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##### Project Mid-term Review Report

##### Government of Seychelles and UNDP

##### Implementing Partner: Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change

##### United Nations Development Programme

##### UNDP GEF PIMS 4529/ GEF Secretariat Project ID 4717

##### Atlas Award 00075876/ Atlas Project ID 00087541

##### Expansion and Strengthening of the Protected Area Subsystem of the Outer Islands of Seychelles and its Integration into the broader land and seascape

***Evaluator: Veronica Nyawira Muthui; nyawira.muthui@gmail.com***



##### Expansion and Strengthening of the Protected Area Subsystem of the Outer Islands of Seychelles and its Integration into the broader land and seascape

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| UNDAF Outcome(s): | n/a |
| UNDP Strategic Plan (2014-2017) - Primary Outputs:*(2.5)* - Legal and regulatory frameworks, policies and institutions enabled to ensure the conservation, sustainable use, and access and benefit sharing of natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems, in line with international conventions and national legislation; and Secondary Output *(1.3)* Solutions developed at national and sub-national levels for sustainable management of natural resources, ecosystem services, chemicals and waste. Other relevant programmatic links at the corporate level: [From *UNDP’s Biodiversity and Ecosystems Global Framework 2012-2020*:] Signature Programme #2: Unlocking the potential of protected areas (PAs), including indigenous and community conserved areas, to conserve biodiversity while contributing to sustainable development. |
| Expected CPD Outcome(s): By 2016, the governance systems, use of technologies and practices and financing mechanisms that promote environmental, energy and climate-change adaptation have been mainstreamed into national development plans. Relevant indicator: Area of terrestrial and marine ecosystems under improved management or heightened conservation status increased by 50 per cent by end of 2016.  |
| Expected CPAP Output (s): n/a*Project Objective*: To promote the conservation and sustainable use of coastal and marine biodiversity in the Seychelles’ Outer Islands by integrating a National Subsystem of Coastal and Marine Protected Areas (CMPAs) into the broader land- and seascape while reducing the pressures on natural resources from competing land uses. [*Project Outcome 1*]: Management effectiveness is enhanced within a sample of coastal and marine protected areas (IUCN Category I, II and VI) operating under innovative public-private-civil society partnership agreements. [*Project Outcome 2*]: Sustainable Development and CMPA management integrated into broader land/seascape in the Outer Islands.  |
| Implementing Partner: Ministry of Environment and Energy (MEECC) - Department of Environment (DOE). |
| Responsible Party: Island Conservation Society (ICS), Seychelles Island Foundation (SIF), Save Our Seas / D’Arros Research Centre. |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Programme Period:  | 2012 – 2016 | Total resources required (total project funds):  | $12,219,549 |
| Atlas Award ID:  | 00075876 | Total allocated resources (UNDP managed funds) | $1,935,500 |
| Project ID: | 00087541 | Regular:  | $150,000 |
| PIMS #:  | 4529 | GEF (in award 75876) | $1,785,500 |
| Start date: | August 2014 | Other (partner managed resources) |  |
| End Date | August 2019 | o    Government :  | $1,042,683 |
|  |  | o    CSOs (incl. Foundations) :  | $9,131,866 |
| Management Arrangements | NIM | o    Other (private sector)  | $109,500 |
| PAC Meeting Date  | 20 August 2013 |  |  |

**Acknowledgements:** The evaluator recognizes and thanks the Project Coordination Unit (PCU), the Island Conservation Society (ICS), Project Manager and the UNDP Country Office for the efficient and professional organizational support they provided during this evaluation. The PM (Joanna Prosper), the PCU Coordinator (Andrew Grieser), Pierre Andre Adam (ICS Project Coordinator), Country Office Team of Preethi Sushil and Roland Alcindor, deserve a special mention for the professional manner in which they facilitated the MTR process. Thanks also go to IDC and other partners involved in the implementation of the project for the information provided during the review.

### Executive Summary

The project seeks to promote the conservation and sustainable use of terrestrial and marine biodiversity in the Seychelles’ Outer Islands by expanding the protected areas system and strengthening protected area management, supported by broad-scale ecosystem planning and sustainable land management activities to conserve ecosystem functions. The project aims to achieve both biodiversity conservation and sustainable land management goals: On biodiversity conservation, the project supports the official establishment of five new protected areas in the Outer Islands, encompassing 1,237 hectares of terrestrial ecosystems and 76,258 hectares of marine ecosystems. On sustainable land management, the project supports the establishment of the necessary institutional framework (information and planning systems) to support integrated management of the new PA sites that address both biodiversity conservation and reduction of land degradation.

The goal of the project is: **to** *conserve biodiversity in Seychelles Outer Islands through a protected area and sustainable development approach*. **The project objective is to** promote the conservation and sustainable use of coastal and marine biodiversity in the Seychelles’ Outer Islands by integrating a National Subsystem of Coastal and Marine Protected Areas (CMPAs) into the broader land- and seascape while reducing the pressures on natural resources from competing land uses. **The objective is to be achieved through two outcomes, each with several ouptus (Annex 1 shows the ammended logframe). Outcome 1:** Management effectiveness of Outer Islands CMPAs is enhanced; while **Outcome 2:** *Sustainable Development and CMPA management integrated into broader land/seascape.*

The 5 year project is nationally implemented (NIM) by the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change (MEECC), which provides a National Project Director (the Permanent Secretary for Environment), and a Program Coordination Unit (PCU), which also houses the Project Manager, responsible for day to day management of the project. Actual implementation is delegated to the Island Development Company (IDC) which has in turn delegated its responsibility to the Islnad Conservation Society (ICS), under a Memorandum of Understanding Signed between ICS and MEECC. The total project cost is $12,219,549, of which the Global Environment Facility (GEF) contributes US$ 1,785,500 (15%), Government contributes $1,042,683 (9%), and Civil Society contributes 9,131,866 (75%).

The project is at the beginning of the third year of implementation; the Mid Term Evaluation was therefore conducted in accordance with the guidelines and regulations of UNDP and GEF, and, assessed the overall performance against the project objectives as set out in the Project Document and other related documents; project relevance to national priorities, as well as UNDP and GEF strategic objectives, namely; the effectiveness and efficiency of the project; sustainability of the project interventions and consideration of project impacts; implementation and management arrangements of the project, including financial management. The MTR assesed progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outcomes as specified in the Project Document, assessing early signs of project success or failure with the goal of identifying the necessary changes to be made in order to set the project on-track to achieve its intended results. The MTR also reviewed the project’s strategy and its risks to sustainability.

#### Summary of Findings

Summary ratings along the MTR criteria

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Review Criteria** | **Sub-criteria** | **Rating**  |
| Project Strategy ***Moderately Satisfactory***  | Project design | MS |
| Results Framework/ Logframe | MS |
| Progress Towards Results ***Moderately*** ***Unsatisfactory*** | Project Strategy | N/A |
| Objective Achievement  | U |
| Outcome 1  | Moderately Unsatisfactory  |
| Outcome 2  | Unsatisfactory  |
| Project Implementation and Adaptive Management ***Moderately Satisfactory*** | Management Arrangements | MS |
| Work Planning | MU |
| Finance and co-finance | S |
| Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems | MU |
| Stakeholder Engagement | MS |
| Reporting | MS |
| Communications | S |
| Sustainability ***Likely*** | Financial risks to sustainability | Insignificant  |
| Socio-economic risks to sustainability | Insignificant |
| Institutional Framework and Governance risks to sustainability | Insignificant |
| Environmental risks to sustainability | Insignificant |

The MTR finds that the project identified clear threats to integrating biodiversity conservation and economic development in Seychelles and the need to integrate the Outer Islands into the PA estate of the country. It also identified the barriers to achieving this goal and laid out a clear strategy to overcome those barriers.

Despite a one year delay between project approval and Inception workshop, project implementation is well under way with impressive progress on several outputs including: Output 1.2: Institutional capacity to plan and implement protected area expansion is strengthened (70%); Output 1.3: Infrastructure and Resources enhanced to enable Protected Areas management (70%); Output 1.7: Increased Education and Awareness levels support Protected Areas management in the Outer Islands (90%); Output 2.1: Spatially-based decision support system (DSS) in place to enable integrated natural resource management in the Outer Islands (90%); Output 2.3: Ecosystem-wide Zoning & Master Strategy for the Outer Islands in place to guide conservation and development activities (75%). This gives the project an overall estimated delivery on activities of 40%. This is close to the financial delivery (expenditure) of 41% by June 2016 (at 34% for ICS and 51% for PCU). During 2014 ICS total expenditure was $159,264 (100% of budget, mostly major procurements), during 2015 and 2016 to date, when the focus shifted to operations, expenditure dropped to $251,860 and $40,387 (41% and 34% of the planned budget). PCU expenditure during the total period thus far is $353,977 (51% of the planned budget). Total expenditure at end of June 2016 was $727,977 which (41% of the total budget allocation).

Despite these delivery rates, the project overall implementation is rated as **Moderately Un Satisfactory** because implementation and delivery on the targets for the core outputs is zero – Output 1.4 - Protected Areas Legally Established; Output 1.5 - Protected Area Management Structures in place and sufficiently financed, and Output 1.6 - Protected Area Management Plans Developed and Implemented. Delivery is only 35% on another core output (1.1 - Biodiversity & Ecosystem Assessment, Monitoring and Conservation Programs to strengthen PA Management) and about 15% for two critical outputs (2.5 - Ecosystem Restoration & Invasive Species Management support Protected Area management objectives, and 2.6 - Monitoring & Management of Ecosystem Functions reduce land and resource degradation at Protected Area sites). However, the rating could improve dramatically if the targets for indicators 3, 6, 8, 9, 10 and 11 are revised to reflect achievements for which the project has a high level of control and influence.

Implementation of the project has so far been hampered by the following:

* Initial one year delay while sorting out contracting of ICS as a responsible party;
* Initial delay in disbursing funds for the first quarter while the project established project financial systems;
* Loss of capacity in ICS, which is responsible for 60% of the project outputs; poor coordination and unclear lines of responsibility within ICS (e.g. between project coordinator, ICS CEO or lack of ICS Board, that have hampered approval, recruitment and management of consultants – and between ICS and IDC in all aspects). Delayed actions and corresponding slow expenditure by ICS has been affected by: delayed recruitment of staff and delayed purchase of equipment for Poivre due to a lack of provision of infrastructure (housing and conservation centre) by IDC; slow progress towards finalizing the protocols for the assessment, monitoring and conservation of marine and terrestrial ecosystems; delays in coastal erosion and beach profiling activities due to prior commitments of the consultant coupled with infrequent availability of transportation to the outer island sites; delayed establishment of facilities on Poivre combined with the closure of Desroches Resort for renovations - this stopped transport of staff of both Poivre and Desroches.
* Destruction of facilities at Farhaqur by Cyclone Fantala which hit in April-2016. Although staff was evacuated prior to the cyclone hitting the island and some project assets (boats and engines) were saved, the total cost of the damage (to IDC, not the project) was estimated at $4.5 million (World Bank), with an estimated loss of revenue accruing from the island of $500,000 during the recovery phase (this includes loss of revenue paid by tourism operators towards biodiversity management etc.). IDC has prioritized reconstruction work on the Island, potentially affecting work on other Islands, due to the concentration of equipment and resources on Farquhar.

The project M&E system is challenged by ambitious targets whose achievements are largely outside of the project control and influence (see point above); inadequate budgeting given the cost of travelling to the Outer Islands and the reliance on IDC for transport to the Islands (even where the project has budgets to pay for travel, IDC has to grant access to the Outer Islands). The ineffective representation of IDC on the PSC has made it difficult for PCU to undertake regular monitoring missions, weakening adaptive management. Adaptive management has been further weakened by the inability of the PSC to resolve the challenges of engaging IDC effectively, and the practice of some members taking decisions on project implementation outside of the PSC and contrally to plans approved by the PSC.

The project is however on track with mobilization of the rest of the co-finance with evidence of the project partners pursuing co-finance actively. The project is also on track with stakeholder participation, with participation of only two key stakeholders being problematic.

The MTR finds that the project is on track with reporting and communications, and that reporting has been done in line with all UNDP-GEF guidelines. However, it has not yet generated material for technical publications or lessons to be shared widely (too early in the implementation process). The MTR finds no financial or socio-economic risks to the outcomes once the GEF investment is completed. However, it finds mixed results on the institutional and governance framework; The government commitment to partnering with NGOs and the private sector in PA management, and the partnership between IDC, ICS and the owners of the resorts/hotels on the Outer Islands provides a strong basis for sustainability; however, the recent interest in the Outer Islands by politicians may be both an accelerator or delayer of PA gazettement. It remains to be seen which way it goes.

Recommendations

The table below summarises the recommendations. Except for recommendation 1 and 6, all the timeline of the recommendations will be determined and indicated in the Management Response.

Summary of recommendations

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Recommendation**  | **Responsible Party** | **Timeframe**  |
| **Recommendation 1:** It is recommended that, with the support of the PSC, the PCU leads an assessment of the impacts of the lessons that were not taken into consideration as well as the impacts of the assumptions that have upstaged implementation of some activities on the overall project – especially the indicators, targets and implementation arrangements. Based on the results of the assessments, the PCU should refine the project strategy and the results framework/logframe, to allow partners to consolidate outputs/activities for which the project can realistically implement in the remaining project time, without departing from the original project goal and objective, but proposing adjustments to project indicators as necessary. | PCU, with support from PSC | **By end of Feb 2017** |
| **Recommendation 2:** The PCU should take over recruitment and management of all consultant to accelerate project implementation in the remaining and recommended extension period. |  |  |
| **Recommendation 3:** Project is likely to require more time than planned for to deliver on all target, unless project implementation is accelerated in the second half of project life. The MTR therefore recommends a one year project extension. | PCU with support from UNDP | In Management response  |
| **Recommendation 4:** The PSC, and the NPD in particular should continue to work with IDC to facilitate increased access to the Islands to enable ICS and PCU to accelerate implementation for the remaining project time. | IDC, ICS, PSC | In Management response  |
| **Recommendation 5:** UNDP Regional Service Centre should ensure continuity of Technical Advisors especially for complex projects such as the Outer Islands | UNDP RSC/Hq | In Management response  |
| **Recommendation 6:** The NPD should advocate for the faster approval of the new PA Law  | NPD, PSC | In Management response  |
| **Recommendation 7:** ICS Capacity Assessment undertaken during project formulation should be repeated by an independent entity and used to determine activities ICS can realistically implement within the project outlines. Based on the findings, the implementation strategy should be refined and responsibility transferred from ICS to other parties as deemed necessary to fast track project implementation  | ICS, PCU, PSC | By end of Feb 2017 |
| **Recommendation 8:** The MEECC and GEF OFP should discuss the challenge with the Ministry of Finance to find lasting solutions for all GEF projects in the country; including exploring the use of project accounts with Commercial Banks and training project staff regularly on UNDP financial procedures, especially when the implementing partner institutions experience high staff turn-over. |  | In Management response  |
| **Recommendation 9:** The PSC should facilitate a decision in regard to rehabilitation work on Alphonse and Desroches (and in general), in line with the species selected during the vegetation management planning and determining whether there are valid reasons for not undertaking rehabilitation on both Islands in parallel. | PSC | In Management response  |
| **Recommendation 10:** Given the importance of IDC in accessing the Islands and the fact that this project is likely to enter the category of ‘Projects at high risk’ if the speed of implementation is not accelerated, IDC should: i) participate fully in PSC Meetings to ensure full agreement with decisions made and activities planned, ii) continue a schedule of regular briefings with the project manager in which visits to the islands can be approved and access scheduled - ICS (Ag.) CEO also to attend these briefings. | IDC, ICS, PSC | In Management response  |
| **Recommendation (Repeated elsewhere):** Given the number of risks and assumptions that have affected project implementation, the project partners should assess the logframe to identifty activities that are not likely to be implemented and those they should consolidate, inorder to improve the likelyhood of the project delivering important impacts.  | PSC/PCU | In Management response  |
| **Recommendation 11:** Unless facilities can be established on Poivre to allow project staff in residence by June 2017, then the site should be dropped and funds should be reallocated to another activity as determined by the PSC | PSC | In Management response  |
| **Recommendation 12:** The project should revisit indicators and targets and develop an M&E action plan, ensuring adequate arrangements and/or finance to implement it; | PCU, PSC | In Management response  |
| **Recommendation 13:** All partners should re-engage with the PSC and channel all decisions related to project implementation through the PSC. The PSC should consider quarterly Meetings until the project implementation improves. In addition, the PSC should facilitate establishment of technical sub-committees to assist PSC move the implementation of those activities lagging behind.  | IDC, ICS, DRC | In Management response  |
| **Recommendation 14:**  There are likely benefits for DRC in integrating D’Arros into the overall push for improved representation of outer island habitats into PAs, rather than going it alone. The PSC and PCU should engage DRC into more regular communication and information transfer between DRC, Government and other project partners. | DRC | In Management response  |
| **Recommendation 15:** IDC should re-engage with the project and align its stated commitment to conservation on the Outer Islands with its every day operations and decisions on development of the Islands; | IDC | In Management response  |
| **Recommendation 16:** The PSC should monitor the political development around Outer Islands and assist the project to apply adaptive management to adjust to the uncertainty created by these political developments, and eventually to the outcome of the political process; the Project could even make a presentation to the NA at committee stage if required. | PSC | In Management response  |

**MTR Consultant Agreement Form**

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

Name of Consultant: \_\_\_\_\_Veronica Nyawira Muthui \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): \_\_N/A\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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

Signed at *\_\_\_\_Leverkusen, Germany\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Place)* on 26th Nov 2016*\_\_ (Date)*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**I also approve this MTR report**

Signed at *\_\_\_\_Leverkusen, Germany\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Place)* on 1st Feb 2017*\_\_\_ (Date)*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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## Acronyms

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| AG | Attorney General |
| APR | Annual Progress Report |
| AWP | Annual Work Plan |
| CBD | Convention on Biological Diversity  |
| CBD | Convention on Biodiversity |
| CCF  | Country Cooperation Framework (UNDP) |
| CITES  | Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora |
|  |  |
| CMS | Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals |
| CO | (UNDP) Country Office |
| DOE | Department of Environment |
| DRC | D’Arros Research Centre |
| EEZ  | Exclusive Economic Zone |
| EIA | Environmental Impact Assessment |
| ENGO | Environmental Nongovernmental Organization |
| ESSP | (UNDP’s) Environmental and social screening procedure |
| FBOA  | Fisherman and Boat Owners Association |
| FFEM | Fonds Français pour l’Environnement Mondial |
| GEF | Global Environment Facility  |
| GIF | Green Islands Foundation |
| GIS | Geographic Information System |
| GISP  | Global Invasive Species Programme |
| HDI | Human Development Index |
| IAS  | Invasive Alien Species |
| IBA | Important Bird Area |
| ICRAN  | International Coral Reef Action Network |
| ICS  | Island Conservation Society |
| IDC  | Islands Development Company |
| IMPASP  | Integrated Marine Protected Area. Systems Plan |
| IUCN | International Union for the Conservation of Nature  |
| LME  | Large Marine Ecosystem |
| LPAC | Local Project Appraisal Committee |
| M&E | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| MCSS  | Marine Conservation Society of Seychelles |
| MEECC  | Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change |
| METT | Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool |
| MFTEP | Ministry of Finance, Trade and Economic Planning  |
| MFA | Department of Foreign Affairs |
| MHILT | Ministry of Habitat, Infrastructure and Land Transport  |
| MOU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| MPA  | Marine Protected Area |
| MSP | Marine Spatial Planning |
| NBSAP | National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan |
| NCCC | National Climate Change Committee |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| NIM | National Implementation Modality |
| NS | Nature Seychelles |
| PA | Protected Area |
| PAS | (National) Protected Area System |
| PCA | Plant Conservation Action Group |
| PC-CTA | Programme Coordinator – Chief Technical Advisor |
| PCU | Programme Coordination Unit |
| PIP | Project Implementing Partners |
| PIR | Project Implementation Review |
| PIR | Project Implementation Report |
| PoWPA | (CBD) Programme of Work on Protected Area |
| PPR | Portfolio Progress Report |
| PSC | Project Steering Committee |
| RCU | (UNDP) Regional Coordinating Unit |
| RSC | Regional Service Centre |
| RTA | (UNDP) Regional Technical Adviser |
| SAIAB | South African Institute of Aquatic Biodiversity |
| SBAA | Standard Basic Assistance Agreement |
| SCMRT | Seychelles Centre for Marine Research and Technology |
| SFA  | Seychelles Fishing Authority |
| SHTA | Seychelles Hospitality and Tourism Association |
| SIDS  | Small Island Developing States |
| SIF  | Seychelles Islands Foundation |
| SNPA | Seychelles National Parks Authority |
| SOSF | Save Our Seas Foundation |
| SR  | Seychelles Rupee |
| SRSF | Shark Research Foundation, Seychelles |
| SSDS | Sustainable Development Strategy |
| SWIOFP  | South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Project (GEF-UNDP) |
| TBW | Total Budget and Work plan |
| TCPA  | Town and Country Planning Act |
| TNC | The Nature Conservancy |
| UNCCD | United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification |
| UNDAF | United Nations Development Assistance Framework |
| UNDP  | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNESCO | United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organization |
| UNFCCC | United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change |
| WHS | World Heritage Site |
| WIOLab  | Western Indian Ocean Land based activities (GEF-UNEP Project) |
| WIOMSA  | Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association |

# Background

## Project Background and Information

1. The project seeks to promote the conservation and sustainable use of terrestrial and marine biodiversity in the Seychelles’ Outer Islands by expanding the protected areas system and strengthening protected area management, supported by broad-scale ecosystem planning and sustainable land management activities to conserve ecosystem functions. To enhance biodiversity conservation, the project will support the establishment and operationalization of five new protected areas encompassing both terrestrial and marine ecosystems. This will increase the number of operational protected areas in the Outer Islands from 1 to 6; add 76,258 hectares of seascape and 1,237 hectares of landscape to the national Protected Area (PA) estate; and establish two new organizations as official PA management institutions in the Seychelles. It is expected that these new PA units will also be invaluable demonstration sites for the replication of additional sites, using different PA classifications and allowing for different levels of development activities, over the long-term in the Outer Islands. The project will also foster the systematic development of PA management capacities, processes and tools, including the mobilization of financial resources to support and sustain the PA expansion effort. In terms of PA finance, the project expects to gradually decrease the gap between financial needs and funds actually available for PA management, including the capacity of PA units to generate their own funding through tourism-based revenues.
2. To ensure a reduction in land degradation, the project will support various integrated natural resources management activities at both the systemic and site levels. The project was intended to support the development of a spatially-based DSS (Decision Support System) that can be available for use in cross-sectoral land/seascape planning, management and policy development, across different sectors and different scales. Based on the DSS, the project will facilitate the creation of an ecosystem-wide zoning and master strategy for the Outer Islands, the goal of which will be to provide the first coherent strategic level strategy for the whole of the Outer Islands of the Seychelles, including both terrestrial and marine realms, that will balance development and conservation needs, including the maintenance of global environmental benefits. At the site level, additional planning tools will include the development of land use plans for four islands / island groups (Desroches; Alphonse; Poivre; and Farquhar). On the ground measures to address land degradation related issues will include native forest and mangrove re-vegetation at selected sites; erosion monitoring and control; and the establishment of biosecurity systems to prevent the entry of new invasive alien species, including those that impede re-vegetation efforts.
3. The goal of the project is: **to** *conserve biodiversity in Seychelles Outer Islands through a protected area and sustainable development approach*. **The project objective is to** promote the conservation and sustainable use of coastal and marine biodiversity in the Seychelles’ Outer Islands by integrating a National Subsystem of Coastal and Marine Protected Areas (CMPAs) into the broader land- and seascape while reducing the pressures on natural resources from competing land uses. **The objective is to be achieved through two outcomes, each with several ouptus (Annex 1 shows the ammended logframe). Outcome 1:** Management effectiveness of Outer Islands CMPAs is enhanced; while **Outcome 2:** *Sustainable Development and CMPA management integrated into broader land/seascape.*
4. Under Biodiversity & Ecosystem Assessment, Monitoring and Conservation Programs to strengthen PA Management (output 1.1), the project supports the preparation of terrestrial and marine habitat maps for Farquhar, Poivre; Desroches and Alphonse. It also supports the assessment, monitoring and conservation of coral reefs, seagrass beds, mangroves, terrestrial fauna, sea turtles, fish and seabirds. This is complemented by assessments to understand the current and potential climate change impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem functioning as well as the establishment of ‘citizen science', a recreational diver and fishing observation monitoring programme. It also seeks to develop materials for Training and Reference for the marine habitat mapping & monitoring programs on Aldabra. Under **Institutional capacity to plan and implement protected area expansion is strengthened (Output 1.2)** the project aims to hire conservation and ecosystems management staff for Farquhar and Poivre Protected Areas and support Capacity Building of PA Management Staff.
5. Under **Infrastructure and Resources enhanced to enable Protected Areas management** (output 1.3), the project aims to Establish PA infrastructure on Farquhar and Poivre; Strengthen PA infrastructure on Desroches and Alphonse, and, establish/strengthen transport and equipment resources for PA management on 4 Islands. Under output 1.4 (**Protected Areas Legally Established),** the project aims to build on the PA Management Plans established under output 1.1 to achieve the gazettement of 5 PAs (Farquhar, Poivre; Desroches and Alphonse, D’Arros) with the boundaries marked in a consultative process and functioning PA management Units established. This would be supported by the formulation of 10-year Business Plan for the Island Conservation Society (ICS) to increase financial sustainability of PA management systems (output 1.5) and the development and approval of an official Protected Area management plan as well as operational PA management plans. The project also intends to raise awareness levels regarding Outer Islands Conservation via Public awareness and education campaigns (output 1.7).
6. Outcome 2 - (*Sustainable Development and CMPA management integrated into broader land/seascape in the Outer Islands).* Under this outcome, the project will build capacity for the use of decision support system to support integrated natural resource management in the Outer Islands (output 2.1). The project will provide technical support to Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change on data and information management. It will then review and validate compiled data and assist to mobilize financial resources for the continuation of the use of the DSS after the project end**. The project will also support the development of land use plans for** Desroches, Alphonse, Poivre, and Farquhar (output 2.2), to be validated in a participatory process. It will also support an **Ecosystem-wide Zoning and development of a Master Strategy for the Outer Islands to guide conservation and development activities (output 2.3). It will then strengthen institutional capacity for the implementation of the Integrated Natural Resource management Framework (output 2.4). This will involve** capacity building of the Ministry of Environment Energy and Climate Change and the Island Conservation Society (ICS) staff on information Management systems, Geographic Information System (GIS), database management, decision support tools, mapping, and, systematic conservation planning. The project will also ensure that **Ecosystem Restoration and Invasive Species Management support Protected Area management objectives (Output 2.5), which will involve development of programs for** ecosystem restoration and invasive species management and the implementation of bio security measures on the four Outer Islands. The project will also ensure that **Monitoring & Management of Ecosystem Functions reduce land and resource degradation at Protected Area sites, which will include the development and implementation of programs for** Coastal Erosion Control, Beach Profiling, Rain Water Harvesting Systems and Energy and Carbon Footprint on the four Outer Islands. This will be supported by capacity building activities to ensure that Island based staff implement Sustainable Land Management at PA sites.
7. As a result of the project, an expanded subsystem of Coastal and Marine Protected Areas (CMPAs) will provide increased protection to an estimated 1,152 ha of land area, plus marine area to be determined. These areas are expected to be: (i) South Island Farquhar National Park together with Goelettes Island (Farquhar) and Banc de Sables Strict Nature Reserves; (ii) South Island (Poivre) National Park; (iii) Alphonse Sustainable Use PA (174 ha), and (iv) Desroches Sustainable Use PA, inc (394 ha). The project will also improve PA management effectiveness in target sites, mitigating direct threats to biodiversity and maintaining essential ecosystem services. In addition, pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in the wider land- and seascape will be reduced through an Integrated Natural Resource Management (INRM) framework. This will result in reduced land conversion in areas important for biodiversity conservation and within ecosystems providing important ecosystem services (water provision and flooding control) as an indirect result of improved land use planning. Also, 60 hectares of degraded ecosystems will be rehabilitated (IAS controlled), and the systemic capacity and financing for promoting sustainable development in the Outer Island through INRM across the land- and seascape will be improved.

The five year project is implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and executed by the Government of Seychelles under the National Implementation Modality (NIM); actual implementation is being led by a partnership between the Island Conservation Society (ICS) in collaboration with the private hotels operating on the islands.

1. The total project cost is $12,219,549, of which the Global Environment Facility (GEF) contributes US$ 1,785,500 (15%), Government contributes $1,042,683 (9%), and Civil Society contributes 9,131,866 (75%). The other 2% (US$ 259,500) is from other unspecified sources.
2. The project is at the beginning of the third year of implementation; the Mid Term Evaluation was therefore conducted in accordance with the guidelines and regulations of UNDP and GEF, and, assessed the overall performance against the project objectives as set out in the Project Document and other related documents; project relevance to national priorities, as well as UNDP and GEF strategic objectives, namely; the effectiveness and efficiency of the project; sustainability of the project interventions and consideration of project impacts; implementation and management arrangements of the project, including financial management. The MTR assesed progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outcomes as specified in the Project Document, assessing early signs of project success or failure with the goal of identifying the necessary changes to be made in order to set the project on-track to achieve its intended results. The MTR also reviewed the project’s strategy and its risks to sustainability

## OBJECTIVES OF THE MTR

1. The objectives of the MTR are spelled out in the Terms of Reference (ToR - Annex 2). The overall objective is to assess progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outcomes as specified in the Project Document, and assess early signs of project success or failure with the goal of identifying the necessary changes to be made in order to set the project on-track to achieve its intended results. The MTR will also review the project’s strategy, its risks to sustainability.

## MTR APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

1. The MTR has been conducted in line with UNDP-GEF Guidelines, as spelled out in the ToR (Annex 2). The MTR was conducted in close coordination with UNDP, Government of Seychelles (GoS), and Project Implementing Partners (PIPs). The MTR took place from 13th November to 30th January 2017 [30 working days spread over a period three months]. The Inception Report (Annex 3) contains the methodologies and activity schedule used to conduct the review. It was prepared in consultation with UNDP and the Project Coordination Unit. The list of persons consulted is given in Annex 4.

#### Desk review of documents

1. The key documents reviewed during the evaluation process are contained in the Inception Report (Annex 3). The review provided a basis for the analysis and enabled the determination of what further information was required. The review of UNDP documents was necessary to establish linkages of the project with the umbrella programmes, such as United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and Country Programme. Review of GoS, Islands Development Company (IDC) and ICS plans, policies and strategies enabled the linkage of project results at the national level, and to determine the contribution of the project towards the achievement of goals as stipulated in the strategic documents of the government and IDC and ICS.

#### Data collection and analysis

1. The evaluator spent a week visiting the intervention sites (Desroches, Poivre, Alphonse) to assess progress and appreciate the difficulties faced by the project implementers concerning access to the Outer Islands. Meetings were held on the sites with ICS, Resort Operators/developers, Sports fishing Company and IDC staff on the Islands to discuss project implementation and achievements. This was followed by several Meetings with project partners in Mahe.

#### Detailed Context

1. In line with the ToR (Annex 2), the MTR reviewed the following aspects of the project design, implementation and delivery of results:
2. **Project Strategy (Project design and Results Framework/Logframe):** The MTR examined the problem addressed by the project and the underlying assumptions; reviewed the effect of any incorrect assumptions or changes to the context to achieving the project results as outlined in the Project Document; reviewed the relevance of the project strategy and assessed whether it provides the most effective route towards expected/intended results; reviewed whether lessons from other relevant projects were properly incorporated into the project design; examined how the project addresses country priorities and reviewed country ownership. The MTR also reviewed decision-making processes to determine if the planning phase took the perspectives of those who would be affected by project decisions, those who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources; and, the extent to which relevant gender issues were raised in the project design.
3. **On Progress Towards Outcomes Analysis:** The MTR guidelines require review of the logframe indicators against progress made towards the end-of-project targets; comparison and analysis of the GEF Tracking Tools at the Baseline with the one completed right before the Midterm Review; identification of remaining barriers to achieving the project objective in the remainder of the project; review of the aspects of the project that have already been successful, identifying ways in which the project can further expand these benefits.
4. **On Management Arrangements:** The MTR requires a review of overall effectiveness of project management as outlined in the Project Document, determining if changes have been made and if they are effective; examine if responsibilities and reporting lines are clear and if decision-making is transparent and undertaken in a timely manner. Further, review the quality of execution of the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner(s) and recommend areas for improvement, and review the quality of support provided by the GEF Partner Agency (UNDP) and recommend areas for improvement.
5. **On project implementation,** review whether there were any delays in project start-up and implementation, identifying the causes and examining if they have been solved; examine if work-planning processes are results-based; if changes have been made to the original logframe and if it is being used as a management tool.
6. **On finance and co-finance** - the review assessed; i) Whether strong financial controls have been established that allow the project management team to make informed decisions regarding the budget at any time, and allow for the timely flow of funds and the payment of satisfactory project deliverables; ii) Variances between planned and actual expenditures; iii) Whether the project demonstrates due diligence in the management of funds, including annual audits; iv) Any changes made to fund allocations as a result of budget revisions and the appropriateness and relevance of such revisions; v) Whether co-finance has been delivered in accordance with expectations laid out in the project document, and if the Project Team has made effort to pursue delivery of co-finance.
7. **On stakeholder engagement***,* the review assessed whether the project management team developed and leveraged the necessary and appropriate partnerships with direct and tangential stakeholders; whether local and national government stakeholders support the objectives of the project and continue to have an active role in project decision-making; whether public awareness has been created to support the project and how stakeholder involvement and public awareness contributes to the progress towards achievement of project objectives.
8. **On reporting and Communication,** the review assessed how adaptive management changes have been reported by the Project Team and shared with the Project Board; how well the Project Team and partners undertake and fulfil GEF reporting requirements (i.e. how have they addressed poorly-rated PIRS? (Project Implementation Review)), and suggest trainings etc. if needed; how the PIRs have been shared with the Project Board and other key stakeholders and how lessons derived from the adaptive management process have been documented, shared with key partners and internalized by partners and incorporated into project implementation.
9. **On financial risks to sustainability,** the MTR assessed the likelihood of financial and economic resources being available once the GEF assistance ends, examining the opportunities for financial sustainability and additional factors needed to create an enabling environment for continued financing.
10. **On socio-economic risks to sustainability** , the MTR assessed whether there are social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outcomes; whether there is a risk that the level of stakeholder ownership (including ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained; whether lessons learned are being documented continually; and whether successful aspects of the project are being transferred to appropriate parties, potential future beneficiaries, and others who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it in the future.
11. **On institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability**, the MTR assessed; whether the country’s legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes pose risks that may jeopardize project benefits; whether the project has in place frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes that will create mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer after the project’s closure; whether the project has developed appropriate institutional capacity (systems, structures, staff, expertise, etc.) that will be self-sufficient after the project closure date; and how the project identified and involved champions (i.e. individuals in government and civil society) who can promote sustainability of project outcomes; and whether the project leadership have the ability to respond to future institutional and governance changes (i.e. foreseeable changes to local or national political leadership) – thus can the project strategies effectively be incorporated/mainstreamed into future planning?
12. **On environmental risks to sustainability**, the MTR assessed whether there are environmental factors that could undermine and reverse the project’s outcomes and results, including factors that have been identified by project stakeholders.
13. **Conclusions & Recommendations:** The MTR offers evidence-based conclusions, in light of the findings. Recommendations made are succinct suggestions for critical intervention that are specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant.

# Findings

## Project Strategy (Project design and Results Framework/Logframe) - Moderately Satisfactory

1. The MTR finds that the project addresses a national priority that is in line with the country’s conservation and economic development strategies such as sustainable tourism development, the blue economy and the Marine Spatial Planning initiative. Seychelles recognizes the importance of natural resources and ecosystem services in the economic development of the country, as expressed in the country’s Sustainable Development Strategy 2012-2020 (SSDS). The SSDS covers 13 thematic areas, six of them relevant to the establishment of protected areas and sustainable land management in the Outer Islands: (i) Biodiversity and Forestry; (ii) Climate Change, (iii) Fisheries and Marine Resources; (iv) Economics of Sustainability; (v) Land Use, Coastal Zones and Urbanization; (vi) Tourism and Aesthetics; and (vii) Policy, Institutional and Regulatory Frameworks. Within each thematic area, the SSDS describes and prioritises various support programmes. In the context of protected areas and sustainable land management in the Outer Islands, these include: terrestrial national parks under the Biodiversity and Forestry thematic area; marine protected areas under the Fisheries and Marine Resources thematic area; coastal zones and protected areas development funding programme under the Economics of Sustainability thematic area; and environmental legislation review and enactment / environmental policy and institutional development under the Policy, Institutional and Regulatory thematic area. The project is also in line with the new PA Policy (Developed for GOS under previous GEF support 2015), whose goal is to achieve an effective and multi-use protected area system that is representative, comprehensive and balanced, and to maintain the highest quality examples of ecosystems within the country by engaging all stakeholders. The Protected Area Policy provides a national policy framework for: 1) the elaboration of legislation and associated regulations for the establishment and management of PAs; 2) the coordination and guidance for the planning, management and assessment of the existing (and future) set of protected areas in accordance to other national policies, international standards and best practices; and 3) the fulfillment of regional and international commitments relating to the conservation, protection and sustainable use of biodiversity and associated ecosystems (*inter alia* the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD), UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC, UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)). The policy also outlines the concept of co-management and proposes templates for co-management agreements for PAs in Seychelles, including those for NGO and private partner management of official protected areas.
2. The project was formulated over a one year period, involving a wide spectrum of stakeholders (through a Project Preparatory Grant – PPG). This ensured that the perspectives of all relevant stakeholders informed the project design. The MTR finds that the project design was indeed based on a detailed analysis of the country’s agenda for expanding PAs and in particular integrating the Outer Islands into the PA estate, in particular the threats to PA expansion and the barriers preventing the country from effectively addressing these threats. The rationale for integrating the Outer Islands into the country’s PA estate lies in the fact that the country’s existing protected area system is primarily situated in the Inner (Granitic) Islands of the country. The Outer Islands of Seychelles, which constitutes more than 80% of the country’s Exclusive Economic Zone, only contain four official protected areas, and only one of these, the Aldabra Atoll Special Nature Reserve is actively managed[[1]](#footnote-2).
3. The MTR finds that the project strategy identified is highly relevant to the government’s agenda of addressing threats to biodiversity conservation in the Outer Islands and the country. Indeed, the establishment and effective management of a representative system of protected areas, and the integration of biodiversity conservation and ecological function priorities into a spatial development and investment planning framework is an integral part of Seychelles’ overall strategy to address the threats and root causes of biodiversity loss and land degradation in the Outer Islands. The project supports: (i) the establishment of new official protected areas encompassing terrestrial and marine ecosystems in the Outer Islands to ensure that important ecosystems, habitats and species are effectively conserved; (ii) the development of functional, working partnerships between the government and environmental NGOs (and other partners) in the establishment and effective management of protected areas in the Outer Islands; (iii) the implementation of management strategies that harmonize conservation goals with the interests of various stakeholders in tourism and sustainable resource use (e.g. fisheries); (iv) the rehabilitation of terrestrial ecosystems to restore ecological functioning and diversity and support PA management objectives; and (v) adequate capacity in public PA institutions, NGOs and other prospective partners to enable knowledge sharing, development of effective interventions (e.g. ecosystem / species assessments, monitoring and conservation) and processes (e.g. creation of PA management and business plans).
4. These strategies are adequate to address the operational, financial and capacity constraints to effective management of PAs faced by the government and its partners. These include: inadequate funds, human resources and infrastructure, which reduces the ability of the Seychelles National Parks Authority to extend PA coverage to the Outer Islands; where the private sector, which operates tourism facilities on the Islands are willing to contribute to conservation (e.g. the privately owned D’Arros and St. Joseph island group, Desroches, Alphonse and Farquhar), the absence of official PA status for specific sites and delegated management authority greatly restricts the ability of these partners to implement protection measures for critical ecosystems and species, to develop or implement any long-term planning processes for the sites, or to develop collaborations and raise funds from national and international partners. The other barriers to the creation and effective management of protected areas in the Outer Islands is a lack of ecological and economic data and inadequate systems to ensure that the data that does exist is available for key stakeholders; inadequate technical and human capacities and resources, unclear PA financing model that involves the private sector, NGOs, government and citizens in general. Another barrier is the absence of an overall, long-term strategy in place for the development and conservation of the Outer Islands including a lack of a process for bringing together relevant stakeholders to generate such a strategy; and, the consequent lack of adequate systems, rules and capacities for planning and decision-making. The MTR concludes that the selected project strategy provides the most effective route towards the long-term goal of removing threats to biodiversity of the Outer Islands. It is noted that the project design is coordinated with the Marine Spatial Planning Initiative, which will support removal of threats at the macro-ecosystem level while the project tackles threats at the individual site level (micro levels).
5. The MTR finds that the project design incorporated lessons from several existing initiatives and partners; notably, i) implementing marine monitoring activities (water temperature; benthic; species) from Seychelles Islands Foundation (from SIF supported activities on Aldabra); ii) On coral reef monitoring from ICS and DRC; iii) On technical and legal/policy aspects of expanding the marine protected zones from SIF (based on the similar initiative around Aldabra); The MTR finds that project implementation utilized lessons on financial disbursement and the important role of the Programme Coordination Unit (PCU) from previous projects. Despite an initial delay in disbursements in the first quarter of the project, this project seems to have avoided the disbursement delays experienced by the NGO Modality and other GEF projects in the country (noting that some delays were experienced at the start of the project and reported elsewhere, with the explanation that most of those were due to Ministry of Environment and Finance procedures and the UNDP 80% rule on expenditures before replenishment can be made).
6. The MTR however finds that the project design and implementation should have been informed by three lessons that were not factored in. Not taking these lessons into account may complicate project implementation and achievement of its stated targets. They are:
* Committing project to results whose achievement is outside control of the project – the target for indicator 3 (the PA estate expands from 28,939 ha (terrestrial) and 15,261 ha (marine) to 105,197 ha and 6,498 ha respectively and indicator 6 (number of Protected Areas legally established and demarcated in Outer Islands increases from 4 to 9) – both of these targets depend on the approval of the new PA Law (Nature Reserves and Conservancy Act, a draft of which was completed in 2015 but has not been approved yet.). Although the project is actively monitoring the progression of the new Act, there is no guarantee that approval will be in time to enable the project meet these targets. On the other hand, the Act could be approved soon and this will no longer be an issue. It is difficult to predict one way or the other.
* Use of ecosystem health indicators whose condition can be affected by developments outside the control of the project (indicators 8, 9, 10 and 11). Already the warm temperatures experienced around the Outer Islands in April-June 2016 have caused massive damage to coral health.
* Capacity challenges of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS); with 39 different activities, the project is quite complex. Majority of the project activities are supposed to be supported by consultants; project design however inadequately catered for the small pool of national consultants and provided only two staff members per Island, while ICS reports that a contingent of 3 to 5 staff members per Island would have been ideal. In addition, it failed to consider the probability of reduction of capacity resident at project start. However, ICS has progressively lost capacity it had at the beginning of the project via frequent staff changes at senior management, mid-management and operations[[2]](#footnote-3). This has exacerbated weak systems of procuring and managing consultants, causing delays in the deliveries of key outputs;
* Difficulty of access of the Outer Islands would have required a specific strategy: Project implementation is limited by access determined by weather. ICS is unable to carry out most assessment and monitoring activities on the Islands during South East Monsoon (May/June to Sept/Oct) due to weather challenges. IDC does not operate regular flights during these times to the Islands. Moreover, Alphonse Resort closes down during this season. These facts were not taken into consideration during the project design.
1. Further, the MTR finds that project design was based on an in-depth analysis of risks and assumptions, with suggested mitigation measures. However, several assumptions upstaged project implementation and achievement of results. These are examined in the table below.

Table 1: Risks and Assumptions and their effects on project implementation and achievements

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Risk/assumption** | **How it played out** | **Effect on project implementation** |
| Adequately qualified consultants / contractors can be sourced to provide technical support to project activities; and, The appointment of consultants / contractors is not unduly delayed by bureaucratic processes | Seychelles like other Small Island States has severe shortage of qualified consultants and depends largely on consultants sourced internationally. While ICS did everything to recruit national consultants, the best qualified were not always available. This was exacerbated by weak systems of managing consultants to ensure timely delivery of quality reports (e.g. establishing and agreeing deadlines, following up on deadlines and commitments diligently, etc.).  | Delayed establishment of baseline values (to update those collected from secondary sources). In addition weak management of consultants (recruit and manage consultants) exacerbated delays in implementation. |
| Legal gazetting of new Protected Areas is not held up by bottlenecks in the executive or legislative branches of the Government | The new Nature Reserves and Conservancy Act has not yet been approved by Cabinet. | The new PAs cannot be gazetted before the new Nature Reserves and Conservancy Act has been enacted. Although new PAs can be legally gazetted under the existing legislation (as D’Arros was to be – and as the extensions to Aldabra and Aride are proceeding), the Ministry has decided not consider any new nomination files until the new legislation is in place to avoid having to re-gazette. If approval of the new Law delays further, it will limit the time the PAs can be managed as such after gazettement, hence the ability of the project to contribute to the long-term indicators (8, 9, 10, and 11). The fact that the project has no influence on the enactment of the new Law poses a major risk to the project being able to deliver on indicators 3, 6 and 13 (5 new PAs).  |
| Climate impacts (cyclones, storm surges, coral bleaching) do not reduce coral, mangrove and seagrass bed cover / functioning above background levels; and,Poor resilience of marine and terrestrial ecosystems to the effects of climate change | The risk of a new cyclone hitting the island was not considered adequately (it was hit in 2006); From April-June 2016, the target Islands experienced high sea temperatures and significant coral bleaching: there has not yet been time to assess the damage to the reefs although initial reports indicate considerable (although localized and variable) damage. Impact of Cyclone Fantala on Farquhar is also to be determined. | This event underscores the risk of using coral health and other ecosystem state indicators for the project while providing further justification for establishing PAs. There is need to establish the baselines for indicators 8, 9, 10 and 11, updating the values obtained from secondary sources.  |
| Tourism development proceeds on Farquhar and Poivre, generating new income streams for PA management at those sites | Farquhar was hit by Cyclone Fantala three times, flattening or destroying all infrastructure previously established by IDC and the project. There is currently no tourism going on although it is expected to restart when the infrastructure is replaced (completion due in early 2017).Poivre is not yet generating any revenue since there are no facilities for tourism or for ICS staff to undertake conservation work. There is a runway but no resort.  | The project had provided 100% of the equipment required for conservation work on Farquhar; although equipment such as engines and boats were not destroyed, the facilities for ICS staff needs to be rebuilt. Although this is delaying establishment of facilities on other Islands, e.g. Poivre, it is noted that Apparently the reconstruction is almost completed and staff will return in a month or so. Costs of repairing the damage to Farquhar are estimated at $4.5 million by the World Bank, with an estimated loss of revenue accruing from the island of $500,000 during the recovery phase (this includes loss of revenue paid by tourism operators towards biodiversity management etc.). It is as yet undetermined how this will impact the achievement of project results, or what mitigatory actions may be applied by funding agencies to support IDC and potentially the resumption of biodiversity conservation actions.It was expected that conservation work could be conducted on Poivre by staff based on Desroches Island, but the Resort on the latter changed ownership in 2015. The new owners closed down for renovation. ICS has recruited conservation staff for Poivre but without facilities on Poivre and without regular tourism boats from Desroches it is impossible for the staff to undertake work, such as ground truthing of maps. It is possible for the staff to be based on Desroches and to undertake work based on secondary data but access to the internet on the Islands is not easy, including Desroches. In addition, there is not much literature available on Poivre. The project has compiled a literature review which they are currently using to draft an annual report for Poivre.  |

1. Recommendation 1: It is recommended that, with the support of the PSC, the PCU leads an assessment of the impacts of the lessons that were not taken into consideration as well as the impacts of the assumptions that have upstaged implementation of some activities on the overall project – especially the indicators, targets and implementation arrangements. Based on the results of the assessments, the PCU should refine the project strategy and the results framework/logframe, to allow partners to consolidate outputs/activities for which the project can realistically implement in the remaining project time, without departing from the original project goal and objective, but proposing adjustments to project indicators as necessary.
2. Recommendation 2: The PCU should take over recruitment and management of all consultant to accelerate project implementation in the remaining and recommended extension period.

## Progress towards outcomes

1. The table below summarises the progress towards outcomes and the ratings on progress. Annex 5 provides a detailed assessment of achievement against indicators.

Table 2: Progress towards outcomes per Outcome

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Measure | MTR Rating | Achievement Description |
| Project Strategy | N/A |  |
| Progress Towards Results | Objective Achievement Rating: (Unsatisfactory (2). Justification for rating – as described in the next column, there was an overall loss of capacity at the systemic and institutional level; limited increase in METT Scores; and mixed progress in progression towards increasing the hectarage of Protected Areas (At MTR, it was expected that the project would have made progress with preparation of the nomination files. However, progress only registered for Desroches[[3]](#footnote-4) and Alphonse.  | Three indicators in the Results Framework: * The National PA system Capacity Scores (from the viewpoints of Seychelles National Parks Authority (SNPA), Island Conservation Society and the Programme Coordination Unit (PCU)–
* Systemic Capacity declined from 60% at CEO to 54.8%;
* Institutional Capacity declined from 67% at CEO to 52.8%
* Individual Capacity increased from 48% at CEO to 60.3%
* The overall Capacity Scores (Systemic, Institutional and Individual) declined from an average of 60% at CEO to 55.4%.

Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) scores:* Desroches – increased from 60% at CEO to 61.7%
* Alphonse – increased from 59% at CEO to 66.7%
* Poivre -- increased from 30% at CEO to 32.3%
* Farquhar – increased from 30% at CEO to 41.4%

Increase in coverage (ha) of official PAs in the Outer Islands (Aldabra; African Banks; Etoile; Boudeuse)* Marine – no increase from the baseline of 28,939ha
* Terrestrial – no increase from the baseline 15,261 ha

The loss of capacity is largely due to loss of capacity in the Island Conservation Society (ICS); PA expansion was delayed by delayed gazettement of new PAs, itself delayed by the delayed approval of the New PA law (by parliament). However, it is noted that Nomination file is ready for D’Arros and revised nomination file for extension of Aldabra, but not for the other target Islands. |
| Outcome 1 Rating – Moderately Unsatisfactory (3) | On the positive side;* Land use maps for Desroches and Alphonse have been prepared and agreed with IDC Board, although they are yet to be approved by the Planning Authority and Cabinet. This is turning out to be a very long process; however, LUPs will be presented to the Planning Authority in January 2017
* conservation zones (fish protection zones; temporal zones; marine conservation corridors; Important Bird Areas) have been identified but official recognition is tied to official approval of land use maps, gazettement of PAs and the approval of the Ecosystem level marine zonation areas;
* PA finance scorecard has improved from 27% at CEO to 29% (with total finances available to the system almost doubling from 2013 to 2016 – from $189K to $345K), and staff of SNPA, ICS, SIF, Department of Environment, MCSS, SFA, GIF) have been trained on several relevant fields (as indicated by the increase in individual capacity scores under the objective from 48% to 60.3%. It is noted that this is being supported by the PA Finance Plan developed under the associated GEF PA Finance project, which started in mid-2016;
* Farquhar and Poivre now have project supported staff; there is therefore a level of improved management, possibly reducing incidents of illegal fishing and hunting for turtles on Desroches (although not yet on Poivre and Farquarhar)

On the other hand:* No new PAs have been gazetted and the nomination files for 4 of the target Islands are not yet ready. Data required for the nomination files is still in the process of being analysed (ecological data) and land use maps are not yet finalized, etc. Consequently, changes in the health of coral reefs, seagrass beds, mangroves and reef fish cannot be easily or directly attributed to project activities (noting the potential reduction in illegal harvesting of fish and turtles described above). It is however noted that these resources health indicators are very long-term impact indicators; the 5-year project is likely to set the conditions for achievement on these indicators but may not necessarily change these values in its lifetime. Baseline values have been established largely from literature (for different years) (contained in the MTR).
 |
| Outcome 2 Unsatisfactory (2) | * No land conversion has happened to any IUCN category because this requires the gazettment of the PAs and/or approval of the land use plans as prerequisite (which has not happened);
* The pressures from competing natural resources uses in the Outer Islands land- and seascape are yet to be reduced because although two (out of four) land use plans have been formulated, they need to be approved along with the gazettement of the PAs and the Ecosystem-Wide Zoning and Master Strategy is still under formulation.
* The work on the bio-security protocols has begun but only Aldabra and D’Arros are implementing any biosecurity systems yet (this was the situation at baseline)[[4]](#footnote-5).

On the positive side;* IDC now understands role of LUPs and associated vegetation plans (and has approved two of them while agreeing to proceed with the other two, and has included provision in at least the Alphonse Plan for gazetting of a new PA - Bijoutier and St Francois Islands);
* Staff of Government, NGO PA organizations have received training on database management, decision support tools, and systematic conservation planning;
* Training on re-vegetation, coastal erosion control and biosecurity procedures is pending.
 |
| Project Implementation & Adaptive Management | Moderately Satisfactory | On the positive side - Despite a one year delay between project approval and Inception Workshop, project implementation is well under way with impressive progress on several outputs including: Output 1.2: Institutional capacity to plan and implement protected area expansion is strengthened (70%); Output 1.3: Infrastructure and Resources enhanced to enable Protected Areas management (70%); Output 1.7: Increased Education and Awareness levels support Protected Areas management in the Outer Islands (90%); Output 2.1: Spatially-based decision support system (DSS) in place to enable integrated natural resource management in the Outer Islands (90%); Output 2.3: Ecosystem-wide Zoning & Master Strategy for the Outer Islands in place to guide conservation and development activities (75%). This gives the project an overall estimated delivery on activities of 40%. This is close to the financial delivery (expenditure) of 41% by June 2016 (at 34% for ICS and 51% for PCU). On challenges – although the PSC was highly inclusive, IDC attendance was irregular, affecting effectiveness of PSC’s guidance to project implementation and rate of implementation. Accessing the Outer Islands proved to be exceptionally difficult for project partners and IDC was slow in resolving the difficulties. Loss of facilities on Farhaqur (due to Cyclone Fantala) and delayed establishment of facilities on Poivre further challenged implementation. ICS lost some of the capacity it had during project inception, causing delays in implementation, since it is responsible for 60% project activities. Several assumptions made during project formulation upstaged implementation; the project M&E system was well used to monitor risks and assumptions, although the effectiveness of adaptive management was weakened by the irregular attendance of IDC from the PSC. |
| Sustainability | Likely | On the positive – the MTR finds no significant financial or socio-economics risks to sustainability. The situation is however unclear regarding institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability of the project outcomes. On the one hand the country has excellent policies on integrating biodiversity into economic development including a new PA Policy (2015) which allows participation of the private sector and NGOs to manage PAs in partnership with government. However, the delayed approval of the new PA Law may prevent the project from delivering on indicators 3 and 6, and delay actual partnerships for managing PAs. |

## Project Implementation & Adaptive Management - Moderately Satisfactory

1. The MTR finds that overall project implementation (indicated by project delivery) is at 40%. Table 3 below shows the estimated level of delivery (implementation) by MTR.

Table 3: Estimated Percentage implementation by Output

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Outcome 1: Management effectiveness is enhanced within a sample of coastal and marine protected areas (IUCN Category I, II and VI) operating under innovative public-private-civil society partnership agreements | Estimated Percentage implementation |
| Output 1.1: Biodiversity & Ecosystem Assessment, Monitoring and Conservation Programs to strengthen PA Management | 1.1.1: Preparation of terrestrial and marine habitat maps (ICS) | 35% |
| 1.1.2 Assessment, monitoring and conservation of coral reefs |
| 1.1.3 Assessment, monitoring and conservation of sea grass beds |
| 1.1.4 Assessment, monitoring and conservation of mangroves |
| 1.1.5 Assessment, monitoring and conservation of terrestrial fauna  |
| 1.1.6 Assessment, monitoring and conservation of sea turtles  |
| 1.1.7 Assessment, monitoring and conservation of fish |
| 1.1.8 Assessment, monitoring and conservation of seabirds |
| 1.1.9: Current and potential climate change impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem functioning assessed and monitored (ICS) |
| 1.1.10: Establishment of 'citizen science' recreational diver observation monitoring programme (ICS) |
| 1.1.11: Establishment of 'citizen science' recreational fisheries observation monitoring programme |
| 1.1.12 Materials for Training and Reference for the Marine habitat mapping & monitoring programs on Aldabra (SIF) |
| 1.1.13 Travel Cost for visiting experts to design and oversee various ecosystem/species assessment, monitoring and conservation programmes at 4 PA sites (PCU) |
| Output 1.2: Institutional capacity to plan and implement protected area expansion is strengthened | 1.2.1 Hiring of staff for Farquhar and Poivre Protected Area (ICS) | 70 |
| 1.2.2 Capacity Building of PA Management Staff (PCU) |
| Output 1.3: Infrastructure and Resources enhanced to enable Protected Areas management | 1.3.1 Establish PA infrastructure on Farquhar and Poivre; Strengthen PA infrastructure on Desroches and Alphonse and establish/strengthen transport and equipment resources for PA management on 4 Islands (ICS) | 70 |
| Output 1.4: Protected Areas Legally Established | 1.4.1 PA Management Plans and 1.6.b Official Protected Area Management Plan (PCU) | 0 |
| 1.4.2 Gazetting of PA Units |
| 1.4.3 Consultative Process for boundary setting and zoning |
| 1.4.3 Workshops |
| Output 1.5: Protected Area Management Structures in place and sufficiently financed | 1.5.1 Capacity Building workshop to enhance capacity of PA Managers in Sustainable Financing/ Business Planning in Protected Areas (PCU)[[5]](#footnote-6) | 0 |
| 1.5.2 10-year Business Plan for ICS managed Protected Areas and |
| Output 1.6: Protected Area Management Plans Developed and Implemented | 1.6 an Operational Management Plan (ICS/PCU) | 25% |
| 1.6.b Official Protected Area Management Plan (PCU) |
| Output 1.7: Increased Education and Awareness levels support Protected Areas management in the Outer Islands | 1.7.1 Increased education and awareness levels regarding Outer Islands Conservation (ICS) | 90 |
| 1.7.2 Public awareness and education campaigns (PCU) |
| *Outcome 2: Sustainable Development and CMPA management integrated into broader land/seascape in the Outer Islands* |  |
| Output 2.1 : Spatially-based decision support system (DSS) in place to enable integrated natural resource management in the Outer Islands | 2.1.1 Technical Support to help MEECC to build their internal capacity for data information management and DSS (PCU) | 90 |
| 2.1.2 Review and validate data compiled in the DSS (PCU) |
| 2.1.3 Resources enhanced to ensure ongoing maintenance and application of the DSS at MEECC Data Management Section (PCU) |
| Output 2.2 : Land Use Plans completed for targeted Islands | 2.2.1 Land Use Plans - Desroches, Alphonse, Poivre, Farquhar (PCU) | 45 |
| 2.2.2 Review and validate Land Use Plans (PCU) |
| Output 2.3: Ecosystem-wide Zoning & Master Strategy for the Outer Islands in place to guide conservation and development activities  | 2.3.1 Technical support to guide development of Ecosystem-wide zoning and Master Strategy for the Outer Islands (PCU) | 75 |
| 2.3.2 Preparing and approving the spatial management strategy and public consultation (PCU) |
| Output 2.4: Institutional Capacity strengthened for the implementation of Integrated Natural Resource | 2.4.1 Capacity building of MEECC and ICS staff in GIS, database management, decision support tools, mapping, systematic conservation planning (PCU) | 45 |
| 2.4.2 Capacity building for ICS information Management system (ICS & PCU) |
| Output 2.5: - Ecosystem Restoration & Invasive Species Management support Protected Area management objectives | 2.5.1 ICS programmes for Ecosystem Restoration (ICS)2.5.2 Invasive Species Management- bio security measures (PCU | 15 |
| Output 2.6 : Monitoring & Management of Ecosystem Functions reduce land and resource degradation at Protected Area sites | 2.6.1 Coastal Erosion Control, Beach Profiling, Rain Water Harvesting Systems and Energy and Carbon Footprint (ICS) | 15 |
| 2.6.2 Capacity Building: I2sland Based Staff to Implement Sustainable Land Management at PA sites (PCU) |
| Overall delivery  | 40.4% |

1. This level of implementation can be explained by the project management arrangements, work planning, provision of finance and co-finance, application of project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, stakeholder engagement, reporting, and communications, as briefly described below.

## Management Arrangements - Moderately Satisfactory

1. The management arrangement for the project is described in the prodoc. The 5 year project is nationally implemented (NIM) by the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change (MEECC), which provides a National Project Director (the Principle Secretary for Environment), and a Program Coordination Unit (PCU), which also houses the Project Manager, responsible for day to day management of the project.
2. The UNDP CO is responsible for: (i) providing financial and audit services to the project; (ii) assist with the recruitment of technical experts; (iii) overseeing financial expenditures against project budgets; (iv) appointment of independent financial auditors and evaluators; and (v) ensuring that all activities, including procurement and financial services, are carried out in strict compliance with UNDP and GEF procedures. The Island Conservation Society (ICS), is the **Responsible Party** (as defined in POPP[[6]](#footnote-7))[[7]](#footnote-8), engaged by MEECC to provide protected area operationalisation services for 4 of the 5 sites where new Outer Islands Protected Areas are to be established.
3. The project document allocates 60% of the outputs directly under ICS - all of Outputs 1.1 (apart from some activities on Aldabra Island), 1.3, as well as parts of Outputs 1.2,1.6, 1.7, and 2.4., 2.5 and 2.6. A memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the MEECC and ICS describes the roles and responsibilities of each partner, PCU and PSC, as well as the financial and reporting arrangements and procedures for the project. ICS was to hire a Project Coordinator (PC) specifically to manage the implementation of its activities under the project, including organizing for and undertaking frequent visits to the Outer Island PA sites to manage ICS activities on the ground.
4. A Project Steering Committee (PSC) provides overall policy guidance to the project. Chaired by the National Project Director (NPD), the PSC is made up of representatives from Islands Development Company (IDC), Island Conservation Society (ICS), Seychelles Islands Foundation (SIF), Seychelles National Parks Authority (SNPA), Seychelles Fishings Authority (SFA), Ministry of Habitat, Infrastructure and Land Transport, Seychelles Coast Guard, Seychelles Maritime Safety Administration, Seychelles Port Authority and UNDP. The PCU is the Secretariat to the PSC. The PSC was expanded at Inception to include the Tourism Department, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) Initiative, the Fisherman and Boat Owners Association and UNISEY, and Desroches Island Development Company/ Four Seasons Resort. The South African Institute of Aquatic Biodiversity (SAIAB) was withdrawn from the PSC. The PSC members were generally responsive at the meetings, with some members (SIF, TNC MSP Initiative and MEECC) being more active than others particularly in responding to circulated documents.
5. The Islands Development Company manages all the Outer Islands (on behalf of Government of Seychelles) and therefore plays a critical role in granting access to the Islands. Without this support, it is impossible to implement any activities on the Outer Islands. Given this critical role, it was expected that IDC would play an active role in the project implementation and the PSC;
6. Examining the minutes of the PSC, the MTR finds that the implementation arrangements presented a few challenges to project implementation:
7. First, the appointment of the Island Conservation Society (ICS) as the Responsible Party without going through competitive bidding raised questions (at the GEF Secretariat), delaying project start-up by a year. The LPAC was held on 13th August 2013; the Global Environment Facility (GEF) however raised questions on the appointment of ICS, whose clarification took time. A Note to File was submitted by UNDP and GOS-UNDP-GEF PCU on 24th June 2014, allowing the signing of the MOU between MEECC and ICS on 19th August 2014. The project had however recruited a Project Manager and the Project Document had been signed in July 2014, mitigating some of the impacts of the delayed process.

Lesson: Adequate justification should be included in the Management Arrangement section of a Prodoc where appointment of an entity without competitive bidding is deemed necessary.

1. Recommendation 3: Project is likely to require more time than planned for to deliver on all target, unless project implementation is accelerated in the second half of project life. The MTR therefore recommends a one year project extension..
2. The second change was that although CEO of IDC had committed to regular meetings with the PCU and at the PSC, he attended the first one, was represented in subsequent ones and IDC’s attendance was irregular in the previous one year. As a resulkt the project has faced increasing difficulty of accessing the Outer Islands, causing considerable delays in implementation.
3. Examples of the difficulty of accessing the Outer Islands include: i) project activities on Poivre are delayed considerably because there are no facilities for project staff on the Island. The neighbouring Desroches Island – from which it had been assumed that ICS staff would operate activities for Poivre, changed ownership in 2015 and was put under (still on-going) renovation. Without tourist activities on Desroches, staff from Poivre have no transport to the Island. In addition, Desroches staff cannot undertake monitoring work far from the Island shores for security reasons (tourists boats would normally provide transport for inter-island travel); ii) PCU staff experienced difficulties visiting the Islands on project monitoring missions (PCU no longer relies on ICS and organizes directly with IDC, which has worked better). This was acutely felt after the April-May 2016 warm period which is expected to have damaged corals considerably, and the Cyclone Fantala which flattened or destroyed most above ground infrastructure on Farquhar. While IDC organized a field trip for damage assessment in mid-May 2016, only UNDP, the World Bank and ICS participated in the damage assessment[[8]](#footnote-9); PCU missed an opportunity to undertake monitoring/assessments too. iii) ICS and the project staff generally lack the expertise and capacities to carry out updating of existing (draft and old) marine maps. This is because there has not been training on remote sensing (necessary for marine mapping) under the project and the project provides only two staff members per island, while 5 would be necessary (one boatman and two diver minimum, (5 staff per island were requested at the drafting of the project).
4. Regarding the GEF Partner Agency (UNDP), the Country Office (CO) provided management and administrative support to the project while the Regional Service Centre (RSC, based in Addis Ababa) provided technical support. From the minutes of the PSC Meetings and responses from project partners, the MTR finds that although UNDP applied lessons from previous projects to reduce challenges related to funds disbursement; it could have been more proactive in three areas: i) engaging the IDC more directly to ease the challenges of access to the Islands (to both ICS and PCU); ii) tackling procurement difficulties of the ICS, in order to link the project with quality technical assistance, as well as modifying the ecosystems health indicators (indicators 8, 9, 10 and 11), for which the project has limited influence. The unsuitability of these indicators had been raised during the inception workshop without further action from UNDP. High staff turn-over at the RSC is likely to have affected the speed of response and technical support to the project, with three changes on the Regional Technical Advisor responsible for the project in 2 years.
5. Regarding the MEECC, which has the overall responsibility for achieving the project goal and objectives, it has designated the Permanent Secretary as the National Project Director (NPD). The NPD provides strategic oversight and guidance to project implementation. The NPD signs and approves the project financial reports and the financial requests for advances under any contracts issued under NIM. He also signed the MOU between the Government and the Island Conservation Society (ICS). The MTR finds that although the NPD changed early on in the implmentation process, the Ministry (both the first and the second NPC) remained engaged with the project and were active at the PSC. However, the MTR finds that the NPD could have played a more active role in assisting the project to address the challenges of accessing the Outer Islands and perhaps advocating for the faster approval of the new PA Law.
6. Recommendation 4: The PSC, and the NPD in particular should work with IDC to facilitate increased access to the Islands to enable ICS and PCU to accelerate implementation for the remaining project time.
7. Recommendation 5: UNDP Regional Service Centre should ensure continuity of Technical Advisors especially for complex projects such as the Outer Islands.
8. Recommendation 6: The NPD should advocate for the faster approval of the new PA Law
9. Recommendation 7: ICS Capacity Assessment undertaken during project formulation should be repeated by an independent entity and used to determine activities ICS can realistically implement within the project outlines. Based on the findings, the implementation strategy should be refined and responsibility transferred from ICS to other parties as deemed necessary to fast track project implementation.

## Work Planning - Moderately Unsatisfactory

1. The MTR finds that project implementation is being guided by the Multi-Year work plan, complemented by Annual Work plans. The project logframe was discussed at length during the Inception Workshop and a few changes were made, summarised below (Amended logframe in Annex 1):
* Modified target for **Indicator 15 (**Extent (# of hectares) of Desroches and Alphonse Islands with restored native habitats). Lessons drawn from restoration work on Denis and North and D’Arros islands indicated that restoration work is extremely tedious even on inner Islands. A target of 30 hectares was unlikely to be reached on Outer Islands, given the difficulty of access, even with co-finance. The target was therefore reduced from 30 to 15 on each Island. However, the target seems to have been changed again after the formulation of the vegetation management plans for each Island to 22.3 and 17.1 hectares respectively – these being the total areas identified as suitable for restoration on the two Islands. The MTR finds that a target of 15 hectares is reasonable and should be retained as the indicator target. However, the MTR also finds that the project is unlikely to meet this new target since IDC has not approved implementation of any rehabilitation work (see discussion and recommendation in a later section).
* Discussed and clarified targets and suitability for indicators 8-11: It was noted that indicators 8 to 11 (Box 1) had no baseline data or clear targets; it was further acknowledged that the targets could only be set once the baseline values were established. However, there was no budget for baseline data collection, hence all the baseline values were obtained from secondary literature, and dating as far back as 2008. There is therefore no uniform baseline for one particular year. In addition, the Inception Workshop noted that these indicators measure parameters which either cannot be influenced by the project alone (e.g. coral reef health), or require the Protected Areas to be set up and the marine areas managed under PA status for several years before any change can be registered (e.g. mangroves, fisheries). The MTR finds that the use of these indicators to measure project success is not appropriate. The project could however set the baselines for future monitoring of these parameters, if the appropriate budget is provided for updating the baseline values collected from literature.
* Indicator 14 (Pressures from competing natural resources uses in the Outer Islands land- and seascape are reduced through an integrated natural resource management (INRM) framework, including Overall Planning Framework and Landuse Plans). It was noted that the achievement on this indicator would be closely coordinated with the Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) initiative currently being implemented by Government, with Technical support from The Nature Conservancy (TNC). Noting that the MSP exercise involves the entire Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), the project will provide detailed planning at the micro-level for the target sites, while the MSP tackles the larger scale planning for the whole EEZ.
* Refining the project budget – the project budget was refined to provide a budget for output 1.6 (which had no budget) and to adjust allocation of funds between years to take into account the late start of project (in 2014 instead of the stipulated 2013). The five year project now extends over into 2018.

Box 1: Indicators 8, 9, 10 and 11

|  |
| --- |
| 8. Coral reef health, as measured by: Percent live hard coral cover; Percent dead hard coral cover; Number of coral recruits (per m2)9. Mangrove health, as measured by: Average height and/or DBH; # of hectares10. Seagrass bed health, as measured by # of hectares11. Health of selected reef fish stocks, as measured by: Abundance per m3; Species diversity; Biomass in kg per m3 |

1. The MTR finds that the slight changes to the logframe (and targets) were approved by the relevant authorities (PSC, UNDP). The MTR also finds that project partners made effort to use the project logframe as a management tool but success was hampered by the followings:
* **Delays with disbursements at the beginning of the project**: The MTR finds that implementation by ICS in the first quarter of the project (Sept – December 2014) was affected by delayed disbursement. Minutes of the PSC meetings show that delays in disbursements occurred while the project was establishing financial management systems and slow processing between the MEECC and the Central Bank. Although the ICS used its own resources where possible, this delay reverberated into the second quarter because of missed opportunities to transport equipment to the Outer Islands (they missed two IDC boats). However, although UNDP (learning from previous projects) addressed this challenge early on, (holding meetings with the Finance Ministry, PCU, NPD), the challenge of slow disbursements still remains;
1. Recommendation 8: The MEECC and GEF OFP should discuss the challenge with the Ministry of Finance to find lasting solutions for all GEF projects in the country; including exploring the use of project accounts with Commercial Banks and training project staff regularly on UNDP financial procedures, especially when the implementing partner institutions experience high staff turn-over.
* **Risks and assumptions:** as explained in section the table 1, section 2.1. it is noted that the project has consistently updated the risk log and reported on them dilligently.
* **Difficulty of accessing Islands** – the use of the project workplans and logframe to guide project implementation was further hampered by difficulty of accessing the Islands. As explained in the previous section, the Outer Islands are under the management of the Islands Development Company (IDC), which controls transport and accommodation on the Islands. ICS was expected, due to their close relationship and proximity to IDC, to facilitate the communication and arrangements for field work between the project and IDC. However, the MTR finds that ICS did not effectively facilitate communication or arrangements for field work in a timely manner, either for its own staff, consultants managed by itself or for PCU monitoring. This was exacerbated by the frequent absence of IDC from PSC meetings, which made it difficult to determine whether PSC decisions had the approval of IDC senior management. A case in point is the stoppage of revegetation work on Alphonse Island. Rehabilitation had started on Alphonse, in line with a project workplan, both approved by the PSC. A demonstration plot had been set up under the supervision of the Island Conservation Officer, who is also a Forest Engineer. However, the CEO of IDC did not agree with the rehabilitation and ordered it to be stopped, including closing/dismantling of the well-established tree nursery that had both a rehabilitation and an awareness raising function [[9]](#footnote-10). The project PIR for 2016 reports that while the CEO is not against rehabilitation per se, the reasons for the disagreement seems to be mainly that i) the trees being replanted were not timber species that could subsequently be used for construction; ii) the need to wait for pilot work on rehabilitation to be undertaken at Desroches. However, the trees for replanting have been identified in the vegetation plans and handbooks for each island, and it is not necessary to wait for a pilot on antoher Island. The MTR finds that while the CEO might have a valid point, it is important to use project structures such as the PSC to raise such issues during discussions on workplans, to ensure that such decisions are participatory and transparent. In addition, waiting for the Desroches pilot to provide lessons for rehabilitation on Alphonse is likely to delay the attainment of the project targets, given how difficult it is to undertake rehabilitation work on the Outer Islands. There is need to develop a way forward such that the two Islands can be rehabilitated effectively in parallel.
1. Recommendation 9: The PSC should facilitate a decision in regard to rehabilitation work on Alphonse and Desroches (and in general), in line with the species selected during the vegetation management planning and determining whether there are valid reasons for not undertaking rehabilitation on both Islands in parallel.
2. Recommendation 10: Given the importance of IDC in accessing the Islands and the fact that this project is likely to enter the category of ‘Projects at high risk’ if the speed of implementation is not accelerated, IDC should: i) participate fully in PSC Meetings to ensure full agreement with decisions made and activities planned, ii) continue a schedule of regular briefings with the project manager in which visits to the islands can be approved and access scheduled - ICS (Ag.) CEO also to attend these briefings.
3. Recommendation (Repeated elsewhere): Given the number of risks and assumptions that have affected project implementation, the project partners should assess the logframe to identify activities that are not likely to be implemented and those they should consolidate, in order to improve the likelihood of the project delivering important impacts.
4. Recommendation 11: Unless facilities can be established on Poivre to allow project staff in residence by June 2017, then the site should be dropped and funds should be reallocated to another activity as determined by the PSC

## Finance and Co-finance - Satisfactory

1. The MTR finds that the project has strong financial controls, albeit with enough flexibility to facilitate implementation. Financial management is in line with UNDP and Government of Seychelles guidelines. Setting up the financial management systems caused an initial delay in disbursement (for the first two quarters of project implementation) but no further delays have been reported. Frequent staff turn-over at ICS has affected the compliance with financial management procedures of UNDP with some delays in disbursement. The project went through an Audit in 2016 which it passed without qualification.
2. The MTR finds evidence that the project partners have pursued co-finance and tracked it diligently (Table 4 below). Minutes of the PSC Meetings capture robust discussions on co-finance. Co-finance contribution to date is about 47%, which would be higher if all partners provided information.

Table 4: State of Co-Finance at MTR

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Source of Co-financing54 | Name of Co-financier | Type of Co-financing55  | Amount Confirmed at CEO endorsement (US$)  | Actual Amount Contributed at stage of Midterm Review (US$)  | Actual % of Expected Amount |
| National Government | Islands Development Company | In-kind | 807,962 | 328,800 | 41 |
| National Government | Ministry of Environment, Energy & Climate Change | In-kind | 190,471 | Not submitted | - |
| National Government | Seychelles National Parks Authority | In-kind | 25,000 | 9800 | 39 |
| National Government | Seychelles Fishing Authority | In-kind | 8,250 | 1040 | 13 |
| National Government | Ministry of Habitat, Infrastructure and Land Transport | In-kind | 11,000 | Not submitted | - |
| NGO | Island Conservation Society | In-kind | 631,866 | 277,920 | 44 |
| NGO | Save Our Seas / D'Arros | In-kind | 2,000,000 | Not submitted |  |
| NGO | SAIAB / Pangaea | In-kind | 4,500,000 | 2,229,000 | 50 |
| NGO | Seychelles Islands Foundation | In-kind | 2,000,000 | 1,184,711.69 | 59 |
| Private Sector | Desroches Island Lodge | Grant | 109,500 | 116,400 | 106 |
| GEF Agency | United Nation Development Program | Grant | 150,000 | 60,000 | 40 |
| Total | 10,434,049 | 4,207,672 | 40 |

1. Significant co-finance has been delivered by the IDC (via the Island Conservation Society), responsible for 60 % of the project outputs, Seychelles Islands Foundation, who have developed protocols and shared lessons on harmonizing of coral reef monitoring methods. Another contribution has been provided by the Plant Conservation Action Group, who prepared the vegetation restoration/ rehabilitation plans for Desroches and Alphonse and the Wildlife Club of Seychelles who are working on a magazine on Protected Areas in the Outer Islands. Although these are contracted activities (not strictly co-financed), the staff are contracted at concessionary rates and absorbing the excess costs as co-financing. Numerous other Civil Society Organisations contributed towards raising education and awareness levels of PA management through participation in the World Biodiversity Day School competitions.
2. Contributions from the private sector included Desroches Island Developments Ltd and Collins Properties Ltd, who contributed to the project design, inception and as members of the project steering committee. North Island and Fregate Island management have been involved with the review of the draft Nature Reserve and Conservancy Act Bylaws and regulations. The Pangaea Project, which is privately financed, is a partner in the assessment and monitoring of marine ecosystems for the project: the third annual Pangaea expedition took place on Farquhar from the 16th to 22nd November 2014: the fourth expedition took place from the 18-25th of March with Farquhar being one of the sites visited, before the Cyclone event of April 2016.

## Project-Level Monitoring & Evaluation Systems - MU

1. The MTR finds that the quality at entry for the M&E system is problematic for two reasons: i) the appropriateness of some indicators and targets (especially target for indicator 3,6 and indicators 8, 9, 10 and 11). As explained in a previous section, the project has very limited control over the gazettement of the PAs and the attainment the system health indicators; ii) Budgeting – Transportation costs to the Islands is seasonal, limited and expensive. The project partners depend entirely on IDC to access the Islands. The cost of travel to the Islands for M&E purposes is therefore largely part of IDC co-finance. The earlier detachment of IDC from project processes translated to a real challenge for the PCU and ICS to fulfil M&E functions. This is well captured in the minutes of several PSC meetings. However, the situation seems to be improving since more regular direct liaison has been initiated between the PM and IDC.
2. The MTR also finds that the project M&E is participatory: the PSC was expanded to include many relevant institutions which had not been identified in the project document. This is commendable (Best Practice) as it ensured that project implementation and M&E involves all relevant partners. Indeed, the MTR finds that the project M&E is integrated into the partner institutions and that all partners have diligently monitored the risks and assumptions upon which project implementation is premised, and that PCU has regularly updated the risk log in ATLAS. The MTR however finds that despite these positive aspects, the ***use of M&E information for adaptive management*** has been rendered ineffective by the practice of some key partners taking decisions on project implementation outside of the PSC process. M&E and adaptive management has for instance not managed to solve the following challenges: i) Poivre still has no facilities for ICS project staff. Although project staff was hired and housed in Desroches, they have no access to the Island and no project supported conservation work is happening[[10]](#footnote-11); ii) while an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) was undertaken for the Descroches hotel extension, shearwater colonies seem to be under threat from hotel renovation and it is not clear what mitigatory mesures recommended by the EIA will be implemented[[11]](#footnote-12); iii) Implementation of the revegetation plans are delayed, despite the existence of plans approved by the PSC. The MTR therefore concludes that the PSC has not adequately supported the use of M&E information for adaptive management. Consequently, project implementation has suffered, and delivery of results and impacts is likely to be compromised, unless corrective measures are taken immediately.
3. **Gender:** The Outer Island project does not require special attention on gender issues, due to the fact that it’s about establishment of Protected Areas on Islands that are not currently inhabited by communities. However, it is evident from project records and PSC minutes that women are adequately represented in the key project committees.
4. Recommendation 12: The project should revisit indicators and targets and develop an M&E action plan, ensuring adequate arrangements and/or finance to implement it;
5. Recommendation 13: All partners should re-engage with the PSC and channel all decisions related to project implementation through the PSC. The PSC should consider quarterly Meetings until the project implementation improves. In addition, the PSC should facilitate establishment of technical sub-committees to assist PSC move the implementation of those activities lagging behind.

## Stakeholder Engagement - Moderately Satisfactory

1. The MTR finds that public awareness for the critical role biodiversity management plays in the economy of Seychelles, and the role of Protected Areas in the biodiversity management is very high across the board. The MTR finds evidence that the PCU made special efforts to expand the PSC to include relevant institutions in the implementation, including the Fisherman and Boat Owners Association, the closest institution to communities relevant to the Outer Islands. It is noted that the project had a specific output on public awareness, through which they embarked on a campaign to “Bring the Outer Islands to Mahe”, a phrase used to popularise and raise awareness on the importance and challenges of managing the Outer Islands as part of the Seychelles economic development and conservation agenda. This output has registered a 90% delivery rate at MTR. On the political arena, the Outer Islands have drawn the attention of Parliament, which constituted a Select Committee in October 2016 to assess the developments on the Islands for consideration by parliament. It is however not clear how this political development is likely to affect the project agenda of creating PAs on these Outer Islands.
2. The MTR however finds that despite the effort by the project management to engage partners, there are some issues with full participation. First there is limited participation of the environment NGOs (ENGOs) on the project. PCU raised the issue at the inception meeting and invited these ENGOs to join but this has not happened[[12]](#footnote-13). Both IDC and D’Arros Research Centre (DRC) have attended PSC meetings irregularly, especially in the last one year. The issues related to IDC’s disengagment with the project have been discussed in the previous sections.
3. There are several reasons for the importance of DRC to the project: i) it is on the PSC ii) it is part of targets for indicators 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 13, 14 and 16 (see table 2 and Annex 5 for indicators); iii) more importantly –in some cases (e.g. preparation of nomination files, monitoring terrestrial and marine biodiversity around the Island, etc.), D’Arros is quite advanced, and thus there may be transferable lessons. During project formulation, it was assumed that it would be important for D’Arros to work closely with the government and other partners in advancing the integration of Outer Islands into the PA estate of the country in general, and the gazettement of D‘Arros in particular; and that this project would provide the opportunities and partnerships for such interest and engagement. It would have been logical for DRC to have integrated this with the MSP process, and/or to have supported conclusion of (or waited for) the new PA Act. D’Arros has however been a ‘sleeping partner’ to the project. For instance, D’Arros failed attempt at creating a new PA could have learnt from project experience in identifying partnership arrangements for PA management – which was a key criticism of the nomination file.
4. Recommendation 14:  There are likely benefits for DRC in integrating D’Arros into the overall push for improved representation of outer island habitats into PAs, rather than going it alone. The PSC and PCU should engage DRC into more regular communication and information transfer between DRC, Government and other project partners.

## Reporting and Communication - Satisfactory

1. The MTR finds that the project reporting is in line with UNDP-GEF requirements; the project produced an inception report, one PIR (July 2016, at 22 months of implementation), several quarterly reports and Back to Office Reports (BTOR – after monitoring missions). The MTR concurs with the observation in the 2015-2016 PIR that producing a draft PIR for the period 2014-2015 would have been beneficial for adaptive management. Such a PIR was not a requirement because the project was slightly short of a full year of implementation. Such a PIR would have brought critical challenges to the attention of the PSC and other project partners such as capacity deficits in ICS, challenges of accessing Outer Islands for the purposes of M&E and project activities, etc. The project has used the minutes of the PSC to capture policy and implementation discussions and decisions, including suggestions for resolving challenges.
2. Regarding communication with external stakeholders, the MTR finds that the project partners have invested great effort to promote outreach, including training in effective stakeholder engagement and communication, which was held in August 2015 with 24 attendees. To engage the public and win support for conservation of outer island sites, various education and awareness campaigns have been organized, including schools' competitions and engagement with key events such as World Biodiversity Day and the National Expo. However, with the exception of Vegetation Management plans for Alphonse and Desroches, the project has not yet produced any technical publications as most activities that would provide material for such are at early stage of implementation.

## Financial Risks To Sustainability - Insignificant

1. The MTR finds that once the GEF investment ends, the probability of continued financial support from the private sector and the government is very high. This is reflected by the high level of contribution from co-finance institutions – for example the new owners of the Desroches Island, which inherited and agreed to honor the commitment of the previous owners to conservation and participation in the project. The Outer Islands are utilized mainly for tourism (in addition to conservation). Seychelles has a policy of pursuing high end tourism and utilizing conservation levy on the tourism sector - specifically setting up a Trust Fund for each island, whereby the island resort pays for conservation activities (to be translated into PA management activities).
2. The project design put in place several measures to ensure financial sustainability: i) Creation of Protected Areas, which creates an enabling environment for mobilizing PA finance through island Trust Funds and other sources; ii) Formulation of ten year business plans to strategize on, and ensure financial sustainability of the ‘newly-created PAs’. The MTR finds that although the PA Finance scorecard has improved from 27% at CEO to 29% at MTR, the delays in the approval of the new PA Law and the consequent delay in gazettement of the Outer Islands as Protected Areas may negatively affect further improvement in the PA Finance Score Card. However, if the legal processes are completed and the PAs gazette, then improved revenue capture would be expected to occur (noting that, as reported earlier, looking at the figures in the Financial score card (as opposed to the score) the total finances available to the system have almost doubled from 2013 to 2016 – from $189K to $345K).

## Socio-Economic Risks To Sustainability - Insignificant

1. The MTR finds no socio-economics risks to sustainability of the project outcomes. The risks are minimized by the high level of country ownership of the project, and the high levels of awareness of the importance of biodiversity conservation in the economic development of Seychelles, and the role of Protected Areas and Private sector co-management of PAs in biodiversity conservation. The MTR identified two mechanisms of sustainability being employed by the project, outlined below:
* High country ownership - Project formulation was highly participatory; the project is consistent with several key national policies and programs; in particular it is recognized as a key means for the country’s progress towards the CBD and Aichi targets on biodiversity conservation, PA coverage and PA finance, and as an integral part of the MSP process. Indeed, the project concept originated in the government’s stated objective of expanding PA to the Outer Islands (Presidential Memo of 2011), management options for non-Government and Private sector (the previous GEF PA project) and the MSP process (that was developed by Government in parallel to the PA Project). This is meant to overcome the dual problem of land scarcity and a dearth of HR and financial resources for PA management within the government, that is typical of SIDS;
* Private Sector and Civil Society involvement in the project is very high. As reported elsewhere, 60% of the project is implemented by ICS and the target Islands are primarily being exploited for Tourism, with the Resort Owners involved in the project (including the PSC); majority of the partners continue to contribute co-finance identified during the project formulation, which the MTR interprets as demonstration of ownership of the issues the project tackles;

## Institutional Framework And Governance Risks To Sustainability - Insignificant

1. The MTR finds mixed results for the institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability of the project outcomes. On the one hand, the MTR finds that in general, Seychelles legal framework, policies and governance structures are conservation friendly. The country has a new PA Policy (2015) which allows participation of the private sector and NGOs to manage PAs in partnership with government. With the exception of D’Arros, the target Islands are owned by the government and leased to the Islands Development Company (IDC), a parastatal formed in 1980 to establish and supervise economic activities on the Outer Islands. Traditionally managed for production of copra (coconut) and timber (casuarina), the Islands have transitioned to a tourism-based economic model in the past 10-15 years, with commercial and sport fishing being actively pursued. IDC is a champion of conservation of the Outer Islands, and formed the Island Conservation Society to undertake conservation work on the Outer Islands under its management. IDC has also committed to working with NGOs and private partners to integrate the Outer Islands into the country’s PA network, to create a series of PAs and strengthen protected area management. IDC works closely with the Island Conservation Society and the private sector (Hotel/Resorts owners) in a partnership that aims to equip each conservation site with full time conservation staff engaged in the protection of the marine and terrestrial biodiversity of the islands and finances the conservation work through island Trust Funds.
2. On the other hand, the MTR also found operational and political developments whose impact on the achievement of the project targets on PA gazettement and sustainability of the results are unclear at this point in time: i) (Operational) - although IDC created ICS to undertake conservation work on the Outer Islands, its failure to provide it with access to the Islands during the implementation of this project, the fact they approved the extension of the hotel in the shearwater colony on Desroches in spite of the recommendation of ICS (technical report), and that its staff on the Islands are reportedly involved in illegal acts (fishing and sea turtle eggs), raises doubts about the sustainability of the project results; ii) (Political) - the approval of the new PA law is still pending (the Law was formulated with support from a previous GEF PA project and was expected to be approved by July 2015[[13]](#footnote-14)). The Law is however not yet approved, and will likely be circulated for another round of public consultation before it is submitted to Cabinet for consideration. The challenge is that the Cabinet has to then send the Law to National Assembly, which is expected to happen in February or March 2017 but may be delayed by political climate. This is because the Cabinet will not send to NA something they know will be shouted down; ii) in mid-2016, Parliament expressed the desire to be more informed about the state of development on the Outer Islands. Consequently, it has formed a Select Committee to study the activities/economic development issues currently on-going on the Outer Islands. The report is expected to be tabled early in 2017. iii) An application for the gazettement of D’Arros under the old Law has been rejected by National Assembly, primarily because of its non-inclusive nature, which needs to be addressed in future submissions to make sure they cover partnerships and stakeholder interests. It is not clear how these developments will affect the agenda of integrating the Outer Islands into the national biodiversity conservation agenda, via PAs. It is noted here that the real test will be the MSP. If this is acceptable to the National Assembley (and stakeholders) at the macro-level, then it is more likely that the project can probably work with stakeholders to ensure PA gazettement at the micro level (indivdual sites) is also acceptable;
3. The MTR finds that the project strategies are strongly mainstreamed into the country’s strategic plans for the blue economy and biodiversity conservation. The project is being implemented in close collaboration with the Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) – indeed, output 2.3 (Marine Spatial Planning) was subsumed within the MSP initiative of Government and linked Blue Economy strategic development actions. In addition, the proposed protected areas range from those IUCN Categories I to VI, with varying degrees of protection versus sustainable use, in response to the needs of the country to balance its conservation agenda with the necessity of economic development. The classification will be used to determine the type of developments possible on each PA and the allocation of scarce resources such as land, freshwater, and marine resources in a manner that is compatible with the fragility of ecosystems in the Outer Islands and their ability to render services. The project plans to support all the new PA units, but particularly those established under a sustainable use classification, to integrate economic development activities (many of which are critical for PA funding) with conservation objectives. This will be achieved through implementation of the sustainable land management activities to to ensure that development pressures do not negatively impact ecosystem functions, including protection and restoration of native habitats, prevention and control of invasive alien species, and land management to prevent / reduce coastal erosion and/or threats to water resources.
4. Recommendation 15: IDC should re-engage with the project and align its stated commitment to conservation on the Outer Islands with its every day operations and decisions on development of the Islands.
5. Recommendation 16: The PSC should monitor the political development around Outer Islands and assist the project to apply adaptive management to adjust to the uncertainty created by these political developments, and eventually to the outcome of the political process; the Project could even make a presentation to the NA at committee stage if required.

## Environmental Risks To Sustainability - Insignificant

1. As reported elsewhere in the MTR Report, there is evidence that the health of the corals and other marine life is vulnerable to climate related factors such as high sea temperatures, cyclones and hurricanes. However, the project seeks to improve the resilience of the terrestrial and marine ecosystems of the Outer Islands, which mitigates against the impacts of these climate risks.

# Summary of findings and recommendations

## Summary of Findings

Table 5: Summary ratings along the MTR criteria

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Review Criteria** | **Sub-criteria** | **Rating**  |
| Project Strategy – Moderately Satisfactory  | Project design | MS |
| Results Framework/ Logframe: | MS |
| Progress Towards Results – Moderately Unsatisfactory | Project Strategy | N/A |
| Objective Achievement  | U |
| Outcome 1  | Moderately Unsatisfactory  |
| Outcome 2  | Unsatisfactory  |
| Project Implementation and Adaptive Management – Moderately Satisfactory | Management Arrangements | MS |
| Work Planning | MU |
| Finance and co-finance | S |
| Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems | MU |
| Stakeholder Engagement | MS |
| Reporting | MS |
| Communications | S |
| Sustainability – Likely | Financial risks to sustainability | Insignificant  |
| Socio-economic risks to sustainability | Insignificant |
| Institutional Framework and Governance risks to sustainability | Insignificant |
| Environmental risks to sustainability: | Insignificant |

1. Despite the fact the summary delivery table (Table 4) shows an average delivery of 40%, the MTR rates project implementation as **Moderately Unsatisfactory**. The reasons for the low rating are:
* All the core outputs of the project (1.1, 1.4, 1.5, 2.5 and 2.6) have very low delivery rates; most of the outputs with high delivery rates are ‘supporting outputs’;
* Despite great effort in M&E, adaptive management has not been effectively applied; and the PSC has seemed ineffective in the face of challenges, failing to effectively support adaptive management.
* ICS, responsible for 60% of project outputs has lost capacity during project implementation, and has visibly struggled with recruitment, delivery, management of consultants (source – PCU interviews, PIR and quarterly reports);
* Despite its importance in accessing the Outer Islands, IDC has not been effective enough as a key partner or facilitating ICS to be an effective Implementing Partner and PCU to effectively monitor project progress and use of monitoring information in adaptive management.

## Recommendations

1. The table below summarises the recommendations. Except for recommendation 1 and 6, all the timeline of the recommendations will be determined and indicated in the Management Response.

Table 6: Summary of recommendations

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Recommendation**  | **Responsible Party** | **Timeframe**  |
| **Recommendation 1:** It is recommended that, with the support of the PSC, the PCU leads an assessment of the impacts of the lessons that were not taken into consideration as well as the impacts of the assumptions that have upstaged implementation of some activities on the overall project – especially the indicators, targets and implementation arrangements. Based on the results of the assessments, the PCU should refine the project strategy and the results framework/logframe, to allow partners to consolidate outputs/activities for which the project can realistically implement in the remaining project time, without departing from the original project goal and objective, but proposing adjustments to project indicators as necessary. | PCU, with support from PSC | **By end of Feb 2017** |
| **Recommendation 2:** The PCU should take over recruitment and management of all consultant to accelerate project implementation in the remaining and recommended extension period. |  |  |
| **Recommendation 3:** Project is likely to require more time than planned for to deliver on all target, unless project implementation is accelerated in the second half of project life. The MTR therefore recommends a one year project extension. | PCU with support from UNDP | In Management response  |
| **Recommendation 4:** The PSC, and the NPD in particular should continue to work with IDC to facilitate increased access to the Islands to enable ICS and PCU to accelerate implementation for the remaining project time. | IDC, ICS, PSC | In Management response  |
| **Recommendation 5:** UNDP Regional Service Centre should ensure continuity of Technical Advisors especially for complex projects such as the Outer Islands | UNDP RSC/Hq | In Management response  |
| **Recommendation 6:** The NPD should advocate for the faster approval of the new PA Law  | NPD, PSC | In Management response  |
| **Recommendation 7:** ICS Capacity Assessment undertaken during project formulation should be repeated by an independent entity and used to determine activities ICS can realistically implement within the project outlines. Based on the findings, the implementation strategy should be refined and responsibility transferred from ICS to other parties as deemed necessary to fast track project implementation  | ICS, PCU, PSC | By end of Feb 2017 |
| **Recommendation 8:** The MEECC and GEF OFP should discuss the challenge with the Ministry of Finance to find lasting solutions for all GEF projects in the country; including exploring the use of project accounts with Commercial Banks and training project staff regularly on UNDP financial procedures, especially when the implementing partner institutions experience high staff turn-over. |  | In Management response  |
| **Recommendation 9:** The PSC should facilitate a decision in regard to rehabilitation work on Alphonse and Desroches (and in general), in line with the species selected during the vegetation management planning and determining whether there are valid reasons for not undertaking rehabilitation on both Islands in parallel. | PSC | In Management response  |
| **Recommendation 10:** Given the importance of IDC in accessing the Islands and the fact that this project is likely to enter the category of ‘Projects at high risk’ if the speed of implementation is not accelerated, IDC should: i) participate fully in PSC Meetings to ensure full agreement with decisions made and activities planned, ii) continue a schedule of regular briefings with the project manager in which visits to the islands can be approved and access scheduled - ICS (Ag.) CEO also to attend these briefings. | IDC, ICS, PSC | In Management response  |
| **Recommendation (Repeated elsewhere):** Given the number of risks and assumptions that have affected project implementation, the project partners should assess the logframe to identifty activities that are not likely to be implemented and those they should consolidate, inorder to improve the likelyhood of the project delivering important impacts.  | PSC/PCU | In Management response  |
| **Recommendation 11:** Unless facilities can be established on Poivre to allow project staff in residence by June 2017, then the site should be dropped and funds should be reallocated to another activity as determined by the PSC | PSC | In Management response  |
| **Recommendation 12:** The project should revisit indicators and targets and develop an M&E action plan, ensuring adequate arrangements and/or finance to implement it; | PCU, PSC | In Management response  |
| **Recommendation 13:** All partners should re-engage with the PSC and channel all decisions related to project implementation through the PSC. The PSC should consider quarterly Meetings until the project implementation improves. In addition, the PSC should facilitate establishment of technical sub-committees to assist PSC move the implementation of those activities lagging behind.  | IDC, ICS, DRC | In Management response  |
| **Recommendation 14:**  There are likely benefits for DRC in integrating D’Arros into the overall push for improved representation of outer island habitats into PAs, rather than going it alone. The PSC and PCU should engage DRC into more regular communication and information transfer between DRC, Government and other project partners. | DRC | In Management response  |
| **Recommendation 15:** IDC should re-engage with the project and align its stated commitment to conservation on the Outer Islands with its every day operations and decisions on development of the Islands; | IDC | In Management response  |
| **Recommendation 16:** The PSC should monitor the political development around Outer Islands and assist the project to apply adaptive management to adjust to the uncertainty created by these political developments, and eventually to the outcome of the political process; the Project could even make a presentation to the NA at committee stage if required. | PSC | In Management response  |

# Annexes

## Annex 1: Amended logframe (on request from PCU)

## Annex 2: terms of reference

**UNDP-GEF Midterm Review Terms of Reference**

**Standard Template 1: Formatted for attachment to** [**UNDP Procurement Website**](http://procurement-notices.undp.org/)

#### INTRODUCTION

This is the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the UNDP-GEF Midterm Review (MTR) of the *full-*sized project titled **Expansion and Strengthening of the Protected Area Subsystem of the Outer Islands of Seychelles and its Integration into the broader land and seascape** (PIMS 4529) implemented through the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change, GOS-UNDP-GEF Programme Coordination Unit, which is to be undertaken in *August – September 2016*. The project started on the 7th August 2014 and at the time of the MTR will be commencing its *third* year of implementation. In line with the UNDP-GEF Guidance on MTRs, this MTR process was initiated before the submission of the second Project Implementation Report (PIR). This ToR sets out the expectations for this MTR. The MTR process must follow the guidance outlined in the document *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* (*insert hyperlink*).

#### 2. PROJECT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The project was designed to promote the conservation and sustainable use of terrestrial and marine biodiversity in the Seychelles’ Outer Islands by expanding the protected areas system and strengthening protected area management, supported by broad-scale ecosystem planning and sustainable land management activities to conserve ecosystem functions. The project will focus outputs and activities – over a period of five years – to achieve both biodiversity conservation and sustainable land management goals: *First*, to enable biodiversity conservation, the project will support the official establishment of five new protected areas in the Outer Islands, encompassing 1,237 hectares of terrestrial ecosystems and 76,258 hectares of marine ecosystems. The project will specifically support: (i) an assessment of the current state (biodiversity, infrastructure, management, resource uses, etc.) of the proposed PA units: (ii) the gazetting, boundary setting and zoning of the new PA units; (iii) the strengthening of management structures and the preparation of management plans for each PA Unit, as well as a strategic business plan for four of the PA units; and (iv) the development of functional and well-trained team of PA staff working in collaboration with private sector partners at each new PA unit. *Second*, to enable sustainable land management, the project will ensure the establishment of the necessary institutional framework (information and planning systems) to support integrated management of the new PA sites that not only addresses BD conservation but also reduces land degradation impacts. The project will specifically support: (i) development of a decision support system to enable integrated natural resource management decision-making; (ii) creation of land use plans (for specific PA units) and an Ecosystem-Wide Zoning and Master Strategy (for the entire Outer Islands); (iii) the restoration of degraded terrestrial ecosystems impacted by unsustainable activities; and (iv) the prevention and control of invasive alien species, many of which impact both ecosystem functioning and the rehabilitation processes of native ecosystems. The project is for four years (2014-2020. It has a budget of US$ 12,219,549 with a GEF grant of US$ 1,935,500 and planned co-financing of US$ 10,284,049. The project is managed by the GOS-UNDP-GEF Programme Coordination Unit (PCU) of the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change (MEECC), and implemented in association with Islands Conservation Society (ICS) and other stakeholders.

#### 3. OBJECTIVES OF THE MTR

The MTR will assess progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outcomes as specified in the Project Document, and assess early signs of project success or failure with the goal of identifying the necessary changes to be made in order to set the project on-track to achieve its intended results. The MTR will also review the project’s strategy and its risks to sustainability.

#### 4. MTR APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

The MTR must provide evidence based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The MTR team will review all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase (i.e. PIF, UNDP Initiation Plan, UNDP Environmental & Social Safeguard Policy, the Project Document, project reports including Annual Project Review/PIRs, project budget revisions, lesson learned reports, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the team considers useful for this evidence-based review). The MTR team will review the baseline GEF focal area Tracking Tool submitted to the GEF at CEO endorsement, and the midterm GEF focal area Tracking Tool that must be completed before the MTR field mission begins.

The MTR team is expected to follow a collaborative and participatory approach[[14]](#footnote-15) ensuring close engagement with the Project Team, government counterparts (the GEF Operational Focal Point), the UNDP Country Office(s), UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisers, and other key stakeholders.

Engagement of stakeholders is vital to a successful MTR.[[15]](#footnote-16) Stakeholder involvement should include interviews with stakeholders who have project responsibilities, including but not limited to: MEECC (executing agency), PCU (implementing agency), ICS (responsible party for a significant part of the activities), Project Board, key project stakeholders (Islands Development Corporation, Seychelles National Parks Authority, Seychelles Islands Foundation, Save our Seas / D’Arros Research Centre, Four Seasons Resort Desroches, University of Seychelles, etc. If logistics allow, the MTR team will conduct field missions to one or more of the four outer island sites: Desroches, Poivre, Alphonse and Farquhar.

The final MTR report should describe the full MTR approach taken and the rationale for the approach making explicit the underlying assumptions, challenges, strengths and weaknesses about the methods and approach of the review.

#### 5. DETAILED SCOPE OF THE MTR

The MTR team will assess the following four categories of project progress. See the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for extended descriptions.

**i. Project Strategy**

Project design:

* Review the problem addressed by the project and the underlying assumptions. Review the effect of any incorrect assumptions or changes to the context to achieving the project results as outlined in the Project Document.
* Review the relevance of the project strategy and assess whether it provides the most effective route towards expected/intended results. Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated into the project design?
* Review how the project addresses country priorities. Review country ownership. Was the project concept in line with the national sector development priorities and plans of the country (or of participating countries in the case of multi-country projects)?
* Review decision-making processes: were perspectives of those who would be affected by project decisions, those who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the process, taken into account during project design processes?
* Review the extent to which relevant gender issues were raised in the project design. See Annex 9 of *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for further guidelines.
* If there are major areas of concern, recommend areas for improvement.

Results Framework/Logframe:

* Undertake a critical analysis of the project’s logframe indicators and targets, assess how “SMART” the midterm and end-of-project targets are (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound), and suggest specific amendments/revisions to the targets and indicators as necessary.
* Are the project’s objectives and outcomes or components clear, practical, and feasible within its time frame?
* Examine if progress so far has led to, or could in the future catalyse beneficial development effects (i.e. income generation, gender equality and women’s empowerment, improved governance etc...) that should be included in the project results framework and monitored on an annual basis.
* Ensure broader development and gender aspects of the project are being monitored effectively. Develop and recommend SMART ‘development’ indicators, including sex-disaggregated indicators and indicators that capture development benefits.

**ii. Progress Towards Results**

Progress Towards Outcomes Analysis:

* Review the logframe indicators against progress made towards the end-of-project targets using the Progress Towards Results Matrix and following the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects*; colour code progress in a “traffic light system” based on the level of progress achieved; assign a rating on progress for each outcome; make recommendations from the areas marked as “Not on target to be achieved” (red).

Table. Progress Towards Results Matrix (Achievement of outcomes against End-of-project Targets)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Project Strategy** | **Indicator[[16]](#footnote-17)** | **Baseline Level[[17]](#footnote-18)** | **Level in 1st PIR (self- reported)** | **Midterm Target[[18]](#footnote-19)** | **End-of-project Target** | **Midterm Level & Assessment[[19]](#footnote-20)** | **Achievement Rating[[20]](#footnote-21)** | **Justification for Rating**  |
| **Objective:**  | Indicator 1-3: |  |  | n/a |  |  |  |  |
| **Outcome 1:** | Indicator 4-12: |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Etc. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Outcome 2:** | Indicator 13-17: |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Etc. |  |  |  |  |  |

**Indicator Assessment Key**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Green= Achieved | Yellow= On target to be achieved | Red= Not on target to be achieved |

In addition to the progress towards outcomes analysis:

* Compare and analyse the GEF Tracking Tool at the Baseline with the one completed right before the Midterm Review.
* Identify remaining barriers to achieving the project objective in the remainder of the project.
* By reviewing the aspects of the project that have already been successful, identify ways in which the project can further expand these benefits.

**iii. Project Implementation and Adaptive Management**

Management Arrangements:

* Review overall effectiveness of project management as outlined in the Project Document. Have changes been made and are they effective? Are responsibilities and reporting lines clear? Is decision-making transparent and undertaken in a timely manner? Recommend areas for improvement.
* Review the quality of execution of the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner(s) and recommend areas for improvement.
* Review the quality of support provided by the GEF Partner Agency (UNDP) and recommend areas for improvement.

Work Planning:

* Review any delays in project start-up and implementation, identify the causes and examine if they have been resolved.
* Are work-planning processes results-based? If not, suggest ways to re-orientate work planning to focus on results?
* Examine the use of the project’s results framework/ logframe as a management tool and review any changes made to it since project start.

Finance and co-finance:

* Consider the financial management of the project, with specific reference to the cost-effectiveness of interventions.
* Review the changes to fund allocations as a result of budget revisions and assess the appropriateness and relevance of such revisions.
* Does the project have the appropriate financial controls, including reporting and planning, that allow management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allow for timely flow of funds?
* Informed by the co-financing monitoring table to be filled out, provide commentary on co-financing: is co-financing being used strategically to help the objectives of the project? Is the Project Team meeting with all co-financing partners regularly in order to align financing priorities and annual work plans?

Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems:

* Review the monitoring tools currently being used: Do they provide the necessary information? Do they involve key partners? Are they aligned or mainstreamed with national systems? Do they use existing information? Are they efficient? Are they cost-effective? Are additional tools required? How could they be made more participatory and inclusive?
* Examine the financial management of the project monitoring and evaluation budget. Are sufficient resources being allocated to monitoring and evaluation? Are these resources being allocated effectively?

Stakeholder Engagement:

* Project management: Has the project developed and leveraged the necessary and appropriate partnerships with direct and tangential stakeholders?
* Participation and country-driven processes: Do local and national government stakeholders support the objectives of the project? Do they continue to have an active role in project decision-making that supports efficient and effective project implementation?
* Participation and public awareness: To what extent has stakeholder involvement and public awareness contributed to the progress towards achievement of project objectives?

Reporting:

* Assess how adaptive management changes have been reported by the project management and shared with the Project Board.
* Assess how well the Project Team and partners undertake and fulfil GEF reporting requirements (i.e. how have they addressed poorly-rated PIRs, if applicable?)
* Assess how lessons derived from the adaptive management process have been documented, shared with key partners and internalized by partners.

Communications:

* Review internal project communication with stakeholders: Is communication regular and effective? Are there key stakeholders left out of communication? Are there feedback mechanisms when communication is received? Does this communication with stakeholders contribute to their awareness of project outcomes and activities and investment in the sustainability of project results?
* Review external project communication: Are proper means of communication established or being established to express the project progress and intended impact to the public (is there a web presence, for example? Or did the project implement appropriate outreach and public awareness campaigns?)
* For reporting purposes, write one half-page paragraph that summarizes the project’s progress towards results in terms of contribution to sustainable development benefits, as well as global environmental benefits.

**iv. Sustainability**

* Validate whether the risks identified in the Project Document, Annual Project Review/PIRs and the ATLAS Risk Management Module are the most important and whether the risk ratings applied are appropriate and up to date. If not, explain why.
* In addition, assess the following risks to sustainability:

Financial risks to sustainability:

* What is the likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available once the GEF assistance ends (consider potential resources can be from multiple sources, such as the public and private sectors, income generating activities, and other funding that will be adequate financial resources for sustaining project’s outcomes)?

Socio-economic risks to sustainability:

* Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outcomes? What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership (including ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained? Do the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow? Is there sufficient public / stakeholder awareness in support of the long term objectives of the project? Are lessons learned being documented by the Project Team on a continual basis and shared/ transferred to appropriate parties who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it in the future?

Institutional Framework and Governance risks to sustainability:

* Do the legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes pose risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project benefits? While assessing this parameter, also consider if the required systems/ mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer are in place.

Environmental risks to sustainability:

* Are there any environmental risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project outcomes?

**Conclusions & Recommendations**

The MTR team will include a section of the report setting out the MTR’s evidence-based conclusions, in light of the findings.[[21]](#footnote-22)

Recommendations should be succinct suggestions for critical intervention that are specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant. A recommendation table should be put in the report’s executive summary. See the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for guidance on a recommendation table.

The MTR team should make no more than 15 recommendations total.

**Ratings**

The MTR team will include its ratings of the project’s results and brief descriptions of the associated achievements in a *MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table* in the Executive Summary of the MTR report. See Annex E for ratings scales. No rating on Project Strategy and no overall project rating is required.

Table. MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table for Outer Islands project

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Measure** | **MTR Rating** | **Achievement Description** |
| **Project Strategy** | N/A |  |
| **Progress Towards Results** | Objective Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale) |  |
| Outcome 1 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale) |  |
| Outcome 2 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale) |  |
| **Project Implementation & Adaptive Management** | (rate 6 pt. scale) |  |
| **Sustainability** | (rate 4 pt. scale) |  |

#### TIMEFRAME

The total duration of the MTR will be approximately *26 days* over a time period of *eleven weeks* starting *8th August 2016,* and shall not exceed five months from when the consultant(s) are hired. The tentative MTR timeframe is as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **TIMEFRAME** | **ACTIVITY** |
| *20th June 2016* | Application closes |
| *15th July* | Select MTR consultant |
| *15th July – 8th August*  | Prep the MTR consultant (handover of Project Documents) |
| *8th -15th August 3 days*  | Document review and preparing MTR Inception Report |
| *28th August 1 day*  | Finalization andValidation of MTR Inception Report- latest start of MTR mission |
| *29th August – 9th September 12 days*  | MTR mission: stakeholder meetings, interviews, field visits |
| *9th September*  | Mission wrap-up meeting & presentation of initial findings- earliest end of MTR mission |
| *12th - 30th September 8 days*  | Preparing draft report |
| *31st October 2 days*  | Incorporating audit trail from feedback on draft report/Finalization of MTR report  |
| *1st – 4th November*  | Preparation & Issue of Management Response |
|  | Concluding Stakeholder Workshop (not mandatory for MTR team) |
| *11th November* | Expected date of full MTR completion |

Options for site visits should be noted in the Inception Report – whether these can take place depends on logistical constraints

#### MIDTERM REVIEW DELIVERABLES

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **#** | **Deliverable** | **Description** | **Timing** | **Responsibilities** |
| **1** | **MTR Inception Report** | MTR team clarifies objectives and methods of Midterm Review | No later than 2 weeks before the MTR mission: (15th August) | MTR team submits to the Commissioning Unit and project management |
| **2** | **Presentation** | Initial Findings | End of MTR mission: (9th September) | MTR Team presents to project management and the Commissioning Unit |
| **3** | **Draft Final Report** | Full report (using guidelines on content outlined in Annex B) with annexes | Within 3 weeks of the MTR mission: (30th September) | Sent to the Commissioning Unit, reviewed by RTA, Project Coordinating Unit, GEF OFP |
| **4** | **Final Report\*** | Revised report with audit trail detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final MTR report | Within 1 week of receiving UNDP comments on draft: (31st October) | Sent to the Commissioning Unit |

\*The final MTR report must be in English. If applicable, the Commissioning Unit may choose to arrange for a translation of the report into a language more widely shared by national stakeholders.

#### MTR ARRANGEMENTS

The principal responsibility for managing this MTR resides with the Commissioning Unit. The Commissioning Unit for this project’s MTR is the UNDP Seychelles Country Office (under the UNDP Seychelles-Mauritius Country Office).

The commissioning unit will contract the consultants and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements within the country for the MTR team. The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the MTR team to provide all relevant documents, set up stakeholder interviews, and arrange field visits.

####  TEAM COMPOSITION

One international independent consultant will conduct the MTR - one team leader (with experience and exposure to projects and evaluations in other regions globally). The consultant cannot have participated in the project preparation, formulation, and/or implementation (including the writing of the Project Document) and should not have a conflict of interest with project’s related activities.

The selection of consultants will be aimed at maximizing the qualifications in the below areas. 70% of points will be awarded for the technical qualifications and 30% for the financial bid.

* Recent experience with result-based management evaluation methodologies;
* Experience applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios;
* Competence in adaptive management, as applied to GEF Biodiversity and Land Degradation Focal Areas;
* Experience working with the GEF or GEF-evaluations;
* Experience working in SIDS, preferably in the Western Indian Ocean;
* Work experience in relevant technical areas for at least 10 years;
* Demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender and protected area management; experience in gender sensitive evaluation and analysis.
* Excellent communication skills;
* Demonstrable analytical skills;
* Project evaluation/review experiences within United Nations system will be considered an asset;
* A Master’s degree in Environment, or other closely related field.

#### PAYMENT MODALITIES AND SPECIFICATIONS

10% of payment upon approval of the final MTR Inception Report

30% upon submission of the draft MTR report

60% upon finalization of the MTR report

Or, as otherwise agreed between the Commissioning Unit and the MTR team.

1. **APPLICAT**I**ON PROCESS[[22]](#footnote-23)**

**Recommended Presentation of Proposal:**

1. **Letter of Confirmation of Interest and Availability** using the [template](https://intranet.undp.org/unit/bom/pso/Support%20documents%20on%20IC%20Guidelines/Template%20for%20Confirmation%20of%20Interest%20and%20Submission%20of%20Financial%20Proposal.docx)[[23]](#footnote-24) provided by UNDP;
2. **CV** and a **Personal History Form** ([P11 form](http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/Careers/P11_Personal_history_form.doc)[[24]](#footnote-25));
3. **Brief description of approach to work/technical proposal** of why the individual considers him/herself as the most suitable for the assignment, and a proposed methodology on how they will approach and complete the assignment; (max 1 page)
4. **Financial Proposal** that indicates the all-inclusive fixed total contract price and all other travel related costs (such as flight ticket, per diem, etc), supported by a breakdown of costs, as per template attached to the [Letter of Confirmation of Interest template](http://procurement-notices.undp.org/view_file.cfm?doc_id=29916). If an applicant is employed by an organization/company/institution, and he/she expects his/her employer to charge a management fee in the process of releasing him/her to UNDP under Reimbursable Loan Agreement (RLA), the applicant must indicate at this point, and ensure that all such costs are duly incorporated in the financial proposal submitted to UNDP.

All application materials should be submitted using the UNPD Jobs site (<https://jobs.undp.org>) This email address is being protected from spam bots, you need Javascript enabled to view it by ***20.00 hrs GMT on 31st May 2016.*** Incomplete applications will be excluded from further consideration.

**Criteria for Evaluation of Proposal:** Only those applications which are responsive and compliant will be evaluated. Offers will be evaluated according to the Combined Scoring method – where the educational background and experience on similar assignments will be weighted at 70%and the price proposal will weigh as 30% of the total scoring. The applicant receiving the Highest Combined Score that has also accepted UNDP’s General Terms and Conditions will be awarded the contract.

**ToR ANNEX A: List of Documents to be reviewed by the MTR Team**

1. PIF
2. UNDP Initiation Plan
3. UNDP Project Document
4. UNDP Environmental and Social Screening results
5. Project Inception Report
6. All Project Implementation Reports (PIR’s)
7. Quarterly progress reports and work plans of the various implementation task teams
8. Audit reports
9. Finalized GEF focal area Tracking Tools at CEO endorsement and midterm (METTs for the four target sites, LD PMAT, Financial Scorecard, Capacity Scorecard)
10. Oversight mission reports
11. All monitoring reports prepared by the project
12. Financial and Administration guidelines used by Project Team

The following documents will also be available:

1. Project operational guidelines, manuals and systems
2. UNDP country/countries programme document(s)
3. Minutes of the Outer Island Project Board Meetings and other meetings (i.e. Project Appraisal Committee meetings)
4. Project site location maps

**ToR ANNEX B: Guidelines on Contents for the Midterm Review Report**[[25]](#footnote-26)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **i.** | Basic Report Information *(for opening page or title page)** Title of UNDP supported GEF financed project
* UNDP PIMS# and GEF project ID#
* MTR time frame and date of MTR report
* Region and countries included in the project
* GEF Operational Focal Area/Strategic Program
* Executing Agency/Implementing Partner and other project partners
* MTR team members
* Acknowledgements
 |
| **ii.**  | Table of Contents |
| **iii.** | Acronyms and Abbreviations |
| **1.** | Executive Summary *(3-5 pages)* * Project Information Table
* Project Description (brief)
* Project Progress Summary (between 200-500 words)
* MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table
* Concise summary of conclusions
* Recommendation Summary Table
 |
| **2.** | Introduction *(2-3 pages)** Purpose of the MTR and objectives
* Scope & Methodology: principles of design and execution of the MTR, MTR approach and data collection methods, limitations to the MTR
* Structure of the MTR report
 |
| **3.** | Project Description and Background Context *(3-5 pages)** Development context: environmental, socio-economic, institutional, and policy factors relevant to the project objective and scope
* Problems that the project sought to address: threats and barriers targeted
* Project Description and Strategy: objective, outcomes and expected results, description of field sites (if any)
* Project Implementation Arrangements: short description of the Project Board, key implementing partner arrangements, etc.
* Project timing and milestones
* Main stakeholders: summary list
 |
| **4.** | Findings *(12-14 pages)* |
| **4.1** | Project Strategy* Project Design
* Results Framework/Logframe
 |
| **4.2** | Progress Towards Results * Progress towards outcomes analysis
* Remaining barriers to achieving the project objective
 |
| **4.3** | Project Implementation and Adaptive Management* Management Arrangements
* Work planning
* Finance and co-finance
* Project-level monitoring and evaluation systems
* Stakeholder engagement
* Reporting
* Communications
 |
| **4.4** | Sustainability* Financial risks to sustainability
* Socio-economic to sustainability
* Institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability
* Environmental risks to sustainability
 |
| **5.** | Conclusions and Recommendations *(4-6 pages)* |
|  |  **5.1**   | Conclusions * Comprehensive and balanced statements (that are evidence-based and connected to the MTR’s findings) which highlight the strengths, weaknesses and results of the project
 |
|  **5.2** | Recommendations * Corrective actions for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project
* Actions to follow up or reinforce initial benefits from the project
* Proposals for future directions underlining main objectives
 |
| **6.**  | Annexes* MTR ToR (excluding ToR annexes)
* MTR evaluative matrix (evaluation criteria with key questions, indicators, sources of data, and methodology)
* Example Questionnaire or Interview Guide used for data collection
* Ratings Scales
* MTR mission itinerary
* List of persons interviewed
* List of documents reviewed
* Co-financing table (if not previously included in the body of the report)
* Signed UNEG Code of Conduct form
* Signed MTR final report clearance form
* *Annexed in a separate file:* Audit trail from received comments on draft MTR report
* *Annexed in a separate file:* Relevant midterm tracking tools (*METTs, LD-PMAT, Financial Scorecard, Capacity scorecard)*
 |

**ToR ANNEX C: Midterm Review Evaluative Matrix Template**

This Midterm Review Evaluative Matrix must be fully completed/amended by the consultant and included in the MTR inception report and as an Annex to the MTR report.

| **Evaluative Questions** | **Indicators** | **Sources** | **Methodology** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Project Strategy: To what extent is the project strategy relevant to country priorities, country ownership, and the best route towards expected results?**  |
| How well does the project align with evolving GEF focal area priorities through GEF 4 5 and 6?  | Extent to which CBD and related GEF priorities and areas of work incorporated  | Project documentsNational policies and strategies (MTNDS, blue economy road map, marine spatial planning initiative, etc.)GEF6 NPFDProject partnersProject beneficiaries | (i.e. document analysis, data analysis, interviews with project staff, interviews with stakeholders, etc.) |
| Is the project aligned with other donor and Government programmes and projects? Is the project country driven? | Degree of coherence between the project and nationals priorities, policies and strategies |
| Does the project adequately take into account the national realities, both in terms of institutional and policy frameworks in its design and implementation? | Adequacy of project design and implementation to national realities and existing capacities |
| Have implementation strategies been appropriate (is the logframe logical and complete)? | Degree to which the project supports objectives of Government. |
| Did the project address the needs of target beneficiaries and other stakeholders? Is the approach inclusive? Are beneficiaries and other stakeholders effectively engaged in implementation? | Degree to which the project supports local aspirationsDegree to which the project meets stakeholder expectations |
| **Progress Towards Results: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved thus far?** |
| How well has the project performed against its expected objectives and outcomes, and its indicators and targets? | Extent to which milestones and targets are achieved at mid-term, as laid out in the logframe and monitoring plan | Project reports Minutes of Project Steering Committee MeetingsLocal partners and beneficiariesTracking tools |  |
| Which have been the key factors leading to project achievements? | Achievement of milestones and targets as laid out in the logframe and monitoring plan |  |
| To what extent can observed results be attributed to the project or not? In this respect have there been notable changes in the enabling environment for the project? | Extent of change to the enabling environment |  |
| Has the project failed in any respect? What changes could have been made (if any) to the design or implementation of the project in order to improve the achievement of the expected results? | Evidence of adaptive management and/or early application of lessons learned |  |
| How has the project contributed to raising capacity of local stakeholders to address aims of the project or of Government? | Extent of support from local stakeholders |  |
| What are the views of stakeholders on the implementation and activities of the project? Are there activities missing from the implementation? | Extent to which stakeholders are actively participating in the implementation and monitoring of the project |  |
| **Project Implementation and Adaptive Management: Has the project been implemented efficiently, cost-effectively, and been able to adapt to any changing conditions thus far? To what extent are project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, reporting, and project communications supporting the project’s implementation?** |
| Implementation efficiency (including monitoring):* Was the project implemented as planned, including the proportion of activities in work plans implemented?
* Have monitoring trips been conducted to project sites as per the M&E plan? Has monitoring data been collected as planned, analyzed and used to inform project planning?
* Has project implementation been responsive to issues arising (e.g. from monitoring or from interactions with stakeholders)?
* What learning processes have been put in place and who has benefitted (e.g. training, exchanges with related projects, overseas study visits) and how has this influenced project outcomes?
* Were progress reports produced accurately and timely, and did they respond to reporting requirements including adaptive management changes?
* Did the project experience any capacity gaps (e.g. staffing gaps)?
* Has internal and external communication been effective and efficient?
* How efficiently have resources and back-up been provided by donors, including quality assurance by UNDP?
 | Extent to which project activities were conducted on timeExtent to which project delivery matched the expectation of the ProDoc and the expectations of partnersLevel of satisfaction expressed by partners in the responsiveness (adaptive management) of the projectLevel of satisfaction expressed by MEECC and PCU in regard to UNDP back-stopping | Project work plans and reportsLocal partnersTracking tools |  |
| Financial efficiency:* Are the accounting and financial systems in place adequate for project management and producing accurate and timely financial information?
* Have funds been available and transferred efficiently (from donor to project to contractors) to address the project purpose, outputs and planned activities?
* Are funds being used correctly?
* Are financial resources being utilized efficiently (converted into outcomes)? Could financial resources be used more efficiently?
* Have any issues been raised in audit reports and if so how efficiently were they addressed?
* Was project implementation as cost effective as originally proposed (planned vs. actual)
* Has the leveraging of funds (co-financing) proceeded as planned?
 | Extent to which funds have been converted into outcomes as per the expectations of the ProDocLevel of transparency in the use of fundsLevel of satisfaction of partners and beneficiaries in the use of fundsTimely delivery of funds, mitigation of bottlenecksCoordination and synergies of project funds and co-financing | Project financial recordsProject audit reportsProject work plans and reports |  |
| Efficiency of partnership arrangements for the project* To what extent were partnerships/linkages between institutions/organizations/private sector realized as planned?
* Which partnerships/linkages were facilitated? Which ones can be considered sustainable?
* What was the level of efficiency of cooperation and collaboration arrangements?
 | Extent to which project partners committed time and resources to the projectExtent of commitment of partners to take over project activities | Project work plans and reportsReports of local partners (particularly IDC, ICS, D’Arros, SIF) |  |
| Is the project responsive to threats and opportunities emerging during the course of the project? | Level of adaptive management related to emerging trends | Project work plans and reports |  |
| How well were risks, assumptions and impact drivers managed? What was the quality of risk mitigation strategies developed? Were these sufficient? Are there clear strategies for risk mitigation related to long-term sustainability of the project? | Extent to which project has responded to identified and emerging risks Level of attention paid to up-dating risks log | Risks log |  |
| Is a communications strategy in place? How well is it implemented and how successful has it been in reaching intended audiences? | Extent to which project information has been disseminatedLevel of awareness of beneficiaries and the general public | Communications documentsPress articles |  |
| **Sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, socio-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?** |
| Is the social, legal and political environment conducive to sustainability?  | Extent of supportive policies | Policy documents (e.g. blue economy road map)Steering Committee minutesLocal partners and beneficiaries |  |
| Are there early signs of activities being taken up by project partners, and plans being developed to sustain them? | Extent to which partners are considering post-project actions  |  |
| Have partners and stakeholders successfully enhanced their capacities and do they have the required resources to make use of these capacities? | Extent to which partners and stakeholders are applying new ideas outside of the immediate project context |  |

**ToR ANNEX D: UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators/Midterm Review Consultants[[26]](#footnote-27)**

**Evaluators/Consultants:**

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.

**MTR Consultant Agreement Form**

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

Name of Consultant: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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

Signed at *\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Place)* on *\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Date)*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**ToR ANNEX E: MTR Ratings**

|  |
| --- |
| **Ratings for Progress Towards Results:** (one rating for each outcome and for the objective) |
| 6 | Highly Satisfactory (HS) | The objective/outcome is expected to achieve or exceed all its end-of-project targets, without major shortcomings. The progress towards the objective/outcome can be presented as “good practice”. |
| 5 | Satisfactory (S) | The objective/outcome is expected to achieve most of its end-of-project targets, with only minor shortcomings. |
| 4 | Moderately Satisfactory (MS) | The objective/outcome is expected to achieve most of its end-of-project targets but with significant shortcomings. |
| 3 | Moderately Unsatisfactory (HU) | The objective/outcome is expected to achieve its end-of-project targets with major shortcomings. |
| 2 | Unsatisfactory (U) | The objective/outcome is expected not to achieve most of its end-of-project targets. |
| 1 | Highly Unsatisfactory (HU) | The objective/outcome has failed to achieve its midterm targets, and is not expected to achieve any of its end-of-project targets. |

|  |
| --- |
| **Ratings for Project Implementation & Adaptive Management:** (one overall rating) |
| 6 | 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”. |
| 5 | 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. |
| 4 | 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. |
| 3 | 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. |
| 2 | Unsatisfactory (U) | Implementation of most of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management. |
| 1 | Highly Unsatisfactory (HU) | Implementation of none of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management. |

|  |
| --- |
| **Ratings for Sustainability:** (one overall rating) |
| 4 | 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 |
| 3 | 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 |
| 2 | Moderately Unlikely (MU) | Significant risk that key outcomes will not carry on after project closure, although some outputs and activities should carry on |
| 1 | Unlikely (U) | Severe risks that project outcomes as well as key outputs will not be sustained |

**ToR ANNEX F: MTR Report Clearance Form**

*(to be completed by the Commissioning Unit and UNDP-GEF RTA and included in the final documen*

**Midterm Review Report Reviewed and Cleared By:**

**Commissioning Unit**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\*The final MTR report must be in English. If applicable, the Commissioning Unit may choose to arrange for a translation of the report into a language more widely shared by national stakeholders.

## annex 4: schedule of mtr, list of people consulted and documents reviewed

Schedule of the MTR

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Dates | Days | Details |
| 13th Nov | Sunday | Arrival of Consultant |
| 14th Nov | Monday | Stakeholder Meeting during the day and leaving for visit to PA sites in the evening |
| 15th Nov | Tuesday | Visit to PA sites (Desroches)  |
| 16th Nov | Wednesday | Visit to PA sites (Poivre/ D'Arros)  |
| 17th Nov | Thursday | Visit to PA sites (Alphonse)   |
| 18th Nov | Friday | Return Early morning/ Stakeholder meeting afternoon |
| 19th Nov | Saturday |   |
| 20th Nov | Sunday |   |
| 21st Nov | Monday | Stakeholder meeting |
| 22nd Nov | Tuesday | Stakeholder meeting |
| 23rd Nov | Wednesday | Workshop/ presentation/ Follow up |
| 24th Nov | Thursday | Departure of consultant |

List of Documents reviewed

1. PIF
2. UNDP Initiation Plan
3. UNDP Project Document
4. UNDP Environmental and Social Screening results
5. Project Inception Report
6. All Project Implementation Reports (PIR’s)
7. Quarterly progress reports and work plans of the various implementation task teams
8. Audit reports
9. Finalized GEF focal area Tracking Tools at CEO endorsement and midterm (METTs for the four target sites, LD PMAT, Financial Scorecard, Capacity Scorecard)
10. Oversight mission reports
11. All monitoring reports prepared by the project
12. Financial and Administration guidelines used by Project Team
13. Project operational guidelines, manuals and systems
14. UNDP country/countries programme document(s)
15. Minutes of the Outer Island Project Board Meetings and other meetings (i.e. Project Appraisal Committee meetings)
16. Project site location maps

**List of people consulted**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Number | Name | Organisation |
| 1 | Pierre Andre Adam | ICS |
| 2 | Adrian Skerrett | ICS |
| 3 | Stephanie Massy | EBA |
| 4 | James Millet | EBA |
| 5 | Andy Rylance | PAF |
| 6 | Isabelle Ravinia | SNPA |
| 7 | Ameer Ebrahim | Consultant |
| 8 | Andrew Grieser Johns | PCU |
| 9 | Jeanne Mortimer | ICS |
| 10 | Line Mancienne | PCU |
| 11 | Preethi Nair | UNDP |
| 12 | Sabrina Zoe | MLUH |
| 13 | Rodney Quatre | UNDP |
| 14 | Francois Charles | SMSA |
| 15 | Roland Alcindor | UNDP |
| 16 | Joanna Prosper | OIP |
| 17 | Alain Decomarmond | MEECC |
| 18 | Glenny Savy | IDC |
| 19 | Marie-Corrinne Balett | SFA |
| 20 | Olivier Bodere | ICS |
| 21 | Helena Sims | TNC |
| 22 | Veronique Bonnelame | Independent consultant  |
| 24 | Frauke F. Dogley | SIF |
| 25 | Teddy Songoire | FBOA |
| 26 | Keith Andre | FBOA |
| 27 | Virginie Lagarde | FBOA |
| 28 | Beatty Hoarau | FBOA |
| 29 | Bernice Elizabeth | TOURISM DEPARTMENT |
| 30 | Marie May Jeremie | DOE |

## annex 5: detailed analysis of project delivery per indicator

| Project Strategy | Indicator | Baseline level  | Level in 1st PIR**[[27]](#footnote-28)**  | Targets (End of Project) | Midterm Level & Assessment | Achievement Rating | Justification for Rating  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Project Objective** To promote the conservation and sustainable use of coastal and marine biodiversity in the Seychelles’ Outer Islands by integrating a National Subsystem of Coastal and Marine Protected Areas (CMPAs) into the broader land- and seascape while reducing the pressures on natural resources from competing land uses. | 1. Capacity development indicator score for protected area system:SystemicInstitutionalIndividual | 60%67%48% | N/AN/AN/A | 73%73%62% | 54.852.860.3 | Moderately Unsatisfactory  | Although individual capacity has increased significantly and is close to end of project target, both systemic and institutional capacities have declined. Individual capacity is ineffective without systemic and institutional capacity. The main issue at the systematic level is that PA institutions find it difficult to work in partnership (there is no system, it is a case of everyone for themselves); at the institutional level the issues are mainly a continuing lack of supporting legislation (enabling environment) and financing. So the projects train people (building individual capacity) in an absence of the supporting environment fully to utilize these skills.  |
| 2. METT scores:DesrochesAlphonsePoivreFarquharD’Arros | Baseline values were adjusted to those in brackets during the inception period.59% (60)58% (59) 29% (30)29% (30)57% (58)  | N/AN/AN/AN/AN/A | 80%80%74%74%76% | 61.7% (63)66.7% (68)32.3% (33)41.1% (42)56.9% (58) | Moderately Satisfactory | Although Desroches and Alphonse register considerable increase, the increase in METT Scores for Poivre and Farquhar are minimal and D’Arros did not change (probably more due to a lack of attention on the part of the person completing the METT than to a real absence of change).  |
| 3. Coverage (ha) of official PAs in the Outer Islands (Aldabra; African Banks; Etoile; Boudeuse)- Marine- Terrestrial | 28,939 ha.15,261 ha. | 0 0 | 105,197 ha. (76,258 ha. added at 5 new PA sites)16,498 ha. (1,237 ha. added at 5 new PA sites) | 00 | Satisfactory | Although the nomination files are not yet ready, a lot of work has been done in mapping, ecological assessment/justification, etc., Actual gazetting would not be expected at mid-term; however, the project did not set mid-term targets, hence the zero rating on the end-term target.Increase in PA coverage is dependent on gazettment of new PAs which, in turn, depend on approval of the new PA Law (Nature Reserves and Conservancy Act), which is not yet approved. |
|  | 4. Detailed habitat maps of terrestrial and marine ecosystems of the Outer Islands | 4 out-dated / rough-scale and incomplete maps of PA sites (Desroches, Alphonse, Poivre, and D’Arros) | Terrestrial mapping - 65%;Marine mapping -0%;Collectively - 32.5%  | 5 updated, finer-scale and complete habitat maps of PA sites | Terrestrial mapping - 65%;Marine mapping -0%;Collectively - 32.5%  | Moderately Satisfactory | The work on terrestrial maps has progressed significantly and is on way to full delivery. Project staff (and ICS generally) lack the expertise and capability to carry out updating of existing (draft and old) marine maps at present, but are being supported by qualified and trained by qualified staff from MEECC and Ministry of Habitat, Infrastructure and Land Transport . This is a specialized skill and need not reside at every NGO but rather should be consolidated within Government departments with the mandate to undertake this work[[28]](#footnote-29). |
| 5. Number of NGO PA staff with specialised training and/or skills development in:EnforcementMarine research and monitoringCommunications / Public Outreach | 0105 | Enforcement; 0Marine research and monitoring – 16 (45.7%)Communications / Public Outreach – 20 (100%) | 203520 | Enforcement; 0Marine research and monitoring – 16 (45.7%)Communications / Public Outreach – 20 (100%) | Moderately Satisfactory | Although training on Marine research and monitoring, and, Communications / Public Outreach are on target, the training on enforcement was delayed to await the approval of the new Nature Reserves and Conservancy Act, to ensure that all provisions of the new Act are incorporated into the training. However, the enforcement training has now been undertaken[[29]](#footnote-30), expect for the interpretation of the new Act, which has to wait. It is not known when the new Law will be approved by Cabinet. |
| 6. # of Protected Areas legally established and demarcated in Outer Islands | 4 PA sites (Aldabra, African Banks, Boudeuse, Etoile) | 0 | 9 new PAs at 5 sites legally gazetted by middle of year 3, and demarcated by end of year 4 | 0 | Unsatisfactory  | Legal establishment dependent on the endorsement of the Nature Reserves and Conservancy Act by Government; nomination files are not yet ready however, except for D’Arros (prepared independently). However, given that the target is expected to be met by mid-3rd year and demarcation by 4th year, it is possible for drastic improvement in the status of this indicator if the new Law is approved and the nomination files are completed within 2017. |
| 7. # of conservation zones (fish protection zones; temporal zones; marine conservation corridors; Important Bird Areas) officially recognized in the Outer Islands | 0 | 50% Baseline information established from literature. In addition, data collection and prioritization of areas for increased conservation status).  | At least 3 zones with official recognition | 50% achieved (data collection and prioritization of areas for increased conservation status).  | Satisfactory | Delivery on this indicator is being supported by the on-going Marine Spatial Planning process and is building on work of a previous GOS-UNDP-GEF PA project) which identified six new IBAs - three them in the outer islands (Alphonse, St Joseph atoll and St Francois), plus six potential new marine (open water) IBAs, including the waters around Farquhar group. Extensive work on fisheries zoning, linked to the MSP, is expected to start up under the SWIOFish3 project, commencing in 2017. |
| 8. Coral reef health, as measured by:Percent live hard coral cover Percent dead hard coral coverNumber of coral recruits (per m2)  | Baselines information was established for Alphonse, Farquhar and Desroches but not for Poivre. No data was collected for Farquhar which was hit by a cyclone in early 2016.  | Baseline information established from literature for Desroches but not yet for Poivre**Poivre:** Baselines not yet obtained, and now influenced by the recent coral bleaching event (no data available pre-bleaching) Protocols under development | No decrease by project endNo increase by project endNo decrease by project end |  Monitoring protocol under development | N/A | Coral health is highly dependent on stable ocean conditions, which cannot be influenced by the project. The target islands experienced high sea temperatures during April-June 2016, accompanied by the worst coral bleaching event on record. Farquhar Island was hit by Cyclone Fantala, likely impacting the reefs around it negatively. The extent of the damages from both events is yet to be determined.  |
| 9. Mangrove health, as measured by:Average height and/or DBH# of hectares | Baselines established as follows: (measurements were made pre-project but not recorded in the original project design): **Desroches:** # of hectares = 0 Ha (2013) **St Francois:** # of hectares = 2.1 Ha (2013) **Alphonse:** # of hectares= 0 Ha (2013) **Poivre:** # of hectares = 0.6 Ha (2013) **Farquhar:** # of hectares = 15.5 Ha (2013) | Baseline values established from literature; monitoring protocol under development | No decrease by project endNo decrease by project end | Monitoring protocol under development | Moderately Satisfactory | The threat to mangroves in the Outer Islands is from developments on the Island, which will be alleviated via the land use planning (indicator 14). The areas covered by mangroves are small enough for the project to manage the monitoring of the trends, although the project is not engaged in active management of the mangroves.  |
| 10. Seagrass bed health, as measured by # of hectares | BASELINES determined as follows (measurements were made pre-project but not recorded in the original project design): **Desroches:** # of hectares = 7,155 Ha (2015) \*7,155 Ha (consisting of High density seagrass 2661 ha, medium seagrass 2738 ha, Low density seagrass with macroalgae 1757 ha)**Alphonse:**# of hectares = 914 Ha (2013) **\***914Ha (consisting of High density seagrass 183Ha, medium seagrass 473Ha and Low density seagrass with macroalgae 258Ha)**St** **Francois and Bijoutier:** # of hectares = 3257 Ha (2013) **\***3,257 Ha (consisting of High density seagrass 540 Ha, medium seagrass 1031 Ha and Low density seagrass with macroalgae 1,686 Ha)**Poivre:** # of hectares = 924 Ha (2013) **\*** 924 Ha (consisting of High density seagrass 68 Ha, medium seagrass 438 Ha and Low density seagrass with macroalgae 418 Ha)**Farquhar:** # of hectares = 2,006 Ha (2013)  | Baseline values established from literature | No decrease by project end | Monitoring protocols have now been received, assessments to be undertaken in 2017-2018 to update baseline values obtained from literature | N/A | The health of the seagrass beds in the Outer Islands is influenced more by ocean conditions outside the influence of the project, than it is influenced by land and marine management processes likely to be influenced by the Protected Areas. Monitoring this indicator before the PA have been established and management regimes put in place for several years is unlikely to detect trends in condition influenced by the project. |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 11. Health of selected reef fish stocks, as measured by:Abundance per m3Species diversityBiomass in kg per m-3 | Baseline data adopted from previous studies (mainly 2008) as follows: **Desroches:** Abundance per m3 = 0.20/m2 ; Species Diversity =10 families; Biomass in Kg/ m3 = 7kg/250m2 (D.Obura 2008) **Alphonse:** Abundance per m3 = 0.28/m2; Species Diversity = 13 families;Biomass in Kg/ m3 = 3kg/250m2 (D.Obura 2008) **Farquhar:** Abundance per m3 = 0.30/m2 ; Species Diversity = 12 families (Pangaea 2014) Biomass in Kg/ m3=32kg/100m2\* (Frielander 2009) **Poivre:** Baselines not yet obtained, expected by Q1 2017 A consultancy is being started up to determine monitoring protocols and thereafter to reassess the parameters. | Baseline values established | No decrease by project endNo decrease by project endNo decrease by project end | A monitoring protocol is now available; new assessments planned for 2017 to update the baselines values obtained from literature.  | N/A | As with indicators 8, 9 and 10 there are concerns about the use of this indicator for project implementation. It is essentially one of ecosystem health, which is beyond the project's control, especially in the early stages of project implementation. However, in this case, the diversity of the recorded families, abundance and biomass may also be regarded as an indicator of fishing pressure, and/or length/ frequency distribution, which should be controlled within aspiring protected areas.  |
| 12. Increase in funding support to 4 Outer Islands Protected Areas managed by ICS (US$/annum):Funding generated by ICS / Island Foundations Contributions of Outer Island businesses (IDC & Hotels)Corporate Social Responsibility Tax | 106,66182,7690 | ICS - 49% increase (US$ 189,430)Outer island businesses; - 35% increase (102,000);Corporate Social Responsibility Tax - 0% | 274,729138,000100,000 | ICS - 49% increase (US$189,430)Outer island businesses; - 35% increase (102,000);Corporate Social Responsibility Tax - 0% | Moderately Satisfactory | There has been no change in CSR contributions; the other two sources recorded less than 50% of target at MTR. |
|  | 13. Land Conversion at PA sites; Land conversion in new IUCN Category I (Seychelles Strict Nature Reserves) and IUCN Category II (Seychelles National Parks) PAsLand conversion in new Category VI (Seychelles Sustainable Use Areas) Pas | No existing restrictions on land conversionOn-going land conversion (e.g. tourism; forestry operations) | Indeterminate  | 0% land conversion <10% land conversion | Indeterminate  |  | The baseline to monitor this indicator should be set at the time the PAs are gazetted. This is because the demarcation of the PAs are likely to exclude the hotels/resorts areas, areas occupied by IDC (including airstrips), and potential future development sites. In the case of Desroches the resort area may be expanding under the current renovation, and is heavily impacting on some formerly natural areas (particularly the shearwater colony) but the resort area will not be included within a PA.  |
| 14. Pressures from competing natural resources uses in the Outer Islands land- and seascape are reduced through an integrated natural resource management (INRM) framework, including:Overall Planning FrameworkLand Use Plans | No existing planning framework for the Outer Islands1 Land Use Plan (Coetivy Island) for the Outer Islands | Ecosystem-wide zoning and master strategy – 80% (merged with the national The Nature Conservancy (TNC) supported Marine Spatial Planning initiative, which will provide the strategic zoning while the project will provide the detailed planning around the Islands).**Land use plans** - 40%. LUPs for Alphonse and Desroches are advanced and ready for submission to Cabinet. Work on the LUP for Farquhar has started but Island is still recovering from Cyclone Fantanala. Work on LUP for Poivre has not yet started due to lack of facilities on the Island.  | Ecosystem-Wide Zoning and Master Strategy approved by Cabinet4 Land Use Plans for island with new PA units approved by Cabinet | Ecosystem-wide zoning and master strategy – 80% Merged with the national The Nature Conservancy (TNC) supported Marine Spatial Planning initiative, which will provide the strategic zoning (macro-level) while the project will provide the detailed planning around the Islands (micro-level).Land use plans - 40%. LUPs for Alphonse and Desroches are advanced and ready for submission to Cabinet. Work on the LUP for Farquhar has started but needs to be based on a vegetation rehabilitation plan as the Island is recovering from extensive damage caused by Cyclone Fantala. Work on LUP for Poivre has not yet started due to lack of facilities on the Island.  | Moderately Satisfactory | The work on the ecosystem-wide zoning and master strategy / MSP has advanced steadily, led by Government and with technical support from the TNC. However, the lack of facilities at the Poivre Island has made it impossible to start land use planning work. Staff for Poivre could be located on Desroches Island but transport back and forth is a problem due to the fact that Desroches is closed for tourism (the resort is under renovation, hence no tourism boats moving between Desroches and Poivre). |
| 15. Extent (# of hectares) of Desroches and Alphonse Islands with restored native habitatsDesrochesAlphonse | 2.5 ha.0 ha. | **Desroches** – 11 ha out of 22.3 ha possible (43%);**Alphonse** – 1.3 ha of 17.1 ha possible (7.6%) | **Desroches** - 30 ha (revised 15 ha at project inception and later to 22.3 ha during Vegetation management plan (VMP) formulation)**Alphonse** - 30 ha (revised to 15 ha during project inception and later to 17.1 ha during VMP process) | **Descroches** – 11 ha out of 22.3 ha possible (43%);**Alphonse** – 1.3 ha of 17.1 ha possible (7.6%) | Moderately Satisfactory | Vegetation Management Plans have been approved and endorsed by MEECC for both Islands but implementation is slow. Most of the revegetation achieved so far was done pre-project.  |
| 16. # of Outer Islands with functioning biosecurity processes (protocols under implementation) | 1 island (D’Arros) | 0% | 5 additional islands (Aldabra; Desroches; Alphonse; Poivre; Farquhar) by end of year 2 | 20% | Unsatisfactory  | Aldabra has developed a Biosecurity protocol and started implementing some of the measures. A consultant was recruited in late July 2016 under the OIP to develop biosecurity protocols for the Islands. 1st Draft of Pest Abatement protocols have been submitted and presented in December to IDC and positive feedback received. Protocols and leaflets being finalized in Q 1, 2017. However, adoption of biosecurity measures more widely will await implementation of the guiding document 'Biosecurity protocols for the transportation of vessels, cargo and people between islands, with special reference to protected areas and islands of high biodiversity value', which was produced under the GOS-UNDP-GEF Biosecurity project in 2015; it was approved by the National Biosecurity Committee (NBC), but there’s some delay as the NBC is being upgraded into an Agency which can then apply the protocols directly. |
| 17. Number of Govt. and NGO PA staff with specialised training and/or skills development in:Database management, decision support tools, and systematic conservation planningRe-vegetationCoastal Erosion ControlBiosecurity procedures[[30]](#footnote-31) -  | 5500 | management, decision support tools, and systematic conservation planning – 100%Re-vegetation – 0%Coastal Erosion Control – 10%Biosecurity procedures – 0% | 12151020 | Database management, decision support tools, and systematic conservation planning – 100%Re-vegetation – 0%Coastal Erosion Control – 10%Biosecurity procedures – 0% | Moderately Satisfactory seabirds not mentioned as an indicator in the prodoc | Revegetation – the project collaborated with another project and produced a video on plant propagation, which will be used to train relevant staff on revegetation on the Islands.Coastal erosion control - A consultancy to assess coastal erosion, propose mitigation measures and develop a protocol for monitoring of beach erosion is on-going. Training will follow the conclusion of the consultancy. Biosecurity procedures - A consultancy is on-going to produce biosecurity materials and training needs assessment.  |

Key:

Red colour – delayed;

Yellow colour – Somewhat on track

Green colour – On track

## Annex 6: Updated METT and Capacity scores – in a separate document with UNDP CO and PCU

1. It is noted here that Aldabra is very large though and actually makes up 77% of the total PA estate. It is more a question of representativeness of different habitat types, with most outer island terrestrial and marine habitats being hugely under-represented in the system. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Finance Officer left in April 2015 although he was replaced immediately after (lost training on UNDP financial procedures), the CEO changed twice and the Project Coordinator has changed three times. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. It is noted however that some level of pest control is happening on some Islands, at the aviation zone and on the port. These are biosecurity measures, even if not formalized in a management plan [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. To be conducted in association with PA Finance project [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Ibid: “A Responsible Party is defined as an entity that has been selected to act on behalf of the implementing partner on the basis of a written agreement or contract to purchase goods or provide services using the project budget. In addition, the responsible party may manage the use of these goods and services to carry out project activities and produce outputs. All responsible parties are directly accountable to the implementing partner in accordance with the terms of their agreement or contract with the implementing partner. Implementing partners use responsible parties in order to take advantage of their specialized skills, to mitigate risk and to relieve administrative burdens. […]” [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. A Capacity Assessment was done during the project planning period [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. The report of the team was published in the 'Seychelles Post Disaster Needs Assessment-April 2016' a report compiled by the Government of Seychelles. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. All vegetation rehabilitation work stopped as after the vegetation restoration plans were produced and approved by ICS and IDC; IDC stated that they would take the lead on implementing the plans. This was recorded formally in the Alphonse and Desroches Foundation meetings held on 17th February 2016. But verbally to all the people involved in producing the plans, including the Alphonse Conservation Officer. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. ICS staff have asked to do camp outs, catch lift with barge etc., but IDC has not made any arrangements for them to get to Poivre. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. It is however noted that series of “fire-fighting” mitigative measures arebeing implemented to mimimise the impact on the shearwater colony. Actions include: Weekly meetings to facilitate communication between the developers and ICS; weekly monitoring of the burrows in the areas to be constructed; ICS put up colony boundary markers with barrier tape and awareness signs; DIDL waited until the birds left before clearing with heavy machinery in the high and low density areas; ICS has physically moved around 45 burrows and free birds inside whilst the heavy machinery was waiting to clear Casuarina roots and level the Villa development plot; work on improving the habitat for shearwaters in the eastern colony to attract more birds there instead. However, according to ICS, “It remains uncertain as to what will happen when the hotel is open and birds return to their breeding colony; they are likely to be attracted to the lights and repeatedly fly into hotel accommodation. Not sure how hotel/ICS will deal with this issue.” [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. Noted here that the ENGOs actually opposed an original suggestion to have a joint SC for all PA projects. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. UNDP: Terminal Review of the PA NGO Modality project; March 2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. For ideas on innovative and participatory Monitoring and Evaluation strategies and techniques, see [UNDP Discussion Paper: Innovations in Monitoring & Evaluating Results](http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/capacity-building/discussion-paper--innovations-in-monitoring---evaluating-results/), 05 Nov 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. For more stakeholder engagement in the M&E process, see the [UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results](http://www.undg.org/docs/11653/UNDP-PME-Handbook-%282009%29.pdf), Chapter 3, pg. 93. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. Populate with data from the Logframe and scorecards [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. Populate with data from the Project Document [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
18. If available [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
19. Colour code this column only [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
20. Use the 6 point Progress Towards Results Rating Scale: HS, S, MS, MU, U, HU [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
21. Alternatively, MTR conclusions may be integrated into the body of the report. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
22. Engagement of the consultants should be done in line with guidelines for hiring consultants in the POPP: <https://info.undp.org/global/popp/Pages/default.aspx> [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
23. <https://intranet.undp.org/unit/bom/pso/Support%20documents%20on%20IC%20Guidelines/Template%20for%20Confirmation%20of%20Interest%20and%20Submission%20of%20Financial%20Proposal.docx> [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
24. <http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/Careers/P11_Personal_history_form.doc> [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
25. The Report length should not exceed *40* pages in total (not including annexes). [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
26. <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/100> [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
27. The project submitted a first PIR in July 2016 while the MTR took place in November 2016. There was therefore very little change in the level of implementation and results. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
28. ICS has clarified that remote sensing should be used for Marine habitat mapping to be correctly done in the OIP, which is not considered in the Prodoc. ICS is waiting for MEECC to analyse the images downloaded. Geo data are still collected on site and will contribute to the production of habitat maps as soon as MEECC will assist ICS in integrating the field data to the remote sensing treatment. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
29. Training was organized by Protected Area Finance and Outer Islands Project. Funds available for follow up training in 2017 following possible approval of the Act. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
30. Seabirds were not included in the indicator but should probably be included (PSC to discuss during the recommended refinement of the logframe). [↑](#footnote-ref-31)