape management to reduce land degradation and greenhouse gas emissions and to promote conservation whilst enhancing sustainable local livelihoods**.**		
Obj-1: Area under increased vegetative cover (with average tree density of 111 trees/ ha)	**Increased by 24,430 ha** **An increase of ___ ha, endorsed by the National Environmental Sector Committee**	The target of 24,430 ha is roughly broken down (according to the project document) as 5,000 ha of reforestation, 500 ha of degraded land restored, and 18,000 ha of land under sustainable agriculture practice. These figures are inconsistent with capacities of national partners and essentially unachievable within the project's lifespan. This result should be more strategic, setting guidance for increasing vegetative cover during the project timeframe and after GEF funding ceases. The criterion of an average tree density of 111 trees/ha should also be reviewed.
Obj-2: Area under forest cover (no net loss due to land use conversion) under effective management	~~128,000 ha~~ **___ ha (consistent with the national Upland Watershed Management Policy)**	It would be advisable to link to the national Upland Watershed Management Policy, which focuses on land with >600 m elevation.
Obj-3: ~~**Increase of agriculture income and consumption per household as a consequence of increased productivity of land**~~ **Number of households benefitting from adoption of sustainable agriculture practices**	~~**5000 households' incomes increase by 10% on average by project end through increased land productivity**~~ **500 households, benefitting men and women equally**	The benefits of adopting SLM extend beyond household income. For example, human capital is enhanced through capacity building, nature capital is increased through improved land productivity, and social capital is increased through strengthened community structures. Furthermore, the baseline of household agricultural income has not been validated, it is a parameter not included in the agricultural census, and would require substantial resources to monitor. Delivering substantive results to 5,000 households is unlikely; consistent with some of the targets of the SACEP project, 500 seems like a more realistic figure – and one that also presents a significant challenge to the project.
Obj-4: Total amount of CO2 equivalent greenhouse gas emission avoided, and sequestered at the target sites due to effective application of SLM good practices	Avoided emission of 689,333 CO2-eq for 4 years and sequestration of store additionally 10,755 tCO2eq.	This indicator is linked to Indicator Obj-1, i.e., area under increased vegetative cover. The baseline and end targets should be reassessed, through consultation with the results of the GEF Carbon Benefits Project and other relevant criteria.
Outcome 1: Communities and farmers are able to undertake and benefit from integrated land and water management on their traditionally owned lands**.**		
1. Number of certified organic farmers/farms	A 30% increase in number of households engaged in organic farming or more ecological farming	No changes suggested for this result.
2. Increased density and diversity of native tree species in cyclone damaged landscapes around Apia covering 3314 ha	At least 50% increase forest cover in a landscape	The baseline for this result should be validated according to the 5-year cyclone recovery plan. Achieving an increased in forest cover of 50% of 3314 ha would be highly unlikely to achieve over the

Indicator	End-of-Project target	Justification
		remaining project implementation timeframe and according to national level capacities.
3. Area of natural forests, riverine areas and wetlands under protection and management in the production landscape under community land use plans (forest and tree cover maintenance; maintenance of wetlands; no net increase of agricultural land under mono cropping)	By the end of the project, at least 55000 ha ~~will be~~ under integrated landscape management **with management plans approved through village ordinances** ~~outside KBAs~~	It would be advisable to include key biodiversity areas (KBAs)
4. Number of farmer households adopting at least one or more soil / water management and conservation practices on agricultural lands	At least ~~5000~~ **500** households will be adopting soil management and conservation practices in their land by the end of the project covering at least ~~18,000~~ **1,800** ha	Consistent with Indicator Obj-3, targeting 500 households might be a more reasonable result. This should be confirmed with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF).
5. Increased water quality as a consequence of enhanced watershed management and water source protection **Water quality monitoring programme operationalized and demonstrated at three livestock management areas**	~~At least 50% of the project sites report on increased water quality by the end of the project – including *E. coli* levels within national standards; and additional parameters of nutrient loads (such as nitrogen) are also within acceptable international standards~~ **Water quality monitoring guideline for livestock management areas approved by Water Resources Division and demonstrated at 3 sites**	This end target is essentially unachievable and over simplifies the time required to instill changes in livestock management. The suggested modification to the indicator and end target provide a more meaningful contribution to national efforts aimed at improving livestock management.
6. ~~Per cent of Livestock relocated to optimal grazing areas away from critical riparian areas~~. **Improved livestock management in critical riparian areas**	~~At least 50% relocated, covering 2500 ha~~ **Improved livestock management plans designed and implemented in at least 5 villages in 5 different catchment areas**	Relocation of livestock is not a valid measure of improved livestock management.
7. Number of integrated participatory village level SLM plans	~~At least 50 villages have developed plans integrating SLM with the participation of 15,000 community member including men, women and young~~ **In coordination with the Community Integrated Management (CIM) program, 16 villages, one in each administrative district, have development plans integrating SLM, with priority actions focused on gender and social inclusion.**	Linking this result to the national Community Integrated Management (CIM) program would be more sustainable, and provide demonstrable guidance for scaling up in other villages.
8. Number of community members **who are aware of SLM and** ~~that~~ report on increased knowledge and capacity on SLM	a. At least 40% of the communities**/people surveyed** are able to report on increased knowledge on SLM through access to national SLM system, audio-video materials and trainings; **b. Social media engagement is doubled by end of project (based on Facebook diagnostics)**	It would be advisable to design and facilitate a knowledge attitudes and practices (KAP) as a means of measuring changes in knowledge on SLM.
Outcome 2: Strengthened national enabling environment to promote integrated landscape management through local households and communities**.**		
9. Soil management and conservation manual targeting local communities in local language	~~By the end of year 1 a~~ Soil management and conservation manual developed including SLM practices for agriculture, **agro-**forestry and water resources management	The presumed intention behind having the manual completed by Year 1 is that it could be utilized by the farmers engaged in sustainable agriculture practices. Draft versions of the manual can still be

Indicator	End-of-Project target	Justification
		used by the farmers, and in the meantime the manual can be more developed, including adding information on agro-forestry and water resources management.
10. Number of national policies and plans that support for inter-sectoral and partnership approach to promote community based SLM	• Land Resource management legislation developed and national land use policy updated • Agriculture Sector Plan 2011-2016 strengthened to mainstream SLM approaches and management practices • policies on mining (including sand mining) strengthened or developed • formal guidelines for sustainable land management under village development plans under PUMA Act developed • **Forestry sector plan mainstreams sustainable forestry management**	The Forestry Sector Plan is current under review; the project has an opportunity to advocate for mainstreaming sustainable forestry management and agro-forestry priorities.
11. Increased capacities for INRM as measured by an increase in the score of the GEF LD Tracking Tool Enhanced cross-sector enabling environment for integrated landscape management	5	No changes suggested for this result.
12. Coordination mechanism in place to ensure multi-sector approach to SLM in line with National Environment management Strategy	By the end of the project a formal institutional coordination mechanism has been established including all relevant ministries to ensure integration of SLM in all sectors to manage multiuse landscapes through combined efforts, shared technical resources	No changes suggested for this result.
13. Increased involvement of private sector, civil society and others in promoting SLM in partnership with the government.	By Year 4, the number of NGOs and private partners in SLM is increased by 200%.	No changes suggested for this result.
14. National SLM information system in line with information system for national Environment Management Strategy	By Year 4 an SLM information System **linked with the Data Knowledge Information Facility (DKIF)** ~~**will be**~~ established and managed by MNRE	It would be advisable to link the information system to the DKIF.
15. Number of government staff who have completed new training of trainers short term courses ~~**provided by USP**~~ on SLM, tailored for Samoa and including carbon accounting from LULUCF	By the end of the project, at least 100 staff from MNRE, MAF, MWCSC have completed ~~**the**~~ **professional level** SLM training ~~**at USP**~~	The USP has not yet started to develop a SLM course for professional level staff. It might be advisable to keep options open for existing professional level course, for example.
16. Number of long term courses institutionalized in USP to degree students on SLM	By the end of the project, at least 1 SLM long term course has been institutionalized at USP	No changes suggested for this result.
Note: Proposed modifications shown in red color or strikethrough text.		

Annex 7: Cofinancing Table

Annex 7: Cofinancing Table							
Sources of Cofinancing[1]	**Name of Cofinancer**	**Description of Actual Cofinancing Contributed at Stage of Midterm Review**	**Type of Cofinancing[2]**	**Amount Confirmed at CEO Endorsement USD**	**Actual Amount Contributed at Stage of Midterm Review USD**	**Expected Amount by Project Closure USD**	**Actual % of Expected Amount USD**
GEF Partner Agency	**UNDP**						
		Samoa Cyclone Evan Early Recovery Project (2013-2014)	Grant	$400,000	$400,000		
		Preparatory Assistance: Samoa TC Evan Early Recovery Project (01 Jan - 31 Dec 2013)	Grant	$100,000	$100,000		
		Private Sector Support Facility, PSSF (2008-2012) (Not credited as cofinancing because completed before project was approved)	Grant	$117,000	$0		
			UNDP Grant, Sub-Total	**$617,000**	**$500,000**	**$500,000**	**100%**
National Government	**Ministry of Finance**						
		In-kind support	In-Kind	$600,000	$0		
			Government In-Kind, Sub-Total	**$600,000**	**$0**	**$600,000**	**0%**
National Government	**Parallel**						
		AusAid - Parallel (Agro-Forestry project, (SAT 243,137 transferred to MNRE in 2014)	Other	$5,000,000	$96,663	$96,663	
		World Bank - Parallel (SACEP project)	Other	$18,000,000	$0	$13,840,000	
			Government Other, Sub-Total	**$23,000,000**	**$96,663**	**$13,936,663**	**1%**
			Total	**$24,217,000**	**$596,663**	**$15,036,663**	**4%**

Notes: SAT:USD (30 Sep 2016): 2.5153

1.Sources of Co-financing may include: Bilateral Aid Agency(ies), Foundation, GEF Partner Agency, Local Government, National Government, Civil Society Organization, Other Multi-lateral Agency(ies), Private Sector, Other

2. Type of Co-financing may include: Grant, Soft Loan, Hard Loan, Guarantee, In-Kind, Other

The expected amount of cofinancing from the SACEP project is assumed by the MTR evaluator to be the value of the World Bank funding: USD 13.84 million

Annex 8: Summary of Field Visits

28 October 2016, Visit to Uafato Village, Upolu

The meeting was attended by 8 men and 1 woman from the village. A few of the men are on the village council and the woman is on the women's committee for the village. The other women are busy today helping the children prepare for their annual school exams.

There are 16 families in this village, meaning approximately 150 households.

The project has started to develop the Sustainable Development Village Plan (SDVP) for this village. Also, the project has carried out a rapid biodiversity assessment of the Uafato key biodiversity area (KBA).

The village is fairly isolated. Road access is difficult and there is only one road in and out of the village. During heavy storms, the village is sometimes cut off.

There are limited livelihood opportunities here. Household farming is clearly something the villagers would like to expand, but there are serious problems with roaming pigs. The residents essentially are unable to farm. Through village bylaw, the village was able to resolve a similar problem with cattle. But, only one or two households had cattle, and it was easier to reach an agreement to move the cattle out of the village. With pigs, nearly each household are raising them.

The villagers have asked the project for support in resolving the problem with roaming (feral) pigs. It seems that they favor a solution of having individual pig pens per household, rather than centralized. This makes sense, in terms of ownership. One of the residents urged to provide Palani pigs rather than Samoan pigs, as that breed is easier to manage. There is an estimated 300 pigs in the village.

Observation: there is a need for training in livestock management. If the pigs are fenced in, the households will need to manage them much differently than they are now. There are health & safety issues, waste management, etc.

An EU-funded project has recently completed improvements in the village's fresh water supply. It seems that this project consisted of improving/replacing the water supply pipeline that runs from an upland waterfall/reservoir.

There is also a need to strengthen the vegetation along the river banks in the village. During storm events, the village often floods.

Many of the households are involved in wood carving – selling their goods in Apia. This is difficult work, and the villagers would prefer to focus on farming.

There are a few commercial farmers, e.g., growing kava. They have resorted to growing kava on very steep slopes, again, because of the roaming pigs.

Some of the women are weaving mats, but the vegetation used for the mats are also being damaged by the pigs.

Training needs identified include:

- Farming practices
- Water management (maintaining clean water supply)
- Bookkeeping

- Forest conservation (learning more about the trees in their forest, e.g., which ones should not be used and which ones can be sustainably used)

There is a large problem with invasive vegetation among the hillsides in this area (and throughout Samoa). The African snail is another problem they are facing for the past 3-4 years.

There have been limited government or NGO driven programs in this village. And, the village seems to have very little support from the District administration.

28 October 2016, Visit to Tiavea Village, Upolu

The meeting was attended by 5 women, each of whom is on the women's committee for the village. The men of the village needed to go to Apia for a church matter.

This village is situated much differently than Uafato – along a main road. The village is active in farming; there is an issue with free roaming pigs, but not to the degree as in Uafato. They have a village bylaw which permits a landowner to shoot a pig if it wanders onto his property and is damaging his crops; the shot pig needs to be returned to the owner. Some landowners have fenced their plantations to manage the pig problem.

The mayor of this village, who lives in Apia, is reportedly quite active and he brings quite a few projects in.

The interviewed women indicated that they were very satisfied with the training provided by the project in sustainable agriculture. Many of them have started to implement some of the best practices under their own initiative and resources – they made a point to indicate that they are not waiting for handouts, they mainly need the knowledge.

For example, some of the farmers have planted mucuna beans (*Mucuna pruriens*), as a means to naturally add nutrients to their soil; this plant has nitrogen fixation properties.

Two of the women did not have the opportunity to attend the training and inquired about whether there will be other trainings. They were not too keen on learning from the trained trainers, but rather from the group who delivered the community based training.

They also indicated that they were very pleased with the opportunity to visit other farms in other villages. This was very useful for them.

There are more than 200 households in the village, and the territory runs from the ridge to the reef.

Water quality of the public supply is fairly good; if it rains, the water becomes turbid. Each household pays a flat fee of WST 20 per month for water; many feel this is too high, considering the poor quality.

Many of the households have received rain harvesting water tanks through the CSSP, Red Cross, and USAID projects.

Farm visit:

After the discussion with the village women representatives we visited on of the model farms in the village.

The farm is approximately 5 acre in size and the multiple crops are being farmed, with taro and banana as their main cash crops. There is also a coconut plantation, but the village has recently prohibited the sale of fresh coconuts because of some theft problems in another farm.

The farmer has started growing vegetables, as a result of the training he received on the project. Observation: there seems to be a lack of culture with respect to investment at this farmer. He is using primitive hand tools or borrowing from neighbors. There are no mechanized farming practices at all.

The vegetable plots are fairly modest, with tomatoes, cucumber, pumpkin, and some other varieties grown, including from seeds obtained during the farm visits organized by the project. The farmer has started a roadside vegetable stand to supplement their household income.

The project is considering funding a tunnel house (or green house) on this farm, to further support the farmer in diversifying his land use and to also be used as a model farm to others in the village and other parts of Samoa. Observation: should consider how a tunnel house fits within the objectives of sustainable agriculture (reportedly, it is very difficult to farm vegetables during the raining season). Suggestion: if a tunnel house is built here, it would be best to follow a design specification rather than constructing ad hoc; these are very easily damaged structures, e.g., from wind and sun, and such an image would paint a negative picture of the project.

29 October 2016, Visit to Aopo Village, Savai'i

The meeting was attended by 10 men and 1 woman from the village. A few of the men are chiefs within the village, and the woman is on the women's committee for the village.

The project has to date completed a pre-survey of the Aopo key biodiversity area (KBA) and a rapid biodiversity assessment of the KBA. Approximately 20 village residents supported the pre-survey and more than 25 supported the KBA rapid assessment.

There was strong discontent among some of the interviewed residents regarding delay in payment for the support services they rendered. The provided about 2 weeks of work, but it took 3 months for them to receive payment. For the days they were with the project teams, they could not provide income for their families, so these delays presented significant problems for them.

They were also dissatisfied with how the project provided logistics support. The scientists had tents and sleeping bags, but the villagers were left to their own, using what little gear they had.

The villagers also strongly requested to receive results of the surveys. There is a feeling that the scientists are benefitting from the information of their KBA, but they, as custodians are not. If there are future activities in this village, they urge that such knowledge sharing arrangements be sorted out. Also, financial arrangements need to consider paying the village council, not only the individuals who worked in the field.

Several of the villagers are involved in the tourism sector. Tourists are mostly coming to climb to the top of the highest peak in Samoa, located nearby. Fees charged are WST 150 per person to go up and WST 50 per day for camping. Of the WST 150, WST 100 goes to the guide(s) and WST 50 goes to the village council. They generally receive about 5-6 tours per month, and mostly the tours consist of couples.

They have been approached by the Tourism Agency in recent years about support in developing their camp site, e.g., providing a water supply tank. But, they have not heard back from the agency.

The interviewed villagers asked whether the project could support further development/maintenance of the trail going to the top. Suggestion: the project could possibly link traditional ecology knowledge with development of the nature trail. Having the villagers design the trail, deciding which key areas to point out, and elaborating the stories at these areas.

The entire village of Aopo is a certified organic farming village, by the NGO Women in Business (WIBDI). Many of the interviewed villagers are involved in this scheme, but they are generally dissatisfied. There are about 20 households involved in total.

Training needs identified:

- Conservation forest management
- Sustainable agriculture

The women's committee in the village are involved in sewing, small vegetable gardens, and village beautification.

Water supply is fairly unreliable and of low quality for this village. Many of the households have received rainwater harvesting tanks from the CSSP, Red Cross, and USAID programs. Rainwater is now the main water supply for much of the village.

29 October 2016, Visit to Falealupo Village, Savai'i

The meeting was attended by 4 women and 2 men from the village. One of the men is the leader of the village council and the women are on the women's committee in the village.

The village representatives recalled that the project has completed two activities in the village to date: the pre-survey of the Falealupo KBA and the rapid KBA survey. There were approximately 30 villagers who supported these activities in the field: 10 for the green coastal forest area survey, 10 for the bird habitat survey, and 10 for the coastal zone survey. There were also support rendered for catering meetings and providing accommodation.

They are largely unaware of what the next steps will be, but they do understand the project representatives will come back two more times.

They are also unaware whether the project is only dealing with research or whether there will be activities supporting the villagers in benefitting from the ecosystem services in their area.

They are very much interested in receiving the information obtained from the scientists; demonstrating a keen interest in knowing the value of the ecosystems in their area.

There was general discontent regarding the delay and in some cases lack of payment for the services the villagers provided during the project activities. Project staff later showed them a ledger indicating what sums were paid and when; there seems to have been some miscommunication between the village council and the villagers receiving the money, as the payments were transferred to the village account and the village council was responsible to disburse further to the individuals. There seems to have been a written agreement between the project and village council, but the individuals had nothing in writing regarding payment due to them.

This village has about 100 households in total, including 29 households along the coastal area. There seems to be two distinct sections of the district. We were visiting the coastal one.

Many of the villagers are involved in the tourism sector. The Faelalupo Rainforest Preserve is nearby and a few "Legend" sites. Also, there are beaches that attract foreign tourists. There are also agricultural activities; most households are involved in some type of farming. There are some plantations in the village also, mostly having mixed crops. A few of the households are involved in handicrafts, and many receive remittances from family overseas.

According to the village residents interviewed, the village does not yet have a development plan, and has not been visited by the Planning and Urban Management Agency (PUMA) from the

MNRE, or the Ministry of Women. They have been involved in some meetings regarding climate change resilience, organized through the Disaster Management Office (DMO).

Two of the households are involved in organic farming with the NGO Women in Business (WIBDI). According to one of the women, WIBDI provide seeds and other inputs and also teams come to do the planting on her land. She maintains the plots, by watering and weeding, and then WIBDI comes back to harvest.

Training needs identified include:

- First response, with respect to disaster management
- Further involvement in biodiversity conservation
- Vegetable farming techniques

Disaster management is clearly a key concern here, as cyclone season is annual. Observation: there some mangroves in and around the village, but seems very fragmented. The village residents were unaware that mangroves provide a natural buffer to the effects of storm surge, for example.

Annex 9: Signed UNEG Code of Conduct Agreement Form

Evaluators:

1. Must present information that is complete and fair in its assessment of strengths and weaknesses so that decisions or actions taken are well founded.
2. Must disclose the full set of evaluation findings along with information on their limitations and have this accessible to all affected by the evaluation with expressed legal rights to receive results.
3. Should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. They should provide maximum notice, minimize demands on time, and: respect people's right not to engage. Evaluators must respect people's right to provide information in confidence, and must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. Evaluators are not expected to evaluate individuals, and must balance an evaluation of management functions with this general principle.
4. Sometimes uncover evidence of wrongdoing while conducting evaluations. Such cases must be reported discreetly to the appropriate investigative body. Evaluators should consult with other relevant oversight entities when there is any doubt about if and how issues should be reported.
5. Should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty in their relations with all stakeholders. In line with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, evaluators must be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender equality. They should avoid offending the dignity and self-respect of those persons with whom they come in contact in the course of the evaluation. Knowing that evaluation might negatively affect the interests of some stakeholders, evaluators should conduct the evaluation and communicate its purpose and results in a way that clearly respects the stakeholders' dignity and self-worth.
6. Are responsible for their performance and their product(s). They are responsible for the clear, accurate and fair written and/ or oral presentation of study limitations, findings and recommendations.
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.

Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form

Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System

Name of Consultant: James Lenoci

I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.

Signature:

Signed on 30 September 2016

James Lenoci, Midterm Reviewer

Annex 10: Terms of Reference

Annex 11: Signed MTR Final Report Clearance Form

Midterm Review Report Reviewed and Cleared By:	
Commissioning Unit	
Name:	
Signature:	Date:
UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor	
Name:	
Signature:	Date: